

Empire-Advance

serving virden & area since 1885

JUNE 12, 2026 | EMPIRE: VOL 121 NO 43 / ADVANCE: VOL 140 NO 45 | PUBLISHING FRIDAYS

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*Some conditions apply. Three (3) winners will be selected, one (1) per Sunrise district. Each winner will receive either three (3) months of payments or up to \$3,000 in payments, whichever is less. Winner financing must be approved to qualify. Deadline to qualify July 31, 2026. See branch for details.



GAME NIGHT

CHEERS UP. GAME ON. GOOD TIMES.



Storm causes damage to cemetery grounds



PHOTO BY NANCY JO MOLLER

One of the historic trees in front of Princess Lodge, Virden that fell victim to the ravaging winds on June 7. Town of Virden employees are working diligently to clean up all debris to minimize disruption of services throughout the town.

By VEA Staff
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

High winds, rain, thunder and lightning took its toll on the Virden community on June 7. From Doppler radar the Saturday night storm activity was forming in Montana and tracking northeast into Manitoba bringing high winds, light rain in southern Manitoba and many lightning strikes.

The cemetery grounds suffered some extensive damage from the storm. Many of the trees were ripped out of the ground by high winds. The town locked the gates so that town crews could assess and clean up the damage.

The service at the cemetery that was scheduled for Monday, June 8 went ahead as planned. Access was provided for only those attending the service.

Crews and contractors were hard at work clearing storm damage and downed trees throughout Virden on Monday June 8. Wallace District Fire Department assisted on multiple sites to remove hazards and keep the community safe. Lightning strikes on Sunday night meant some local homes and businesses were without power until later Monday afternoon. Manitoba Hydro has worked tirelessly to restore power in the widespread storm ravaged region.

The Town of Virden office has advised that if you have

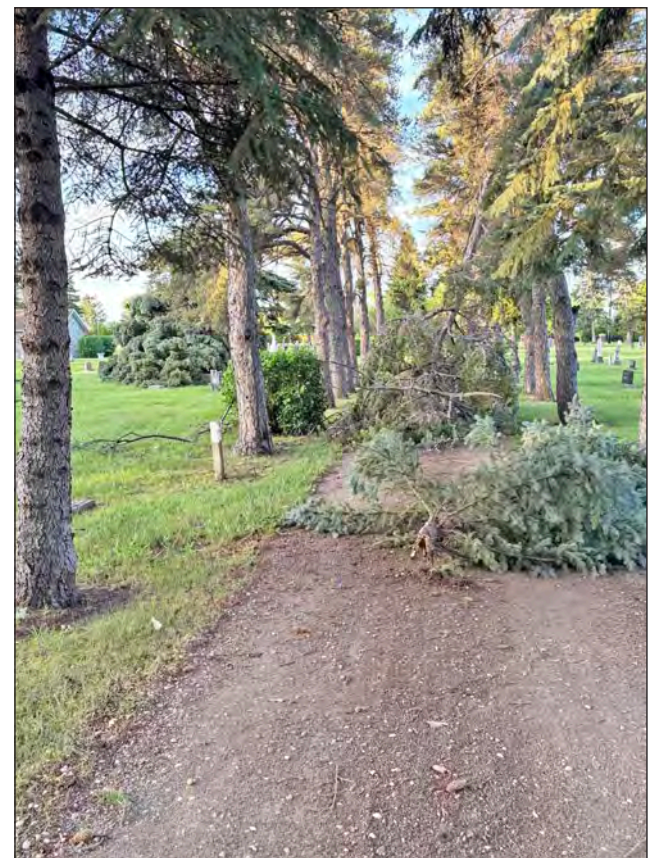


PHOTO FROM TOWN OF VIRDEN FACEBOOK

Older trees in the cemetery had to be cleaned up in time for a funeral service on Monday, June 8.

broken branches on your property, you can drop them off on Anniversary Road by the compost pile or if neatly placed on the boulevard, crews will pick them up as they are able. To report a downed tree or damage in Virden area please call the town office at 204-748-2440.

We here at the Empire-Advance thank all the town crews, local contractors, Wallace District Fire Department and Manitoba Hydro for all your hard work, and to all the community members who stepped up and out to help your neighbours, absolutely amazing. It is wonderful to see a community come together to work hard to help one another.

Inside...



STORMY WEATHER CAUSES DAMAGE

P9



VIRDEN SECURITY CAMERAS

P10

Reston library celebrates jubilee



PHOTO BY ANNE DAVISON

Terri Vandenberghe (L) with Jordan Greig and her two sons Finnley and Hayes help Sylvia Hall cut the Reston District Library 50th Anniversary cake on June 3.

By Anne Davison
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

Reston District Library 50-year Jubilee celebration on June 3 drew a huge crowd to celebrate the journey through history that has brought the library to be an efficient and inviting space offering programs for kids and many titles to lend to all ages.

Head librarian Terri

Vandenberghe reported, "73 people attended with the off-days-kinder kids and their teachers."

MLA for Riding Mountain, Greg Nesbitt addressed the event bringing a message from the Minister for Cultural Heritage and Tourism, the Honourable Nellie Campbell: "On behalf of my colleagues at the Manitoba Legislative Assembly, it is my pleasure to extend

a warm congratulations to the Reston District Library as you celebrate the significant milestone of your 50th anniversary.

Congratulations and appreciation were extended to Board Chair, Brenda Penner, Library Administrator, Terri Vandenberghe "and to all those who have contributed to the library's success over the years.... We look forward to working alongside your library as it continues to adapt and meet the needs of the community in the years ahead."

Vandenberghe then recounted the remarkable history behind this tidy library that serves residents of the RMs of Pipestone and Two Borders.

Reston District Library has grown from humble beginnings into an important community gathering place over the past 50 years. Early library services in the area began through the Pipestone Mutual Association, with books shared from the homes of pioneers such as William Bulla. Over time, church groups and local residents established small collections that were housed in businesses and private homes.

In 1975, the Rural Municipalities of Pipestone and Albert began planning for a permanent library, supported by a government grant and a volunteer board. The library operated from several locations over the years, including a former

Empire-Advance Countryfest Winner



PHOTO BY CHRISTINE WADDELL

The Virden Empire-Advance held a contest for advertisers purchasing an ad in April and May with a chance to win passes to Country Fest. This year's winner was Pik-a-Dilly RV Centre in Brandon. Virden Empire Advance Publisher Ken Waddell presented the Country Fest tickets to Pik-a-Dilly RV Centre General Manager Jeremy Voth.

public Rest Room building, the Memorial Theatre basement, and the Aurora building. In 1991, the RM of Pipestone purchased the former Reston Ceramic Shop site, where a new library was built. The current building opened in December 1992, with an official grand opening in June 1993.

Six librarians have guided the library since 1976, each helping it evolve with the community's needs. Beyond lending books, the library has introduced programs such as Moms

and Tots, a book club, Lego club, summer reading activities, technology services, and accessible formats for readers with visual impairments.

With an estimated 500,000 books circulated over five decades, the Reston District Library continues to serve as a welcoming hub that promotes literacy, lifelong learning, and community connections for residents of all ages.

When it was time to serve the 50th Anniversary cake, long-time

library client, Sylvia Hall, was called upon.

Reston District Library's success reflects the administrator's dedicated enthusiasm and the support of the community. Vandenberghe acknowledged that support from the library board Julie Fotheringham, Brenda Penner, Brenda Revet and Lorna Elliott who helped with preparations and during the event. She thanked library staff Nancy and Glenda for their hard work to make the event such a success.

Happy FATHER'S DAY!

BBQ Essentials • Cologne
Hats • Coffee Mug
Snacks • Rock Glasses

261 7th Avenue, Virden, MB
204-748-1869

Flower Attic & Gifts
www.floweratticandgifts.ca
(204) 748-1869

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Celebrate Father's Day with 25% off All Men's Sandals, Flip-Flops and Slides Sale ends June 20

Two Great Reasons To Shop Downtown Virden

VIRDEN FOOTWEAR
220 Nelson Street West | Virden
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Having the mindset to continue in life



Carter Armstrong and members of the Wallace District Fire Department who escorted him into Virden on June 8.



PHOTOS NANCY JO MOLLER

Carter Armstrong in his trek from Vancouver BC has reached King Street, Virden on June 8. He is running raising awareness for Mental Health.

By Nancy Jo Moller
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

Carter Armstrong is dedicated to spreading Mental Health Awareness as he runs from BC to Dryden Ontario. After his own attempt at suicide, Carter woke up the next day and went for a run at 20 below Celsius. Running from the thought of ending his life that day, the realization came that if he could make a difference and save not only his own life, but someone else's would become his goal. Not being a trained runner but having previously run a marathon distance, Carter decided that he would run from Vancouver, BC to his hometown of Dryden, ON. It sounded like an enormous feat but one step at a time, he

has proved that Awareness of Mental Health is required. He is running the route with no follow vehicle. That means his duffle is carried on his back as he travels adding approximately 60 pounds of additional weight.

At first, while he was travelling through the rugged terrain of British Columbia, Carter faced not only anonymity as few people knew about his trek but the dangers of wildlife, weather and traffic. He preserved with a 'will to live' and has found that the generosity of individuals along his path has been healing. People running beside him, cheering him on to food and lodging some nights. Other nights are spent in a small tent close to the roadside. Imagine his comfort level during what

seems to be never-ending unpredictable storms that have frequently struck the region. The thought of getting up and continuing each day has been the recovery Carter has needed. He has planned stops by not just the distance but for reality of services available. Arriving in Virden on Day 60 of his trek means that an average of just over 34 kilometres per day has been accomplished. Readers keep in mind the punishment his body has been taking daily and the need for replenishment.

Making people around him aware of not only his struggles but others' challenges as he strives to have awareness of mental health brought forth into the minds of all. While a GoFundMe page was started for Canadian Mental Health with a current balance over \$26,000, money was never the goal. Carter is open and honest by saying "if he saves a life by running, that is what matters". It is not a cliché when he says it but a statement from the heart.

Recently having someone close to him die by suicide was a sad reaffirmation that more must be done to take the stigma of mental health issues away. Making it okay to talk about and seek help is the goal of this run. Carter, along with many other people wonder, "why did I miss the signs, I should have done something", that feeling of guilt persists. Mulling over what could be done so that tragedies like this don't go unnoticed and something is done to prevent them in the future, their lives mattered and we need to make sure that everyone realizes it.

True sign that summer is just around the corner



PHOTO NANCY JO MOLLER

Customers gathered to enjoy conversation and the first chance at homemade goods and produce on opening day, June 4. The market is held Thursday nights from now until September. The Virden Farmers Market provides a venue for local entrepreneurs and individuals to sell their goods under a pole roof located on Sixth Avenue S. in Virden. Located beside the train tracks, parking is plentiful and the atmosphere is relaxed. There was a variety of items available from homemade baking, jams and jellies, plants, crafted wood items, jewelry, kitchen and storage items. Being open on Thursday nights allow residents the opportunity to purchase pre-weekend before busy plans interfere with attendance. The Cantina food cart was on site to satisfy everyone's hunger, who can resist a quick bite after smelling the aroma of cooking food as you stroll around.

As one era ends and one continues



PHOTO NANCY JO MOLLER

Pictured above L to R: Dianne Liefso - Virden AUD Director, Jean Anne Overand. Virden AUD Theatre Chair, Diane Burke - Secretary Treasurer Phoenix Players, Kel Smith - President Phoenix Players, Laura Wright - Virden AUD Director Our local Phoenix Players Community Theatre Group has made the hard decision to step back and let others entertain them. A cheque for \$1,603.15 was presented to Virden AUD Theatre for their co-operation, understanding and kindness to the Phoenix Players.



Whyte's Lumber is pleased to announce its 80th anniversary.

To celebrate this milestone, we will be hosting a lunch on June 19th from 12:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m.

We look forward to celebrating with you.

June 19th

12:00-2:00 p.m.

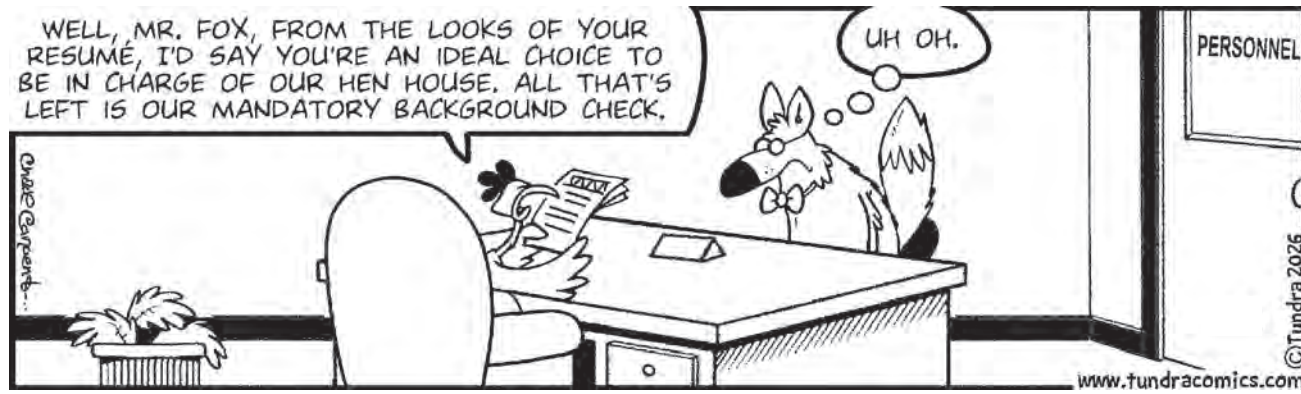
Kenton



FOR ANY QUESTIONS PLEASE CONTACT US AT 204-838-2265

Tundra

By Chad Carpenter



Tough love or common sense

Editor's note: With the release of a Spring 2026 report that says the City of Winnipeg is dealing with up to 60 plus drug overdoses a day, I thought it appropriate to re-run an edited version of a column from June, 2025.

Some very basic changes are needed. There are many clues leading to the need for change. Here is a list.

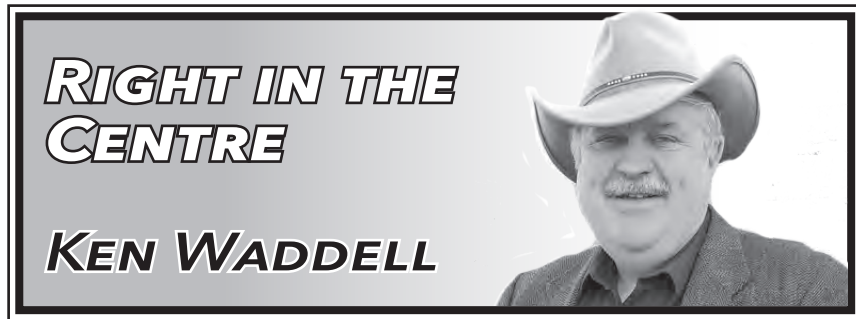
Go into any urban centre, especially large ones and the presence of drug dealers and addicts is painfully obvious. Areas of Winnipeg, Brandon, Thompson and other locations have drugged and drunk people obvious in the streets. It used to be a criminal offence to be in such a condition. That is no longer the case.

We have cases reported to us every week about rural theft, sometimes accompanied by guns and threats of violence. There was a murder case in 2025 in Brandon and the amount of sympathy in the court and the media for the murderers was astonishing.

I don't care how rough a life you have had, or how many mental health issues you may have, there is no excuse for violence unless it's a matter of self defence. The recent Brandon case didn't seem to have a self defence aspect to it. If a person goes to an event at the Canada Life Centre (Winnipeg Jets arena), there's a good chance your vehicle will be smashed into and items stolen.

At least once a month, we see news releases about chronic violent offenders being released into areas of a community with the warning that, "They are likely to re-offend". There is often a stated provision that, "Women and children are especially at risk". This kinds of notices are appearing more frequently in 2026.

Community leaders from indigenous and other communities have publicly said that, "This catch-and-release"



system of justice isn't working. Community planners wonder why people don't want to be in downtown Brandon or Winnipeg. It should be obvious. People who live there don't feel safe, people who visit there definitely don't feel safe and there's ample proof as to why that is so.

There has to be some solutions. From what I understand, more and more people are being asked to administer drug overdose antidote injections. That simply boggles my mind. Apparently drug users and addicts know that if they OD, someone is likely to bail them out with an antidote injection. I am tempted to say, "Let them die! The current approach is not reducing the cases and we know that paramedics, police and fire staff are at their wits end trying to get through this very unnecessary workload.

In Manitoba we have life pretty good. Education (albeit less than the standards we might like) is readily available. Food is still readily available and, if a person shops and cooks wisely, it's affordable.

(Before anybody gets too worked up about that statement, please examine your shopping list and if it includes regularly purchased \$5 cups of coffee, cases of bottled water and huge bags of pet food, then please go and re-examine your shopping cart.)

Roads are pretty rough in places but pretty good shape relative to many

other places. There is a lot to be thankful for. If after all that, you are in a bad mental state, then let me ask, have you volunteered lately for any groups or organizations in your community. Have you picked up even one piece of trash? Have you even considered getting involved with a church or place of worship? There are lots available and some of them are even friendly.

If you don't have a job, you should have one. If you don't like your job then make the moves necessary to get a more suitable one.

But what about the hard core criminals and drug addicts. I say put them in an institution until (or if) they can get their head straightened out so they can conduct themselves in a way that doesn't involve violence, drug dealing or causing misery to other people.

Quite frankly, there are people who have proven that they don't deserve to ever see the "Outside world" again and while that is sad, maybe being in an institution would be best for everyone including them.

Call it tough love if you like, but it could also be called common sense as our current system isn't working all that well.

Disclaimer: The views expressed in this column are the writer's personal views and are not to be taken as being the view of the Banner & Press staff.



Summer camp...

It is one of my deepest desires that every child that would like to spend time at a summer camp would have the opportunity. I got to go as a child, with a passel of cousins, to Gimli Bible Camp, run then by the Canadian Sunday School Mission, now known as One Hope Canada. We slept in cabins, ate in the dining hall that doubled as the chapel and got to swim in Lake Winnipeg. The smell of water and the sound of the wind in the tall pines stay with me to this day. I can envision the path, crisscrossed with pine roots, dotted with rocks, that led down to the water front. Our parents drove us from home (Graysville) to Elim Chapel in Winnipeg from where we were all bussed to the campgrounds. We got home the same way but it could have been any of the aunties and uncles that picked us up - long before seatbelts and number regulations!

I tried another camp, closer to home, run by the denomination to which our church belonged. The swimming was in a river, the counselors were not as adept and the attitude I found unfriendly. That was simply my experience there and many of my peers enjoyed repeat camping sessions there.

Youth retreat weekends were truly enjoyable, for many reasons. Usually at Camp Moose Lake or Camp Koinonia, the time was spent with friends, study and singing sessions and just good clean fun. It wasn't long after that season I returned to camps as a counsellor myself. Guiding a gaggle of early teens who thought my oldest son was the be all end all became a bit of a challenge! I became quite adept at intercepting unauthorised activities. There were some summers I signed up as kitchen staff. Mrs. Driedger made the very best cinnamon buns and as staff we could get a head start sampling.

When we as a family moved from Southern Manitoba to the Riding Mountain area, we became involved with the Dauphin Bible Camp. There was the summer Ed was one of the cooks and the evening spaghetti was on the menu; he sterilized a canoe paddle to stir the cauldron. Kids wandering through the kitchen paused to stare and then laugh. We kept them all alive and well fed. I believe it was at that same camp that Carol and I heard the guys on staff order pizza to be delivered after curfew. We laid in wait, hidden in the shadows and the shrubs, and as the lads took the delivery we ambushed them. The pizza flew right out of their hands, like a frisbee, landed right side up, and amid much laughter — rescued. Those young men never thought two old ladies would do something like that! And I wasn't even old back then!

It wasn't always summer camping. There was a father/son retreat in winter. I got to go as kitchen support. My son still speaks of fathers and sons breaking curfew to take the sleds out on the frozen lake, under a full moon sky.

Camping allows one to read from the Big Bible, the wonderful creation. I wish every child who wanted to go, could.

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Manitoba Hydro restoring power in storm-damaged areas

Some customers remained without power overnight

Submitted
By MANITOBA HYDRO

Manitoba Hydro crews continue to work to safely restore electrical power to areas of the province hard hit by high winds, heavy rain and flooding over the weekend. We are making good progress restoring power in areas we can access, but some customers may have remained without power overnight.

The damage includes multiple spans of power lines and poles down in more than a hundred individual outages spread across a wide area in southwest Manitoba and the Parkland region including Virden, Kenton and Hamiota.

Flooding has also closed many roads, complicating efforts to safety access damage.

Manitoba Hydro crews were unable to reach the site of a ruptured natural gas line in Minitonas Monday but flew into Swan River by helicopter to safely shut off the flow of gas remotely.

Additional Manitoba Hydro personnel from other parts of the province

have been brought in to expedite repairs to poles, power lines and other electrical equipment.

“Safety is the highest priority. Anyone who sees a downed power line should stay at least 10 meters away from it and anything it touches, including water, and call 911 to report it,” said Manitoba Hydro Media Relations Officer Peter Chura.

Our crews are working on the outages they can safely access, making repairs that will re-energize the most customers. Monday morning there were about 4,000 customers without power; by late Monday afternoon the number was down to about 1,000 and more expected to be restored this evening.

But in some difficult to reach or heavily damaged areas, customers should be prepared to be without power overnight.

“Thank you to all our customers for their cooperation and patience in a challenging time like this,” Chura said. “Be safe.”



PHOTO BY MANITOBA HYDRO

Powerlines in Kenton being pulled down due to trees falling on the lines.

Town Office: 204-748-2440

Virden Landfill: 204-748-6033

Tundra Oil & Gas Place: 204-748-2736



Animal Control: 204-851-5881

Facility Bookings: 204-748-2440

Emergency After Hours: 204-851-5540

Virden Spray Park

Open daily from 10:00-8:00

For maintenance, please call:

- 204-908-1210 – weekdays until 5:00 PM
- 204-851-2870 – evenings and weekends

Upcoming Council Meetings

June 18 & July 14

Council Meetings start at 7:00 PM

Summer Day Camp registration open

Email Tara Davies should you have any questions at: events.program@virden.ca

Tax Prepayment Discounts

The Town of Virden offers tax prepayment discounts as outlined below to taxpayers wishing to pay an installment or installments on their 2026 property taxes.

Those wishing to prepay may pay an amount or a series of amounts that in total does not exceed the amount of their 2025 property taxes. The discount rate is equivalent to an effective annual interest rate of 3%.

Month of Payment	Discount Rate	Savings on \$1000.00
June	1.00%	\$ 10.00
July	0.75%	\$ 7.50

Tax prepayments made in the months of August, September or October will be accepted at par and can be made via Online Banking, Telephone Banking, E-Transfer, or through our Drop Box located at the main doors of our office at 236 Wellington Street West.

Virden Swimming Pool

Open for the Season!

We're Looking for Cheerleading Coaches!

We are seeking motivated individuals with a background in cheer or gymnastics!

If you are interested, please contact Tara Davies at events.program@virden.ca

Employment Opportunity

Municipal Clerk/RCMP Detachment

The Town of Virden is accepting applications for a full-time, permanent position for a Municipal Clerk at the Westman RCMP Detachment, Virden.

The successful applicant will report to the Staff Sergeant. The applicant will be required to perform all clerical duties as well as learn all aspects of the computer systems utilized by policing.

Detailed Job descriptions are available at the Virden Town office or the Westman RCMP Detachment.

The hiring panel will accept and review applications as received, and interview as early as June 15, 2026, with applications continuing to be accepted until the right candidate is found.

Detailed resumes marked "Municipal Clerk/RCMP" will be accepted by:

Faye Pope, Office Manager
Town of Virden

236 Wellington Street West
Box 310, Virden, Manitoba, R0M 2C0
Ph: (204)748-2440 Fax: (204)748-2501
Email: office.manager@virden.ca

Virден Area Flying Club hosting breakfast



FILE PHOTO

No matter how you get there, the Virден Area Flying Club will welcome you. People are invited to fly in, walk in or drive in on Saturday, June 20 to enjoy a great breakfast. Pancakes will be served from 8 to 11 am. While enjoying breakfast, visitors can see some airplanes and flight activity at the Virден Regional Airport. Everyone is welcome.

HELEN DRYSDALE

OUT OF HELEN'S KITCHEN Riding Mountain Youth Club

Our recipes today come from Riding Mountain Youth Club cookbook, "From Our Kitchen to Yours." In front of the book is the history of the Youth club. "In 1969 the Riding Mountain Youth Club was formed by Mrs. Lydia McAllister and a handful of interested community minded members.

The Youth Club was formed with the intentions of organizing activities for the youngsters of the community. This entailed organizing baseball, picnics and dances in the summer and gradually progressed to taking field trips each year. We also have curling and skating in the winter months. A Christmas concert is held each year and this year we had our first Variety Concert."

Again this cookbook does not have the year they published it. Some of the advertisers in the book from Riding Mountain include: D & D Service, Garage-Coffee shop-Hardware, where you drive in please and drive out pleased; Buchanan's Store, open 7 days a week; Zechowski's Well Drilling; Davies Trucking and Teena's Touch Beauty Salon.

Polish Pork Chops

- Sherry Zechowski

- | | |
|---------------------|------------------------|
| 4 pork chops | 3 Tbsp. chopped onion |
| 1 cup tomato sauce | 1/2 cup sour cream |
| 1 small dill pickle | 3 Tbsp. wine or sherry |
| Salt and pepper | |

Brown meat slowly, about 20-30 minutes. Add onions and continue cooking 5-10 minutes longer. Add remaining ingredients and heat to a simmer. Do not boil.

Rancher's dinner

- Gloria Mutch

- | | |
|------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1 pkg. Kraft dinner | 1 lb. wieners or sausage |
| 2 Tbsp. margarine | 1/2 cup chopped onion |
| 1 can drained tomatoes | 1 cup sour cream |
| 1/2 tsp. salt | Dash of pepper |

Prepare Kraft Dinner as directed. Brown meat in margarine, remove from pan. Add onions, cook until tender. Combine Kraft dinner, onion and remaining ingredients and put into baking dish. Top with meat. Bake at 350°F for 20min.

Pizza Buns

- Merle Spafford

- | | |
|--|---------------------------|
| Cheese Whiz | 1/2 cup ketchup |
| 1/4 tsp. dry mustard | 1/4 tsp. oregano |
| 1 tsp. Worcestershire sauce | 1 can broken shrimp |
| 1 can mushroom stems and pieces | 2-3 green onions, chopped |
| 4 strips bacon, fried crisp and crumbled | |

Spread Cheez Whiz on 24 bun halves – enough for a cheesy flavour. Spread mixture on to desired thickness. Broil for a few minutes. Watch carefully as they can burn easily.

Cracker Box Cookies

- Karen Kaye

- | | |
|--------------------|----------------------|
| 1cup butter | 1cup brown sugar |
| 1cup white sugar | 2 eggs |
| 1/2 tsp. salt | 2 tsp. vanilla |
| 1 1/2 cup flour | 1 tsp. baking powder |
| 1 tsp. baking soda | 2 cups oatmeal |
| 1 cup coconut | 2 cups Rice Krispies |

Cream butter, eggs, and vanilla together. Blend in sugars and add remaining dry ingredients. Drop cookies by teaspoon on greased cookie sheet. Bake at 350 F for 10 min.

Big and little are best friends



PHOTO BY ANNE DAVISON

On a beautiful June 3rd evening Lloyd the Doberman and Bandit the mini dachshund puppy take their people for a walk - Danielle Chapman (L) and Breeanna Chapman. Training is an ongoing hobby for these dog owners.

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smart thermostat

A smart thermostat is a must-have money saver. It lets you control your home's temperature remotely, can connect with your smart home devices, and helps you save energy. And with a \$50 rebate, it'll pay for itself even faster.

Visit efficiencyMB.ca/smart-thermostat to learn more.



Little Valley Jamboree continues to support Westman families with their 2026 event



PHOTOS BY LITTLE VALLEY JAMBOREE

Reese Sheane, Miniota, MB.

By Nancy Jo Moller
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

Celebrating 29 years, Little Valley Jamboree fundraises for Westman families, on Friday and Saturday, June 19–20, it is truly a fantastic weekend. Throughout the years the event has grown and to date the Jamboree has helped more than 70 area families. The Little Valley Jamboree volunteers take a lot of time planning the weekend and there is a kids' zone including the Jamboree express train, petting farm, face painting, games, and two huge bouncy houses. It truly is a whole family affair and the money raised goes to such an amazing cause. The members of the live bands showcase a variety of skills and music styles as they provide listening pleasure throughout the weekend.

Everyone is encouraged to come and experience the event, music, live auction, silent auction, meet the recipients, etc. It is a fundraising event that assists fam-

ilies dealing with unimaginable challenges by showing community support.

Board Chair Toni Ferguson said, "Little Valley Jamboree is more than a music festival - it's a community coming together with heart, compassion, and generosity to support children and families who need it most. Every volunteer, performer, sponsor, and guest helps create something truly special."

This year the Jamboree has two recipients, one from Miniota, MB and one from Forrest, MB. The jamboree is a fundraiser to assist local families with significant costs they face in everyday living.

Reese Sheane is five years old and lives in Miniota with his parents and two older brothers. When he was just 4 months old, his family noticed some unusual movements. Reese was referred to children's Hospital in Winnipeg, where after numerous tests and appointments, he was diagnosed with Infantile Spasms and Global Developmental Delay. His skills began to regress and with no noticeable improvements from treatments, there was no physical brain abnormalities to explain his symptoms. Through genetic testing, it was discovered Reese has a genetic mutation called SCN2A, which is the probable cause of his epilepsy. Recently diagnosed with Lennox Gastaut Syndrome, Reese continues to have daily seizures and spasms although he is on multiple medications. At the Children's Hospital, he recently had a gastrostomy tube (G-tube) placed through which he receives his medications and nutrition.

Reese is nonverbal and nonambulatory but has a sweet easy-going nature. Reese loves to be outside with his two older brothers where they communicate in their own special way. He enjoys swimming and being taken for walks like any young child. Currently he uses a standing frame but as he grows the family will make accessibility changes for him. An adapted vehicle for his wheelchair along with home renovations will be required in the future.

Nathan Huhtala is thirteen years old and lives in Forrest with his parents and sister. When he was seven months old unexplained behaviour and movements with his upper limbs were noticed. He was referred to Health Sciences Centre (HSC) after a visit to Brandon Hospital Emergency. After a two week stay, the head of the Pediatric



Nathan Huhtala, Forrest, MB

Ward shared testing results with his parents. He gently informed them that life in the future would be challenging and stressful. Nathan's diagnosis was Cytomegalovirus (CMV), which is associated with severe brain damage, calcifications of the brain stem, seizure disorder, global developmental delay, microcephaly and hearing loss.

In his short lifetime, Nathan has received dental, adenoidectomy, gastrostomy tube (G-tube) and double hip surgeries along with profound hearing loss in his left ear. Throughout all his struggles, he is like any other thirteen-year-old boy who loves to be outdoors, fishing, camping and gardening. He has taught his family that joy can be found in daily events and triumphs. Nathan's family considers him a blessing and adapts all activities to include him.

Both recipient families face the expenses of travel to continued appointments along with adaptations to create accessibility in everyday living and are thankful that an organization like Little Valley Jamboree exists.

Men's Health Week June 15 -21

Make Prevention a Priority

Submitted
BY PRAIRIE MOUNTAIN HEALTH

Every season there is a maintenance checklist to ensure vehicles, equipment and households operate efficiently to avoid long-term damage and extend their life span and avoid bigger problems later on.

Our health deserves the same attention. Men's Health Week (June 15-21) is a reminder that prevention matters. Small check-ins today can help prevent bigger health concerns tomorrow. Knowing what's normal for your body – blood pressure, cholesterol, lab results, etc. can help identify changes and catch issues early.

Take a moment to ask yourself: When was the last time you...

- Had a complete physical exam?
- Checked your blood pressure?
- Checked your cholesterol?
- Did anything for mental wellness?
- Engaged in physical activity?

- Protected yourself from negative sun effects?
- Checked condition of safety equipment?
- Talked to someone about quitting or cutting back on smoking/vaping?

Check on your friends, family and partners. Talking about health (including mental health) helps support healthier outcomes for men. Start with what is easiest for you: going for a walk or working out, booking a medical appointment, tossing a piece of fruit into the lunch box, looking at work/life balance.

It is not about where you start – it's about taking action and checking something off the prevention checklist.

Greg NESBITT
MLA for Riding Mountain

204.759.3313
Toll Free 844.877.7767
gregnesbittmla@mymts.net
#7 - 515 4th Avenue
Burlington Place, Shoal Lake, MB

VIRDEN LIONS HALL

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230 Nelson St W • Virden, MB

Hall capacity is limited based on current Manitoba Public Health restrictions/guidelines; renters and attendees must comply with up-to-date Manitoba Public Health Orders.

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A bond ladder delivers scheduled income, staggered maturity, and real liquidity.

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On The Road Again!



PHOTO BY ED JAMES

The smiles indicated that the recent tour taken by Fort La Bosse staff and friends was memorable.

By Ed James

EMPIRE-ADVANCE

The annual spring bus tour on June 4, by former Fort la Bosse School Division (FLBSD) staff and friends was on the road again, for a long and interesting day of learning, new discoveries and some meals. The bus pulled out at 8:00 am from the Virden Legion heading for The Royal Canadian Artillery Museum at C.F.B. Shilo, just east of Brandon. At the museum we were divided into three groups to tour the museum with knowledgeable guides. The Royal Canadian Artillery Regiment has a long history in Canada, being formed as a military unit in 1871, shortly after Canada was formed in 1867. The museum displays are life size 3-dimensional displays of the various historical periods of the Regiment and how the big guns of the Royal Canadian Artillery (RCA) are a major part of the Canadian Army. Other aspects of the museum showed the different types of cannons, uniforms and personal equipment. While perhaps one of the most impressive displays was the "Medal Room". Displayed in this room are the historic military awards, medals given out to some members of the RCA regiment over the years. One of the special medals on display was The Victoria Cross. This is the highest award medal a member of the armed forces can receive! However, any of the medals on display represent a wide range of courage by military personnel. A unique part of the medal collection is that the awards represent all ranks and trades in the RCA Regiment. Another very special item is the original WWI printing plate of the poem, "In Flanders Field" written by Lt. Col. John McCrae in 1915, written as a tribute to a fallen friend in battle. The poem over the years has become a major part of Canada's Nov. 11th Remembrance Day services. Time to move on! Our next stop was The Shady Lane Tea House for lunch, with a unique variety of sandwiches and home-made soups. The lunch was made even more enjoyable by the ambiance of the dining room and excellent service. Following lunch, we were given a tour of the adjoining Doll Museum by the owner Diane Willey, a recognized master

doll restorer and collector. She is also well known for her creation of unique Teddy Bears, made from old fur coats. The doll collection has hundreds of dolls of all ages, showing the changes in clothing styles over the years. The collection also included dolls of different nationalities and ethnic origins. As in any doll collection there were lots of the ubiquitous Barbie dolls, friends and accessories! Our final stop of the day would be The Commonwealth Air Training Plan Museum and Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF) WW2 Memorial. This museum is located on the grounds of The Brandon Municipal Airport. It is in one of the 1940 airplane hangars, from the WWII air training program. The basic purpose of "The Plan" at the start of WW2, was the realization that WW2 would depend more on the role of airplanes in winning the war. With WWII raging in Europe, it was not the best place to train air force pilots. However, Canada had thousands of miles of wide-open Prairie, that was far from the war and a safe place to train. Training bases were built across western Canada and young men, and later young women, would come to these bases to learn how to fly and learn related trades to keep the planes running well and in the air! By the time WWII ended, The Plan, across all of Canada had trained tens of thousands of men and women for service. Many of these trainees came from British Commonwealth colonies from all over the world! The museum has over a dozen restored, or being restored, training planes from the WWII period, with the work being done by knowledgeable volunteers. You will notice that most of the training planes are painted bright yellow. The colour was chosen to make the planes easier to see in training and easier to spot on the ground should there be a training mishap. Also, it was assumed that no enemy plane would paint itself bright yellow, if it planned to attack the air training bases. Another special item in the museum's collection is a logbook kept by the Brandon base barber shop during the war. The books contain 1000's of names of trainees who passed through the school. So many of the names never came back from their service with the RCAF and other Com-

monwealth air forces in WWII! The museum also has displays of vehicles used on the base during the war that included the all-important runway fire trucks in case of plane fires and landing crashes. In one part of the museum there is a special children play area with toy pedal airplanes to sit in so they can pretend to be pilots. Outside of the main hangar display building is a unique 300-foot dark granite wall, engraved with the names and ages of over 19,000 of the RCAF's fallen. A sobering site, when you look at the names and ages, the loss of a whole generation of our best and brightest. Lest we forget! Our final stop of the day would be a great dinner and service at Smitty's restaurant just down the hill from the air museum! The staff of the restaurant was even able to accommodate us with a special birthday cheesecake slice for a member of our group who was celebrating his 70th birthday on that day. Organizers of the bus trip said they were very pleased with the various tours and all that they had learned during the day's travel. The bus tour was a time of fun and friendship with old and new friends.

Hitting the Road

Submitted

By KAREN MITCHELL

On Monday, June 8th some residents from the Elkhorn Elview Lodge loaded the handivan and headed North West to the thriving little town of McAuley. The McAuley Country Grocery & Café did not disappoint with their delicious home-made soup and sandwiches for lunch, not to mention the great atmosphere and smiling staff. After filling our bellies, we headed across the hall to the Second-Hand Store and discovered some great deals to be had. It is so wonderful to see the old school being utilized in such a great way for the community. With café, grocery store, post office and thrift store...it's definitely the place to visit while visiting town. And after driving down Highway 41 we deserved a little pampering!

Next up we loaded back into the Handivan and toured some backroads as we made our way back to Elkhorn. Ladies reminisced as we toured some of their old stomping grounds and family farm sites. There is nothing better than a trip down memory lane. Great for the heart and soul that's for sure.

With SAIL we have a couple more road trips planned during the summer to different locations. It is so rewarding for me as a Resource Coordinator to be able to provide this service to residents and to also be a part of them. Some of the best parts of our jobs is being able to hear stories and share memories with our clients.

Please remember to keep an eye out for all of the happenings in the Oak Lake, Virden and Elkhorn areas throughout the summer. There is definitely no lack of activities occurring.

Until next time.....have fun, get outside when you can, and live life to the fullest!



REQUEST FOR QUOTATIONS DISPOSAL AND REMOVAL OF METAL GARBAGE BINS AND TRAILER

Submission Deadline is on
June 29, 2026, at 12:00 Noon

SCOPE OF WORK

The Rural Municipality of Wallace-Woodworth invites quotations from interested parties for the purchase, removal, and disposal/repurposing of surplus waste collection equipment located at the Kenton Waste Disposal Grounds. The successful bidder shall be responsible for the complete removal of all items from the site and for any subsequent disposal, recycling, or repurposing of the materials in accordance with all applicable environmental regulations and requirements.

Equipment Details

- **Make & Model:** One (1) Specter semi-trailer (VIN#1S9ES3834VS188511)
- Approximately 30 dumpsters
- All equipment is being sold as is, where is, with no warranties or guarantees expressed or implied.
- **Location:** Kenton Waste Disposal Grounds (NE 29-11-23)

Submission Information

Quotations shall be submitted to:

R.M. of Wallace-Woodworth
Box 2200
Virden, MB R0M 2C0
procurement@wallace-woodworth.com

For further information or to arrange a site inspection, please contact the Municipal Office at 204-748-1239.

Hail smashed, lightning struck, and everyone is okay



PHOTOS BY CHRISTINE WADDELL

Municipal teams were out clearing the fallen trees from the town of Kenton on Sunday.



The siding on the north and west sides of homes in Kenton was very damaged.



PHOTO BY MANITOBA HYDRO

Power lines were down all over town.



Old structures did not stand a chance against the high winds of the weekend of storms.



So many trees needed to be cut into smaller pieces to remove them safely.



PHOTO BY KENT COULTER

The hail was the size of marbles to golf balls.

By Ken Waddell
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

All during the day on June 6, it seemed like a storm was coming. Over a widespread portion of western Manitoba, cell phones were buzzing with warnings about rain, thunder, lightning and possible tornadoes. Experienced sky-watchers sensed something ominous was on the way. "I was very thankful for the alerts sounding on my phone. I was working in the yard and the alert gave me enough time to put away what I was working on and get the truck into the garage," Jessica Coulter, Kenton resident.

When it finally hit the village of Kenton and surrounding area, it was the worst storm in about 10 years. According to The Weather Centre of Manitoba, rainfall was reported to be 0.64 inches, but the high winds, possible tornadoes and huge hail inflicted, it was hard to imagine the damage. Hail came in a wild assortment of sizes and shapes from marble to golf ball to baseball size hailstones. The wind and hail hammered vehicles, houses, and trees. Dozens of trees came down in Kenton, in farmyards and woodlots across the district blocking roads, farm lanes and town streets. Several homes were struck by falling trees

and there were numerous near-misses. Some windows were broken, siding, shingles, eavestroughs, soffits and even chimneys were damaged. It's expected that insurance adjusters will be flocking into the area for many days to come.

The roof even lifted on Woodworth Dodge, and it is reported that almost every car on the lot was subjected to some hail damage. So many leaves and branches were blown off the trees that the sidewalks, roads and house yards seemed to be eerily covered with a strange looking green carpet.

Manitoba Hydro was out for most of Saturday right after the storm had passed and was still being restored on Monday as there were several Manitoba Hydro crews very busily reconnecting services. Lines were down in many places. Along with Manitoba Hydro, other local companies including RF Now, LRB Electric and local contractors were seen out fixing everything they could before the next storm which hit on Sunday, June 7 in the evening. Windows were boarded up, roofs were repaired and debris was removed. Thankfully, the June 7 storm was not as aggressive to the town of Kenton.

Local municipal equipment operators with loaders and trucks were seen Sunday actively moving downed trees so streets, driveways could be accessible again. RM of Wallace-Woodsworth staff were present and they, and everyone else was working under very humid and hot conditions.

The Empire-Advance was informed, that there was some good news, in that, as far as people who talked to the paper knew, no one was hurt.

The Empire-Advance was also informed by Vince Heaman that here was a storm between Harmsworth and Two Creeks in the afternoon of June 6 with pictures sent to show the extent of the storm.

Photo of the week



PHOTO BY CHRISTINE WADDELL

This building at 143 Nelson Street West in Virden truly does speak. During a stroll around downtown Virden on Thursday, June 4, a mural showcasing part of Virden's heritage caught the eye of this passerby. Local history has come alive on the side of MJ's Coffee Bar & Bistro. The kaleidoscope of colours is a reminder of our diverse history.

Virден adopts security camera policy

Town of Virден Council Meeting June 2



Washrooms at Victoria Park.

PHOTO BY DALE DAVISON

By Anne Davison
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

Senseless vandalism in public areas such as new bathrooms at Virден’s Victoria Park, has triggered council to take action.

Installation of security cameras has been discussed over recent months and now security cameras will be installed in the Town. At the June 2 public meeting of Town of Virден Council a Security Camera Policy was established, providing guidelines for the use, management and monitoring of surveillance cameras on municipal property.

Cameras will be installed in Victoria Park and at municipal buildings as a theft deterrent says Chief Administrative Officer Neil Smith. However, Smith adds, “The arena (TOGP) is going to be tackled under a separate project in the near future.”

The policy covers Town-owned and operated security cameras located at municipal buildings, public facilities, parks, recreation facilities, and anywhere surveillance is considered reasonably necessary.

Mayor Tina Williams explained the funding had RCMP support. “We got this money through the criminal forfeiture fund.” The mayor added, “Virден RCMP detachment applied for it on our behalf.” (This is a reference to property gained through criminal actions that’s confiscated and its value can then become part of crime prevention.)

Williams pointed out that the Victoria Park bathrooms were installed as part of the Strategic Plan to enhance downtown Virден with funds for this park modernization

granted to the Town. The bathrooms are important for town functions like the community wide BBQ held in August – really, for everyone who enjoys the park.

The cameras are intended to enhance public safety, protect municipal assets, support investigations and help maintain a safe environment for residents, staff and visitors.

Surveillance must balance security needs with individual privacy rights and comply with Manitoba’s Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FIPPA) and Personal Health Information Act (PHIA).

“You have to create good policies when installing public security cameras,” said Williams. For instance, viewing will be limited to one or possibly two senior Town staff with access to a secure computer. The RCMP would need a warrant to be able to view recorded material

The policy states that cameras are prohibited where people have a heightened expectation of privacy, including washrooms, change rooms, staff break rooms and most private offices or medical treatment areas. And, audio recording will not be permitted unless specifically authorized by law and approved by the CAO.

The camera whereabouts will not be a secret. Signage at monitored locations will inform the public that surveillance cameras are in use and will provide contact information for municipal administration.

The policy also includes provisions to protect personal information and maintain confidentiality. Routine surveillance footage will generally be retained for 30 days before being securely deleted unless it is required for an investigation, legal matter or other legislative purpose.

Eventually cameras will also be installed in the sports complex (TOGP) but that will be a Town budget item. In anticipation of that, and to save costs, the wiring is being installed while other work is being done within the complex.

Elkhorn and Area Foundation holds A.G.M.



PHOTO BY ED JAMES

Elkhorn Foundation members discussing next move for the organization.

By Ed James
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

The Elkhorn and Area Foundation Group started 27 years ago as a small seed, but over the years it has grown, with an investment portfolio of over 2 million dollars. In that time, they have given out over \$100,000 in grants to groups in the Elkhorn area.

The Foundation held their Annual General Meeting on June 3 with no major issues on the agenda and a look back on a successful 2026 year of funding. The main point of business at the meeting was a change in some of the board member positions. Long time chair Marcy Rowan is stepping down, and the new chair will be Lana Bajus. Alana Martin will be the new treasurer, while Tyler Mitchell will become vice-chair and in charge of social media matters. Cheryl Sisson will be the new secretary, and Leanne

Rookes will be joining the board as a new member. Long time member Jill Canart is stepping down to become a regular board member. In conversation with outgoing chair Marcy Rowan, who has been a board member since 2019, she said, “I am stepping back for awhile, but might return at a later date if was needed for the chair position.” She added community donations keep the foundation alive whether by present, past or away community members and there are so many ways people can make donations to the Foundation. We want everyone to know, near and far, what the efforts of the Foundation have done to build area communities and projects. I have enjoyed my time as chairperson and I am so thankful for the work and support of the board members and volunteers, with special mention of Brenda Orr’s involvement and the strong involvement of the area communities.”

NIGHTS AT THE BANDSTAND KENTON, MB

STARTING FRIDAY, JUNE 12
7:00 PM TO 8:00 PM

<p style="font-weight: bold; margin: 0;">June 12 Jan Ek from Brandon</p>	
<p style="font-weight: bold; margin: 0;">June 25 Young Pixels from Kenton</p>	
<p style="font-weight: bold; margin: 0;">July 1 Along for the ride!</p>	

Follow the Town of Kenton on Facebook
for future concert details.

Presented by
Kenton Community Enterprises

Theatrick Players are so thankful to everyone

From the Theatrick Players: Theatrick Players are so grateful to the community for the support of our Carol Burnett fundraiser for the fire department. The fire department received over \$8000 in donations from the evening. Thanks to the Legion, who donated the use of the venue, Fort La Bosse School Division for rehearsal space. A special thanks to the 30 plus volunteers who served, acted, organized, etc. And of course, to you, the community, who bought tickets and came to enjoy the show! Your 70's costumes added so much fun to the night. We appreciate the Virden Empire Advance for covering the evening! Watch for more fun in the months to come!



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Guild Insurance Customer Appreciation BBQ a success



SUBMITTED PHOTO

(L-R) Dawson Brown, Daniel Venter, Becca Collier, Maddie Warkentin, Abby Pearn, Avrin Krieser, and Charley Dunning.

Submitted
VCI GRAD CLASS OF 2026

Despite cool and wet conditions, community spirit shone brightly at the annual Guild Insurance Customer Appreciation BBQ, held in support of the Virden Collegiate Institute (VCI) graduating class of 2026. The event saw an overwhelming turnout on and generosity, with \$3,053.40 raised for the grad class on May 22.

Twenty-six VCI student volunteers, supported by three parent volunteers, served up 360 burgers and 144 hotdogs to a steady stream of appreciative guests. The graduating students were praised for their professionalism, energy, and heartfelt gratitude toward every guest they served.

The success of the event would not have been possible without the generosity of several community-minded businesses and organizations. Guild Insurance once again donated all BBQ product, while CD Oilwell Servicing

provided use of the BBQ equipment. Somerville Weddings and Events contributed seating for guests, and Sanders Water and Ice supplied the ice. The VCI Parent Graduation Committee extends its deepest thanks to each of these sponsors.

"It is a joy to watch these young people and the enthusiasm they bring to the grad BBQ," said Ashlee McCormick, Account Executive at Guild Insurance. "Guild is proud not only to support their graduation, but to have such wonderful representation at the customer appreciation BBQ."

The VCI Parent Graduation Committee expressed its gratitude for the ongoing support of Guild Insurance and their loyal customers, noting that the community's generosity makes a meaningful difference for the graduating class each year.

The annual event continues to be a cherished tradition that brings together local businesses, families, and students in a celebration of community and giving.

The Rumble of Thunder did not refer to the weather Saturday morning in Oak Lake



PHOTO BY NANCY JO MOLLER

Registration Point at Dirty Word Customz - Eager to catch up on new cycle stories after registration.

By Nancy Jo Moller
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

The rumble of motorcycles was heard on Saturday June 6 in Oak Lake as participants met at Dirty Word Customz. The proceeds of the day go toward local resources in the Westman area such as the women's and men's shelters. The meeting point was a beehive of activity shortly after registration started at 10 am. Riders from all walks of life came together on a super-hot day to raise funds for an important cause. The parking lot was filled with custom bikes and even a couple of collectible cars prepped to head out on a run into Saskatchewan. Age is not a limit when you talk to bikers, and the group proved that point. The registra-

tion line inside found people purchasing 50/50 tickets and then registering for the run and picking up their map. But as they stepped out of the building, conversations began to greet fellow enthusiasts and check out their rides. Shyness was not a common denominator in this crowd, but good heartedness was apparent.

As bikes streamed out to enjoy their day, the ominous clouds to the west had us wondering how quick of a return they would have. Supper and entertainment were planned for later so the stories could continue between like-minded folk. This day was all about "fellowship of motorcycles" referring to the culture of camaraderie among riders and the causes they ride for regularly.

Lead Local. Run Local. Shape the Future.

School trustees make decisions that shape classrooms, communities, and futures.

When local voices step up to lead, students benefit.

If you've ever thought about making a difference in your community, now is the time to run for school trustee. Your leadership can help strengthen schools, support students, and

your leadership ensures local priorities are heard.

You don't have to be an expert—just someone who cares about local voice and local choice when it comes to public education in your community and are ready to serve.

Democracy works best when people step forward.

Lead. Run. Be part of public education in Manitoba.

This is your chance to lead, support, and shape education close to home.

Contact your local school division to learn more about how trusteeship looks in your community.

MANITOBA
School Boards
ASSOCIATION

Election Day is October 28, 2026
elect2026.ca

2026
Manitoba School Trustee Elections

SPORTS

SPORTS NOTES: CHASTKO DOES ALL HE CAN FOR SILVERTIPS

By Robin Wark
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

Nolan Chastko's willingness to do whatever he could to help his team paid dividends for the Everett Silvertips last season.

The former Virden Oil Capitals forward and the Washington state-based Silvertips won the team's first Western Hockey League championship. They went on to finish second at the Memorial Cup, Canada's national major junior hockey championship, in Kelowna.

"The whole Memorial Cup experience was amazing," said Chastko, a Brandon product. "We were treated really well and had a great time. The best was just experiencing that with all the guys in Everett. We were all brothers and family, which made the experience that much better."

Chastko fulfilled whichever role he was asked to take on. He saw time on the power play and penalty kill. At times, he was utilized as a defensive forward. In addition, Chastko said he played defence "for almost half the season and then again in the semis and the finals of the Memorial Cup."

"It was really a no-brainer to go back there and help out the team," he said. "All the guys and coaches were super supportive and just made the whole experience a ton of fun. What allowed me to succeed was just the confidence I got from having the trust of my coaches and them believing in me."

The 5-foot-8, 158-pounder scored 10 goals and recorded 25 assists for 35 points in 68 games last season. Chastko never missed a game and won the team's Unsung Hero Award. He had two goals and seven assists in 18 playoff games. At the Memorial Cup, Chastko played five games and collected an assist.

He defied the odds to make it all the way to the national title tilt. Chastko was not selected by a WHL squad in his draft year. He was a key player for the Manitoba Junior Hockey League's Oil Capitals for two seasons (2022-24). Some of the honours Chastko earned while playing in Virden included selection to the 2023 MJHL All-Rookie



PHOTO BY EVAN MORUD

Nolan Chastko had a lot to celebrate last season.

Team and 2024 MJHL All-Star Team, as well as the Oil Capitals' Top Scorer Award in 2023, Playoff MVP Award in 2023 and co-MVP Award in 2024, shared with Eric Reid.

"Playing in Virden helped me a ton," Chastko said. "They developed me into a better hockey player than when I came and a better person off the ice too. I can't thank Tyson (Ramsey, head coach) enough for what he's done for my career and the impact he's had on me, along with my billets there, Jack and Karen (Forster). Being an Oil Cap will always have a special place in my heart and something I'm really proud of."

The WHL's Prince George Cougars signed him as a free agent, but he never played a regular season contest

there. The Cougars swapped him to Everett in January of 2023. It certainly worked out well for Chastko and the Silvertips. He has committed to play for the University of Manitoba men's hockey team and will study finance at the Winnipeg school.

VCI Softball

The Virden Collegiate Institute softball team posted a 16-5 record this season. It fell to Wawanese in the zone semifinals.

"The team was great to work with as the players all enjoy ball and like to compete. They also got along together, which meant there was no drama to deal with. It's tough not advancing with such a talented squad," said head coach Doug Roach, who also enjoyed coaching alongside his daughter Mackenzie, a former University of Regina softball standout.

Provincial Baseball Teams

Reston's Andie Williamson has been selected for Baseball Manitoba's 14U Girls Development Team Roster. The team will play at the 14U Girls Western Championships in Île-des-Chênes, Aug. 14-16.

Reston's John Patmore will be an assistant coach for the 17U Boys Youth Team. The squad competes at the 17U Canada Cup in Summerside, PEI, Aug. 5-9.

Hockey POE Top-40

On June 5-7, Hockey Manitoba hosted U16 women's and U15 men's Program of Excellence Top-40 Camp.

Local women's athletes who were invited were Virden - Hadley Robertson, Georgia Koop; Lenore - Demi Hodson; and Novalee Hack, Reston. Virden's Dawson Densmore and Oak Lake's Wyatt Cochrane were invited to the men's camp.

Oil Caps Openers

The opening weekend for the Oil Capitals has been announced. The 2026 MJHL finalist will begin the season on the road against the Waywayseecappo Wolverines on Sept. 18. The following night, the two teams will meet at Tundra Oil & Gas Place in Virden for the Oil Capitals' home opener.

SWBL: VIRDEN'S ROWAN TAKES PRIDE IN PITCHING FOR OILERS

By Robin Wark
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

Nathan Rowan is pleased to take the mound for his hometown

Virden Oilers.

The son of Curtis and Shelley Rowan recently completed his first year studying commerce at the University of Saskatchewan in Saskatoon. In addition to selling cars at Virden Mainline Motors this summer, Rowan appreciates the opportunity to take the mound and compete.

"The things that I enjoy about pitching are having a great team that plays solid defence behind me," he said. "I'm never afraid to attack a hitter knowing that anyone on the field is capable of making a play and getting an out. It is also nice to be able to control the game and work at my own pace. Pitching is challenging and rewarding. There is always something to work on and adjust after every outing no matter how it went."

This is Rowan's third summer playing for Virden in the SWBL. He has started three games, as of June 7.

"What I enjoy about playing for the Oilers is being around this group of guys," he said. "Everyone is having a good time all the time. Everyone is always joking around and very positive. The fans are great as well. It's awesome playing at home and having such a great group of fans rallying around us. It's motivating to try and compete for such a great fan base."

Virden lost 7-2 at home to the Brandon Cardinals on June 2. Jeff Peel had two hits for Virden, and Hudson Davidson drove in a run. Virden product Adam Hartman earned the win for Brandon as he allowed four hits over five innings.

The Oilers fell 9-6 to the host Deloraine Royals

on June 7. Mat Strain hit a home run and drove in three runs for Virden.

The Virden team entered this week seeking its first win of the season. The Oilers were scheduled to play in Souris on June 11 after the Empire-Advance deadline. On June 12, the Oilers start a four-game homestand when the Rivers Comets visit. On June 13, the Boissevain Centennials and Wawanese Brewers are both in Virden. The Oilers host the Oak River Dodgers on June 18.

Reston Rockets

The Reston Rockets are 3-5-0, as of June 7.

They handed the Oak River Dodgers their first loss of the season 12-8 on June 2. Reston trailed 6-4 on the road after two innings. The Rockets scored two runs in the fifth inning, three in the sixth, and another three in the seventh. Elkhorn product Foxx McColl earned the pitching win as he struck out four and allowed eight runs on eight hits over 5.66 innings of work. McColl helped his cause by hitting a home run and driving in two runs. Jamie Williamson and Kaden Revet also pushed two runs across. Both threw in



PHOTO BY MARLA WILSON

Yogi Berra, "I just blame the bat, and if it keeps up, I change bats."

relief of McColl.

On June 4, the Rockets battled back but fell 5-4 to the host Brandon Young Guns. Reston trailed 3-0 heading into the sixth inning. The Rockets scored four runs in the top of the frame to take a 4-3 lead. The Young Guns scored in the bottom of the inning to tie things up at 4-4 and pushed the winning run across in the seventh.

On June 7, Reston fell 11-1 to Boissevain on the road. Billy Patmore drove in the Rockets' run.

SPORTS

FAMILY SUPPORT EASES GRAY'S TRANSITION TO UNIVERSITY LIFE

By Robin Wark
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

Elkhorn's Kirby Gray enjoyed many aspects of her first year competing for the Mount Royal University women's hockey team.

The daughter of Dawn-Rae and Jim Gray helped her Calgary school finish atop Canada West's East division standings in the regular season. The Cougars compete in U Sports, Canada's highest level of university athletics.

"I enjoyed the team dynamic and the level of hard work during my first season of playing and studying at MRU," Gray said. "Everyone was committed, supportive, and pushed each other to improve, which made practices and games both competitive and enjoyable. I also liked the smaller class sizes, because it felt similar to my high school, where everyone knows each other and it's easier to build relationships with classmates and professors. That environment made me feel more comfortable participating and staying engaged in my courses.

"Another part I really enjoyed was learning about life while living on my own. It helped me become more independent, manage my time better, and balance school, hockey, and personal responsibilities. Overall, my first season at MRU was a great experience both athletically and academically."

Gray appreciates all that her parents did to support her through her first post-secondary year.

"They were very supportive during my first year at university," she said. "As their firstborn and the first child to move out, my mom was especially helpful with organizing my schedule, guiding me through the admissions process, and helping me move in and get settled. She made the transition feel much less overwhelming and was always there when I had questions. My dad supported me more on the sports side and with practical, everyday things. He helped me work through challenges related to hockey, and he was also there when I had vehicle issues and needed help with more hands-on responsibilities. Together, their support made adjusting to living on my own and balancing school and hockey much easier. And I know they are at my beck and call every time I need them. Thank you, Mom and Dad."

Gray, a forward, saw action in eight regular-season contests and three playoff games for the Cougars. In a social media post by The Nations Post Media, Gray was quoted as saying, "Early in the year, I broke my hand, which kept me out nearly two months. It was tough missing that time, but it taught me how important it is to work every day to earn your spot. I've always been a player used in key situations like power play and penalty kill."

Gray moved up to the post-secondary level after a standout career with the U18 AAA Yellowhead Cougars. In 2025, she helped Team Manitoba win the female division gold medal at the 2025 National Aboriginal Hockey Championships. Moving up to the Canada West level required some adjustments.

"University hockey is different from U18 AAA in terms of the overall level of commitment and focus," Gray said. "Players at the university level are very driven and focused on winning, and everyone shares the same goal of helping the team succeed. This creates a competitive but supportive environment where teammates push each other and hold one another accountable. As a rookie, I had to work on earning my role on the team and proving myself in practices and games, rather than stepping into a defined position right away. In U18 AAA, I already had my role and understood what was expected of me and when, but at the university level I needed to adapt, compete for ice time, and show that I could contribute in different ways. This made the transition more challenging, but it also helped me grow as a player."

Gray hopes to help athletes in the future. She is majoring in physical literacy and was on the Dean's Honour Roll.

"Physical literacy combines human kinetics, coaching, education and wellness promotion," Gray said. "After four to five years of this program, I will be continuing my education with the athletic therapy post bachelor's certificate. Due to being a university athlete, I am unable to take the athletic therapy major because I would be unable to participate in practicum hours with another varsity team. My career goal is to become an athletic therapist for a hockey team and have my own practice."



PHOTO BY MRU ATHLETICS

Kirby Gray made the successful transition to post-secondary hockey, academics and life at Mount Royal University.

MJHL REPORT

MJHL HOCKEY DEREK HOLTOM

The league posted several social media posts from the 2026 MJHL AGM which took place in Steinbach in the last weekend of May, touting their success from last year while planning to build on that for the coming season.

The weekend of meetings, which included the schedule meeting (but not a draft which for some reason was abolished), also included several high-profile speakers, including Winnipeg Jets Assistant Coach Marty Johnson and Sean Hogan from College Hockey Inc. on the changing landscape of NCAA hockey.

Of course, there was a buzz around the board room as the league now gets to boast they have the top team in the country in the Niverville Night-hawks – something that can only help teams in recruiting. In fact, given most teams are facing the

same difficulties as the others, the MJHL members have really become fraternity where they help each other out as best they can.

"Years ago, when I was governor teams hated each other and didn't want to tell teams what was going on, but it's totally different from that now," says Warren Clark, who represented the Swan Valley Stampeders at the MJHL AGM. "We call ourselves a family now. We're competitors, but we're all in the same league to get players to the next level.

"We had a great AGM, a lot of discussions about standards being set as you're only as strong as your weakest link," he added. "We're trying to get everyone to the same level – things are looking good."

Clark added there is a lot of opportunities for players these days – many more than when he played junior. And the MJHL is doing their best to leverage their league's success last season to entice more players to Manitoba.

The Memorial Cup came down to the OHL's Kitchener Rangers and the WHL's Everett Silvertips last Sunday. The Rangers ended up prevailing, winning what some consider the hardest trophy

to win in sports (given you must win your own league, then a tournament against other league champions, and you are likely only ever get one shot at winning it).

As it happens, the Swan Valley Stampeders were well represented in this final. Brad Flynn, an assistant coach with the champion Rangers, is a former assistant coach with the Stampeders, dating back to the 2012-13 and 2013-14 seasons.

On the other side, the Everett Silvertips General Manager Mike Fraser is also a former assistant coach with the Stampeders. He helped coach the team back in 2003 (and covered the team as a sports reporter for the Swan Valley Star and Times).

Fraser went on to be a prolific hockey scout with Swift Current and Brandon before becoming head scout in Everett. He worked his way up to being general manager last season, and in his second season put together a championship team.

It's a good reminder that the MJHL isn't just a development league for players - lots of coaches go onto bigger and grander things after cutting their teeth in the MJHL.

PC park plate initiative re-announced, Hijacked by Kinew after needless two-year delay



Example of the previous designed MB Park licence plates.

SUBMITTED PHOTO

Submitted

By PC CAUCUS MEDIA

After nearly two years of delaying progress on PC legislation to establish specialty Manitoba parks licence plates, Premier Wab Kinew has re-announced the initiative as his own, scrapped a locally-submitted design, and launched a survey to choose a new bureaucrat-created design.

The Drivers and Vehicles Amendment Act (Manitoba Parks Licence Plates) was introduced by Riding Mountain MLA Greg Nesbitt, PC Critic for Environment, in April 2024 to establish specialty licence plates that allow Manitobans to show their love for provincial parks while also helping to revitalize them.

“Every step of the way I’ve tried to be collaborative with the NDP government to create a licence plate that truly captures Manitoba’s beloved natural heritage,” said Nesbitt. “I immediately began working with stakeholders and the public to launch the new plates in time for the 2025 camping and summer tourism season. The only hurdle I encountered was the NDP, who delayed the project for 2 years just to redo work that’s been done for the sake of putting an NDP stamp on it. It’s a redundant use of taxpayer dollars.”

Upon passing the bill in June 2024, Progressive Conservatives worked in partnership with The Winnipeg Foundation to ensure that the proceeds from plate sales would go into the Provincial Parks Endowment Funds. The funds, created by the previous PC government in 2021, support Manitobans wanting to give back to provincial parks through philanthropic donations and legacy gifts.

After Manitoba Public Insurance informed Nesbitt that they did not have the resources to design a specialty plate, PC Caucus invited Manitobans to submit their designs. Over 70 local designs were received from across the province in various mediums, including photography, paintings, illustrations, and graphic designs. The final design,

a wildlife photo, was chosen from a shortlist with the help of the Manitoba Provincial Parks Cabin Owners Association. PCs then worked with MPI to ensure proper formatting.

NDP Environment Minister Mike Moyes, his predecessor Tracy Schmidt, their deputy minister, and Manitoba’s Director of Parks all respectively rejected Nesbitt’s requests to participate in design discussions and stakeholder outreach.

On Monday, the Kinew government launched an (American-based) EngageMB survey for Manitobans to vote for one of five designs, none of which are from the seven dozen designs submitted by Manitobans.

“I made several efforts early on to engage and involve both the minister’s office and the Parks department in this process,” said Nesbitt. “Those offers were declined, the project was kept in limbo for over a year, and now we can see why. Premier Kinew’s habit of wasting taxpayer dollars just to take the spotlight is completely shameful.”

When asked about the delay in question period last week, Moyes completely dismissed the value of the specialty plates, stating, “I know that the parks plate is the most pressing issue in our environment. Actually, no, I’ve never heard that from any environmental group, anywhere, or any Manitoban.”

The new licence plate is now expected to be made available in 2027, two years later than anticipated.

“My goal was always to keep this initiative non-partisan. This was an opportunity to show Manitobans that Progressive Conservatives and New Democrats are able to work cooperatively,” said Nesbitt. “Given my role in initiating and advancing this project, the lack of transparency or integrity from the NDP is disappointing.”

Provided are drafts of the “winning” local design which was under development by PC Caucus staff and MPI to follow legislative requirements and prepare the process for the plate manufacturer.

Daudrich off Turtle Mountain nomination ballet

By Anne Davison
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

Just over a week before grass roots members of the Progressive Conservative Party of Manitoba in the Turtle Mountain Riding were to cast their vote to elect either Mark Custance or Wally Daudrich, the Progressive Conservative Party called off the vote.

A news memo was issued mid-week last week, June 3, after Empire-Advance press time, saying that the Party “has advised Wally Daudrich that he will not be permitted to seek the Party’s nomination in Turtle Mountain. Candidate nominations are conducted in accordance with the Party’s constitution, rules, and candidate review processes. The Party will have no further comment on this matter.”

This decision leaves

Mark Custance as lone nominee for the PCP in Turtle Mountain with no time for another to be nominated. The vote, now unnecessary, was to occur June 13.

On June 2, Custance was campaigning and posted on social media, “I have said it before and I will say it again, YOUR vote and feedback matter!”

By June 6, he commented about the PCP decision to remove Daudrich from the ticket saying, “The recent decisions regarding the nomination process were made by the Progressive Conservative Party and were not my decisions to make.”

Daudrich said he’d been actively campaigning and selling PC memberships and was expecting to win, until the announcement last week.

He reiterated his

loyalty to the Party and said he’d done nothing wrong. “The decision had nothing to do with my conduct or personal record. My life and my views have always been an open book,” Daudrich said in a social media post.

While Mark Custance and family live and operate a business within Turtle Mountain, MLAs have not always lived within the riding. The outgoing MLA, Doyle Pivniuk is a Virden resident.

The Daudrich family lives within a few miles of Turtle Mountain Constituency.

Like Custance, Daudrich was initially confirmed as a candidate.

Custance confirmed his resolve to represent the riding saying, “My focus has always been on the people of Turtle Mountain. The reason I put my name forward hasn’t changed.”

Life in the slow lane



Another memory of my youth is that of our neighbours, Austin and Elma Gray. I was very young but liked going to visit them as it was only up the road from our home. Austin was a veteran and they had a small farm. I remember one of their horses being called Bill and another one called Pony.

I never knew my grandparents from the Nolan side of the family as grammy died before I was born and Grandpa when I was around 4, so I do not remember them. I knew my grandparents from my mom’s side of the family and loved spending time

with them, playing cards and just visiting.

Austin Gray was a friend whom I adopted as my grandpa from my dad’s side of the family and I spent a lot of hours with him. He was so neat just to be around. I was there for a few suppers and just hung out.

Mrs. Gray took sick but I was too young to remember then and am too old to remember the details, but she passed away. I do remember I did not go to her funeral as I was very young, but after she passed away, I spent more time with Austin. I stayed overnight more than once at his house

and he was always happy to have me stay.

After a couple of years Austin, went to live with his daughter Claire Nicholson from Shoal Lake. He went just for the winter. He came back the next summer for a while then made the move permanent. I missed him and saw him several times after his move.

Austin passed away and that was a sad day for me as he was my friend and my adopted grandpa. It’s funny how life works sometimes because I have now become an adopted grandpa and I love it. The hardships we go through sometimes just sets us up for something further down the line in our lives that we would never envision. As I write this story, it brings back a smile and a tear. I was fortunate and blessed to have a man that I admired and trusted to fill a role that only God would have known in my life, Austin Gray!

Correction: In a recent edition we spelled some sports names incorrectly. They should have been: Kevin Cheveldayoff, Montreal Canadiens and Jakub Dobé

Council considers speed limits, Hwy One, King Street intersection

By Anne Davison
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

Reduced speed limits were discussed for Hwy One near Virden and for Government Road at the Town of Virden's June 2 public council meeting.

Manitoba Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Lisa Naylor visited Westman some weeks ago. She met with Mayor Tina Williams and council toured Virden and area infrastructure.

Naylor posted on social media saying, "We heard about historic infrastructure challenges and safety concerns and figured out ways to work together towards resolution."

Now, with Association of Manitoba Municipalities (AMM) district meetings coming up, council is considering items that require higher levels of government decision making.

On this topic, speed limit changes were proposed for Highway One that would include a 100 kph zone and expand the 80 kph stoplight zone as well. On Government Road PR #257 east of the White Owl a 70 kph zone would be reduced to 50 kph in a zone before the stop sign at the intersection with the north/south Government Road.

Council resolved to advocate for this change.

A Functional Design Advocacy Map was also discussed at the meeting. The map diagrams an overpass of Highway One at the King Street intersection. Manitoba Transportation Infrastructure (Highways) has had a rough plan for this for decades and frontage land is earmarked for it.

Is this the time to press for that change?

Chief Administrative Officer Neil Smith said that while an overpass is not imminent, he noted, "Council has been active on this for quite some time, culminating in the Minister's recent visit. The view is that the changes proposed would improve future transportation connectivity with Virden and related development."

Equipment purchase/ disposal policies

Council and staff are cognizant of the upcoming October council elections and are setting their house in order with updated policies.

Council approved a new Purchasing and Surplus Equipment Disposal Policy aimed at improving transparency, accountability and value for taxpayers.

The policy establishes spending thresholds and purchasing procedures

for municipal staff, while outlining when council approval is required. Purchases of \$75,000 or more will generally require a public procurement process, while smaller purchases will follow quote-based requirements.

The policy also gives priority consideration to local suppliers for purchases up to \$10,000 when their bids are within 10 per cent of the lowest price.

Other provisions address emergency purchases, environmental considerations, use of municipal credit cards and the management of multi-year contracts.

The surplus equipment section sets out rules for the disposal of municipal assets, including public sales, auctions and trade-ins, with larger transactions requiring council approval. The policy also includes procedures for handling IT equipment and protecting confidential information before disposal.

CAO Neil Smith recommended the updated policy be adopted as presented, replacing the one dated 2012 and that this standard policy should be reviewed and improved regularly.

Asset Management Platform

Staff provided council with information about a four-year subscription agreement with a company

called Catalis that can provide asset management and Geographic Information Systems (GIS) platform designed to help manage municipal infrastructure and property data.

The proposed agreement would cost \$18,500 in 2026, increasing annually to \$22,034 by 2029.

The CAO says the platform would allow the town to build a comprehensive database for tracking the condition, maintenance, depreciation and replacement costs of municipal assets, while also providing centralized access to tax, assessment, utility and property information through an online GIS mapping system. The report to council notes that similar systems have been in use in some municipalities for 15 to 20 years and are considered an important planning tool for staff and administration.

Council's options include approving the four-year agreement, issuing a public request for proposals to compare products and pricing, or referring the matter for further discussion.

Council voted to acquire the Catalis Asset Management and GIS platforms.

Snow Ploughing

Also related to Minister Naylor's visit was a discussion about snow ploughing and ice control for the winter

ahead. Smith said, "We are going to conduct a policy review and invite the Ministry to participate with respect to the areas of jurisdictional overlap."

Tourism Awards

Virden and area have several interests up for possible Tourism awards.

Tourism Westman invited mayor and council to purchase tickets for the 2026 Annual Tribute to Tourism Awards & Gala taking place on Thursday, June 11, at The Backyard on Aberdeen in Brandon.

Area nominees are: Prairie Gateway Tourism (Partnership), Prairie Gateway Tourism Burger Week (Marketing Excellence), Virden Indoor Rodeo & Wild West Daze (Event of the Year – over 10k) and Taylor Wegener (Employee of the Year).

Resolutions

Municipalities have prepared resolutions to be presented at Melita's Western AMM June meeting. These resolutions represent municipal issues that the AMM organization can lobby the province to deal with.

School taxes

RM of Boissevain-Morton requested the Town's support for their resolution on behalf of municipalities requesting Manitoba Government to moderate school tax increases. And Virden

council voted to support the resolution.

Shellmouth Dam flooding

The R.M. of Wallace-Woodworth is asking the Association of Manitoba Municipalities (AMM) to lobby the provincial government for changes to Shellmouth Dam operations and improved support for communities affected by prolonged artificial flooding. The Town received the resolution as information.

Wallace-Woodworth council is asking the province to update Shellmouth Dam operating guidelines before the 2027 spring runoff, examine the addition of spillway gates and a second water conduit, create a MASC-administered spot loss compensation program for producers affected by flooding beyond May 15, and provide compensation for crop losses, cleanup costs, infrastructure damage and land rehabilitation.

Given the regional nature of Assiniboine River flood management and the downstream implications associated with Shellmouth Dam operations, the R.M. of Wallace-Woodworth is circulating this resolution to municipalities within the AMM Midwestern, Western, and Central Districts for awareness and consideration of support.



Public Notice is hereby given that Enbridge Pipelines Inc. (Enbridge) intends to conduct the following Pesticide Program from June 1, 2026 – November 15, 2026, to control noxious weeds on Enbridge ROW's, temporary workspaces, stations, and various facilities along the Enbridge Mainline and Bakken corridors. The herbicide active ingredients to be used include:

- MCPA Ester
- Saflufenacil
- Carfentrazone-ethyl
- Pyraflufen-ethyl
- Bromoxynil
- Clopyralid
- Glyphosate
- Dicamba
- 2, 4-D
- 2, 4-DB
- Aminopyralid
- Propyzamide
- Indaziflam
- Chlorsulfuron
- Fluroxypyr
- Aminocyclopyrachlor
- Aminopyralid
- Diflufenopyr
- Metsulfuron-methyl
- Picloram
- Mecoprop-P
- Adjuvant

Any person may, within 15 days after the notice is published, send a written/email submission to the department below, regarding the control program or register with the department their written objection to the use of pesticide next to their property.

Environment and Climate Change
Environmental Approvals Branch
14 Fultz Boulevard (Box 35)
Winnipeg, Manitoba
R3Y 0L6
pesticideusepermit@gov.mb.ca

CLASSIFIEDS

Help Wanted

We are Hiring!

Office Administrator
35 hours per week

Requirements:

- Friendly Customer Service
- Maintenance
- Communications, emails and filing
- Computer skills in Microsoft office

Send resume to:
virdenempireadvance@outlook.com

VIRDEN & AREA HANDIVAN CASUAL DRIVERS

- Minimum Class 4 License Required
- Flexible scheduling

For More Information contact:
Lyle Kinnaird
204-748-7171
Handivan.vwwp@gmail.com

For van bookings, contact:
Operations Coordinator
Tara Mooney
204-526-0855

Announcement



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CLASSIFIEDS

Coming Events

BERTHA BROWN
is celebrating her
90TH BIRTHDAY
on June 20, 2026
between 2 – 4 pm.
at Lenore Hall

**Her family invites you to a
Come & Go Tea in her honour.
No gifts, only your presence.**

Tender

LAND FOR SALE BY TENDER – RM OF MARYFIELD No. 091

Legal Land Description	Assessed Value	Taxable Assessment	Total Acres
*NE 12 –12- 30 W1	\$399,800.00	\$150,800.00	160.76 (142 cultivated)
NW12 –12- 30 W1	\$245,400.00	\$134,790.00	160.68 (136 cultivated)
SE 12 –12- 30 W1	\$260,100.00	\$143,055.00	160.75 (139 cultivated)
SW 13 –12- 30 W1	242,900.00	\$133,595.00	160.7 (136 cultivated)
			Total Acres: 642.89

*home quarter

Particulars: Four quarters of cleared, well drained land with 588 cultivated acres (more cultivated acres than SAMA states) and an approximately 10 acre yard site with a 1120 square foot bungalow built in 1969, 60x40 shop, bins and stock shelters.

Conditions:

- The highest or any tender may not necessarily be accepted as the owner reserves the right to reject any and all tenders. Deposits will be returned to the unsuccessful tenders;
- Tenders must be submitted in a sealed envelope marked "Land Tender" to the undersigned law firm on or before 12 o'clock noon, local time June 30, 2026;
- Land sold as one parcel;
- Bidders will not be called together following the submission of bids;
- Bids shall include a bank draft or certified cheque payable to Osman & Company Law Office for 5% of the tendered amount (deposits of unsuccessful tenders will be returned);
- Persons submitting a tender must rely on their own research and inspection of the property to confirm condition, other particulars and acreage;
- The successful tender shall be required, following closure of the tender process, to enter into a written agreement prior to July 15, 2026 with the registered Owners for the purchase of the land. The Closing date shall be October 1, 2026 and the deposit shall be nonrefundable.
- In the event the Purchaser fails to pay the balance of the purchase price on or before the 1st day of October 2026 (the "Closing Date"), the deposit equivalent to five (5%) percent of the final tender, shall be forfeited absolutely to the registered owner as liquidated damages.

Inquiries can be directed by email to ebolton@osman-law.ca

Forward bids to:
Osman & Company Law Office – Land Tender
Attn: Erin Bolton
1103 Broadway Avenue
Drawer 280
Moosomin, SK S0G 3N0



Help Wanted

EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANT

Position for an Educational Assistant at the Kola Community School, beginning September 2026 to June 2027, every Tuesday and Thursday from 8:45 - 12 pm. Successful applicant would assist with individual learning needs and help maintain a focused and productive classroom environment. Interested candidates should contact Elly Martens at 204-512-0821 or gemfarms@hotmail.com by June 17th 2026.

Visit our website
www.empireadvance.ca

Auction

McSherry Auction Service

Online Horse Acreage Auction for Stuart Syrett
Balmoral, MB
Ends Thursday,
June 18th at 7:00 PM

INT 684 w/ 3PH + FEL, Case 1100 Sickle Mower, JD GD Manure Spreader, Horse Buggy's, Wagon's, Sleight's, Parade Harness, Work Harness, Driving Harness, Various Tack, More Equipment, Acreage Items.

Visit:
<https://mcsberryauction.com>
to Register and Bid!

Ph: 204-467-1858

Help Wanted



EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES ACCOUNTS PAYABLE CLERK

Job Description

The Rural Municipality of Wallace-Woodworth is seeking a motivated individual for the full time position of **Accounts Payable Clerk** at the Virden Municipal Office. The Accounts Payable Clerk reports to the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) and will be responsible for providing financial support to the CAO and the CFO.

Description and Qualifications

- Receive, process, verify, and reconcile invoices, statements, and refund requisitions, etc. - in compliance with the existing financial policies and procedures of the Municipality
- Process all approved invoices into the municipal accounting software, Muniware ensuring accurate coding and description entry
- Produce various financial statements and verify vendor accounts by reconciling monthly statements and related transactions
- Compile files for inventory and Asset Management purposes
- Ensure positive vendor relationships acting as a representative of the Municipality
- Cross training to provide other financial and administrative support ie. semi-monthly payroll; grant applications; position coverage for LUD offices and reception, as needed
- Active role in the Municipal Safety Program
- Uphold a strict level of confidentiality
- All other duties as assigned

Skills and Qualifications

- Attention to detail, thoroughness, and organizational skills are required
- Minimum 1-year previous experience as an Accounts Payable Clerk is preferred
- High school graduate at minimum; post-secondary education in a related field, would be considered an asset
- Demonstrated proficiency with computer applications – Microsoft Office products including Excel, Word, Outlook, etc.
- Experience with the Muniware Accounting Program – would be considered an asset
- Must be self-motivated who is able to complete data entry independently
- Customer service and negotiation skills
- Completion of the Certificate in Manitoba Municipal Administration will be considered an asset

CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER

Job Description

The R.M. of Wallace-Woodworth is seeking a strategic, experienced, and innovative **Chief Financial Officer (CFO)** to lead its financial management and long-term fiscal planning. As a key member of the senior management team, the CFO is responsible for providing expert advice to Council and the CAO, ensuring the financial health of the municipality, implementing the asset management plan, and aligning financial strategies with the 2025–2030 Strategic Plan and beyond. This position will report directly to the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO).

Key Responsibilities

- Lead the preparation of annual operating and capital budgets and long-term financial forecasts
- Provide expert analysis on financial trends, risks, and opportunities
- Coordinate year-end financial statements and the municipal audit process
- Ensure compliance with PSAB standards and provincial financial regulations
- Develop and implement financial policies, reserve strategies, and internal controls
- Support the preparation and tracking of grant applications and related reporting obligations
- Collaborate with department heads on financial planning for capital projects and service delivery
- Prepare financial summaries and support the CAO with information for Council decision-making
- Ensure awareness of legislation related to payroll, pensions, and benefits to support HR/payroll compliance

Qualifications

- Degree in Accounting, Finance or Economics; CPA designation required (or legacy CA, CMA, or CGA)
- Minimum of 3-5 years of progressive experience in finance, with experience in a strategic role; experience in municipal finance an asset
- Strong knowledge of budgeting, financial reporting, and grant management
- Proficiency with municipal financial systems (e.g., Muniware) is an asset
- Understanding of PSAB and the Manitoba Municipal Act is an asset
- Strong leadership, organizational, and communication skills
- Familiarity with employment-related financial legislation and benefits compliance
- A Certificate in Manitoba Municipal Administration will be an asset
- Familiarity with asset management, capital planning, and rural infrastructure is highly desirable

COMMUNITY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND RECREATION MANAGER

The R.M. of Wallace-Woodworth is seeking a dynamic and community-oriented professional to join our team as the **Community Economic Development & Recreation Manager**. This full-time management position plays a key role in implementing the R.M.'s 2025–2030 Strategic Plan by fostering economic growth, supporting business development, leading communications strategies, and enhancing recreational services. The successful candidate will oversee the development of a Recreation Plan, expand municipal programming, support local organizations and community committees, and improve engagement through strategic marketing and communication efforts.

Key Responsibilities

- Develop and implement an Economic Development Strategy aligned with the Strategic Plan
- Support Council-appointed Community Development Steering Committees
- Promote business investment readiness and support local business retention
- Lead the development of a municipal Recreation Plan and expand community programming
- Assist in tourism initiatives, land-use planning, and infrastructure readiness
- Research, apply for, and manage grants to support municipal initiatives
- Provide regular updates and strategic recommendations to Council

Qualifications

- Post-secondary education in Economic Development, Business, Recreation Management or related field
- Familiarity with rural economic development and recreation planning
- Experience in a similar role with grant writing, project coordination, and stakeholder engagement
- Completion of (or commitment to complete) the EDAM Community Edge program
- Valid driver's license and willingness to travel regionally

Interested candidates should submit a resume with three professional references by:

E-mail: info@wallace-woodworth.com
Mail/Drop-off: R.M. of Wallace-Woodworth Municipal Office
154023 PR 257 Box 2200 (Corner of 83 Hwy & PR 257) Virden, MB R0M 2C0

We appreciate your interest in this position. Applications will be accepted until the position is filled. However, only those applicants chosen for an interview will be contacted.

CLASSIFIEDS

Obituary

IN LOVING MEMORY
CHARMAINE RAINEY (PARSONS)



It is with heartfelt remembrance that we share the life of Charmaine Rainey (Parsons), who, on May 30, 2026, at the age of 95, after a long and fulfilling life spent with family and friends, passed with her family at her side at the Westman Nursing Home in Virden, Manitoba.

Charmaine was born on December 12, 1930, in Holland Landing, Ontario, to Fred and Gladys Parsons (Hunt). She grew up with her sisters Kathleen and Verna, and in 1945 the family moved to Virden, Manitoba, where she would create lifelong roots.

She completed her schooling in Virden, graduating in 1948, and went on to teacher training at Tuxedo College in Winnipeg. After briefly teaching in a country school near Reston, she pursued business training in Regina. In 1950, she returned to Virden to work at the Bank of Nova Scotia.

Charmaine married Frank Lelond in 1952, and together they welcomed their children, Ron (born March 28, 1955) and Kathryn (born March 28, 1959). Following Frank's passing in 1960, she continued her career at the Eaton's catalogue order office, where she became a familiar presence in the community. For years afterward, Christmas gifts arriving in Eaton's boxes became a fond and proud family tradition.

In 1966, she married Max Rainey, and they built a life together over many years. In March 1975, her niece Maureen and partner Devona opened Demaury's Gift Shop, where Charmaine managed the store. She later worked at the Ivy Gift Shop (later Hanson's) until her retirement in 1995.

Charmaine is lovingly remembered by her children, grandchildren Ryan and Sean (Jennifer), great-grandchildren Lochlan and Elowen, and extended family.

Her life was grounded in her love of family. She found joy in baking, reading, and time spent together, often around a table playing cards, especially canasta. She was thoughtful and attentive, never forgetting important milestones, and she taught her grandchildren the importance of writing thank-you notes. Known for her positive outlook, she approached life with quiet optimism.

In her later years, she enjoyed reading, Hallmark movies, and the music of Daniel O'Donnell, remaining closely connected to her family.

A favorite quote that reflected her outlook was:

"We are all born, we all die, the measure of our lives is what we do with the time between. Doing things that make us afraid can make the fear go away."

A private family remembrance was held on June 8, 2026, at the Virden Cemetery.

The family extends sincere thanks to the caring staff of Virden General Hospital and Westman Nursing Home.

Help Wanted

Manitoba Government Job Opportunities

Plumber

Regular/Full-Time
Manitoba Public Service Delivery, Brandon, MB
Advertisement Number: 45092
Closing Date: June 20, 2026
Salary Range: \$72,981.00 - \$88,633.00 per year

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Employment Equity is a factor in selection for this competition. Consideration will be given to women, Indigenous people and persons with disabilities.

An eligibility list may be created for similar positions and will remain in effect until exhausted.

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- Knowledge of safe work practices, procedures and relevant safety policies and legislation.
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- Strong written communication skills
- Strong decision-making and problem-solving skills
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Desired:

- Backflow Preventer Certificate, and asbestos awareness training.

Duties:

Under the direction of the Facility Manager, the incumbent will be responsible for the proper maintenance, repair or replace all plumbing fixtures, lap basins, water closets and hot water tanks in the highly visible Brandon Correctional Centre and other district buildings, in accordance to the Manitoba Plumbing Code and the Manitoba Gas Code.

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Applicants may request reasonable accommodation related to the materials or activities used throughout the selection process.

When applying to this position, please indicate the advertisement number and position title in the subject line and/or body of your email. Your cover letter, resumé and/or application must clearly indicate how you meet the qualifications.

Please be advised that job competitions may be grieved and appealed. Should a selection grievance be filed, information from the competition file will be provided to the grievor's representative or the grievor, if unrepresented. Personal information irrelevant to the grievance and other information protected under legislation will be redacted.

We thank all who apply and advise that only those selected for further consideration will be contacted.

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Any personal information provided including employment equity declarations will be used for employment and/or statistical purposes and is protected by The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act.

Alternate formats available upon request

Public Hearing



NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

DEVELOPMENT PLAN – TRANS CANADA WEST PLANNING DISTRICT

Under authority of *The Planning Act*, the Planning District Board will hold a public hearing at the time and location listed below to hear from and receive representations from any persons who wish to make them in respect to the following:

BY-LAW NO. 61, TO ADOPT A DEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR THE TRANS CANADA WEST PLANNING DISTRICT (INCLUDING THE RURAL MUNICIPALITY OF WALLACE-WOODWORTH, AND THE TOWN OF VIRDEN)

DATE, TIME, AND LOCATION:
Monday, July 13th, 2026 at 7:00 pm
Tundra Oil & Gas Place
900 5th Ave.
Virden, MB

FOR INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:
Alleesha MacDonald
Secretary-Treasurer
Trans Canada West Planning District
(204) 748-7239

A copy of the proposed materials may be arranged for review through the contact above.



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Kendra Kay performs at Raise the Roof



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Kendra Kay is on tour and plans to release new music this summer season.

By Anne Davison
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

Music fans and all who love a good time can help raise the roof in Hamiota next weekend.

Hamiota and southwest Manitoba is in for a treat as Country music artist Kendra Kay, on tour throughout Manitoba, is the headliner at Hamiota's major event, Raise the Roof, on June 19. Armed with her five-piece band, Kendra has performed for country music fans around the globe.

Raised in a rodeo family near Elkhorn, few people capture the spirit of country music like this seven times MCMA award winning artist. Her full-length record 'Homegrown Heart', debuted at #1 on the Canadian Country iTunes Charts, #3 on the All-Genre iTunes Charts and has amassed over 3 million streams.

Kendra has earned Championship Buckles in Barrel Racing, and that grit and determination along with her signature 'powerhouse vocals' will bring the Hamiota stage

to life. What will we hear? On June 15th, she is releasing her new single 'I Grew Up With Superman', a beautiful tribute to her father, and her husband Chad (lead guitarist in her band).

Kendra's passionate about getting back to the rural communities in Manitoba. Her band strikes up at 9pm and will play three 45-minute sets. The dance floor will be ready and waiting.

Raising the Roof takes place in Hamiota District Sports Complex. The venue figures largely in this area, and music is a key feature of Hamiota life so it's fitting that on June 19, Kay's concert will help out with funding to fix the complex roof.

But there's more.

You can buy advance tickets, and there's tickets at the venue. The doors open at 6:30pm. Catch the warm-up acts and check out the items donated for draws. Local talent Edson Andan is a great guitarist who's played at event in the area.

The southern Manitoba

band, Bethel Road, will lead into Kendra Kay's act. Morgan Peloquin sings lead. Morgan teaches at Hartney School and she and husband Trevor are farmers in nearby Deleau country. Morgan is bringing the Bethel Road trio that includes Jherrad Cumming (a Rivers resident) and Scott Warren.

By day, Jherrad's work is with Zennith Paving. But he has an after-hours gig as a guitarist, and will provide Bethel Road harmonies.

Scott Warren from Brandon plays percussion and sings, and will probably be wearing a cowboy hat, but that hasn't always been his style. Scott has played with Tangled, a hard rock metal band in former days and with Armadillo, to name a few of Scott's endeavors. He was also on Virden AUD stage in Crazy for You, one of Michelle Chzyk's fabulous musicals.

Funds for the roof

The curling rink can hold up to 700 people and the sports complex committee hopes it's full. There's also an outdoor seating area. The event is a fundraiser to support plans for refurbishing the roof.

Ryan Tolton, president of Hamiota District Sports Complex, says a proper fix has been in the offing. "For years we have known that this day will be coming that something will have to be done with the roof, we have been applying tar to patch holes for many years. That is only a temporary fix that's running out of time," says Tolton.

With curling, hockey and skating in the cold months and in summer, weddings, high school graduations, funerals, and other community events like the summer fair, the rink plays a big role.

Tolton has no firm budget yet. "As we are in the early stages of this project, I can not put a definitive price on how much it will cost. For this event I think we would love to make around \$50,000."

He says whether that goal is reached (or maybe even surpassed), this fundraiser will make an important difference for the community's largest and most used venue.

Come hungry. Pippy's Schnitzel Express (think Poutine) will be on site, enjoy pizza from Hamiota Hotel and for fun food, the Scouts are selling popcorn. There will be a bar for adults, and minors are welcome to attend the event.

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Association for Community Living displays a testament to dedication



PHOTOS BY NANCY JO MOLLER

Backyard at ACL is a serene area to enjoy a breath of fresh air.

By Nancy Jo Moller
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

The Association for Community Living (ACL) building located at 216

Bridge Street, Virден hosted a Garden Party on Sunday June 7. It was a chance for interested local citizens to view the completed backyard and what ACL has to offer

people with intellectual disabilities. Forty-four people took this opportunity to visit this innovative area. The garden area has a beautiful gazebo and access-



The Snoezelen Room at ACL is a therapeutic room that uses controlled lighting, soothing sounds, scents and tactile experiences to calm or stimulate people with disabilities.

able swing that invited you to 'come and stay awhile'. Both the grass and plants spoke of the loving care given to the area. It was like entering another dimension as

you entered their main building. The Snoezelen room, a small room with an ocean vibe, provides an area for a person to decompress. Soothing lights, paint

colours and décor created focal points to relax the mind and give an opportunity to regroup and start fresh. The Multipurpose room provides a craft and meeting area that includes a 3D printer and Cricut to manufacture custom items, as well as a Smart Board to gain skills and have some fun.

The staff were proud to share a full view of the daily routine as the tour continued. The kitchen showcased a full afternoon tea for those hungry guests. Cookies and dainties were available to satisfy any sweet tooth.

In true community generosity Virден Home Hardware donated a door prize which Ben Wolters won, and The Flower Attic provided arrangements for all the tables which completed the festive look.



Jubilee Stage Victoria Park

7:00PM

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In case of rain:
The Legion Hall
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Virден Ukulele Club



The Legion
will be hosting a BBQ at each concert!
6:15PM-7:00PM \$10/\$11/\$12
Half the proceeds from the BBQ will go to a different community organization each week.