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NOVEMBER 21, 2025 | EMPIRE: VOL 121 NO 14 / ADVANCE: VOL 140 NO 16 | PUBLISHING FRIDAYS



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## Local residents dig deeper on Deep Sky



Over 170 people turned out to the public meeting about the proposed Deep Sky project on Nov. 12 in the Pipestone Community Centre. An earlier meeting was held Sept. 4.

By Anne Davison  
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

This fall, citizens of southwest Manitoba began to question what was being planned with a new and unusual business that proposed setting up within the Rural Municipalities of Pipestone and Two Borders.

Grounded in Truth – Deep Sky Awareness, a local group of concerned citizens arranged the public meeting held Nov. 12 in the Pipestone Community Centre.

Emcee for the evening, Keely Woods, explained that as the RM of Pipestone council had no plan to provide a public forum on carbon capture, the group organized an event where residents could be informed about the risks and benefits of the project.

She said, “The goal for this evening is to provide the residents in attendance a better understanding of what carbon capturing is and the potential impact, good or bad, it will have for our area. This is a safe space for us to share and generate constructive conversations...The public wants to hear from council themselves as to why they think supporting this company would benefit the community.”

### Timeline

On Oct. 24, 2024, a delegation from Montreal-based direct air carbon capture (DAC) company Deep Sky met with RM of Pipestone council

In March, the RMs of Pipestone and Two Borders submitted a resolution to the provincial government at the request of Deep Sky proposing to allow for the transfer of long-term liability to the Crown to increase investors’ confidence in the project. The resolution would also streamline consultation and compensation processes with land rights holders to avoid delays, and permit deep CO2 storage beneath protected lands.

Woods said, “The RM sent this letter of support for the private company Deep Sky to the provincial government before receiving any independent research.”

In June, the RM of Pipestone appointed Charlotte Parham, Allie Volk and Ross Tycoles as municipal representatives to



PHOTOS BY DALE DAVISON

James Wilt presents the Climate Action Team Manitoba perspective.

the project.

Deep Sky sent out flyers to advertise the Sept. 4 open house at the Pipestone Hall and earlier on that day they met with municipal officials.

*read more about the Deep Sky meeting on page 7...*



**VIRDEN  
OIL CAPITALS**

**HOME GAME  
THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 27  
VS. NIVERVILLE  
NIGHTHAWKS**

**PUCK DROPS AT 7:30PM**

## Inside...



**OIL CAPS  
CONTINUE TO  
WIN *P12***



**YWCA AND  
ROYAL PURPLE**  
*P11*



# Big Changes underway for Virden Pioneer Home Museum

By Jenn Jaffray  
VPHM MANAGER

As the colder months are upon us in Virden, we at the museum are striving to keep local history alive by opening the doors through the winter by appointment. The decision reflects a growing focus on fostering personal connections and helping residents explore their family roots through genealogy.

The museum is our town's treasure and cultural hub connecting us to how life was lived in the past. Pushing more focus on genealogy and the Virden area's history, we have been working

hard on revamping all our genealogy files on Virden's founding families.

We want people to come into the museum and build connection and see their families' pictures on the walls, their 3rd great grandmother's fine china, and know this is a safe place where these artifacts can be preserved for many more generations.

Winter months are slower at the museum and we can offer an in-depth, more personalized tour. By offering visits by appointment, we can spend more time with each guest and really tailor the experience to their interests.

We have been working hard on our museum's archives, expanding them. The use of social media has been an asset to the museum, getting stories out there and building connections with followers.

There are many other things going on at the museum. We are starting a completely new inventory system which will be such a huge benefit to the museum. During this time there will be artifacts coming out of storage and moved around.

We are developing a system of building connections from the artifacts based on who owned them, covering more information on the artifacts. It's not just

about the museum's collection, it's about the people and building that connection for everyone who walks through the doors. Every family has a story worth keeping, and our goal is helping our community discover and share these stories.

Appointments can be made by contacting the museum directly at 204-748-1659, or by email [virdenpioneerhome@gmail.com](mailto:virdenpioneerhome@gmail.com), or through Facebook or Instagram. You can also text at 204-573-9124. Whether you're tracing your roots, researching local history, or simply looking to reconnect with the past, the Virden Pioneer Home Museum welcomes you this winter.

Jenn Jaffray is the VPHM manager

## Chase the Ace Winner



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Joan Veselovsky is the winner of Virden's RCL No.8 Chase the Ace and a pot over \$14,000. Joan is with Legion volunteer Andy Nash who holds the Ace. He runs Chase the Ace for the Legion.

You are invited!

### Harvey & Marilyn Jacobson

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# Christmas

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# Cheryl Porter recognized as Memorial Cross mother



PHOTO BY MCPL C. MOON/CFB SHILO

Cheryl Porter of Virden, mother of soldier Christopher Porter who served at CFB Shilo, receives the prestigious Silver Memorial Cross from Colonel Robert Tesselaar, commander of the 3rd Canadian Division Support Group. The presentation was made during a private ceremony at the base on Oct. 30.

## By VEA staff

FROM SHILO STAG NEWS

Well-known Westman mother Cheryl Porter was awarded the honourable Memorial Cross Medal at CFB Shilo on Oct. 30.

The recognition was for her soldier son, Corporal Chris Porter, who gave his life willingly for his country and served in the Second Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry (2 PPCLI), Mrs. Porter told Shilo Stag News.

Corporal Chris Porter died in January 2021, after suffering for years with lasting battlewound sustained from 2003 to 2005 while on a deployment in Bosnia, she said.

Porter, was presented with the prestigious Memorial Cross recognition by Colonel Robert Tesselaar, Commander 3rd Canadian Division Support Group, in a private ceremony at the Base.

Cheryl and Allan Porter live near the town of Virden. They travelled to CFB Shilo for the presentation.

Cheryl said, "Today, [in] this ceremony, I wanted to include Shilo because this is where [Chris] wanted to be and couldn't be anymore. This is a recognition for part

of a life that he gave and wanted to give, as so many of our family members have done. This is a ceremony that is in recognition of his service."

The Memorial Cross, medal is granted to loved ones of the fallen in recognition of their loss and sacrifice. Established in 1919, after the First World War, it was initially reserved for mothers and widows to commemorate loved ones who died in the Great War.

Porter was also presented with the Memorial Ribbon, the Memorial Scroll, and the Memorial Bar. Chris's name will also be written in the Seventh Book of Remembrance on display in the Memorial Chamber of the Peace Tower in Ottawa. Also receiving commemorations were the soldier's father, Allan Porter, and family members Kim Watters, Jason Porter, Jacob Porter, and Jennifer Purdy.

Cheryl said due to the

COVID-19 Pandemic restrictions, there was no funeral service for her son at the time, so the commemorative presentation ceremony was significant to each member of his family, many of whom are currently in or have served in the military.

She said she was surprised to receive notice of the commemorative awards four and a half years after her son died. Porter expressed heartfelt appreciation that Chris's sacrifice was noticed.

"[When Veterans Affairs] reached out, it was like, Wow ... they did notice him. For them to reach out and say, 'We've noticed, we acknowledge' — it was amazing."

While it is difficult to work in hypotheticals, she said she hopes Chris is looking down and saying, "Well done. They do recognize us."

"He spent so many years, after the injury, trying to get his body back to where it was, because that's all he wanted to do with his

life, was for his country," she said.

## History:

The original Memorial Cross was worn around the neck on a purple ribbon. Purple stood for suffering and mystery. Purple was the colour of the stained-glassmaker's version of black, expressing negation, mourning, and death. The

first crosses bore the royal cypher of King George V.

In the past, the Silver Cross was manufactured by several private jewellers. However, since 2008, the Memorial Crosses have been crafted by the Royal Canadian Mint from sterling silver and feature the soldier's details engraved on the reverse.



## "SMART SHOPPING:

How to Make the Most of Black Friday and Cyber Monday Deals"

As the holiday season draws near, many shoppers eagerly await Black Friday and Cyber Monday—two of the biggest shopping events of the year. While these days promise major discounts and exciting deals, the sheer volume of offers can be overwhelming. To shop wisely and avoid overspending, it's important to approach these sales with a smart, strategic mindset.

Begin by creating a detailed holiday shopping list. Include all the items you need, whether they're gifts for family and friends or essentials for your household. A focused list keeps you on track and prevents you from getting distracted by flashy but unnecessary deals. Knowing exactly what you're looking for allows you to compare prices more effectively and zero in on true bargains.

Equally important is setting a clear budget. It's easy to get caught up in the excitement and spend more than planned. Determine how much you can afford to spend overall, then break it down by category or recipient. A firm budget helps you prioritize your spending and avoid the post-holiday regret that often comes from impulse purchases. Remember: a deal is only worth it if it fits your budget and meets a genuine need.

To find the best value, do some research ahead of time. Use price comparison tools and apps to track prices on the items you want. Sign up for newsletters from your favorite retailers and follow them on social media to stay informed about upcoming deals, exclusive discounts, and early access sales. Many stores release their promotions before Black Friday, giving you a head start.

Take advantage of early access and pre-sales, especially if you're a member of loyalty or rewards programs. Shopping early can help you secure popular items before they sell out and reduce the pressure of last-minute buying. Also, watch for flash sales or limited-time offers that may appear in the days leading up to the big events.

Be flexible where possible. While sticking to your list is key, be open to alternative brands or similar products that offer better deals without compromising on quality. Just be cautious not to stray too far from your original plan.

Lastly, prioritize quality over quantity. Buying items just because they're heavily discounted often leads to clutter and wasted money. Focus on well-made, useful items that provide lasting value.

With thoughtful planning, budgeting, and research, you can navigate Black Friday and Cyber Monday with confidence—and enjoy a rewarding, budget-friendly holiday shopping experience.

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2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter ... \$100 Fiona Penner / \$50 Jem Todd  
3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter ... \$100 Jason Polk / \$50 Kathy Nankivell  
Final ..... \$200 Lucy Elliott / \$50 Brad Belas

Congrats to all the winners!  
Thanks for buying tickets and those that sold them also.

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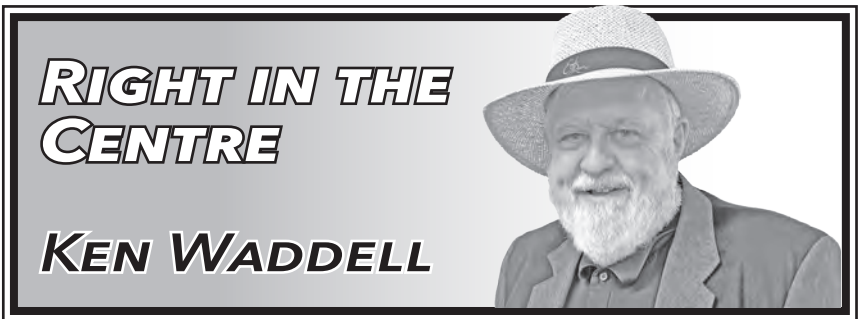
Keep the Canadian content  
in Canadian football

This column is written on Grey Cup Day, and yes, it's about football. I love Canadian Football. I have friends who much prefer the National Football League (NFL) game. In spite of how hyped the NFL is, I still prefer the Canadian Football League (CFL). It's a matter of choice and each person can have their own opinion. We all know that not many CFL players do well in the NFL. A few do, but the NFL seems to be able to demand and pay for a higher skill level.

I played CFL rules football in high school, way back in late 60s for three seasons. It was an absolute highlight of my high schooldays. I played high school hockey too and limped my way into beer-league hockey into the 70s and early 80s. But it was football where I felt I could really contribute as a player. I was the largest kid (read fattest if you must) on my high school team. I played centre and I practised and practised with my Dad, my Mum and by myself. I could block, I could do the short snap and the long snap. We were, for that day and level of football, a pretty competitive team, winning the league championship once and I believe placed second twice.

Now that the CFL has announced some rule changes, I am not impressed. I like the 55 yard line centre field. I like the goal posts on the goal line and the fact that a missed field goal can be returned for a gain, sometimes a big gain and even a touchdown. Same with a long punt.

I am of the opinion that the CFL bosses are somehow thinking if they adopt the NFL rules, they



“ Now that the  
[Canadian Football League]  
has announced rule changes,  
I am not impressed. ”

may attract more fans. More fans isn't our concern as Winnipeg and Saskatchewan usually sell out their stadiums. If there are some empty seats in eastern Canadian stadiums, I say tough luck to be them, I have little sympathy for Ottawa, Hamilton or Montreal. I have no sympathy for Toronto.

CFLPA president Solomon Elimimian in Winnipeg (via TSN) “We were informed about these changes but not consulted, that won't happen again. We've had positive conversations with (commissioner) Stewart (Johnston) and the league about our expectations to be consulted on any future changes to our game. Rule adjustments can directly affect or fundamentally alter members' jobs, and it's important players' perspectives are heard.”

Again on TSN, Canadian quarterback Nathan Rourke had harsher words, He feels the same

way about the CFL's changes to its three-down game.

“New rule changes are garbage. It's garbage. I, as many people did — who are fans and people who play in this league — grew up watching the CFL and loving the game. I grew up in Ontario, played Canadian football rules all my life. I went down to the States proud of the game, being able to explain the differences — the waggle, the yard, the extra person. These are the things that are unique about the game that make it different. I was aware and was a fan of the league down there, but was a fan of the CFL because of its differences,” Rourke said.

In fairness, some players say the new rules will make for more exciting games. I am not convinced!

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 newspaper staff.



Pithy sayings and  
old wives' tales...

For those unfamiliar with the term 'pithy' - it is an adjective meaning concise and forcefully expressive. I know, not far removed in pronunciation from another, too common, common term!

One of the distinct perks of the walking that Arie and I enjoy daily, are the people with whom we stop and chat. Sometimes its a casual and laughter filled conversation, sometimes heavy, and sometimes a bit of both. A catch-up without the coffee! This week I heard an expression that was entirely new to me. 'Just because you tear up the road map, it doesn't change where the roads are.' I've been known to tear up a few maps; turned a blind eye to the reality of a situation rather than trying to find my way through a maze, or tangled undergrowth, or discern a path I don't wish to travel. Not once did the roads change.

Man, this expression can cover so many situations; relationship concerns, deep seated beliefs that may be contrary to ones I cherish, simply doing what needs to be done even when I seek to resist accepting the responsibility. The saying may be as old as Adam, but it's the first time I heard it. Thank you Betty, for something to think about.

'Wives' Rales and Elbow Grease' compiled and printed by the Anemone Rebekah Lodge #23, Neepawa, Manitoba was published in 1995 to commemorate Manitoba's 125 anniversary. Certainly I am thankful for modern day medicine! For a cold- 'mother gave us a teaspoon of coal oil with a little white sugar'. For sore joints, apply equal parts of whiskey and vinegar. For a sore throat- place a piece of brown paper saturated with kerosene oil around the neck and gargle with a solution made of equal parts salt and alum in warm water. I don't hear, or see, much about boils or carbuncles anymore. Perhaps they are a thing of the past? Some folks believed that eating a pound of raisins would purify the blood and clear any boil, forever! This booklet suggests making a mixture of chewing tobacco and spit and applying it to the boil, and cover with a bandage. I'll eat the pound of raisins! Folks were more superstitious, or acknowledged their superstitions... Never put shoes on the table. It is bad luck to cut toenails or fingernails on a Friday or a Sunday. ( I suppose with bath night being Saturday?) Don't put your purse on the Bingo table, you'll have bad luck. ( watch for this at your next bingo night.) When baking, always stir the batter in the same direction to prevent a failure. (Sure wish I had known this years earlier!) Whenever you sneeze, a spirit leaves your body. (How do you even bring that into casual conversation!) And then there are a whole lot of sayings I can vouch for. Don't meet trouble halfway, it is quite capable of making the whole journey alone. The best way for a housewife to have a few minutes alone is to do the dishes. (YUP!) Better to wear out than rust out. Doing beats stewing!

Trust you got a chuckle, and stirred some early memories!

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# It is in the little things

**PUBLISHED AUTHOR, HOLISTIC  
WELLNESS CERTIFIED HYPNOTIST  
(C.H.)**

**MARIE EVELYNE GINGRAS**

Occasionally, life taps us on the shoulder and reminds us that wellness is not always found in the big breakthroughs or the dramatic life changes. It is found in the tiny moments that quietly add up. As I write my last holistic wellness article for the paper, with great sadness, I keep coming back to this simple truth. It is the little things that have carried me, healed me, and kept me going. They sneak into a day like small gifts waiting to be noticed.

For me, wellness has always been a patchwork of tiny choices. A warm cup of peppermint tea with honey after a long day. A few minutes pressing the PC six point on my inner wrist when my stomach needs kindness. Rolling peppermint on my tummy when bloating tries to steal my peace. Even the gentle glide of an acupressure tool or the soft spike of a mat beneath my shoulders reminds me that comfort can come from simple touches. None of these things are grand. On their own they look almost too small to matter. But together they create a rhythm of care that my body understands deeply.

Holistic wellness thrives in these details. A light stretch in the morning to loosen stiff muscles. A sprinkle of turmeric or ginger. A quiet pause when the world feels too loud. A short walk to reset the

mind. Lighting a diffuser with a scent that brings back a good memory. Letting sunlight touch your face for just a minute before stepping into the busyness of the day. None of it needs drama. It simply needs presence.

And that might be the heart of it. When you pay attention to small things, you begin to pay attention to yourself. You start noticing when you need water, or when your shoulders are creeping up toward your ears, or when you are carrying feelings that are not yours to carry. You start catching your stress before it boils. You start honouring your body before it begs for rest. These moments of awareness may be tiny, but they make life feel softer and more human.

As I wrap up my time writing this column, I feel grateful for every topic shared about pressure points, herbs, stress techniques, cold meals, digestion, and all the magic that nature tucks into small places. I hope you keep collecting little things that help you feel good. I hope you keep listening to your body even on the days when it speaks in whispers. Most of all, I hope you remember that healing does not need to be loud or impressive. Often, it is quiet. It is slow. It is gentle. It is found in the smallest acts of kindness you offer yourself day after day.

Thank you for reading, for trying new things, and for walking this holistic path with me. It is the little things that make a life feel full. And sharing these little things with all of you has been one of my favourite parts of this journey.

## Sioux Valley Election results

By Ken Waddell  
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

Sioux Valley First Nation conducted an election last week for chief and council.

As reported in The Brandon Sun, "Former chief Jennifer Bone was declared winner by a vote of 371 to 212 against incumbent chief Vince Tacan after a tumultuous vote-counting process late last week."

As the election polls closed on election day, there was some concerns at the polling station and the electoral officer Burke Ratte left the station. On the following day, community members conducted a live-online vote count.

Indigenous Services Canada, a federal agency, requested a status update on the election. Ratte was quoted in the Brandon Sun he told the agency that the First Nation's improvised ballot count on Friday should be considered null.

As of print deadline, no further update was available.

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## Employment Opportunity Executive Assistant

The Town of Virden is currently recruiting for the position of Executive Assistant.

This position entails a number of duties, including but not limited to:

- Providing administrative and clerical support to the Chief Administrative Officer and Council
- Policy research and preparation
- Preparation of all Council packages, including agendas
- Website and Facebook maintenance

The successful applicant must possess:

- A grade twelve diploma with relevant post secondary education, or experience
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills
- Working knowledge of computer software systems
- The ability to respect and promote confidentiality
- Experience in a municipal environment is an asset
- A minimum of two years experience in a general office environment

A detailed job description is available at the Town Office or online at [www.virden.ca/p/employment-opportunities](http://www.virden.ca/p/employment-opportunities).

Resumes, addressed to the following, will be accepted at the Town Office:

Rhonda Stewart  
Chief Administrative Officer  
236 Wellington Street West  
Virden, MB, R0M 2C0  
Email: [cao@virden.ca](mailto:cao@virden.ca)

Thank you to all who are applying for this position but only those who are selected for the interview process will be contacted. This position will remain open until filled.

## Town of Virden Public Water System

For updates on the Town of Virden Public Water System, please visit [www.virden.ca](http://www.virden.ca) or contact the Town Office at 204-748-2440

## Municipal Government Awareness Week November 23-29, 2025

WHEREAS community participation in municipal elections is important;

AND WHEREAS community involvement in local government decision-making is essential to a healthy democratic system;

AND WHEREAS community understanding of municipal government operations and the services it provides is of primary importance to meaningful participation at the local level;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Town of Virden proclaim the week of November 23-29, 2025 as **Municipal Government Awareness Week**.

## Happy Holidays!

The Town Office will be accepting:

- toy donations for **Virden Christmas Cheer**, and
- non-perishable food items for the **Virden Food Cupboard**

Donations will be accepted December 12.

## Upcoming Council Meetings

December 2 and 16

Council Meetings start at 7:00 PM



# Lions Club Donations - Part 15



PHOTO BY CASSY HUME

Virden Lions Club member Bob Heaman presenting a donation to Youth for Christ, accepted by Kyle Martens on May 28. Over the next few weeks we will be showing all the wonderful donations made by the Virden Lions Club to different organizations.

# Police Report

## Westman RCMP Service Report for Nov. 9 to Nov. 15

Submitted  
By WESTMAN RCMP

During this week, Westman RCMP received a total of 58 calls for service. Some of these calls for service include 18 traffic offences, 2 Mental Health Act, 8 Assault, 3 Suspicious Person, 1 Abandoned Vehicle, 5 Mischief, 2 Wellbeing Checks, 1 Person Reported Missing, and 4 Uttering Threats, 3 Disturbing the Peace, and 1 Identity Fraud file.

On Nov. 9, Westman RCMP responded to a 911 call for disturbing the peace in the Settlement of Sioux Valley Dakota Nation. RCMP attended the address and located the suspect outside of the residence. The 32-year-old-male was on conditions from a previous court order to not attend the address or have contact with the resident. He was placed under arrest for failing to comply with his undertaking conditions. RCMP took statements from the complainant and witnesses, it was determined that the suspect had assaulted one of the residents. The 32-year-old-male was transported to the Virden RCMP detachment and

remanded into custody, his next court appearance will be in December for x2 charges of failing to comply with undertaking condition and one charge of assault.

On Nov. 10, Westman RCMP responded to a 911 call in regards to a motor vehicle collision in the RM Two Borders. RCMP attended and it was determined that a 56-year-old-female drove through a yard and into a ditch while impaired. The 56-year-old female was placed under arrest and released on an Appearance notice to attend court in February for Operation while impaired (alcohol) of motor vehicle and a Highway Traffic Act ticket for driving without holding a valid drivers licence which carries a fine of \$298. The vehicle was impounded for thirty days.

On Nov. 11, Westman RCMP responded to a 911 call for disturbing the peace in the Town of Virden. RCMP attended the address and spoke to members of the household and located the suspect in the garage, it was concluded that a 40-year-old male had assaulted his partner. He was placed under

arrest and transported to the Virden RCMP detachment. He was later released on an Undertaking to appear in court in February on one charge of Assault.

On Nov. 12, during a routine traffic patrol within the RM Wallace-Woodworth, RCMP observed a vehicle travelling at a high rate of speed. Radar confirmed a speed of 123km/hr in a 100 km/hr zone. RCMP initiated a traffic stop and the driver was issued a Traffic Offence Notice for Speeding, which carries a fine of \$351.

To report a complaint or non-emergent incident to RCMP please call 204-748-2135. For general inquiries or administrative requests including criminal record checks please call the administration line at 204-748-2046 Ext. 3. If you are reporting an emergency, please call 911.

If you witness a crime and wish to remain anonymous, please contact Crime Stoppers at 1-800-222-8477. Crime stoppers is entirely confidential and completely anonymous. The tip line is not traceable and they do not subscribe to caller ID or call display.

# HELEN DRYSDALE

## OUT OF HELEN'S KITCHEN

Manitoba is self-sufficient in poultry and egg production. Most the hatching egg and chicken farms in Manitoba are family owned and operated. They ensure that fresh chicken is readily available in our grocery stores. This excellent source of protein needs to be cooked all the way through. Cook whole chicken to an internal temperature of 180 F (82 C) and chicken pieces and ground chicken to 165 F (74 C). Of course cooking time will depend on the cooking method, whether you roast, grill, boil etc.

Chicken is easy to cook, versatile and can be paired with so many different herbs and spices. You can't have too many chicken recipes! These two recipes are perfect for a busy weeknight or weekend company.

## Chicken curry in a hurry

- 2 Tbsp. oil
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 2 cloves garlic
- 2 tsp. coriander
- 2 tsp. ground cumin
- 1 tsp. curry
- 1 tsp. fresh ginger or 1/2 tsp. ground
- 1/2 tsp. dry crushed chilies (optional, only if you like heat)
- 1 frying chicken, cut into pieces
- 2 cups coconut milk
- 1 Tbsp. lemon or lime juice

In a large frying pan sauté the onion and garlic in the oil until golden. Add the coriander, cumin, curry and fresh ginger and if desired chili peppers. Sauté for one minute. Add the chicken and lightly brown. Add the coconut milk, cover and simmer gently until chicken is cooked through, about 30 minutes. (165 F/74 C) Add the lemon juice and serve over cooked rice.

## Baked chicken rose- mary

- 1 frying chicken, cut in pieces
- 1 clove of garlic minced
- 1 small onion, diced
- 1/2 cup tomato paste
- 1 tsp. salt
- 1/4 tsp. pepper
- 1/4 cup lemon juice
- 1/2 cup water
- 1 Tbsp. prepared mustard
- 2 Tbsp. honey or brown sugar
- 1 1/2 tsp. dried rosemary or 1 Tbsp. chopped fresh

Arrange the chicken pieces in one layer in a 9X13 inch baking dish. Mix the onion and garlic together and sprinkle over the chicken pieces. Mix all the remaining ingredients together and pour over the chicken. Bake at 350 F until the chicken temperature reaches 165 F/74 C which will take about one hour. Enjoy with your favourite sides.



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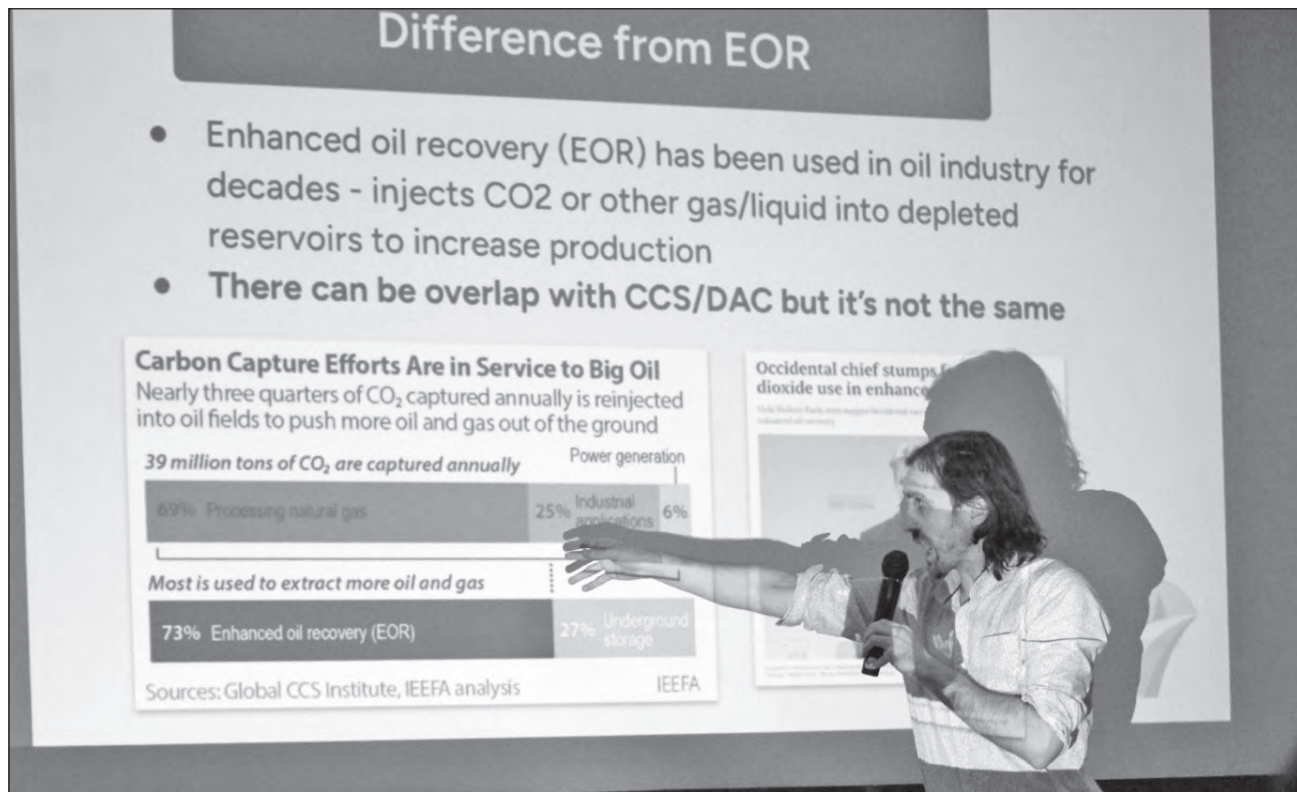
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# Deep Sky public meeting



PHOTOS BY DALE DAVISON

James Wilt presents the Climate Action Team Manitoba perspective at the public meeting about the proposed Deep Sky project on Nov. 12 in the Pipestone Community Centre.

*Continued from page 1*

The hall was comfortably full that evening, with municipal councillors from a broad area present as well as the general public at the Sept. 4 meeting.

A brochure handed out by Deep Sky identified the RM of Pipestone and the RM of Two Borders as their partners; (municipalities deny formal partnership).

The Grounded in Truth committee questioned whether councils are prepared for potential cleanup obligations, what research they have done on possible economic, environmental, and social impacts, and whether they have evaluated projected revenues and expenses. They suggested that local infrastructure might be inadequate for the large influx of people that Deep Sky expects, noting there is no local hospital with emergency services, no ambulance, volunteer fire service only, and long waits for RCMP response.

They wondered about possible conflicts of interest. Has Deep Sky approached a local landowner to buy property? And why did residents have to organize a public information meeting themselves rather than the local municipal council or the provincial government?

James Wilt from Climate Action Team Manitoba (CAT) brought researched findings.

He explained that direct air capture (DAC) proposed by Deep Sky is often promoted for its permanence: unlike forests, which can burn, or soils, which can be disturbed, engineered removal can theoretically store carbon for significantly longer periods. It also allows for monitoring and verification—important for companies purchasing carbon credits and reporting emissions.

CO<sub>2</sub> capture at a creation site (such as at a coal plant) is more efficient, but since ambient CO concentrations in the atmosphere are only around 425–430 parts per million, the engineering challenge is greater. The relatively low concentration is the key reason DAC is so energy intensive.

Wilt shared major concerns.

The first issue is the absence of any successful large-scale proof of concept. Of roughly two dozen DAC facilities worldwide, their combined capture amounts to only around 0.01 megatons per year—tiny in global terms.

Based upon Climeworks' 36,000-ton facility in

Iceland, known as “Mammoth,” functionality in deep cold is a problem.

## Energy, Water, Materials

Because fans must run continuously and heat must be applied in multiple stages to separate CO from the solvent or sorbent, electricity demand is immense.

Economic dependence on carbon offsets is an issue. Wilt explains that captured CO<sub>2</sub> has potential use in different commodities: “The biggest one, and maybe the most relevant one to Manitoba, is for sustainable aviation fuels. There is talk about a plant being built in Portage which would produce this. Having CO<sub>2</sub> inputs combined with green hydrogen is one way to create sustainable aviation fuels.”

Cement, greenhouse enrichment, and enhanced oil recovery (fracking) are other potential uses. But Deep Sky's plan is underground sequestration and selling carbon credits to governments and corporations as offsets to companies to balance their ongoing CO<sub>2</sub> production, on paper.

It was asserted that many geological formations still cannot guarantee long-term CO storage. Proximity to legacy oil and gas wells can create leakage pathways, which would immediately negate any benefits of storage.

## Indicators to watch

Wilt noted that Deep Sky has recently received support from Jamie Moses, Minister of Business, Mining, Trade and Job Creation, who said the project positions Manitoba as a global leader in reducing CO emissions and advancing a modern economy. Environment and Climate Change Minister Mike Moyes dismissed concerns that Manitoba Hydro might not be able to supply the needed electricity, suggesting that future efficiency improvements and unbuilt wind farms will be part of the solution.

Wilt suggested that Manitoba has “far better, cheaper, faster, more job-creating” ways to reduce emissions — specifically, electrifying transportation, space heating, and industrial processes — technologies that already work in real-world conditions. While 500,000 tonnes of captured CO sounds significant, Manitoba emits 21.3 megatonnes annually, meaning the proposed facility would reduce only about 2.5% of total emissions for the province,



Pipestone residents had serious questions about the proposed Deep Sky project at the public meeting on Nov. 12.

Wilt's final recommendations: no tax credits, subsidies, or discounted electricity for the project and that Manitoba Hydro's emissions planning must not assume DAC success without far more certainty.

Emcee Woods followed up with a perspective from Dr. Taylor Galvin, an Indigenous scholar. She read: Manitoba is being asked to applaud a 200-million-dollar investment in a machine that copies the work our wetlands and forests already performed with greater integrity and with immeasurable benefits for water, wildlife, and people.

The statement proposes an alternative path: invest the same money in restoring drained peatlands, expand Indigenous protected areas, fund community guardians, and prioritize stewardship that protects carbon stocks. Every hectare of undisturbed peatland represents enduring carbon management.

Woods quoted Ryan Schultz, a Canadian seismologist. “What worries me isn't carbon. It's control. Because the more we frame the very atmosphere as something to be regulated, taxed, and traded, the less freedom we have over the basics of life itself.” This was a concern shared by meeting participants at Pipestone hall.

Information about the citizen committee can be found on Facebook: Grounded in Truth – Deep Sky Awareness (Southwest Manitoba).





# Letter to the editor

## RE: Deep Sky

Communities across southwestern Manitoba take pride in their land, their water, their homes, and their way of life — and they have every reason to. When questions or uncertainty arise about projects that could affect those things, people deserve space to speak openly, ask hard questions, and hear clear, honest information.

That's the spirit in which Deep Sky wants to engage. While last week's event in Pipestone wasn't designed for open dialogue — and Deep Sky wasn't included on the formal program — our team attended because listening matters. We came early, stayed late, and spoke with anyone who wanted to talk. For us, showing up isn't a PR exercise. It's what being a good neighbour looks like.

Pipestone is a community with many voices. Some residents are hopeful about the economic opportunity a project like ours could bring. Others want more information. And many have important questions about water safety, potential impacts on property values and lifestyle, and the long-term costs and benefits to their community.

These questions deserve honest answers — not assumptions about “unanimous” opposition or support. We've heard from residents interested in jobs, local businesses wanting to participate, and even other Manitoba municipalities asking us to consider their region. We've also heard real concerns, and we take every one of them seriously.

If this project proceeds, it would represent one of the largest private investments rural Manitoba has seen in years. It has the potential to bring:

- Hundreds of construction jobs
- Long-term operations and technical roles
- Millions in contracts for local trades and businesses
- Increased activity for local housing, retail, restaurants, and accommodations
- New municipal tax revenue
- Opportunities for Indigenous participation, training, and long-term partnership

We know major projects can also place new pressures on community infrastructure and services. That's why we are committed to planning together — with the RM, with local businesses, and with community organizations — to ensure growth is responsible and supports the needs and values of the region.

Our neighbours in Alberta have been safely capturing and storing CO<sub>2</sub> since the 1980s, and while what we are doing isn't new, it is understandable that many people want more information. We look forward to sharing more, especially about geology, water protection, and what this technology could mean for their land and future. Those are fair questions - and ones we will continue to provide answers to.

From the outset, Deep Sky made a deliberate choice to engage early, even before all the answers were available. Our first open house took place in September 2025, well before we had results from Manitoba Hydro or geological certainty. We believed — and still believe — that transparency means sharing what we know when we know it, not waiting until every detail is finalized.

We've been updating our FAQs in real time, responding to emails promptly, and meeting with landowners, neighbouring RMs, Indigenous Nations, local businesses, and community groups. We will continue to hold public meetings to share the findings openly and answer questions directly.

People here care deeply about their community. So do we. Our job is not to tell residents how to feel — it's to listen, to share information clearly, and to make sure this project only moves forward if it aligns with the community's values, priorities, and long-term wellbeing.

Our communication channels remain wide open at [manitoba@deepskyclimate.com](mailto:manitoba@deepskyclimate.com). We will continue to be available, to listen, and to engage respectfully with anyone who wants to talk — whether they are excited, uncertain, or concerned.

Big decisions deserve balanced, fact-based conversations. We are committed to being part of that dialogue, every step of the way.

Alex Petre  
CEO, Deep Sky

# Letter to the editor

## RE: Dangerous dog on the loose

Hi there, we are in a dire situation. Our community has a severe dog problem that is not being addressed. The community has been dealing with dog attacks and every time it has been addressed it falls on deaf ears. We the community are tired of the same dogs running rampant and attacking community members.

Yesterday afternoon two of my nephews aged 7 & 8 were attacked, one boy got away and the other laid there all bitten. After the attack my sister went over to address the dog owner, only to find out from the children of that household that their parent left the house with said dog that was responsible for the attack. While she was at the hospital, her eldest son was told my Manitoba First Nations Police that they had “apprehended” the dog, only to confirm that the dog was actually back at the residence. Being hidden and protected.

After meeting with Canupawakpa Dakota Nation Band Manager Nicole Chaske, she stated that they are looking into it, and will be looking into “re-homing” that dog. That dog has a taste for human blood now and is a safety concern to wherever it is re-homed at. That dog has been a menace to this community. The dog is a pitbull breed. Manitoba First Nations Police Service initially falsified information stating they apprehended the dog and then pretty much mocked our concerns for safety. They have failed to protect the community, instead protecting the pitbull that has been viciously attacking CHILDREN.

Who is more important in this situation? The dog? Or the Children?

Tybie Brittany Brown  
Canupawakpa Dakota Nation

# Letter to the editor

## RE: Eco-Emotion

Eco-emotion is psychological stress related to climate change. It arises from external stimulation—namely, our relationship with the natural world. This stress is not considered a pathology or a diagnosis. Here is how it is explained: fears about climate change are a normal response to these abnormal conditions. 73 per cent of 8–16-year-olds are “worried about the state of the planet. Of note, 41 per cent do not trust adults to tackle challenges presented by climate change. 60 per cent of 16–25-year-olds are very worried about climate change. Only 30 per cent of that group felt government is taking environmental concerns seriously.

Some examples of eco-emotion are Eco-grief.

This is a sadness and feeling of loss related to environmental destruction or climate change. Eco-grief can be divided into four categories: 1. Grief from acute disaster—hurricanes, wildfires, flooding.

2. Grief from slow onset change—loss of the polar icecaps. There is no one major break event ; this can lead to a generalized sense of stress, sadness, anxiety.

3) Vicarious grief—people see others suffering or hear news of disaster.

4) Anticipatory grief— thinking about what's to come.

Eco-anxiety.

This is anxiety that is related to both the present e.g. endangered species, and the future e.g. what if mass extinction occurs?” It is a chronic fear related to environmental doom. In a 2020 survey by American Psychological Association: “upwards of 2/3 of all adults had experienced eco-anxiety.”

Climate change disproportionately affects certain communities: indigenous-by degradation of their traditional territories: seniors, the disabled, those living in poverty.

Most of the time, the eco-emotion that you are experiencing is mild and can be looked at as a good thing. This is because emotions are often what leads people to act. It is possible that feelings of ecological anxiety and grief, although uncomfortable, are in fact the crucible through which humanity must pass, to harness the energy and conviction that are needed for the life-saving changes, now required!

Some of the emotions that you might experience are worried, anger, frustration, depression with feelings of helplessness, empathy, betrayal, sadness. ... How can we cope? As mentioned, turning your emotion into action, and also maintaining connection to your community; incorporate ritual and practise, focus on what you can control, find solace in natural places—spend time in nature, read a lot and widely. One needs to take care of

their body—eat well, get regular exercise, practice mindfulness. Also, remember, it's OK to seek clinical support. For some, though, their emotional experience can be much more severe: 1. Solastalgia—a sense that things have suddenly and permanently changed. 2. Denialism—at first there was a denial of the existence of climate change, but now argue that climate change exists, but it is not human caused. 3. Eco-paralysis—overwhelmed by the complexity, so unable to take any action. 4. Eco-nihilism—impossible to do anything about it, so continue business as usual. 5. Blind hope—technology will save us. 6. Eco-guilt—one's own actions are creating the problem.

Let's be clear, there will be catastrophic health risks for a child born today, if an adequate response to climate change does not occur. These include increasing rates of food insecurity, and under nutrition, of diarrheal and infectious diseases, of complications from air pollution, and increased morbidity and mortality from exposure to extreme weather events such as heat waves, flooding, wildfires and hurricanes.

So, with all of this in mind, don't let your genuine feelings about climate change slow you down! Use them to ‘drive’ you into taking action! Every little bit, or big bit, helps!

Scott Blyth  
Brandon, Manitoba



# 'Shakespeare' says Something Rotten is over the top

By Anne Davison  
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

**S**omething Rotten, Virden Theatre Productions' upcoming musical, is rife with rivalry in Renaissance era theatre as brothers Nick and Nigel Bottom strive for playwright fame, but they're up against you know who – yes, Shakespeare.

Personalities figure largely in this show. Three actors discuss their roles.

**Rob Lovatt** is known to some for past roles in Virden musicals, his work with Keywest Photo or maybe as a band member with Just for Kicks. He was attracted to a lead role, in Something Rotten because it's so darn funny and he saw himself in the Shakespeare character.

"There's some musicals that are, what do I say ... traditional?" Lovatt says. "Something Rotten is just another category of fun, spoof-ish, it's hilarious. It's for a more mature crowd, but there is something for everyone there. It just has really big musical numbers that are incredibly impressive.... The singing, the dancing, the choreography, everything - everything is just over the top in this one."

Lovatt's introduction to the world of stage musicals came about a few years ago when Michelle Chyzk asked him if he'd be interested in joining the Mamma Mia cast. He did. He liked it. That was his start.

Lovatt finds himself fitting into the Rotten Shakespeare's shoes just fine, something he attributes to Chyzk's casting skills. "She's intuitive that way. This particular role of Shakespeare actually fits my personality. When she suggested that I audition for this part, I understood why."

So does he feel himself to be the Bard?

"Yeah, there's some things that really gel well with my personality. Oddly enough, I mean, I have written songs and poetry and things like that," he says.

The personalities of lead actors Jordan Elliott, Jackson Hacault and Darrell Corbel playing Nick and Nigel Bottom and the infamous Nostradamus adds synergy. "Not only are they great singers and actors, I mean, they bring their personality. They're just fantastic. They have their own flair."

A familiar Virden actor/artist and steel shop worker, George Baker slides into the Shylock role. "Oh, gosh, he's great," says Lovatt. "He's a straight man. You know, he plays it off a little dry, which is perfect."

"And same with Greg Kirk (Master of the Justice). So, I mean, you know, the deck is loaded."

**Jaysalee Davies** has been in a ton of Virden musicals. For this show, she's an ensemble member, with a bit part as Bea's friend. (Bea, the super supportive wife of lead character Nick Bottom.)

Also credited with a behind the scenes production role, Davies is heavily invested in this show.

"This musical is the type of musical theatre that excites me - a big showy sound, big dance numbers, and big characters. A classic Broadway hit - which always includes the ensemble in a big way throughout.... I love the quick wit and showy numbers."

And where's the triumph without a challenge? She says, "Picking up the tap shoes for the first time in almost 10 years has been a challenge, mostly in a fun way, but requires some extra practice time!"

Her favourite song/scene? "There are quite a few favourites, but I think 'Will Power' is up there for many reasons I cannot disclose at this time... (smile)."

The show transports us back to the finery of the 1590s. Davies loves the outfits and certain aspects of that age, but has reservations about living back then. "I think I'd cause too much trouble and would get caught wearing pants!"

Nick Bottom and brother Nigel Bottom are the main protagonists.

**Jordan Elliott** of Brandon plays Nick Bottom.



PHOTO FROM FACEBOOK

Something Rotten cast in rehearsal on the AUD stage, Darrell Corbell (Nostradamus) is front and centre.

Jordan and his wife Erin are alumni of Michelle Chyzk's Konektis choir. Jordan was on the AUD Theatre stage in the ensemble of Elf the Musical in 2019 and then in Brandon's Mecca Productions – Rent and Oliver.

Now, Elliott takes on a lead role. "I knew going into the show that I would have a lot to learn taking on such a big role, and Michelle Chyzk and Dean Munchinsky have been so much fun to work with to enhance my performance skills."

He gives this show high praise and says you don't have to be a fan of musicals to love this one with its "fantastic music, comedy, and romance, delivered by a very talented cast."

In his day job, Elliott is warehouse manager with Mar Dee Enterprises and enjoys family time with Erin and their dog Koda.

However, this fall he's challenging himself on stage, "finding the right emotions and motivations" for each scene he plays.

"My lack of experience in a prominent role like this, it's definitely been demanding physically and emotionally. Still, to this day there are things I need to work on. But that's part of the process, and all that effort will be worth it for the audience!"

Multiple scenes with the male troupe are his favourites.

"We have some fun songs... the guys always have so much energy. And seeing the way that my brother (Nigel played by Jackson Hacault) evolves in the show is always enjoyable to be a part of."

**Directors Chyzk and Dean Munchinsky** were interviewed on CTV recently.

Munchinsky pitched the show saying, "It's a beautiful show. It's hilarious, it's smart, it's fun ...we've got amazing acting. I'm very proud of my actors. They are impressive people."

Chyzk told the show's host that Rotten "has probably over 30 quotes from different musicals. It goes on forever, just quite a spectacle."

When considering who should see the show, she posted on Virden Theatre Productions Facebook saying, "We have produced so many magical shows over the years, but our previous ones have all been 'general' in rating and this one would be considered 'parental guidance.' She wants audiences to know there's some adult

language and adult humour/content.

It's something Lovatt alluded to saying, "This is such a funny musical, something that Virden might not normally do. There's some parts in it that will make people's eyebrows go up." Adding that it's a show you may want to see twice.

Tickets are available online through 3Common. Arts Mosaic can help navigate the online purchase. Rush seating will be sold at the door.

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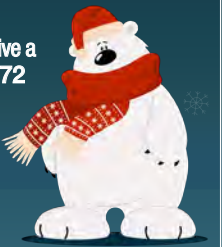
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We are NOT accepting food donations for the 2025 campaign.

However, donations of toys (approximate value \$25) ARE accepted for this campaign and can be dropped off at Sunrise Credit Union in Virden as well as at the Town of Virden office in the Christmas Cheer box in the foyer until December 12.

If you are aware of someone needing to receive a hamper, please call Carol at 204-851-2972 between November 17 - December 8, 2025. Please direct any questions to: Kathy 204-851-0506 or Lisa 204-748-5440



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# Gardening in November

**Submitted**

PATRICIA HANBIDGE

If you are gardening in November in Manitoba, you are definitely not doing so outdoors. Thus, we need to ensure that we provide all of what is needed for good growth. As you know, plants need light, water, warmth, oxygen and food to grow appropriately. Also, as we live in the Northern Hemisphere, we need to provide supplemental light in order to produce any substantial amount of food from the plants that we grow.

One of the best things about growing plants from seed is we then have the freedom to grow almost anything we desire! There is an amazing selection of different varieties and cultivars of plants that sometimes makes it rather difficult for us to decide what we should grow. It is easy to get carried away and grow too much as this time of year we are craving green growth and those tiny little packets don't seem to hold that much! It is only once those plants get growing, we see how a few seeds can easily grow into way too many plants! Instead of planting all the seeds in the package, only plant as many as you will need. Share the leftovers or store them in a cool, dry place.

If we are going to be successful starting seeds, it is useful to understand a little bit about the seed itself and what it requires to germinate. Seeds are made up of an outer seed coat that protects the inner parts of the seed during dormancy. Inside the seed coat lies the endosperm which serves as the food supply that is essential for the early growth of the seedling. In the center of the seed is the embryo which is really a very minute undeveloped plant.

There are four things that seeds need to germinate.

ate. Water is essential for penetrating the seed coat which causes the endosperm to swell. The water dissolves nutrients in the endosperm which are then available to the embryo and life begins! Some seeds need light in order to germinate while others do not. Oxygen is also necessary as the seed needs to respire in order to break down those nutrients in the endosperm. Last but not least, germination requires heat. Each seed will have an optimum germination temperature for the best rate of growth.

If you are new to starting seeds, then choose to grow those plants that are relatively easy to germinate and do not need special conditions. Most seed packages will give directions on how to plant those specific seeds. At this time of year, I grow salad greens and herbs as those are the plants that I wish to have at my fingertips to enhance our diets. Generally, small seeds need not be covered with soil but instead gently pressed into the media or soil. Medium seeds can be lightly covered and large seeds can be poked right into the soil. A good rule of thumb is to plant the seed to the depth of their diameter.

Keep the soil moist to ensure even germination whether you are seeding indoors or directly into the garden. Use a gentle spray to avoid washing the seeds around, or they may pool into dense clumps. Keep the humidity high until the seeds germinate by covering seed pots with plastic wrap. Once you see the plants germinate, uncover the seedlings to avoid conditions



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Seedlings

that are too wet for the new seedlings. Once the seeds germinate those young seedlings will need adequate light in order to grow. Placing them directly under a fluorescent light fixture or grow light will ensure that the seedlings are strong and sturdy. If you find that your seedlings are tall and spindly it is because they are not getting enough light and are reaching for the sun.

Hanbridge is the Lead Horticulturist with Orchid Horticulture. Find us at [www.orchidhort.com](http://www.orchidhort.com); by email at [growyourfuture@gmail.com](mailto:growyourfuture@gmail.com) on facebook @orchidhort and on instagram at #orchidhort.

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## A Very Virden Christmas

**Holiday Events ★ Nov 21 - Dec 5**

- NOVEMBER 26 - 30 **SOMETHING ROTTEN** @ AUD Theatre
- NOVEMBER 27 **OIL CAPITALS GAME** vs Niverville Nighthawks
- NOVEMBER 28 **CHRISTMAS BAKE SALE & TEA** St. Paul's United Church
- NOVEMBER 29 **SANTA PANCAKE BREAKFAST** @ Tundra Oil and Gas
- NOVEMBER 29 **VIRDEN SANTA PARADE**
- DECEMBER 2 **OIL CAPITALS GAME** vs Selkirk Steelers
- DECEMBER 3 **COWBOY CHRISTMAS TOUR - GEORGE CANYON & AARON PRITCHETT** @ AUD Theatre
- DECEMBER 4 **GOULTER SCHOOL CHRISTMAS CONCERT** @ AUD Theatre
- DECEMBER 5 **DAINTY TRAY & BAKE SALE** @ Arts Mosaic \*Hosted by Virden & District Health Auxiliary

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# YWCA shares major expansion plan for women's shelter

By Anne Davison  
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

When Lois Ruston, Executive Director of YWCA Westman, joined the recent meeting of the Virden Royal Purple, her message was both sobering and hopeful. She came to share plans for the YWCA's next major project — a greatly expanded women's shelter in Brandon — and to thank the group for their ongoing contributions that make a real difference in the lives of those escaping violence.

For several years, Royal Purple has shed light on brain injury from intimate partner violence, and they've supported Westman Women's Shelter with Purple Care bags full of essentials and gift items.

Purple Care bags form the foundation of Christmas packages. The warmth of a personal touch speaks to the women. Ruston said, "Our clients, knowing that someone has thought of them and has fundraised and purchased all of these items with such care... is really very special. A lot of times they haven't necessarily experienced that for quite some time in their lives."

The YWCA organization traces its roots back to 1911 and now employs about 30 staff guided by four core values: protect, include, advocate, empower. It operates the women's shelter, crisis lines, and outreach programs across the region, while remaining part of the national YWCA network of 29 member associations.

YWCA Brandon was officially rebranded as YWCA Westman to reflect its true reach as the only women's shelter in all of southwestern Manitoba.

Westman Women's Shelter, in operation since the 1980s, supports women, men, and children fleeing domestic violence. Men are assisted through non-residential services and alternate accommodations. And there are children who are fleeing domestic violence.

"We pretty much always, have kids in the shelter as well, of all ages... we had a boy last year who finished grade 11, and he was living in the shelter with his mom."

## Shelter use rising

Ruston shares heavy statistics "that kind of hurt your heart." Since 2014, shelter use has risen by 20 per cent. In 2024, there were 511 residential stays, with 42 per cent of residents being children.

Some stays are not very long. "Sometimes they just need a few days to kind of get back on their feet or to be away from their family situation for a bit. Sometimes they come to us and that truly is where they start to rebuild from. So typically, the maximum that they would stay is about two months, but that can be extended if necessary."

Recently people are staying in the shelter longer because housing is hard to find. The YWCA employs a housing coordinator who helps clients find housing.

Single women need a safe place they can afford to live in on their own. Mothers with kids are a different story. "So, we are seeing sometimes moms come to us with three, four and five kids. Being able to find an apartment that's big enough, that they can afford, is difficult."

The shortage means more strain on the shelter. Their 24/7 crisis line received 851 calls last year and being full, had to turn away 81 individuals. However, Westman belongs to a provincial network of about ten shelters that coordinate placements when one facility is full.

## Safety, dignity, and choice

Ruston emphasized that shelter life is more than just a roof.

"The goal of our organization is to empower people to make the decision about what they want their next steps to be. They may have been in a situation where they have been told what to do or been under someone's power and control. So, we always work with them to make their own decisions."

"We have support workers that will make a case plan and help them get everything - from a new phone, to new identification, to addressing some of their health needs that they may have." This can include helping a victim of violence to access a court order.



PHOTO BY ANNE DAVISON

YWCA director Lois Ruston flanked by Royal Purple members (L-R) Bev Ogilvie, Marie Plaisier, and Fran Bayliss. A conceptual drawing of the exterior of the YWCA Westman multipurpose women's campus.

Some people choose to stay in the situation or have friends or family they can live with and get restarted from there. Two non-residential support workers assist people who don't come into the shelter.

Seniors coming from abusive situations with their caregivers, their children or others can also find help at the shelter.

"I just did a presentation on elder abuse," says Ruston, explaining, "There's financial abuse, there's all kinds of ways that an individual can be suppressed, and so we work to provide them with safety and support regardless of what that [abuse] looks like."

Children also receive specialized care. A child and youth support worker provides one-on-one trauma support, while the Angel Committee assembles comfort kits with weighted blankets and things like lava lamps and fidget toys to help kids manage stress and anger.

For spiritual support, staff can help clients connect with a church of their choice. The shelter also has a Grandmother's Circle. Ruston says, "The board meets with the grandmothers who are Indigenous, and they provide us with some wisdom and perspective, and then one of the grandmothers actually comes and does sharing circles every two weeks for clients."

## Programs that heal and empower

YWCA Westman provides creative prevention and outreach programs. November is Domestic Violence Awareness Month. National statistics showing alarming trends: a woman is murdered every other day in Canada; Manitoba and Saskatchewan record the highest domestic violence rates.

Rates of teen dating violence have increased 33 per cent since 2015.

"One of the programs that we have is called Strength in Me. It's an event for youth aged 10 to 13 and it's a day off school in Brandon.... It focuses on developing confidence, curiosity and healthy relationships."

Presenters from Brandon Police Service share street smarts. Others sessions include areas of interest for youth such as 4H, Indigenous crafting as well as career counselling.

Ruston says it's important to reach younger students too, "both boys and girls, to talk about what this situation kind of looks like as they grow up, and how to help them not be in one of those situations either as a survivor or as an abuser."

## Community awareness

YWCA Westman has installed bathroom-sticker campaigns across rural Manitoba in communities like Virden, Elkhorn, Glenboro, and Melita, featuring discreet QR codes linking to their crisis line. Ruston tours towns making presentations to groups like this

one at the Royal Purple meeting.

"We've shared information with hospitals and clinics and they've been really thankful to receive that information." There's even a project going in all three Border Regional Libraries to help women in crisis reach out to the shelter.

"We're always working to get out into rural communities. Virden, Hamiota, Carberry, and Killarney will have rink boards with YWCA Westman crisis line on them...."

Community generosity through churches and groups remains the backbone of this work. The United Way funds welcome kits with new toiletries and pajamas, and the "Power of PJs" campaign ensures every resident receives new sleepwear at Christmas. Brandon's La Vie en Rose provides most of these pyjamas every year for the project.

Donations through the Fresh Start Program supply women leaving shelter with items to start a new life on their own. Things like dishes, towels, pillows and linens for example.

## Looking ahead: a new campus

Perhaps the most ambitious step yet is the redevelopment of the former Meredith Place property on 11th Street in Brandon. The aging red-brick facility — formerly used for men exiting corrections — was damaged by flooding in 2022. Rather than repair it, the YWCA chose to reimagine the site as a new multipurpose women's campus.

Conceptual plans call for two floors of emergency shelter plus two floors of supportive housing with 20 self-contained units where residents can stay for up to two years. The building would also include administrative offices, a sexual-assault examination suite, and interview rooms when police need to be involved.

The project, Ruston said, will take several years to realize, with pre-development work and fundraising now underway. Construction could be completed by 2029 or 2030, depending on government and community support.

Operational funding is through the provincial Department of Families. "And then we're hoping to acquire both federal and provincial funding for the construction through the housing portfolios of both federal and provincial governments."

Ruston closed by thanking the Royal Purple for their ongoing partnership. "Every donation, every gift bag, every pair of pajamas — it all matters," she said. "When someone walks through our doors with nothing, those small acts of kindness are what help them start again."

For more information go to: [ywcawestman.ca/](http://ywcawestman.ca/) or phone 204-571-3680.



## SPORTS

OIL CAPITALS DISPLAY OFFENSIVE PROWESS  
IN TWO VICTORIES

By Robin Wark  
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

The Virden Oil Capitals won their two contests last weekend by a combined 11 goals.

Cohen Lewko scored a hat trick and racked up five points to help the Oil Capitals to a 9-4 road win over the Portage Terriers. Eight different players lit the lamp as the Virden team beat the Northern Manitoba Blizzard 8-2 at home.

A highlight of both victories was the effectiveness of the Oil Capitals' power play. Against Portage, Virden converted on all five of its power plays. The Oil Capitals scored on two of their five power-play chances versus the Blizzard.

"We have worked hard on our special teams over the last few weeks," Virden head coach Tyson Ramsey said. "I thought our guys played with an urgency and used the structure to create a ton of really good chances to score and, when we had a chance, we were able to capitalize. A great job by our guys to buy in and get it done. It was nice to see them finally rewarded."

The wins improved Virden's Manitoba Junior Hockey League record to 12-6-0-0, as of Nov. 16.

The Oil Capitals were to play on Nov. 18 in Selkirk, but the contest was postponed. The Virden team is in Winkler on Nov. 22.

#### Oil Caps 9, Terriers 4

On Nov. 15, the visitors from Virden trailed 2-1 after the first period. The Oil Caps grabbed the lead by scoring four goals in the second session to take a 5-2 lead. Three of those goals came from Lewko in seven minutes. Two of Lewko's markers came with the man advantage. He added two assists in the third period as the Oil Caps outscored Portage 4-2. With six points over two games last weekend, Lewko was named one of the MJHL's Stars of the Week.

"Cohen is a very talented young player. He is a big body and likes the physical part of the game," Ramsey said. "He has good offensive instincts and shoots the puck extremely well. He is starting to build his game away from the puck, and we are excited to see what his game will look like as the season moves along."

The Oil Capitals' Noel Englot scored the game's opening goal. London Hoilett found the back of the net on a Virden power play in the second period. In the final frame, Liam Goertzen scored twice, while Nate Schaefer and Virden's own Ty Plaisier had power



Virden Oil Caps defeated Portage Terriers 9 to 4.

PHOTO BY VIRDEN OIL CAPS

play markers. Schaefer finished the night with four points. Goertzen and Plaisier each had three. Braxton Burdeny made 28 saves for the Oil Capitals.

Portage goalie Donovan Bodnar faced 52 shots. He stopped 43 of them. Scoring for the Terriers were Edward Knittig, Rhett Platt, Breck Hirschoff, and Ben Bugeaud.

#### Oil Caps 8, Blizzard 2

The Oil Capitals outshot the visiting Blizzard 43-24 on Nov. 16 in a dominant performance. Thirteen Virden players recorded at least a point in front of the crowd of 637 on Grey Cup Sunday.

"I think our group has really bought into what we are trying to accomplish offensively," Ramsey said. "We have speed up and down our lineup and on the back end and if we manage the puck and play fast, we can attack teams off the rush and overwhelm them in the offensive zone. It has been nice for our guys to build some confidence with the puck, and we hope we can

continue to build that part of our game."

One of the highlights of the contest was Oil Capitals' defenceman Lincoln Black-Greaves scoring his first MJHL goal. Also scoring for Virden were Colten Worthington, Goertzen, Lewko, Rhylan Baxter, Marshall Light, Tyson Draper, and Bryce Bryant. Baxter and Worthington's goals came on the power play.

Bryant, a Virden product, was named the game's First Star with a goal and two assists. As of Nov. 16, he led the team and was tied for second in the MJHL with 30 points. Plaisier, the team's hometown captain, was the Second Star with two assists. Oak Lake Beach's Draper was the Third Star. Goertzen was selected as the Oil Capitals' Hardest Working Player. Carson Wright had two assists. Virden goalie Micky Gross made 22 saves.

Trystyn Sidor and Jett Fogle scored for the Blizzard. Nick Kunyk started in net for Northern Manitoba and stopped 22 of the 27 shots he faced. Keagin Kelln came on in relief. He had 13 saves on 16 shots.

## OIL KINGS BEAT ELKS IN BUSY WEEK OF THHL ACTION

By Robin Wark  
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

The Virden Oil Kings went 1-2 last week in Tiger Hills Hockey League action.

In a rematch of the 2025 THHL finals, the local senior team lost to the Killarney Shamrocks 5-4 at home on Nov. 13. It rebounded the next night to beat the Souris Elks 4-1 on the road. Duncan Paddock turned away 33 shots to backstop the Oil Kings to victory.

"Any win on the road is great, especially after a close loss in Virden the night before," Oil Kings forward Colin Cook said. "Duncan helped big time in net and made a lot of huge saves to help us push for the win."

On Nov. 16, the Oil Kings fell at home 4-2 to the Hartney Blues. The Virden team enters this week with a 3-3-0-0 record.

The Oil Kings are on the road on Nov. 21 to play the Plainsmen in Carberry. Two days later, on Nov. 23, they take on the visiting Melita Bisons.

#### Shamrocks 5, Oil Kings 4

The Oil Kings battled back but were unable to defeat the reigning league champion Shamrocks on Nov. 13. Killarney jumped out to a 2-0 lead and were up 3-1 at the first intermission. On a power play, Dyan Halliday scored Virden's first goal of the game.

In the second period, the Oil Kings stormed back. They scored three straight goals to take a 4-3 lead. Just over a minute into the period, Tanner Koroscil lit the lamp on the power play. About 11 minutes later, he scored one at even strength. Brad Bowles capped the three-goal surge with a marker of his own. In the final two minutes of the frame, Ty Enns knotted things up at 4-4 with a goal. Only 39 seconds into the third, Colten Miller delivered the game-winner for the Shamrocks.

For Virden, goalie Eric Reid made 27 saves. Bowles finished with three points. Elisha Bambridge, Layne Toder, Halliday, and Koroscil all had two each. Shamrocks netminder Brian Archibald stopped 20 shots.

#### Oil Kings 4, Elks 1

Just 53 seconds into Nov. 14's contest in Souris, Pierce Martin scored for Virden. The Oil Kings added two more in the second period with markers from Dillin Stonehouse and Cook.

Ben Williams scored for the Elks in the third period to make the score 3-1. Bowles scored shorthanded into an empty net in the final two minutes to make the final score, 4-1.

He finished with three points. Stonehouse had two. Souris' Brady Edmunds stopped 38 shots.

#### Blues 4, Oil Kings 2

On Nov. 16, the Blues led 1-0 and 3-1, respectively, at the intermissions. Halliday scored the Oil Kings' second period marker. Layne Toder found the back of the net for Virden on a power play in the third period. Paddock made 15 saves.

Hartney's Justin Holder stopped 26 shots. Mark Agnew, Jesse Linner, Derek Elliott, and Taylor Wells scored for the Blues.



# SPORTS

## ON THE ICE AND IN THE COMMUNITY, WRIGHT SHINES FOR THE OIL CAPITALS

By Robin Wark  
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

In Carson Wright's second season with the Virden Oil Capitals, the forward continues to display his passion for hockey and the community.

Hockey is a year-round pursuit for Wright. After his rookie season on the ice with the Oil Caps, he won an Alberta Pro Roller Hockey League championship over the summer.

"I love everything about hockey, but the thing that I love the most is playing in front of big crowds, especially at home with our fans," the 19-year-old said. "Also, meeting new people and becoming close as a team. And obviously, scoring goals and winning games is the most fun part of it all."

The 5-foot-9, 163-pounder is a key contributor for the Oil Capitals this season. As of Nov. 16, Wright was fifth on the team in scoring with 15 points in 18 games.

"Carson is highly skilled and an elite skater," Virden head coach Tyson Ramsey said. "He sees the ice really well and is one of our best passers. He works extremely hard on and off the ice and has been a really good fit with (Bryce) Bryant and (Colten) Worthington. ... He has had a great season to this point and we look forward to what he can accomplish the rest of the way."

In a victory over the Neepawa Titans on Nov. 7, Wright thrilled the Virden fans with a hat trick. Against the Titans on Oct. 11, he recorded two as-

sists. Last week against the Northern Manitoba Blizzard, Wright had two helpers. Performances like those have him on pace to surpass his rookie campaign totals of seven goals and 21 points in 46 games. As of Nov. 16, he already had six goals.

After last season, Wright suited up for the Calgary Outlaws in roller hockey. His team defeated the Sherwood Park Archers in the league championship tilt, which was broadcast later on ESPN and TSN channels.

"Roller hockey is a nice change from ice hockey, as it is a slower pace game, which involves just as much thinking and skill," Wright said. "This improves my game on the ice, as the skills and IQ of the game translates to the ice."

In Virden, the Calgary product has made himself part of the community. Ramsey said Wright is "one of our best volunteers and enjoys spending time in the community." Last season, Wright was the team's RBC Community Ambassador. As well,



PHOTO BY VIRDEN OIL CAPITALS

Carson Wright has had a strong start to his second season with the Virden Oil Capitals.

he received the Oil Capitals' Sunrise Credit Union Most Community Minded Award.

"I enjoy being involved in the community because I get to meet people who support and look up to our team. So volunteering and helping out gives me a chance to give back to them," said Wright, who billets with Oil Capitals assistant coach Brett Braybrook and the coach's sons, Jax and Avery.

## GRIT AND GROWTH: DRYDEN EMBRACES BIGGER STAGE WITH THE RIFLES

By Robin Wark  
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

Virden product Cohen Dryden grasped an opportunity to take on a larger role with the Winnipeg Rifles this past season.

In the 2024 season, the former Virden Collegiate Institute standout learned the ins and outs of the Rifles and the Canadian Junior Football League. This past campaign, the son of Miranda Dryden-Careme and Jacey Careme saw his hard work pay off with increased playing time and responsibility.

Dryden plays defensive back for the Rifles. Head coach Geordie Wilson praised his physical play and effectiveness in run support. Due to veteran-stocked rosters, playing time at the junior level can be hard to come by for young athletes. The Rifles travel with a limited roster, but Dryden was able to go on the

road with the team a couple of times this season, Wilson said.

"He earned his stripes and made some trips this year because of his prowess in practice, his compete level, and how he did on special teams," the coach said.

Dryden is utilized as a gunner on the Winnipeg squad's punt coverage team. He is also used in blocking roles on the kick return and punt return units. Dryden has embraced these opportunities to help the Rifles.

"I love special teams because it has all the aspects of football I love and it feels good to just run downfield with all your teammates and try to make plays," he said.

The CJFL plays 12-man football. Going from competing in the nine-man version of the game in high school to 12-man was just one of the adjustments Dryden had to make in moving up to the junior level.

"Junior football was a giant leap coming

from Virden," he said. "It took a lot of dedication and commitment in the offseason. And when it comes to being on the field, everything is much faster and you have to pay attention to everything."

In Winnipeg, Dryden is a full-time apprentice electrician. While he acknowledges juggling work and football can be "pretty busy at times," Dryden appreciates the opportunity to still be on the gridiron.

"I enjoy playing with the Rifles because of the high calibre of football and because it has given me a second chance at football after high school," he said.

As well, Dryden is grateful for the encouragement and backing his parents have provided during his football career. He said, "They have supported me lots off the field with injuries and recovery and have helped me stay healthy enough to play."



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Former Virden Collegiate Institute football players Michael Love Jr. (#93) and Cohen Dryden (#44) are teammates on the Winnipeg Rifles.



# MJHL SEASON UPDATE

MJHL HOCKEY

DEREK HOLTOM

Can anyone stop the Niverville Nighthawks?

Heading into the past weekend the only team to earn a win over the Nighthawks this year is the Dauphin Kings. Other than that loss the Nighthawks have beaten all comers – 11 in a row and counting at last check.

And they are not just beating last-place teams – their current win streak included two wins over Steinbach (one via shutout no less), Dauphin (the top team in the West Division), and the Selkirk Steelers (the former top team in the East Division).

The Nighthawks are doing it with some stellar defense – they have a team GAA of 1.94, and are led by netminder Austin Dubinsky, who sports a 14-1-0 record with a .943 save percentage and a 1.84 GAA.

They're not a high-flying scoring team – Waywayseecappo, Steinbach, Portage and Selkirk all have more goals than the Nighthawks. But as they say, defense wins championships.

As for the former top team, the Selkirk Steelers started the season 8-0-0 and then proceeded to go 5-7-1. Heading

into the past weekend the Steelers were in a three-way tie for second place, 13 points clear of the Winnipeg Blues and Winkler Flyers for the final playoff spot. That said every team in the East Division has games in hand on the Steelers. Selkirk famously roared to a great start last year and missed the playoffs. They're in a much better spot this year, so it they can avoid any sort of lengthy losing streak, they have a good shot at getting back into the playoffs, and even climb back up the standings.

In the West Division, the defending champions lost a pair of games to the visiting Winnipeg Monarchs, who now have four wins this year – three of which came against the Northern Manitoba Blizzard.

No one is really running away with things in the West just yet – entering the weekend just four points separated first place Dauphin and tied for third Neepawa and Waywayseecappo.

Swan Valley was just five back of the bubble line – a vast improvement from a year ago – and still have a path to the playoffs if they can get their goals against under control – only the Winnipeg Monarchs have allowed more goals against.

The Blizzard are nine back of the playoff line with three games in hand on the Wolverines. They also have a path to the playoffs, but their problem is in not scoring enough goals. They trail every team in goals scored, though they do retain five games in hand on the Winnipeg Monarchs, the next lowest scoring team. The Blizzard team plus minus is

also twice as good as the Monarchs.

- The East Division dominated the MJHL Liquor and Lotteries Stars of the Week, sweeping all three honours. Kicking things off is Trevor Hill from the Portage Terriers. He scored four goals and added four assists in just two games.
- Next up is Niverville goaltender Austin Dubinsky. He won both of his games played, posting a 1.00 GAA and sparkling .961 save percentage.
- The final winner is Evan Gradt from the Steinbach Pistons. He scored a pair of goals and added three assists in two games to earn the honour.
- On the trade front, the Virden Oil Capitals shipped forward Daniel Tokariwski to Fort Frances of the SJHL for a player development fee (PDF).
- The Niverville Nighthawks sent forward Luke Mackenzie to Melfort of the SJHL for defenseman Jake Demone and a PDF.
- The Winnipeg Monarchs acquired defenseman Cooper Stockdale from Warman of the SJHL for a PDF.
- The Winnipeg Blues made two deals – they obtained forward Lucas Lagoutte from St. Michaels of the OJHL for a PDF, and also obtained forward Brady Green from Niagra of the OHL for a PDF.
- And the Northern Manitoba Blizzard obtained forward Kasen Harrold from La Ronge of the SJHL for a PDF. The 18-year-old had two assists in 13 games with La Ronge, and has three assists in his first three games with the Blizzard.
- Just one suspension to report to end the week. Easton Walter from the Neepawa Titans was handed a two-game suspension for earning a major for interference.

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Meighen Haddad LLP

LAW FIRM

Ashley T. Joyce

ajoyce@mhlaw.ca

Virden

255 Wellington St. W.

Virden, Manitoba R0M 2C0

204.725.8769

Stephen K. Branigan

skbranigan@mhlaw.ca

Redvers, SK

21 Railway Avenue,

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## SPORTS NOTES: FOSTER RINK CURLS RARE EIGHT-ENDER

By Robin Wark  
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

The Virden Curling Club was home to a rare feat last week.

Murray Foster and his rink achieved an eight-ender during a men's senior recreational league contest against Greg Tough's rink. Curling Canada's website states, "An eight-ender is an end where all eight stones score for one team; a very rare occurrence." Foster's teammates in achieving the accomplishment were Brian Johnston, Grant Miller and Keith Hagan.

"We didn't get too excited as we knew we could get eight-ender if I made my last shot and there were eight red rocks still in the house. ... We had six rocks in the house and Greg drew for shot rock both times and I was able to chip them out and stay both shots."

According to a Feb. 12 post on the Curling Day in Canada website, there has never been an eight-ender in the Olympics, the Scotties Tournament of Hearts or the Montana's Brier. The probability of the feat is one in 120,000, according to the Canadian Curling Association. In comparison, the odds of making a hole-in-one in golf is 12,000 to 1 according to the National Hole-in-One Registry in 2024.

Cory Barkley of the Virden Curling Club said that longtime members of the organization were trying to recall the last time there was an eight-ender locally. He said they thought it was in the early 1990s. On Facebook, the club posted, "Congratulations guys, it's been a long time since we've seen an 8 ender in Virden."

The eight-ender, which occurred in the third end, was just part of an exciting game between the Foster and Tough rinks. The Tough rink battled back and led 11-9 late. Foster scored four in the eighth to win.

Of the eight-ender, Tough said, "Murray called and made a beautiful shot to get the eight. Our team curled really well on that end and in the whole game. Miraculous comeback! Murray and I are really good friends and I am very happy for him."

Camaraderie is definitely a key aspect of the local club. When asked what keeps him curling, Foster said, "Love for the game and a very good league with lots of fun and visiting and the best ice around."



PHOTO BY VIRDEN CURLING CLUB.

Murray Foster, Brian Johnston, Grant Miller and Keith Hagan of the Virden Curling Club recently curled an eight-ender.

### Hockey Trades

Pipestone's Luke MacKenzie was swapped earlier this month to the Saskatchewan Junior Hockey League's Melfort Mustangs from the Niverville Night Hawks of the Manitoba Junior Hockey League. The former Virden Oil Capitals forward had two goals and five points in nine games this season for Niverville. As of Nov. 16, the son of Gavin and Cheryl MacKenzie had appeared in two games for Melfort and recorded an assist.

The MJHL's Oil Capitals sent Daniel Tokariwski to the Superior International Junior Hockey League's Fort Frances Lakers. After accumulating 19 points in 55 games last season for Virden, the 20-year-old forward was pointless in six games for the Oil Caps this season.

### Poole Reaches 100

Earlier this month, McAuley's Darbi Poole recorded the 100th point of her college hockey career. The daughter of Dana and Robin Poole plays for the Midland University women's team. Midland University is based in Fremont, Neb.

### Scharff Named Athlete of the Week

Virden's Danika Scharff was named one of the University of Windsor's Athletes of the Week on Nov. 17. Last weekend, the veteran setter recorded 71 assists in six sets to help the Lancers to two victories. She also recorded six block assists and 13 digs. As of the date the award was announced, Scharff led U Sports with 10.64 assists per set. She is the daughter of Chad and Rita Scharff.

## REF MEMORIES

REF TO  
WRITER

GERRY  
NOLAN



As an official, you strive to become better at your game and learn from your peers. I went to the Brandon Wheat King games to watch the officials positioning and the calls they made, or missed, and tried to include their style of officiating into my game.

I have always thought there was one particular call in a game that would make or break your game. As officials we would talk about it in the dressing room. What happens if you miss that call, how are you going to get control of the game? This was especially true in a rugged game that was chippy with lots of pushing and shoving and maybe even fighting. What if you just did not see it? That can happen!

I was at a Brandon Wheat Kings game in March of 1979. The Wheat Kings had only lost 4 games so far that season and this would be their fifth and final loss in the regular season. This team set all kinds of records that still stand today in Major Junior Hockey!

A Saskatoon Blade player clipped Brian Propp with a high stick. Brian Propp was nicked and had some blood on his chin. No call was made! I think the referee just did not see it. In my mind I can still see the play in question. My first thought was his positioning. These were the days when there was one referee and two linesmen. So, Brian Propp gets high sticked, is cut, no penalty! Earlier in the game the Saskatoon Blades had a player hurt from blocking a shot, and had left the game and did not return.

At the first stoppage of play after Brian Propp was cut, the Wheat Kings made a line change. Five players came off the Brandon Wheat Kings bench led by Brad Kempthorne who was from Boissevain. He came onto the ice right toward the Saskatoon players' bench and

they were not happy their star forward had got injured. The Brandon players went right to the Saskatoon bench and basically just hauled that Blade player on to the ice. Of course, the benches were emptied and there was a full scale brawl! There were fights everywhere!

As an official, all you can do is try to make sure no one is getting seriously injured, that would be the first fight you intervene in.

Brian Propp, who basically got a bandage on the cut came back out on the ice and skated around the fisticuffs, looking for the culprit who had high sticked him. Brian eventually found him and while a teammate had the player tied up, Propp got a few free shots in and finished him off quickly.

When the smoke cleared there were four Saskatoon players laying on the ice, injured. The rest of the players on both sides had withdrawn to their benches.

Ken Federko who is the brother of St. Louis Blues star player, Bernie Federko, and was Saskatoon's best player lay on the ice for quite some time. When they got him up to escort him to the dressing room it was very apparent he probably was not sure where he was.

This was a real eye opener for me. Things happen in a hurry out there. There was no time for the linesmen to say to the referee, there was a high sticking major penalty, where they could give their version of to the referee, thus a 5 minute penalty issued to the Saskatoon Blade player.

My lesson, always expect the unexpected and hope you were never involved in one of those games. It was a real tough situation for any officials to be in.

Saskatoon won that game, but did not win the war. The two teams met in the Eastern Division Final of the Western Hockey Playoffs. The Brandon Wheat Kings defeated them in four straight games. The Brandon Wheat Kings went to the Memorial cup that season, but lost 2-1 to the Peterborough Petes in overtime. Some players you may recall that were playing for Brandon that year were Brad McCrimmon, Brian Propp, Ray Allison, Laurie Boschman and Oak River native, Wes Coulson!

## A Tribute to Farmers

By Gerry Nolan  
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

A Tribute To Farmers was written by Mrs. Wilma Hatch of Oak Lake. As I read her article from way back, probably some 50 to 60 years ago, while farmers have had to adjust in the way they do things on their farm, farming hasn't really changed that much. The following are the words of Mrs. Hatch!

Farmers are a unique breed, who for the most part, till the land they love and try to preserve a way of life.

They live close to birth, life and death. They live with (Hope) as their companion year after year. They battle not only the fickle elements and pests, but breakdowns which never come singly. They endure the frustrating job of tracking down repairs across two or

three provinces, and the United States.

Their hands become calloused and hard, but gentle as a woman's, when the need arises. Their skin is tanned from the sun and the wind. Their eyes wrinkled from looking across broad fields and trying to escape the dust. Amazingly those same eyes can discern from afar, the granddaughter or great great granddaughter

from a favourite line of livestock breeding, by inherited traits.

Their knowledge of wildlife, comes from first hand observation and close proximity season after season. They know the different species of birds and the geese flying overhead from the sound and the shape of the flight.

They develop an affinity, respect and intensity of feeling they have for the land they till, whether it be grain or mixed farming as well as the type of soil they live on. They care

for the animals in their care.

They have a resiliency beyond most men, as they put setbacks behind them and anticipate, next year. The song of the meadow lark, the honk of geese, the new calf crop and of course seeding time.

TIME, has only served to give me understanding, increased admiration, respect and empathy for this diminishing segment of our population.

These were the words of Mrs. Wilma Hatch, a teacher, a farmer's

wife and mother of four children.

Some sixty years later, her words ring true for many of us! Thank you to all the farmer's who supply the food that we eat. Make way for these men and women who really by faith and hope supply many of our needs. Thank a farmer today, you never know who is going through a hard time, that word may just give them enough hope to continue doing in my opinion the most important task, feeding families!



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- Maintain a clean, safe, and organized work environment
- Other duties as assigned

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### PASTURELAND FOR NEAR TWO CREEKS IN THE RM OF WALLACE WOODWORTH SALE BY TENDER

The Leslie Family is tendering one quarter of pastureland near Two Creeks in the RM of Wallace-Woodworth in Manitoba. Land has potential to be converted to grain land. No mineral rights are included in the sale.

**LAND DESCRIPTION:**  
NW ¼ 25-12-27 WPM

A package of information is available from the law office by email request to [anique@mhmlaw.ca](mailto:anique@mhmlaw.ca). Persons tendering are advised to conduct their own due diligence and verify all information and title status.

Tenders are to be submitted in a sealed envelope to the law office of McNeill Harasymchuk McConnell, Box 520, 243 Raglan Street W., Virden, Manitoba, R0M 2C0, Attn: Anique Timmerman; accompanied by a cheque for 5% of tender payable in trust to the law firm to form the deposit on any successful tenders. Highest or any tender not necessarily accepted. Cheques for unsuccessful tenders will be returned. Please include name, mailing address and phone number. The successful bidder(s) will be required to complete an agreement covering terms and conditions of sale. Please note "Leslie Tender" on envelope.

More information may be obtained by contacting Chad Leslie at (204)851-5775.

Tenders close **December 19, 2025, at 12:00 noon.**

**TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF SALE:**

1. Closing to be on or before January 30, 2026.
2. In addition to the deposit, the balance of the accepted tender must be paid on or before closing. If the balance is not paid by closing or on terms acceptable to the Vendor, the deposit may be forfeited as liquidated damages and not as a penalty.
3. Purchasers will be responsible for municipal taxes after January 1, 2026.
4. Purchaser shall be responsible for payment of GST or shall self-assess for GST.

### Farmland for Sale in RM of Pipestone

	2025 Assessment	2025 Taxes
SW 14-8-27W	231,700	726.47
SE 14-8-27W	262,100	821.86
NE 10-8-27W	275,400	863.46

Land is located on Road 44N and 157 - 158 W. Land is classified as "E" soil on Crop Ins. All Land is presently pasture, meadow brome, -Brome fenced & dugouts.

Offering the S 1/2 of 14-8-27W as one unit. NE 10-8-27W as a separate unit.

Mineral and oil rights are exempt. Interested parties should rely on their own inspection. Highest or any offer, not necessarily accepted. 2025 taxes are paid, 2026 taxes will be paid by purchaser. S 1/2 14-8-27W has a MTS and a capped oil well site Caveat. Deadline for offers is Monday December 22, 2025.

For more information, call or text 204-748-5178.

Offers to be sent to:  
Stewart Farms.  
Box 9, Pipestone MB  
R0m 1T0



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Inquiries and resumes can be directed to Cyndi 204-845-2405, or email [cyndi@tutthill.com](mailto:cyndi@tutthill.com)

### Tender

#### INVITATION FOR TENDERS

Tenders will be accepted to purchase the following lands, being primarily pasture land, located in the Municipalities of Souris-Glenwood and Whitehead:

- A. NE 1/4 16-7-20 WPM (CT#3369949/2)
- B. SE 1/4 28-7-22 WPM (CT#3369951/2)
- C. SW 1/4 1-8-21 WPM (CT#3369955/2)
- D. NE 1/4 36-7-21 WPM (CT#3369958/2)
- E. W 1/2 18-9-21 WPM (CT#3369954/2 and 3369953/2)

The following conditions will apply:

1. Tenders shall close November 28, 2025 at 4:30 pm and shall be submitted to Laura McDougald-Williams, Meighen Haddad LLP, at the address noted below;
2. All persons submitting a tender shall rely on their personal knowledge and inspection of the property;
3. The mines and mineral interests of the land are not being sold;
4. The highest or any tender may not necessarily be accepted;
5. Each tender must be accompanied by a certified cheque representing Ten (10%) Percent of the tendered purchase price;
6. All unsuccessful Bidders shall have their tender cheques returned following the closing of tenders;
7. All tenders submitted shall be unconditional;
8. Closing date for the sale to the successful Bidder shall be December 17, 2025.
9. Current tenants of land shall be permitted until April 1, 2026 to remove their cattle handling equipment and chattels from the land.
10. The successful Bidder shall be responsible for all costs associated with the registration of title into their name.
11. No adjustment for property taxes will be made (Vendor to pay 2025).
12. GST is applicable, and the successful Bidder shall either pay GST on the purchase price or have a valid GST number and provide an undertaking to self-assess.

Address for Tenders:  
Meighen Haddad LLP  
Box 1149, 4 Crescent Ave. West,  
Souris, Manitoba R0K 2C0  
Phone: 204-483-1556 or Fax: 204-483-2321  
[lwilliams@mhmlaw.ca](mailto:lwilliams@mhmlaw.ca)  
Attention: Laura J. McDougald-Williams

### Virden and District Health Auxiliary Annual Bake Sale

Friday, December 5, 2025,  
12:30 pm – 2:00 pm


at Arts Mosaic in the Historic CP Station.  
Christmas baking and dainty trays for sale. Progressive 50/50 tickets will also be available for \$10 each.

Lottery license No. 202506529

### Miniota Craft Sale

**Community Hall**  
**Sunday November 23,**  
**11AM - 3PM**  
**Lunch Available**  
**Contact:**  
**Loree @ 204- 851-5221**  
**to book a table**

### Requests for Quotes



#### REQUESTS FOR QUOTES

The RM of Sifton will be accepting Requests for Quotes (RFQ) for the following:

- 1) Petroleum Products
- 2) Gravel Products (crushing, loading & hauling)

Deadline: Quotes need to be submitted to the RM of Sifton before December 3, 2025, at 1:00 p.m. For more information, please call administration. 204-855-2423. Thanks!

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204-467-1858  
or 204-886-7027  
[mcsherrytld@gmail.com](mailto:mcsherrytld@gmail.com)

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### Notice

#### NOTICE TO CREDITORS

IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF DONNA IRENE ROWAND, late of the Town of Virden, in the Province of Manitoba, deceased;

ALL claims against the above estate, duly verified by Statutory Declaration, must be filed with the undersigned at their office, 243 Raglan Street W., Box 520, Virden, MB, R0M 2C0, on or before the 31st day of December, 2025.

DATED at Virden, Manitoba, this 14th day of November, 2025.

ANIQUE TIMMERMAN –  
MCNEILL HARASYMCHUK  
MCCONNELL SOLICITOR  
FOR THE ADMINISTRATOR

### HAVE NEWS?

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# Sunrise Credit Union fuels Ag members futures with \$15,000 in fuel!

By Heather Merckx  
SCU MARKETING MANAGER

Sunrise Credit Union has fueled local success by awarding \$15,000 in fuel gift cards through its Fuel Your Future contest. Three Sunrise members each received \$5,000 in fuel from their local gas stations, helping drive their farming and agricultural operations forward.

From August 1st to October 4th, individuals who applied for new agricultural loans or mortgages had the opportunity to participate in the Fuel Your Future contest. Each approved qualifying ag loan or mortgage during this period was automatically entered into a draw for one of three \$5,000 fuel gift cards.

Sunrise received an overwhelming response, with a large pool of qualifying entries for the contest. Congratulations to our three lucky winners - David Swift (Minnedosa Branch), Duncan Bell (Melita Branch), and Nevin and Laura Mains, (Boissevain Branch).



SUBMITTED PHOTOS

L to R: Loans Officer, Sunrise Credit Union Drew Kirkup, and Melita Winner Duncan Bell.

The Fuel Your Future contest not only celebrated three deserving winners but also gave Sunrise Credit Union the opportunity to pay it forward - helping strengthen local economies and support the communities that they serve.

### About Sunrise Credit Union

Sunrise Credit Union was formed in

2008 and offers personalized service to approximately 35,000 members across 19 branches. Sunrise Credit Union serves Baldur, Boissevain, Brandon, Cypress River, Deloraine, Grandview, Hartney, Holland, Laurier, Melita, Minnedosa, Reston, Sandy Lake, Shoal Lake, Ste. Rose du Lac, Strathclair, Treherne, Virden, and Waskada.

# Labour and immigration: Not so simple



By Cam Dahl, General Manager  
MANITOBA PORK COUNCIL

Immigration is a hot button political issue. High unemployment rates for young Canadians, housing shortages, and skyrocketing rents have many politicians calling for dramatic changes to Canadian immigration policies. For example, some have been calling for an end to critical programs like the Temporary Foreign Worker Program and slashing the number of new permanent residents.

The policy of the Government of Canada from 2015 to 2023 was one of wide-open doors, with Canada admitting a record number of newcomers. Facing housing shortages, rising rents, and high unemployment for youth and in some immigrant populations, the Government of Canada took a 180-degree policy pivot, cutting immigration targets. The targets for 2025 were almost 20 percent below the 2024 levels with further reductions planned in the years to come. The initial allocation for the Provincial Nominee Program was cut in half. These broad shifts do not serve the Canadian economy nor new Canadians.

The drivers behind the policy shift are real. Canada's big cities do have a housing crisis. Canadian youth are facing a difficult time finding jobs. Some regions of the country have seen an increased strain on social services and health care. Too many people have been admitted to Canada without a link to employment opportunities. However, a country wide one-size-fits-all immigration and labour policy is not the right answer.

What is needed for Toronto, Vancouver, or Montreal is not what is needed in other

parts of the country. Pressures in other regions of Canada are not the same as in our large cities, and new Canadians are a critical part of the Manitoba labour force in places like Notre Dame de Lourdes, Neepawa, Brandon, and Winnipeg. Provinces, not the federal government, are best positioned to manage the labour requirements in their own region.

Lack of access to labour is an issue today for hog producers. There are current cases where farmers have shuttered barn sites due to labour shortages. This problem will only be exacerbated if further restrictions are placed on immigration.

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

This approach successfully matches newcomers with stable full-time work. There is a high retention rate of foreign workers brought in by the hog sector. Foreign workers receive training and put roots into the communities where they settle. Neepawa is a prime example of a town that has been revitalized by the influx of new Canadians. The town is one of the fastest growing in Canada, boasting a new hospital and new road infrastructure because of investment by the hog sector and immigrants brought in to support the industry.

The negative impacts of labour shortfalls on hog producers and pork processors go beyond productivity losses. The sector has invested heavily in improving biosecurity and the ability to manage production diseases like Porcine Epidemic Diarrhea (PED) and Porcine Reproductive and Respiratory Syndrome (PRRS), as well as keeping foreign animal diseases like African Swine Fever (ASF) and Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) out of the country. Labour shortages make this work more difficult and add strain to producers' ef-

forts to protect the animals under their care from disease.

The impact of diseases like PED and PRRS are not theoretical. The last major outbreak of PED in Manitoba, which began in the fall of 2021 and ran through the spring of 2023, is estimated to have cost the industry more than \$100 million. Current estimates indicate that PRRS in the U.S. is costing the industry there \$1.65 billion annually.

Hog production and processing in Manitoba have the opportunity for growth, if barriers like labour shortfalls can be overcome. New building and investment not only provide on-farm and spin-off employment opportunities but also help build and sustain Manitoba's rural communities through population growth, increased school enrollments, additional small business opportunities, and enhanced community services.

Budget 2025 included commitments to prioritize immigration for rural, remote and tariff-hit businesses and to increase the number of new Canadians that are coming to fill specific jobs. These are positive announcements. However, it is not all that is needed. First, we need to abandon a blanket approach for all of Canada. Canada is a vast country with different needs for every region. Canadian immigration policy should reflect the country's diversity. For example, the Provincial Nominee Program has successfully helped meet regional needs. This program needs to be enhanced, not reduced. Second, policy should shift emphasis to the quality of immigration, versus a primary focus on the number of people entering Canada. More newcomers should have skills aligned with market needs, like the hog sector in Manitoba.

Immigration and labour needs vary widely across Canada. Rather than governments delivering, short "social media ready" soundbites we should be focused on thoughtful immigration and labour policies targeting regional, and sectorial, needs.



# Snow plane revival, Deep Sky issues top RM council agenda

## RM of Wallace-Woodworth council meeting, Nov. 13

By Dale Davison  
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

### Councillor Reports Deep Sky

Reeve Clayton Canart reported on the community meeting in Pipestone related to the Deep Sky carbon capture project. He said, "It was very well done, in that there were not a lot of disruptions and it didn't get side-tracked. It was more of a session of just people being able to gather some information...and then have the ability to ask some questions." He added that the representative from the environmental group Climate Action MB attempted to answer several questions, though many were outside his direct scope. Members of the public also submitted written questions for Deep Sky and for the municipal, provincial and federal governments.

### Snow plane

Coun. Barb Stambuski reported on a meeting of the Manitoba Antique Automobile Museum in Elkhorn, where the museum committee had a video conversation with Lisl Gunderman and her husband Darrell Hunter. Stambuski said, "They tracked down an old snow plane that was at the museum that was Doc Galloway's...and it was in horrendous shape. So they took it back, and they have basically redone the whole thing."

The winter vehicle equipped with an airplane propeller and skis was once used by Gunderman's grandfather Dr. Gerry Galloway, a physician who practiced in the south-east corner

of Saskatchewan.

Over the past summer, more than 14,000 people have viewed it as the couple showed it off around the region. Many people in that area remember Doc Galloway and the role the snow plane played in his medical practice. After the tour is completed next summer, the vehicle will be returned to the museum in Elkhorn.

In her report from the Veterinary Board meeting, Stambuski said that the clinic is dealing with plumbing issues in the bovine area, with pipes under the concrete repeatedly plugging and causing septic problems. A new hydraulic tip table has been purchased because the legs on the old one were failing.

Coun. Mark Humphries reported on the Nov. 5 Border Regional Library meeting. The library is preparing for its audit and has received provincial funding. They are arranging to remove an old, outdated sign from the Virden building. Sponsors have stepped forward to help cover the cost of replacing it, and the hope is to have the new sign installed before Christmas.

Humphries also attended the annual general meeting of the Virden Employment Skills Centre where a new president, Madison Mossop, was elected.

Coun. Lyle Kinnaird attended an Oak Lake Aquifer meeting in Souris where the licensing process for water use was reviewed. If aquifer levels fall below prescribed levels, those users li-

censed later would be shut off first. No audits are done on water-licence holders and reporting is voluntary, which raises concerns about the accuracy information and oversight of water use.

Coun. Denis Lachapelle attended the Elkhorn auto museum meeting and said budget meeting details presented there were important and informative. Lachapelle also reported from the Virden Handy Van meeting that an additional driver has expressed interest in helping, which may be useful after regular staff hours.

Coun. Val Caldwell attended the Remembrance Day service in Kenton. Though attendance was lower than in previous years, the service was a success. Reeve Canart noted that the Elkhorn Remembrance Day service was well attended, and that Coun. Humphries' playing of the Last Post and Reveille added emotional weight to the service.

Coun. Diana MacDonald attended the Remembrance Day service in Virden, representing the RM of Wallace-Woodworth. The service was well attended, including many young people, and the guest speaker, Terry Johnson, was praised for doing a very good job.

### Wallace District Fire Department

Council reviewed the financial details related to the new fire engine purchased for Station 1. The total cost of about \$900,000 will be paid to the supplier of the engine, Acres Industries. After donations and grants the

remaining \$274,540.43 is to be shared equally between the Town of Virden and the RM of Wallace-Woodworth, according to a 2023 cost-sharing formula. A resolution to approve the payment was passed.

### Other business

Council approved the second progress payment of \$275,560 to Samson Developments for design and replacement of the Cemetery Road bridge. Piles are now installed and were cut to height at the end of the week. The bridge will reopen before Christmas.

Gary Rhodes made an application for approval to add an approach on his property at NE 4-10-27. The request was approved on the condition that all costs for the new approach will be fully borne by the applicant.

Council appointed members of the Assiniboine West Watershed District committee. Coun. Lyle Kinnaird and Darren Johnson will represent the Arrow River Sub-district; Coun. Val Caldwell and Robert Alexander will represent the Oak River Sub-district.

The Inspire Kola committee has asked council for support in approaching Manitoba Transportation and Infrastructure (MTI) for a speed-limit reduction in the community. Reeve Canart said, "We can certainly support them in this. We've not had very much success with those in the past nor has any other municipality...but certainly worth the effort to try." Council agreed to send a letter of support.

# Miniota News

Submitted  
By LINDA CLARK

Congratulations to the  
Miniota School Grade 7  
& 8 Boys volleyball team

who came home from Hamiota last Thursday with the B-side banner for the Park West South Division. Mr. Lewis reports the team lost a close match to Birtle in the A-side semi-finals sending them to the B-side where they defeated the Shoal Lake team in the 3 sets. Way to go Boys!

Our deepest sympathy is extended to Vi Joseph's family on her death on November 14th at The Sherwood in Virden. Vi, Mom to Barbara Lynn Hodgins, Lorne, Terry, Brad and Warren Joseph was certainly a much loved Mom and Grandma. Our thoughts are with you all at this time and also with the Flannery family.

Our hearts ache again for the Joseph family with the sudden and sad news of the death of Lorne Joseph while on a cruise in Mexico. Our thoughts are with Lorne's wife, Marcia, and their children Kelly, Kass, Curtis and Carla and their families and to Lorne's siblings Barbara Lynn and John Hodgins, Terry and Jana Joseph, Brad and Sandra Joseph, and Warren Joseph. Lorne and Marcia and family farm at Sinclair.

Sheila Kokorudz accompanied her son Curtis to Calgary to visit her daughters Amanda and Angie and their family. Sheila reports that her grandson Yusef and his football team move on to play at Calgary High School finals this week, and her grandson Ryken Arran is having a good year with his team at Niverville MB. A busy Grandma keeping up with all her grandchildren's sports.

We also extend our sympathy to Garry Dalgarno of Newdale and other family members on the death of his sister Diane Cochrane at Hamiota. We think also of Diane's children Brittney Bridge and Richard Cochrane and their families.

History is being made in our small town this coming week, as the Enhancement Committee, the Miniota Community Centre, and the ice makers have turned on the new ice plant, and the ice is ready to go! Imagine in a lovely open fall such as we are having, that the ice is ready to go for our figure skaters and hockey players. Tuesday, November 25th will see the first skaters hit the ice, and on Saturday, November 22nd the two U7 teams, the Nighthawks vs the Mustangs will have a battle of the Miniota Little's. So be sure to visit the rink for a burger and take in the action of history being played out!

"It was only a sunny smile, and little it cost in the giving, but like morning light it scattered the night and made the day worth living." F. Scott Fitzgerald

## GOT NEWS?

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# Virden Jam and Oak Lake dance



PHOTO BY KRISTA PEDERSON

Some of the musicians at the Virden jam, Melody Tricco, Debra Naylor, Jean Istace, May Bercier, Arden Wiebe, Dwight Edwards, Joanne Edwards, Arlene Carter, Herb Benson, Vilson Gibbert, Bud Bercier, Owen Wilson.

By Krista Pederson  
S.A.I.L

Hopefully you got your toes tapping this past weekend!

The Oak Lake dance with The Fugitive's was a great success with around 70 attending. The Fugitives are a great favourite, with the band travelling

the country, from their home base in the Belmont area. Put on by the Oak View Club, the dancers were treated to a lunch in between dances.

And in Virden, the Legion Clubroom rang out with music on Sunday afternoon. With musicians from all over Western Manitoba, and into Saskatchewan, bringing guitars, fiddles, banjos, accordions, and mandolins.

The camaraderie of fun music and friendships from when Jams first started in this area, continues to this day, with musicians travelling from all over.

Back in the early 2000's there was a jam to go to every weekend. They were held in Brandon, Bin-scarth, Birtle, Beulah, Spy Hill, Elkhorn, Virden, and Melita. ... with dancing always encouraged!

Now, on the first Saturday of the month, you can catch Langenberg's jam. Virden's jam is the third Sunday of the month, and Westman Jams, in Brandon or Shilo, is the last Sunday of the month.

## From the prairies to the highlands tour 204 - part 12

By Gerry Nolan  
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

Friday, August 15, the last weekend of our wonderful holiday. Time was flying by so fast!

We left Pitlochry in the morning and continued our trek south to Falkland. This small town would be a place I would live in. It was fabulous! Along the way we stopped at the Mash Tun Bar which is located at the Blair Athol Distillery in Pitlochry. It is known for its selection of whiskies. The bar is named after the last working copper-top mash tun (a large vat) from the Clynelish Distillery and is now on display there.

After refreshments we continued to the Fish Ladder which is an engineering marvel. It is built next to the Pitlochry dam. This ladder helps the salmon by-pass the dam and migrate upstream for spawning. The 310 meter ladder consists of 34 pools that salmon swim through. They migrate up the river Tummel to spawn in Loch Faskally.

On the road again, we are heading south to Falkland and the Lady Well house, which will be our accommodations for the next five days. This is a beautiful Georgian home built in 1806, and was the home of Francis Shand Kydd, the mother of Diana, Princess of Wales. The house sleeps fourteen, has six bedrooms and 5 bathrooms. Each bedroom is named after a member of the family. There was William, Harry, Lady Diana and we were lucky to have Francis Shan Kydds room. Wow!

The kitchen was huge with an AGA range, which was a real learning curve for us to cook on. The conservatory was our gathering place, and the walled garden gave us an area to do yoga and games. These games included the art of body rolling down the hill. Boys will be boys!

The Covenanter which was a wonderful pub and restaurant, it was a twelve



PHOTO BY DEVON CALDWELL

Some of our crew at Lady Well House, Falkland.

minute walk from the Lady Well. We walked there several times and learned to appreciate the taste of gin. The historical town square was where parts of Outlander were filmed.

Julie and Celia had purchased yarn, the men's Dalwhinnie Whiskey, a beautiful Sutherland Tartan blanket plus other assorted treasures, all needed a mode of transport home, so while in Dornoch, we discovered a unique antique suitcase in a little hospice shop. We all chipped in on it and then packed it full to the brim. It got christened Mary Poppins! Packing tape was used to wrap around the suitcase as well as a luggage strap and a leather belt, with hopes that it would keep our Scottish artifacts and memories safe for the trip back to Canada. This would prove to be a source of stress!

After enjoying some pub time and dinner at the Covenanter, we strolled back to our lovely house where we had some leisure time, to visit and plan our adventure for the next day. We were expecting a surprise visitor and a chance to visit Midhope Castle. Lallybroch! The surprise visitor is a former Kenton resident.

## Nurse Practitioners recruited to PMH Region Primary health-care providers work independently and provide many services

Submitted

BY PRAIRIE MOUNTAIN HEALTH

Prairie Mountain Health (PMH) is pleased to announce that four new Nurse Practitioners (NPs) have begun seeing clients within the communities of Rossburn/Shoal Lake, Melita and Canupawakpa First Nation, as well as the Brandon Minor Injury and Illness Clinic and Dauphin Primary Care Outreach Clinic. PMH CEO Treena Slate says recruitment and retention of health-care professionals remains a top priority for the health region and the province, and growing the Grad NP program within the region continues to see great results.

"Along with our health partners and stakeholders, which include our communities, we continue to look for ways to support, recruit and retain healthcare staff within PMH. By having NPs provide services from base locations across our region, we can maintain the provision of primary care closer to home," Slate said.

"This is great news for the Westman community," stated Uzoma Asagwara, Minister of Health, Seniors and Long-Term Care. "Nurse practitioners are an excellent addition to primary health services and their unique focus on patient and client-centered care makes them essential partners in creating healthier communities. We welcome these new recruits and wish them a fulfilling career in health care here in Manitoba."

Slate adds that PMH is collaborating with six more NP students who are currently completing the second year of their NP programs and who are expected to begin working within the health region in the fall of 2026. Upon receiving their full designation, Nurse Practitioners work independently, are accountable to their practice and can provide many services, including:

- Completing assessments and physical

exams, including pap tests and pre-natal exams.

- Diagnosing and managing common medical issues and chronic conditions.
- Prescribing medications and therapies.
- Ordering diagnostic tests like blood work, x-rays, ultrasounds, CT scans and MRIs.
- Performing minor procedures like suturing, biopsies, wart and mole removal; and
- Referring to other health providers, including specialists.

For those looking for a Nurse Practitioner or Family Doctor, the Province of Manitoba has a program to help clients find new Primary Care Providers. Visit [www.manitoba.ca/familydoctorfinder](http://www.manitoba.ca/familydoctorfinder) or call toll-free 1-866-690-8260, to find out more. PMH NPs work with this program when taking on new patients.

As of November 2025, the region has 31 NPs providing service within 30 PMH communities, 11 of which are First Nation communities. Nurse Practitioner services are also provided at medical clinics, 7th Street Health Access Centre in Brandon, the Brandon Emergency Department, Souris acute care, First Nation Health offices, multiple long-term care sites, and the PMH Mobile Clinic (primary care bus).

"While attending Brandon University in 2001, I began providing respite care to adults and children with additional needs. I also worked as a health care aide. From those experiences, I moved forward with changing my career plans and degree to the Bachelor of Nursing program at Brandon University. I graduated in 2007. When the opportunity arose for the NP expression of interest, I felt the timing was suited to further my education and advance my nursing practice. I look forward to providing care to residents of Melita, Canupawakpa and surrounding communities," Stacie Gardiner-Graham, Nurse Practitioner Melita/Canupawakpa.





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