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MARCH 27, 2026 | EMPIRE: VOL 121 NO 32 / ADVANCE: VOL 140 NO 34 | PUBLISHING FRIDAYS



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Carbon, cash and controversy - who really benefits

By Charlotte Artyshko
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

A small group of concerned citizens gathered at the Knox Church in Brandon Thursday, March 19 to learn more about two new mega projects in Southwest Manitoba - the Manitoba Hydro's gas plant in Brandon and the Deep Sky's DAC facility in the Pipestone area.

The evening of information was put on by Sustainable Brandon and Climate Action Team (CAT). James Wilt, Policy Development Manager for Climate Action Team Manitoba started the session by stating "We are not affiliated with the government in any way. Our goal is to get together in communities, sharing information we have come across and try to build a grassroots movement that can help to push for better policies in the province."

Wilt started with the Manitoba Hydro gas plant. Manitoba is facing two issues when it comes to the electricity systems. Winter time peak demand short fall happens on the coldest nights of the year. The record was January 20, 2025 when the 5120 megawatts hitting the grid at the same time. The second is longer term demand growth, expecting production to double in the next couple of decades.

Manitoba Hydro is planning to build a 750 megawatt fossil gas-fired right next to the existing plant. It will require 2 new pipelines and new transmission and distribution infrastructure. Hydro's case for the project is that the plant will run during peak times of the year when demands are highest. Wilt went on to explain Hydro's other claims on why the \$3 billion dollar plant is necessary for Manitoba.

CAT expressed a lot of concerns with the Hydro project including emissions and air pollution, unknown assump-



James Wilt, Policy Development Manager for Climate Action Team Manitoba, speaks to a small crowd about the two mega projects in Southwest Manitoba.

PHOTO BY CHARLOTTE ARTYSHKO

tions about wind, solar and energy storage as well as the enormous cost. Wilt said "We are trying to ask Hydro and politicians is this 750 megawatts necessary, have we looked at more cost effective options on the table."

Wilt went on to talk about the timeline of the program from the online survey closing March 31, the facility review with PUB in early 2026 to the construction starting early to mid 2028 with the plant running by summer 2030.

The information about the Hydro plant also relates to Direct Air Capture (DAC) and the Deep Sky Manitoba project. Wilt wrote a report on why he thinks DAC is not a solution for Manitoba. He responded to Deep Sky's official proposal as well as attended some discussions in Pipestone.

read more about the meeting on page 3...



2026 PLAYOFF HOME GAMES
SATURDAY, MARCH 28
TUESDAY, MARCH 31
VS. NEEPAWA TITANS
PUCK DROPS AT 7:30PM

Inside...



OILFIELD MUSEUM INDUCTEES *P23-24*



FARMERS' ADVOCATE *P11-14*

PLAYOFFS ROUND 1 HOME SCHEDULE

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OFFICE NUMBER (204) 726-3535

WEAR WHITE FOR THE WHEAT KING WHITE OUT




TUNDRA OIL & GAS PLACE
TUESDAY, MARCH 31ST
7:00 PM CST

GAME 3




TUNDRA OIL & GAS PLACE
THURSDAY, APRIL 2ND
7:00 PM CST

GAME 4




TUNDRA OIL & GAS PLACE
FRIDAY, APRIL 3RD
7:00 PM CST *IF NECESSARY

*GAME 5



Dance recital featuring 129 students packs the AUD



SUBMITTED PHOTO

All 129 Virden Dance Club performers on the AUD stage Tuesday, March 17.

By Anne Davison
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

Last Tuesday and Wednesday evenings Virden Aud Theatre was filled with family, friends and dance

enthusiasts to be entertained by the final performances of all 129 members of Virden Dance Club.

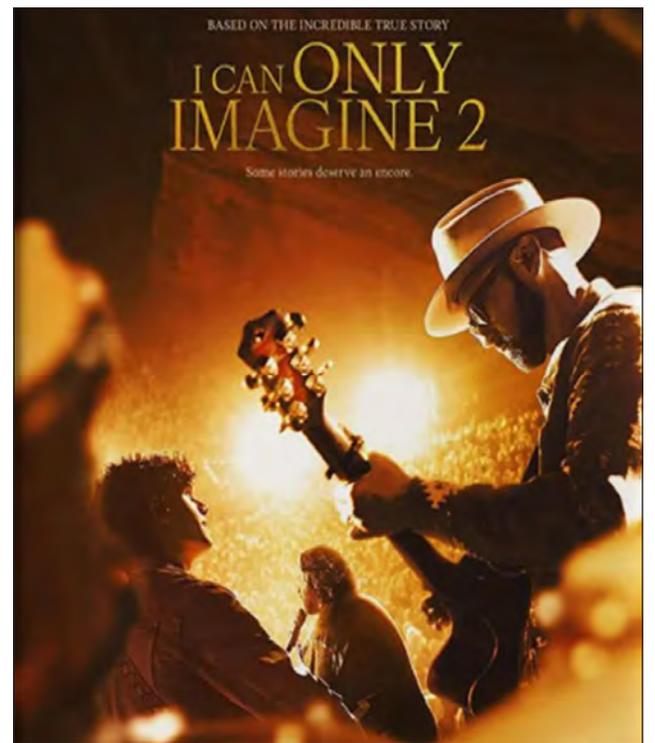
Here, dance graduates were honoured, parents and costume

volunteers were thanked, and Virden Collegiate Institute was acknowledged for the use of their school facility throughout the year of dance lessons.

Graduating students were Abby Archambault, Ariannah Kerr and Avrin Krieser. Dance club staff included Shelby Cranston and Sam Andrew. The important role of class assistants was filled by Ariannah Kerr, Aurora White, Avrin Krieser, Joelle Barkley, Kaitlyn Cox, Kennedy Routledge, Maisie Clarke and Paige Rampton.

The club performed 17 dance numbers featuring tap, ballet, jazz, hip hop and lyrical dances.

Training runs from September to March offering classes for ages 3 to 18. The new fall 2026 season will mark 25 years for Virden Dance Club.



Please join us for a **FREE** showing of **I Can Only Imagine 2** at 7:30 pm on Tuesday, April 7 at the Derrick Theatre in Virden. The snack bar will be open. See you there!

Check out the trailer here:
Rated G



New tech, new unit strengthen First Nations policing

Submitted
By MFNPS

The Manitoba First Nations Police Service (MFNPS) provides enforcement in many Manitoba first nations, including Waywayseecapo First Nation, Birdtail Sioux First Nation and Canupawakpa Dakota Nation in western Manitoba.

In late 2025, MFNPS installed AXON Fleet 3 camera systems in all marked Police vehicles. These cameras serve a dual purpose by recording all vehicle stops and prisoner transports and are equipped with an Automatic License Plate Recognition (ALPR) system. On Mar. 1, these cameras were activated in Opaskwayak Cree Nation as part of a pilot test.

On Mar. 6 officers of the Opaskwayak Cree Nation were on general patrol when the ALPR system alerted them of an unregistered vehicle. A traffic stop was conducted and Officers utilized an approved screening device which resulted in the driver of the vehicle blowing a 'FAIL'.

The driver of the vehicle, an adult female from Opaskwayak Cree Nation, was served an immediate

roadside suspension. Her vehicle was impounded and her driver license was suspended for 3 months. Additionally, all occupants of the vehicle were served Provincial Offence Notices for a variety of offences.

MFNPS has also launched its Crime Reduction and Enforcement Unit (CREU) pilot project, a new initiative designed to strengthen public safety across the 12 First Nation communities served by MFNPS.

The CREU is a specialized team focused on intelligence-led policing and targeted enforcement to address specific crime issues impacting communities, including illegal firearms, illicit drugs, and gang-related activity. The unit will also support harm-reduction initiatives and work closely with partner agencies to identify and respond to emerging threats.

The unit will focus on disrupting the supply of illegal firearms and drugs, targeting organized criminal activity, and strengthening intelligence sharing with law enforcement partners.

"The safety and well-being of the communities

we serve remains our top priority," said Chief of Police Jason Colon. "The creation of the Crime Reduction and Enforcement Unit allows MFNPS to take a more proactive and intelligence-led approach to addressing firearms, drug trafficking, and gang activity that threaten our communities."

The CREU will operate as a one-year pilot project, during which MFNPS will evaluate its effectiveness.

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*Purchase Easter flowers March 30th - April 4th and receive a 25% OFF coupon.

*Restrictions apply

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Statement by Prime Minister Carney and Minister Anand on the situation in the Middle East

“Canada has long seen Iran as the principal source of instability and terror in the Middle East. The regime and its proxies have murdered hundreds of Canadian civilians and caused untold suffering for millions of people in the Middle East and beyond.

Despite more than two decades of negotiations and diplomatic efforts, Iran has not dismantled its nuclear program, nor halted its enrichment activities. Canada has long supported the imperative of neutralising this grave global threat.

Canada stands with the Iranian people in their long and courageous struggle against the regime’s oppressive rule. Which is why we support efforts to prevent Iran from obtaining a nuclear weapon and to prevent its regime from further threatening international peace and security. Because Canada is actively taking on the world as it is, not passively waiting for a world we wish to be.

We take this position with regret, because the current conflict is another example of the failure of the international order. Despite decades of United Nations Security Council resolutions, the tireless work of the International Atomic Energy Agency, and a succession of sanctions and diplomatic frameworks, Iran’s nuclear threat remains. And now the United States and Israel have acted without engaging the United Nations or consulting with allies, including Canada.

So where to from here? With a rapidly spreading conflict and growing threats to civilian life. Canada reaffirms that international law binds all belligerents. We condemn the strikes carried out by Iran on civilians and civilian infrastructure across the Middle East. We implore all parties, including the United States and Israel, to respect the rules of international engagement.

Canada calls for a rapid de-escalation of hostilities and is prepared to assist in achieving this goal. Resolution of this crisis requires commitment to a broader political solution.

Diplomatic engagement is essential to avoid a wider and deeper conflict. Innocent civilians must be protected, and all parties must commit to finding enduring agreements to end both nuclear proliferation and terrorist extremism.

Canada will continue to pursue this approach with like-minded countries and participants in conflict.”

– Prime Minister Mark Carney and Minister Anand

Deep Sky Meeting in Brandon - March 19

continued from page 1

DAC is a type of negative emissions technology and a type of carbon dioxide removal. Deep Sky argues by capturing CO2 and injecting it underground then it gives the opportunity for thousands of years of permanence. If the project were to go through, it would be one of the largest DAC facilities in the world, built in 3 phases and construction would start sometime in the summer of this year.

Deep Sky, a Montreal based start-up, is financially backed by major venture capital firms like Bill Gates’ Breakthrough Energy Catalyst, RBC and has received millions of dollars from the Quebec government.

The project is banking on major future technological advances and when asked questions Deep Sky has given contradictory information on topics such as land use, jobs, capacity capture and investments.

Some major issues CAT sees with DAC are that there is no large scale proof that the concept exists, the technology has extremely high costs and DAC facilities consume a lot of water, energy and materials. “The largest facility in operation which is Clime-work’s “Mammoth” in Iceland has been plagued with issues” Wilt said, “including what we may expect with a Manitoba based project, the parts will freeze in the cold weather.”

DAC is the most expensive carbon removal option due to the high electricity and water demand. Manitoba Hydro is conducting an interconnecting feasibility study. There are two ways that these companies can make money. Sell carbon offsets to companies and governments or produce the CO2 for industrial feedstocks like sustainable aviation fuel.

The province has said they are not putting money to-

wards this project, the company has said the provincial government is not putting money towards this project. “Something we have seen the provincial government do is talk in a manner which is far too excited for the state of this technology,” Wilt continued “They have appeared in press releases that Deep Sky has put out, they have created a carbon capture legislation and seem very open to meeting with this company and so we would argue that there is higher level opportunity cost that is happening here so its not only the money but the attention paid to this technology.”

It will take time to develop this project and many geological sites are not appropriate for permanent CO2 storage if they are in proximity to old oil and gas wells which could result in leakage.

Some things to keep an eye out for is the amendments to The Captured Carbon Storage Act, Environmental Act Proposal/Impact Assessment process and possible connection of Deep Sky project to provincial commitments to the net-zero electricity grid and gas plant.

CAT followed up the information session with some of their alternative recommendations to the programs. Clean energy like wind and solar; energy efficiency which would include retrofitting buildings, installing ground source heat pumps or using smart meters.

While this was an information session with no representatives from Manitoba Hydro or Deep Sky, there are still a lot of unanswered questions from Pipestone area citizens from potential CO2 leakage hazards, to fan noise, to housing construction crews. Perhaps the biggest question of all is whether the Deep Sky proposal and the Manitoba Hydro gas plant are more than just neighbours. Coincidence or calculated, one thing is clear, follow the money and the dots start connecting themselves.

JOIN US!

Tori Elliott, Publisher for Touchwood Editions, will be doing a presentation on Thursday, April 9, 2026 at 7pm at the Reston District Library.



We are excited to host our hometown girl in our library.



Reston District Library

220 4th Street, Reston • 204-877-3673

ATTENTION ALL VETERANS OF THE CANADIAN ARMED FORCES AND ROYAL CANADIAN MOUNTED POLICE & ALL FIRST RESPONDERS

(Fire Fighters, Paramedics, RCMP, Manitoba First Nations Police Service, Sheriffs, Conservation Officers, Safety Officers, etc.) You and an escort are invited to the Annual Veterans and First Responders Appreciation Banquet sponsored by Branch #8 of the Royal Canadian Legion on Thursday, April 9th, 2026 with the Meet and Greet from 5:30 pm to 6:00 pm ... Banquet Starts around 6:30 pm. Dress is dress uniform, business suit, high-end casuals, or duty dress if on service. This is open to all current serving members of the Canadian Armed Forces living in the Virden Area. We would like to know numbers prior to Good Friday, April 3rd if at all possible in order to purchase the right amount of groceries. Send your reply to Comrade Kel Smith at 204-748-3321 or e-mail to kelvonsmith@wgcwave.ca. This is as our guests with the community’s sincere thanks.

Attention to the Public in and around Virden. It is the intention of the Branch to hold a Mother’s Day Supper on Sunday, May 10th in the Legion Hall. The price will be reasonable as a community service. The meal will be enjoyed by all ages.

More news to follow!

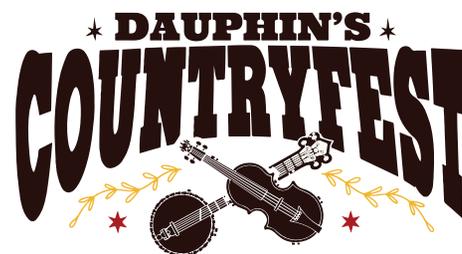


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To place an ad please contact:
Joel at sales2@neepawabanner.com
Jessica at virdenempireadvance@outlook.com
Diane at ads@neepawabanner.com

Tundra

By Chad Carpenter



Flitting scenes

There was a scene, tucked way back in the memory bank, that resurfaced this week. We were speaking of a deer that had been struck by a vehicle, escaped only to suffer terribly, and was finally released in a respectful manner. Even hearing the story caused my heart to hurt, and I had not witnessed any part of it.

Years ago, driving to work from the farm, I came across a dog that had been struck and killed. Sitting, sadly, patiently, beside it was another dog. I assumed that they were friends that had stepped out for an adventure. I wondered how long before they were missed, how long the loving companion sat there mourning. Neither were there when I returned. Thankfully.

Other scenes then resurfaced. Not all sad. I recall having grandchildren in the car, and the five year old lad spotted a combine in a field. I had not seen it, was not certain there had been one. His siblings assured me that if Bryon said there was a combine, there was!

During my stint as a single parent when the children were, let's say four and five, I was accustomed to entertaining them while driving. Playing eye spy, and pointing out interesting things—scenes and animals—as we drove. On a rare occasion I was without the children, with another adult, and I caught myself still being the tour guide—did you see the horses in that field? Rather like thrusting one's arm out to protect a passenger, before seat belts, and still reflex action throwing your arm in front of another adult! Habits die hard.

Amusing the grands in church... so many silent games we played! I would draw half of an object and they would have to try to complete the picture. We made a baby in a cradle out of a kleenex, paper aeroplanes that were refused take off privileges, and little paper boats. There was the Sunday one of them quietly asked about all the brown spots on my hands and I assured them they were playing connect the dots... they could have been...

So many of my memories include children, grandchildren and now the great grandchildren. I am careful which one of my childhood stories I wish to share. I don't think they need to know that grandma skipped school by climbing out the hallway window. I don't think they need to know that grandma led a modest insurrection in the twelfth grade. I do tell them how I walked home from school—three and a half miles—when I was in grade two because the teacher said clearly that the next person who forgot their books at home would walk home and get them. I had forgotten mine, and I went before being told. Only I had not notified anyone, just raised my hand to be excused and kept walking!

No one was happy that day, not my parents, my teachers, or me! There are so many life lessons in that story!

I am thankful for the wealth of great memories, scenes that flit a land and go. I am thankful for the ability to process unhappy memories, and oh, so thankful to be still creating memories!

Random thoughts

Alfred Lord Tennyson once wrote, "In the spring, a young man's fancy lightly turns to thoughts of love."

That sounds good to me, but I am not a young man, am happily married and, yes, I am still in love with my wife of 57 years.

I will admit that in the spring though, my thoughts do turn, or maybe more accurately, churn. Warmer weather, spring rains, a whole summer ahead of us and that means it's time to take on some projects. It also means thinking about a lot of things that should be changed.

This column will be a lot of mixed ideas for change and improvements.

- Every community we serve with our three newspapers has their strengths and weaknesses. I hope that voters in all communities will take a serious look at how to preserve and improve their communities. The power is in your hands. This is a municipal election year. Roads can be graded, ditches can be mowed, garbage cleaned up, houses improved. Maybe if we all got off our butts and our phones, we would get more stuff done. Don't always wait for the government to come to your assistance, sometimes they have too many fires to put out to pay any more attention to us

- Neepawa's Yellowhead Centre, when it was built in 1971 was a crown jewel of western Manitoba recreation centres. Since then, replacements or upgrades have been made in Rivers, Virden, Killarney, Brandon and many other western Manitoba communities. I am looking forward to the report from the multi municipal and facility committee. Hopefully it will include a 10 year plan to upgrade and maintain existing Neepawa facilities while looking forward to some new facilities. As to the actual Yellowhead, there was an upgrade plan in the 90s, a full study in 2012-13, an



economic operational study about five years ago and a physical upgrade study around 2014. All these reports were only partly completed. I believe that is because the Town of Neepawa has refused for years to take leadership on recreation. And full disclosure, even though I was mayor of Neepawa twice, I didn't get the transition done either. Neepawa's three major recreation facilities, the arena and hall, the curling rink and golf course, unlike most towns, are not town owned. I believe that it is too much to ask volunteer groups to do what they can do without management and oversight from the Town.

- A year or two ago, the City of Winnipeg started having security staff on city buses. I actively encouraged that idea with the Winnipeg mayor's office, in fact suggesting that Winnipeg City Police be on the buses. The city stopped short of that, instead they have security people. It has helped reduce danger on the buses but I understand that the City is looking at putting police officers on the buses. Makes sense to me. If someone is intent on causing trouble on a bus with anything from non-payment of a bus ticket to being annoying to violence, it should be dealt with quickly. There is no reason anyone should be subject to danger or abuse on a city bus.

- Manitoba has so much to offer but we fall so short of where we should be and could be. We are a "have-not" province which means we are a welfare case among the other contributing

provinces. In fact, if BC, Alberta and Saskatchewan were to separate from Canada, it would be hard to convince them to take us along. How on earth does it make any sense that the Keystone province, the centre of Canada, one of our first founding provinces can't carry our own weight.

- I look forward to a quick end to the war in Iran but it's not looking good. Countries in that part of the world have been fighting off and on for thousands of years. That said, Iran was very prosperous and relatively free country 50 years ago. Take a look on the internet as to how life looked in Iran in the 60s and 70s. It has since sunk into the depths of fear, repression, very bad regimes and a lot of death and destruction under a religious zealot system that forces their views on others. Few people are happy with Donald Trump but the US and its Allies have been treated very badly by Iran. Iran holds the world hostage for oil, kills their own dissenters and, horror of horrors, have now hung one of their top athletes because he protested. This is reason enough to overthrow the government. The problem is they have a lot of oil, can hold the world hostage and they place no value on human life. They are a nihilistic society where death is valued more than life.

- Let me know your thoughts.

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

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Tundra Oil & Gas Place: 204-748-2736



Animal Control: 204-851-5881

Facility Bookings: 204-748-2440

Emergency After Hours: 204-851-5540

Easter Holiday Hours - Happy Easter!

Town Office & Virден Landfill- CLOSED Friday, April 3 and Monday, April 6

Tundra Oil & Gas Place –

April 3 - Closed to the general public open for the Wheat Kings Game

April 4 – Open 9:00 AM – 5:00 PM

April 5 – CLOSED

April 6 – Open 2:00 PM – 10:00 PM

Regular hours of operation will resume at all sites on Tuesday, April 7.

Employment Opportunity

Flower & Garden Caretaker

The Town of Virден is seeking to employ a self-motivated individual to assist in its annual planting and seasonal maintenance of flowerbeds, planters and hanging baskets throughout town.

Preference will be given to individuals who have graduated from or are enrolled in a recognized green space management course. Individuals with similar experience and training are encouraged to apply. Applicants must hold a valid driver's license.

This position will run from May to September, and will remain open until filled.

Equipment Operator II

The Town of Virден has an opening for a permanent full-time Equipment Operator II position to work primarily in the Public Works Department, although the individual could be required to assist in other departments if necessary.

This position requires an individual that is in good health and capable of carrying out the physical requirements of the job. A valid Class 3 with air Manitoba driver's license is necessary. This position is generally scheduled for 7:00 am to 4:00 pm, Monday to Friday, but this could vary depending on requirements of the Employer, weather, or other circumstances.

A detailed job description, with wage rate is available at the Town Office.

Please forward resume with cover letter to:

Faye Pope, Office Manager
Town of Virден
Box 310, Virден, MB, R0M 2C0
Email: office.manager@virден.ca

Tax Prepayment Discounts

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

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

Month of Payment	Discount Rate	Savings on \$1000.00
March	1.75%	\$ 17.50
April	1.50%	\$ 15.00
May	1.25%	\$ 12.50
June	1.00%	\$ 10.00
July	0.75%	\$ 7.50

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

Spring Thaw Reminder

As spring approaches, please use extreme caution around creeks, culverts and drainage ditches within the Town of Virден and surrounding areas.

For everyone's safety, please keep children, pets, and yourselves out of danger, and off of thin ice.

Upcoming Council Meetings

April 14 & 28

Council Meetings start at 7:00 PM

Summer Employment Opportunities

Virден Public Swimming Pool

Head Lifeguard/Assistant Head Lifeguard:

- 2-3 years previous Instructor experience plus certifications listed below.

Lifeguard/Instructor:

Certifications Required for Supervisor, Assistant Supervisor and Lifeguard/Instructor

- Willing to obtain, or currently hold valid First Aid Certification with Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation Certificate of C-Level or higher
- Valid National Life Guard Service (NLS)
- Valid Water Safety Instructor (WSI)
- Valid Assistant Water Safety Instructor (AWSI)
- Valid Life Saving Instructor (LSI)

Assistant Lifeguard:

Certifications Required for Assistant Lifeguard

- Willing to obtain, or currently hold valid First Aid Certification with Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation Certificate of C-Level or higher
- Valid Bronze Cross Certification or Red Cross Assistant Lifeguard Certification

Please include the following along with your resume and cover letter:

- Preferred position of interest
- Copies of all relevant certifications (required)

Applications will be accepted until April 1, 2026 at 4:00 PM.

Programs/Events Leader & Assistants

The Town of Virден has the following employment opportunities available for the summer of 2026:

Programs/Events Leader – this position, starting July 6, 2026, will be primarily responsible for the coordination of the planning, implementation, operation and evaluation of the Community Day Camp programs for children 5 to 11. Other duties may include planning and assisting with other community programs and events.

Programs/Events Assistants – these three positions, starting July 6, 2026, will be primarily responsible for assisting at the Community Day Camp. Other duties may include assisting with other community programs and events.

The positions listed above will both be subject to 40 hour work weeks, which could include evenings and weekends. The successful applicants must be self-starters, possess exceptional organizational and time management skills and communication skills. The ability to work with children and the general public is imperative. An original Police Information Search (criminal reference check) and Child Abuse registry search will be required prior to the commencement of employment.

Detailed job descriptions are available at the Virден Town Office or on the website at www.virден.ca/p/employment-opportunities.

Resumes will be accepted until Friday, April 17, 2026 at 4:00 PM.

Please forward resume with cover letter to:

Faye Pope - Office Manager,
Town of Virден
Box 310, Virден, MB, R0M 2C0
Email: office.manager@virден.ca

HELEN DRYSDALE

OUT OF HELEN'S KITCHEN

Glenella is a town and municipality with a strong farming community built on hard work and a love of the land. In 1990 a history book of the area was published, called "Tracks of Time." It covers the history of the village of Glenella and the R.M. of Glenella. The early days of settlement saw as many as 27 schools existing at one time. Some closed for lack of enrollment and the remaining ones were eventually consolidated into Glenella Municipal School in the village of Glenella. In 1990 the Glenella School put out a cookbook Called "Rural Cooking from our Kitchens." Teacher Harvey Walker, in the expression of appreciation says, "A special thanks to the grade 10 class for their efforts in raising funds to interestingly enhance their education in geography." I wonder what they purchased with their money from the cookbook sales? Here is a sample of recipes from this cookbook. Enjoy.

Coleslaw that keeps

Janice Abstreiter, Glenella

1 large (3 lb.) cabbage	1 large onion
1/2 red pepper, optional	1/2 green pepper
2 or 3 grated carrots	1 cup of sugar
1 tsp. salt	1 tsp. dry mustard
1 tsp. celery seed	1/2 cup cider vinegar
1/2 cup white vinegar	2/3 cup vegetable oil

Chop the cabbage, onion, and peppers. Add grated carrots. Mix remaining ingredients and bring to a boil until the sugar is dissolved. Pour the mixture over the vegetables. Cool to room temperature. Keep in the fridge.

Homemade sausage

Marilyn Dilk, Glenella

This is great for cold sandwiches with mustard.

4 lbs. lean ground beef	1 1/2 cups of water
4 Tbsp. curing salt	1 Tbsp. garlic powder
1 Tbsp. onion powder	1 Tbsp. mustard seed
1 Tbsp. pepper	

Mix well. Store covered in refrigerator for 24 hours. Roll into one pound each. Wrap each in tin foil. Place holes in top and bottom of tin foil. Place it on a broiler pan. Bake at 350°F for one hour.

Homemade noodles

Barbara Kushner, Glenella

1 beaten egg	1/2 tsp. salt
2 Tbsp. milk	1 cup sifted flour

Combine first three ingredients. Add four to make a stiff dough. Roll very thin on floured surface. Let stand 20 minutes. Sprinkle flour on and roll up thin. Slice quite thin. Drop into salted boiling water and cook, uncovered for 10 minutes. Drain and rinse in cool water.

Health bread

Rose Dayholos, Glenella

Scald 4 cups of milk and pour over 2 cups of oatmeal and 1/2 cup of oil. Let stand until lukewarm.

Yeast mix:

1/2 cup lukewarm water
2 Tbsp. yeast
1 tsp. honey

Add the yeast, water and honey together in a small bowl. Allow to rest for 5-10 minutes until foaming and bubbly. Stir in yeast mixture to the oatmeal and milk mixture.

Add:

1/2 cup molasses
1 Tbsp. salt
1/2 cup wheat germ
1/2 cup flax seed
1/2 cup shelled sunflower seeds

Add 4 cups white flour and beat with an electric mixer. Add 5 to 6 cups whole wheat flour. Let rise until double, about 1 hour. Punch down and let rise again, about 1 hour. Shape into loaves and let rise again, about 1 hour. Bake at 375°F for 30 minutes. Makes 4 loaves.

Pineapple best ever cake

Rose Flatt, Glenella

1-19 oz. crushed pineapple, juice and all	2 eggs beaten
1 1/2 cups white sugar	2 cups flour
2 tsp. baking soda	1 tsp. vanilla
1/2 tsp. salt	1 cup chopped nuts

Mix together and pour into a 9X13 inch greased pan. Bake at 350°F for 40 to 45 minutes.

Police Report

Westman RCMP Service Report for Mar. 15 to 21

Submitted

BY WESTMAN RCMP

During this week, Westman RCMP received a total of 68 calls for service. Some of these calls for service include 30 traffic offences, 1 Assistance to Canadian Agencies/General Public, 3 Assaults, 4 Mischief files, 2 Wellbeing Checks, 3 False Alarms, 2 Fraud (money/property/security) files and 3 Mental Health files.

On Mar. 15, RCMP received a report of assault in the Community of Sioux Valley Dakota Nation and that the suspect was being detained on scene by a friend. Members arrived and were informed that the two victims had been assaulted, but a 47-year-old male who was intoxicated, was in the house and placed under arrest without incident. Statements were obtained from the victims and the friend that was called to the house for help. He was later released on an undertaking to appear in court in May for two counts of Assault.

On Mar. 18, during routine traffic patrols in RM Sifton, RCMP observed a vehicle approaching at a high rate of speed. Members conducted a traffic stop with the vehicle. The driver was queried and it was learned that the 37-year-old male was under curfew from 10pm to 6am, as the time was minutes before 10pm and the driver resided more than a half hour away from the traffic stop he would not have been home to abide by the court condition. Further investigation revealed the driver was prohibited from driving in the province and was in possession of unmarked tobacco. The male driver was arrested and charged for Driving while Prohibited, Failure to Comply with a Release Order Condition, Possession of fewer than 25 units of Unmarked Tobacco, and under the Highway Traffic Act he was issued

a ticket for speeding as he was travelling at a rate of 145 km/hr in a 110 km/hr zone which carries a fine of \$508. The vehicle was towed and impounded and the 37-year-old male was arrested and lodged at the Virden Detachment; he was remanded into the custody of the province and will have a court date later this month.

On Mar. 19, RCMP conducted routine traffic stops in the town of Virden. A 28-year-old male driver was issued a Traffic Offence Notice for Using a Cellular Telephone or Other Hand-Operated Electronic Device While Driving a Vehicle, which carries a fine of \$672 and a 3-day License Suspension.

On Mar. 20, during routine patrols in the RMPipestone, RCMP observed a vehicle traveling at a high rate of speed. Radar confirmed the driving speed of 168 km/

hr in a 90 km/hr zone. A traffic stop was conducted, and the driver a 44-year-old-male was issued a Traffic Offence Notice for Speeding, which carries a fine of \$1071. A Serious Offence Notice was submitted to MPI Law Enforcement for review.

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.

Greg NESBITT
MLA for Riding Mountain



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Highway 259 racetrack

By Gerry Nolan
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

Highway 259 runs from highway 21 past Kenton and Lenore on the way to Virden. The speed limit on this highway is posted at 90 km. When passing Kenton, it is 70 km.

Let's start with the 70 km sign at Kenton. That means slow down when passing the town. There are a lot of young children on bikes and just like you, the driver of the vehicle, they do not always look for traffic, just as you do not slow down by observing the speed limit sign. If you are coming from the west, going east to highway 21 there is a bit of a dip in the hill just as you go past the village. If you do not follow the posted speed, and are in fact speeding, no one would have a chance to stop. Is life worth slowing down for? I think so!

The other day a vehicle, with 2 snow sleds on the back, was witnessed going on the curve that takes you to Hamiota. They drove on a one way, going the wrong way. Fool!

As I said, the 259 highway, speed is 90km. It is not 110,120,130 etc. The highway is a speedway. There are lots of curves and hidden spots on this road including hills. The things I have noticed are passing going up the hill on double lines, passing going down the hills on double lines and passing

vehicles in the valley near Virden. The guard rails also mean nothing, I guess. Are you in that much of a hurry? Why not leave home earlier? Get everyone to work then home safely! I also notice people on their cell phones. Someday a life will be lost with this recklessness. I just hope it is not an innocent bystander.

I get the RCMP are busy and short staffed and do not patrol very much. If you read the paper at all in the RCMP report they do catch the odd one, going at excessive speeds and the fines, well maybe they need to increase.

I hope the RCMP, if they read this, will spend a couple of weeks out on highway 259, especially at 7:30 to 8 am and again around 5 pm. I have started writing down license plate numbers of the offenders and call the RCMP. After last week on Tuesday, a truck tried to pass me going down the river hill on a double line, but they discovered there was a vehicle coming from the east, so they had to duck back in the correct lane. I was doing 90km. They passed me on a double line down in the valley before racing up the hill before turning to go down Errol Road at the top of the hill. I can describe the vehicle. I wonder if the owner of the vehicle would be interested in this info or better yet the RCMP?



PHOTO BY CELIA NOLAN

Highway corner near Kenton MB.

Life in the slow lane

By Gerry Nolan
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

Continuing on from last week, when our beef was processed, yes there were steaks, roasts and hamburgers but also tongue, heart, liver and kidney pie. Nothing was left to waste. Same went for pork and chickens and turkeys. Older laying hens were butchered, and mom would cut pieces of chicken and put in jars with some kind of whatever and it was like jelly chicken. It was really good. You don't see that very often anymore. With a self-sufficient farm there was really no need to go to the store. If there was an extra roast, mom would make stew. This is one of my favourites! We also churned cream to make butter and, in the summer, mom would make homemade ice cream, a treat on a hot summer day.

Spring was not only time for planting the garden and the crop, it also meant the cows were having their baby calves, which meant milking cows. I think the most we milked was around 12, done by hand. After milking we carried the milk up the hill to be separated. After that was done, we hauled it back down to feed the calves as they were pail fed.

We sold the cream and stored it either in the refrigerator or the ice well. Norm Sutherland was the cream truck driver in our area. Norm was a great gentleman and a very friendly man. Norm was like family to us. If for any reason we were away, which wasn't often, Norm would put the cream into the cream cans and carry on with his route. Norm also carried butter in the truck, and we did pur-

chase butter from him on occasion.

Also, in the spring with the melting of the snow meant our ravine would flood. It was a big deal to us. It filled the creek and dugout with water for the year. 1961 was a drought, so bad we had to pump water for the livestock that summer. Then the well went dry that winter, so we had to take them over to our neighbours, Wally Gray had a spring down in his pasture, so that is where we drove the cattle daily for water.

Away from daily chores, we did not have a television until 1961, so we listened to the radio, for the news, weather, markets and sports. Everyday, the radio had a signal at 12 noon signalling the time at central standard time. Most of the clocks were the old kind that you had to wind up everyday, or it stopped and you had no idea what the time was.

The radio was also our entertainment with NHL hockey on Saturday nights. They also carried a ton of western programs, the Lone Ranger, Gene Autry, Roy Rogers and Dale Evans. Also, Davy Crocket and comedy shows as well. The family sat around the radio, especially in the wintertime. We also read a lot of books and comics. Just a little note, my brother Garth practised drawing a gun out of the holster just like they did on the radio. Not a real gun, but nevertheless drawing a pistol. He got really quick at this action.

Of course, music was huge in our house. My mom could play piano by ear, so she entertained us as well. Our favourites on the radio were Elvis Presley and lots of good wholesome country music. My favourite were Johnny Horton and the Everly

Brothers as well as Jerry Lee Lewis and Chuck Berry.

Also, in the spring meant playing catch with our gloves and a baseball.

There is a story to tell about playing catch which I will lead off with next week. Until then, enjoy the sights and sounds of spring!

Dealing with a minor injury or illness?

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Manitoba 



PHOTO FROM BRANDON SUN

Community support has been overwhelming for Alexis Bukarz, a local high school student, who sustained traumatic injuries on March 12, 2026 and is facing a long road to recovery. Local sources report that the GoFundMe balance is now at \$31,813 and a recent fundraiser raised over an additional \$4,000. Alexis underwent brain surgery after she was airlifted to a Winnipeg hospital.

Victim, an 18-year-old female

Submitted
By BRANDON POLICE SERVICE

The Brandon Police Service extends its deepest concern and heartfelt support to the victim, her family, friends, and the entire Brandon University community during this difficult time. We recognize the profound impact an incident like this has, and we commend Brandon University for the care, transparency, and support they have shown to their students, staff and community.

Following an investigation on March 12, 2026, a 20-year-old male was arrested in connection with an aggravated assault that occurred earlier that same day. The accused was held in Brandon Police Service detention cells overnight and appeared in court on the morning of March 13, 2026.

The victim, an 18-year-old female, was transported to hospital in serious condition.

The investigation has determined the two individuals were known to one another. The altercation is believed to have occurred off campus; however, the victim later experienced a medical emergency in Darrach Hall at Brandon University.

The accused has been charged with aggravated assault. In accordance with provisions outlined in the Criminal Code of Canada regarding the release of accused persons, the 20-year-old male was released on an Undertaking with numerous conditions to abide by. A future court date has been scheduled for April 7, 2026.

This matter remains

under active investigation.

Brandon University announced that a Stand in Solidarity Against Violence will take place on Friday, March 20 at 4:00 p.m. in the Kavanagh Courtyard. Attendees are asked to gather at that time, with a moment of silence to follow shortly thereafter. This event is open to all students, faculty, staff, and members of the wider community.

Those attending, or wishing to show support from afar, are invited to wear purple, a colour associated with awareness of intimate partner violence. Parking in campus lots will be free on Friday afternoon. Those in attendance are asked to note that the media may be present.

Our thoughts remain with the victim, her loved ones, and all those affected by this incident.

Letter to the Editor

RE: In My Opinion By Gerry Nolan

In his Opinion piece of the March 20, 2026 issue of the Virden Empire Advance, Gerry Nolan states that "Canada is going down the sewer". His opinions are not universally subscribed to.

In 2024 Canada ranked fourth in the world according to U.S. News and World Report's Best Countries rankings, with an overall index of 94.1 out of 100.

Some of the criteria used were quality of life, social purpose and agility.

The country earns high marks for being a "leader in diversity and inclusivity on the world stage".

A 2025 Yahoo News Canada survey found that people across 26 countries ranked Canada as the #1 destination for stability and safety.

Certainly, Canada is not without issues, but at least we have free speech.

The Covid pandemic was a very difficult time for people across the world. The Canadian government at the time had to do something to protect the citizens of the country. Mandatory vaccines was one step. Vaccines are proven to be effective against disease. We no longer have Red Measles, Diphtheria or Polio. Polio caused such a lot of suffering for those who contracted the disease. I recall my parents being so greatly relieved when a vaccine was discovered.

Instead of spreading doom and gloom and pessimism, perhaps Mr Nolan should have some faith in world leaders who think before acting, who are not power hungry and who stand firm in their belief in humanity and International Law.

- Karen McKinnon, Virden, MB

Virde n RCMP make arrests after same home broken into four times in three days

Submitted
MB RCMP MEDIA

On March 9, Virden RCMP received a report that a home in the RM of Wallace-Woodworth had been broken into for a fourth time in three days.

The owner, who lives in Winnipeg but frequently visits the community, had reported the first break and enter on March 7. Numerous items had been taken from the home.

While waiting at a friend's place for officers to arrive, the home was broken into a second time, with more items taken.

After spending the night at a relative's, the owner returned the following day to finish

securing the residence and noted a third break and enter had been attempted.

On March 9, the owner received a call from a neighbour after returning to Winnipeg that four people were attempting to break into the property. A truck driven by a female was observed picking up the four suspects and driving away from the scene. The vehicle was found three days later, abandoned in a ditch near Virden.

Three Sioux Valley Dakota Nation males were arrested this week in connection with the incidents.

Brayden Jenkins, 26, and 19-year-old Laias Jen-

kins have been charged with:

- Break and enter with intent;
- Possession of property obtained by crime less than \$5,000;
- Possessing break-in instruments; and
- Mischief under \$5,000.

Julius Jenkins, 23, has been charged with:

- Break and enter with intent x2;
- Breaking, entering and committing;
- Mischief under \$5,000; and
- Possession of property obtained by crime less than \$5,000.

The three suspects remain in custody.

RCMP continue to investigate and more arrests are expected.

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Golden Arches get the height they need

Council approves McDonald's sign variance



Site for McDonalds next to Valleyview Co-op Gas Station.

SUBMITTED PHOTO

By Dale Davison
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

Plans are underway to bring a new fast-food restaurant to Virден. The March 17 Town of Virден council meeting included a public hearing regarding Variation Order VO01-2026 for the property located at 558 Frame Street East.

The hearing considered an application related to a proposed new McDonald's restaurant at the site. The applicant requested a variation to increase the allowable height of a pylon sign from 35 feet to 50 feet. Development officer Cory Nixon recom-

mended approval of the application subject to a condition that the variation order must be acted upon within 12 months of council's decision.

A neighbouring property owner had raised concerns about the light from the sign shining into their residence. Since the proposed sign includes automatic brightness adjustment, dimming at night and brightening during the day, the owner indicated they were satisfied that the sign would not have a negative impact on their property.

Three representatives of McDonald's attended the meeting via Zoom.

Matthew Dunn has 13 years of experience man-

aging real estate planning for McDonald's.

Lee Dowd of Park Avenue Equities, who own the property, has worked in partnership with McDonald's across Canada on multiple sites, most recently in Niverville and Portage la Prairie.

Lori Todd, a planning consultant for McDonald's indicated she would be working directly with the local development officer throughout the permitting process.

Unlike typical McDonald's sites, this one is set back from the frontage road and obscured by a motel, and the large Co-op gas bar. These obstructions limit visibility from both eastbound and westbound traffic, so the proposed 50 foot sign is essential for the project to proceed.

Matthew Dunn explained, "I spent a lot of time on this site researching Virден and selling this site to my superiors to the point where I did get a phone call from the head of real estate for Canada. He was concerned about the site and didn't want to do the site. He actually made me put into the lease agreement that one of the conditions is to ensure that we get the sign 50 feet high in order to make it work because it's so recessed in and it's so camouflaged."

Lori Todd outlined a development schedule that will get the project moving quickly. Todd said, "We're looking to submit our redevelopment permit before the end of the month... and we're targeting submitting our building permit on April 13th."

In addition to these target dates the company will be seeking approval from Manitoba Transportation and Infrastructure at the same time.

After the public hearing council approved the application subject to the condition that it be acted upon within 12 months.

Split vote sends wayfinding project ahead

By Dale Davison
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

At their March 17 meeting Town of Virден council considered two options for funding the new wayfinding signage that had been tabled at a previous meeting. Completing both the wayfinding and the gateway signage would cost approximately \$213,481 and would require raising additional revenue in the current year.

Council already has roughly \$155,000 carried over from the previous year that could be used toward the first phase of the project. CAO Neil Smith suggested, "If you prioritize wayfinding over gateway signs... the project could proceed—at least partially—without needing to raise additional revenue."

A motion was introduced to proceed using these existing funds and to direct staff to begin the project.

Coun. Travis Penner said, "I think the timing just sucks. With our water issues and everything else, I think ratepayers would be very upset for us to spend \$200,000 to \$300,000 on signage, which is information that they already have... I just don't think we have the support of spending that money while they're purchasing drinking water."

Penner added, "If we want to bring this forward at a public meeting and ask people how they feel when we meet with them, I'd be all for that. But other than that, I'd like to defer it and if we're not going to defer it, I'd also like to record the vote."

The motion passed with a recorded vote of 4-2 in favour of approving the use of the \$155,000 to initiate the wayfinding signage project. Mayor Williams, Coun. Grumpelt, Coun. Maxwell and

Coun. Cruickshank voted for the motion. Coun. Penner and Coun. Dunning were opposed. Coun. Savy was absent from the meeting.

Assiniboine West Watershed District

Council discussed correspondence from several rural municipalities regarding concerns with the Assiniboine West Watershed District (AWWD).

Mayor Tina Williams said, "Some people are unhappy with the way the voting took place for one of the sub-districts." The municipalities that participate in the AWWD also want more detailed financial information from the organization, and Williams added, "There's a request in here that they want to see the books... they want to see the money, including budgets and audited statements." Williams also noted that current concerns may be related to a past incident involving over \$1 million in federal funding for an ecological corridor project that had to be returned.

Town of Virден contributions to AWWD have increased from \$5,000 annually to the former Upper Assiniboine River Conservation District (UARCD) to just over \$10,000 under the current watershed district.

Williams acknowledged that while watershed projects may not occur directly within town limits, upstream infrastructure and dams still provide benefits like flood control.

A stakeholder meeting is tentatively planned for mid-to-late April.

RCMP report

Sgt. Amy Doan provided the monthly RCMP report to council.

February was described as a positive month. The detachment responded to 64 calls for service. Half

of these calls were traffic-related, including a small number of impaired driving investigations. There were two mental health-related calls.

The detachment currently maintains 10 to 11 constables regularly on duty. Most non-commissioned officer (NCO) positions are expected to be filled within the coming months. A new corporal is expected to arrive in Virден in April. Having these roles fully staffed would be a significant improvement, as the detachment has not consistently had all five NCO positions filled in recent years.

Virден minor ball

Council considered a request from Virден Minor Ball Club for support from the Town to apply for a grant through the Virден Area Foundation. The grant will be used to purchase a portable pitcher's mound and council approved support for the application.

Valley Riders 4-H

Council considered a request from the Valley Riders 4-H Club related to a facility rental fee. Due to school closures, the club had been unable to use school facilities for their regional 4-H speeches event and instead relocated to the Sunrise banquet hall at Tundra Oil and Gas Place. This resulted in an unexpected cost of \$459.38 for the club. The event drew approximately 120 to 150 participants from across a wide regional area, including communities such as Birtle, Lenore, Archie, Oak Lake, Pipestone, and Reston.

A motion was made to approve a 50 per cent reduction in the club's fee, as this was a regional event that had a positive impact on the community. This would reduce the cost by approximately \$230. The motion was approved.

Northern Lights Painting Class

Submitted
BY JULIE MASON



SUBMITTED PHOTO

On Tuesday, March 10th at Princess Lodge, a Painting Class was hosted by Patti Lewis of Melita. Patti hosts a paint class weekly in Melita for seniors. She does it as a volunteer and just charges a small fee for supplies. Through social media, Julie Mason (S.A.I.L. Resource Coordinator) found out about her and asked if she could try this out for a group in Virden. With some hesitancy due to lack of experience or skill, we had a group of 8 join in, which was perfect as she prefers a maximum of 10 people. Patti says that no painting or artistic experience is needed. She guided us every step of the way through our 'Northern Lights' painting. She encourages this to be a fun, social experience, and an opportunity to try something new!

Fun was certainly had along the way. With the same concept for each painting, everyone's came out a little different. It was lovely to see everyone feel proud of their painting. They are currently displayed in the common room at Princess Lodge for everyone to admire.

Elvis is in the building!

By Ed James
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

Seniors Access to Independent Living (SAIL) has had another successful event at the Elks Hall in Elkhorn with the recent "Elvis, The Legend Lives!" Almost 100 people showed up at a two-and-a-half-hour show. The hall had St. Patrick's Day decorations. The crowd, many wearing 'the green' came from all over Westman and eastern Saskatchewan with a good mix of ages.

A display of items for sale by showman, Daylin James, included photos, jewellery and CDs of his music. His road manager told of his many music competition awards, his concert travels and stressed that James was not trying to be an Elvis impersonator, but his performances were meant as a tribute to Elvis.

During the evening, bar service was available, complete with green beer and at the check-in draw tickets and 50/50s were available.

Showmanship

At 7pm, with loud musical fanfare, Daylin entered in a bright red sports coat with black slacks, for his opening song, a Frank Sinatra classic, "Fly Me to the Moon."

The singer was not what I'd expected. As a self-taught singer, his voice range was outstanding. He was good at imitating other pop singers of the '50s and '60s. His playlist had something for everyone, and he involved the audience in his musical program. There were just so many songs that were easy to sing along with; songs by Sinatra, Dean Martin, Tom Jones, Garth Brooks and Louis Armstrong, to name a few. Some songs he sang in a copy voice - Louis Armstrong and Carol Channing. The first hour was energy filled fun, with people dancing.

During the break, the organizers had a selection of fresh baked dessert treats prepared by SAIL food co-ordinator Christina Walker. Or you could have another green beer, operated by Elks Club members. The break gave the audience time to soak in the first part of the evening event, with anticipation of the second half - the Elvis show.

Elvis hits the stage

After the break, Elvis hit the stage complete with a powder blue jumpsuit, lots of sparkle and a big shiny belt buckle, to the crowd's approval. The stage was lit with colourful lights and the sound system was powerful. In the second set he had the audience in his hand with songs, jokes

and Elvis moves that have made him famous in live performances.

If the first half of the show was good, the second part was even better, with the style and energy that the real Elvis had back in the day. The selections were some of Elvis's classics, fast and slow, with the first one being a dance floor mover, "Hunka Hunka Burning Love," and other rock classics such as "Jail House Rock," "Don't Be Cruel" and "Hound Dog" as well as my all-time favourite rock and roll song, "Johnny Be Good."

During his performance of "Blue Hawaii" he moved about the audience giving out flower leis. While singing "Let Me Be Your Teddy Bear" he gave out teddy bears. One in particular was to a special young lady who came up from the Virden A.C.L. (Association for Community Living). For some who received these items it made for a special evening and memories.

Before his last song, Daylin James told of his life, coming from Thunder Bay and now living in Roblin, Manitoba; his love for music, and how he hoped to do a lot more music shows in small community halls and senior homes, that people seem to enjoy and appreciate.

After his closing song, Karen Mitchell came forward to thank James and the crowd that came out and the many community volunteers and groups that helped and donated time and prizes for the event. Draws were held and the winner of the 50/50 draw donated \$100 back to SAIL. Mitchell pointed out that SAIL is a non-profit and donations like this help keep programs and activities in operation.

In closing Mitchell said, "I could see a lot of happy faces as they remembered the songs of their day!"

An upcoming event will be a fraud prevention workshop, by Darby Shackel of the Virden CIBC Banking Centre on March 24 at 10:30am at the Elkhorn Leisure Centre. The event is open to any interested seniors.



Mingling with the audience, here 'Elvis' sings to Betty Freeman.



PHOTOS BY ED JAMES

Daylin James in the persona of Elvis Presley.

Farmers' Advocate



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Manitoba TESA award winners keep on learning

By Angela Lovell
 MB BEEF PRODUCERS

Connor and Kyla English of English Ranching Ltd. accepted the 2025 Manitoba Environmental Stewardship Award (TESA), presented to them by Stacey Stott of MNP, at the Manitoba Beef Producers AGM on February 12 in Brandon.

The couple received the award for their dedication to sustainable farming and adoption of environmentally-friendly practices on their family farm at Bradwardine, Manitoba.

In his nomination of the Englishs, Andre Stepler of Stepler Farms Ltd said they are “thoughtful, motivated and principled individuals whose commitment to sustainability and advocacy clearly sets them apart.”

Bringing new ideas

After Connor rented some pasture and began building his own cattle herd in 2021, he began farming alongside his parents, Brian and Leanne English of Melody Acres Beef, the following year, bringing with him new ideas to enhance the regenerative and conservation practices his dad was already practicing on the original family farm.

That winter, the Englishs grazed standing corn for the first year, and began to convert 80 per cent of their farmland to forages, dividing pastures into smaller paddocks with temporary fencing to allow for daily moves to avoid overgrazing and allow the land to rest and rejuvenate between grazing.

Water management is one of the biggest challenges on their farms, and they have developed two very low flowing water



PHOTO BY ROB LOVATT

Pictured from left to right: Brian and Leanne English, of Rivers, Manitoba; Hon. Ron Kostyshyn, and Kyla and Connor English along with their children. The English family were named the 2026 recipient of The Environmental Stewardship Award from Manitoba Beef Producers.

wells that pump water into a buried 15,000-gallon tank for watering the cattle during winter. They have installed solar watering systems for summer and winter watering sites, with both a stationary solar direct water pumping system, and another mobile solar system to move with the cattle.

They practice silage pile grazing as well as bale grazing out on the paddocks, returning manure and urine back to the land to improve soil health and reducing labour and fuel costs for hauling bales and manure.

Proud to reduce food waste

The Englishs are proud to be involved in a national program called LOOP

that aims to reduce food waste from grocery stores by feeding it to cattle. “The biggest reward we find is the knowledge that we have stopped the large tonnage of food from being dumped into our landfills, where it takes years to breakdown,” Connor said in his TESA submission.

In nominating the couple, beef producer (and former

TESA recipient) Ryan Boyd said they “actively pursue ongoing education to stay at the forefront of conservation practices, ensuring their methods are innovative and effective.”

Continuous learning is important to Connor and his dad, who frequently attend courses, field days and virtual learning events. They have also hosted a field

day to show attendees their many regenerative practices such as intercropping with corn and peas, multi-species cover crops and their watering systems.

They are working towards their goal of raising nutritionally dense, healthy livestock and reducing the use of industrial fertilizer and chemical sprays and having completely elimin-

ated the use of fungicides on both their farms.

Their conservation practices have encouraged wildlife to thrive on their land, where they frequently see moose, deer, rabbits and many new or returning species of birds. It seems that their farms are a great place to live for wildlife, cattle and people.

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Aging farmers, aging equipment

A growing safety challenge on Canadian farms

Media Release
CANADA SAFETY COUNCIL

The late-winter sun hangs low over a machine shed in rural Canada. Inside, a farmer in his 70s climbs into a tractor he has operated for more than four decades. The machine still runs reliably but its lack of modern safety features tell a quieter story, one that's shared by farms across the country.

As farmers work later into life and equipment remains in service longer than ever, the risks associated with this trend are becoming increasingly difficult to ignore.

National Farm Safety Week is March 14-20 and the Canada Safety Council is raising awareness on the intersection of aging operators and aging machinery, a combination that significantly increases the likelihood of serious injury.

By the numbers...

Machinery remains the leading cause of agricultural fatalities in Canada. According to the Canadian Agricultural Injury Reporting (CAIR) program, 2,814 agriculture-related fatalities were recorded between 1990 and 2020, representing an average of 91 deaths per year over the full period and 70 per year between 2006 and 2020.

Machinery, especially the tractor, continues to account for the largest share of fatalities, with rollovers, runovers and entanglements representing the most common circumstances.

Canada's farm population, meanwhile, is aging. Statistics Canada's Census of Agriculture continues to identify a rising proportion of farm operators aged 55 and older. In 2021, the most recent year for which

information is available, that demographic accounted for 60.5 per cent of Canada's 262,045 farm population.

"As farmers age and equipment ages with them, the risks change," said Gareth Jones, President & CEO of the Canada Safety Council. "Older machinery may lack rollover protection or reliable braking systems. And at the same time, older operators may be facing natural changes in mobility, reaction time and visibility. Recognizing these realities helps protect the people who built the farms and ensures they can continue working safely."

Tips and Tricks

- Evaluate older equipment for safety. Look for worn tires, degraded brakes, poor lighting and unguarded power take-offs (PTOs).
- Schedule preventative maintenance. Build regu-

lar inspections and servicing into the farm calendar to catch mechanical issues early and keep aging machinery operating safely.

- Plan tasks with physical changes in mind. Avoid high-risk terrain and allow extra time for mounting, dismounting and rest.

- Ensure lighting is adequate for early-morning or late-evening work. Establish check-ins with family members to allow for quick response in case of emergency.

Aging farmers and aging equipment are both realities of modern Canadian agriculture. But neither needs to become a source of preventable tragedy. Take the time to understand how these factors interact. Take practical steps to address them. This way, farm families can protect their most valuable assets: their people and their livelihood.



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Canada's farmland values continued to climb in 2025

Submitted
FARM CREDIT CANADA

The average value of Canadian farmland continued its steady climb in 2025, increasing by 9.3 per cent, according to the latest FCC Farmland Values Report. The Prairie provinces drove much of the year's average increase, while the Maritimes followed with continued growth. In contrast, Ontario and Quebec's increase in average values eased from the stronger gains recorded in previous years.

Manitoba recorded the largest average farmland value increase at 12.2 per cent, followed by Alberta at 11.4 per cent and Saskatchewan at 9.4 per cent. In Atlantic Canada, New Brunswick showed a 9.1 per cent gain and Prince Edward Island rose by 8.5 per cent, while Nova Scotia recorded a more modest 1.6 per cent increase. Farmland values in Quebec increased by 4.8 per cent, reflecting steady demand across a diverse agricultural base, while Ontario saw a slower pace of growth at 2.2 per

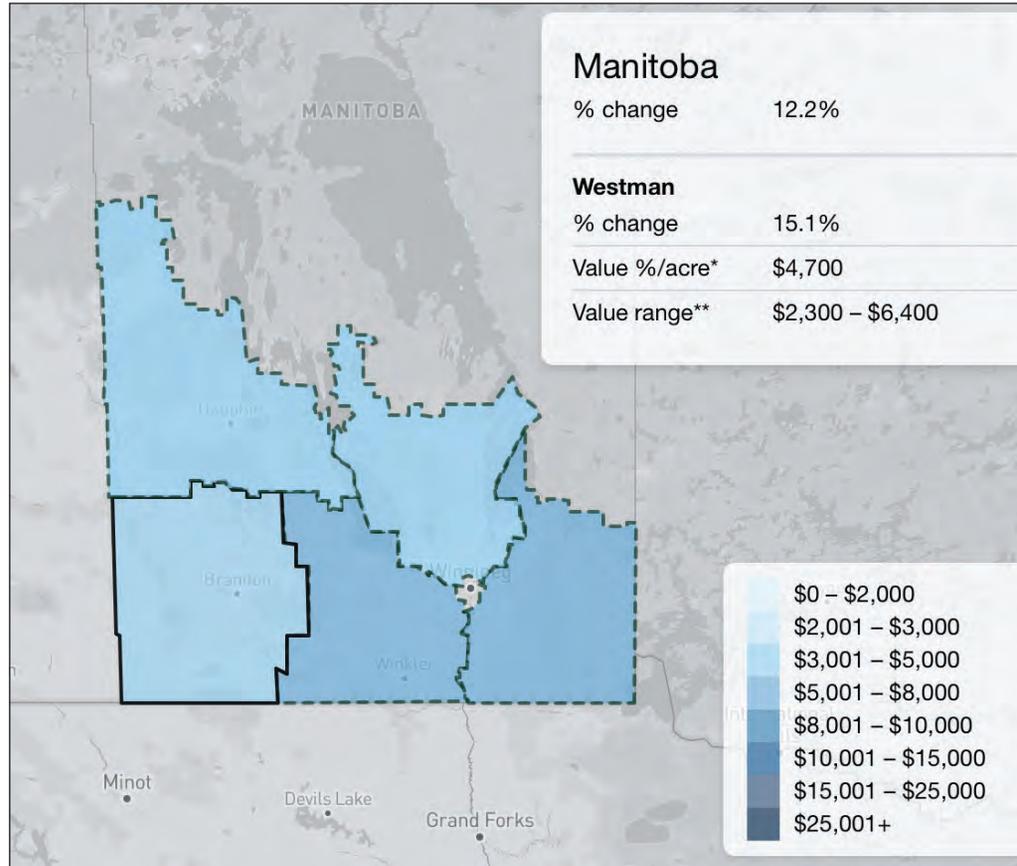
cent following several years of stronger gains. Four provinces reported higher growth rates in 2025 than 2024: Alberta, Manitoba, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island.

British Columbia recorded a decline in the average value of 1.7 per cent, yet the province has the highest farmland values on average. There were insufficient publicly reported sales in Newfoundland and Labrador, Northwest Territories, Nunavut and Yukon to fully assess changes in farmland values in those regions.

Defying expectations

Over the past year the Canadian farmland market remained resilient, defying expectations as producers continued to expand their land base and make strategic acquisitions, supporting values across cultivated, irrigated, and pastureland nationwide.

"Demand for farmland remained robust, supported by long-term confidence in Canadian agriculture, lower borrowing costs, strong livestock prices and



In the most recent evaluation of farmland values across Canada, Manitoba recorded the largest year-over-year increase at 12.2 per cent, with Westman above the average at 15.1 per cent.

GRAPHIC COURTESY OF FARM CREDIT CANADA

the limited supply of land available for sale," said J.P. Gervais, ag production executive vice-president at FCC. "The ongoing uncertainties related to trade and tariffs, high input costs and low commodity prices did not deter buyers' interest in farmland. These factors

combined with varying local market conditions will influence future trends in farmland affordability."

While more than 30 years of increasing farmland values is good news for current owners, it can present

a significant challenge to those who want to enter the agriculture sector. FCC offers products such as the Transition Loan to support young farmers and others looking to join a thriving industry.

By sharing agriculture economic knowledge and forecasts, FCC provides solid insights and expertise to help those in the business of agriculture achieve their goals. For more information and visit fcc.ca/Economics.

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March 30 - April 4, 2026 Keystone Centre - Brandon, MB



Submitted

PROVINCIAL EXHIBITION OF MANITOBA

The Provincial Exhibition of Manitoba is excited to announce the theme days for the 2026 Royal Manitoba Winter Fair, running Monday, Mar. 30 to Saturday, Apr. 4, 2026 at the Keystone Centre in Brandon. This year's theme, "A Royal Celebration of Agriculture and Community," promises six days of spring break fun filled with entertainment, equestrian events, live performances, food, trade shows, agricultural education, and family-friendly activities.

2026 Theme Days:

A weeklong celebration

Monday, Mar. 30 – Heroes Day: Heroes Day kicks off the Royal Manitoba Winter Fair by celebrating the outstanding contributions of our military members, police officers, public safety communicators, firefighters, and EMS personnel. Special recognition and activities throughout the day will honour those who serve and protect our communities. As a token of appreciation, eligible heroes will receive free admission to the RMWF upon presentation of valid service identification, and their entire carload will receive 50 per cent off gate admission.

Tuesday, Mar. 31 – 4-H Day: Celebrate the next generation of agricultural leaders on 4-H Day. Members from clubs across Manitoba will participate in demonstrations and evening ceremonies, showcasing their hard work and dedication. Visitors can enjoy hands-on activities and learn more about agriculture through these inspiring youth programs.

Wednesday, Apr. 1 – RBC Family Day: RBC Family Day invites families to enjoy a full day of fun and entertainment. From live performances to educational activities, this day is

designed to bring everyone together and highlight the best of the Royal Manitoba Winter Fair.

Thursday, April 2 – Forever Royal Kids Day:

Forever Royal Kids Day is dedicated to kids and families, with interactive activities and surprises throughout the fairgrounds. Through the Forever Royal Community Ticket Program, local partners purchase and provide complimentary tickets for selected families and community groups, helping ensure more children and families can enjoy the RMWF.

Friday, Apr. 3 – Multicultural Day:

Multicultural Day celebrates the diversity of Manitoba. Visitors can experience cultural performances, music, food, and displays that reflect the rich traditions and heritage of communities from across the province.

Saturday, Apr. 4 – Indigenous Celebrations Day:

Indigenous Celebrations Day honors the culture, history, and contributions of Indigenous peoples in Manitoba. The day features storytelling, dance, music, and hands-on activities to showcase Indigenous traditions and



SUBMITTED PHOTO

heritage. Each day of the Royal Manitoba Winter Fair offers a unique experience, from world-class equestrian competitions and livestock events to interactive agricultural education, food and concessions, and trade show exhibits. There is truly something for everyone, making it the perfect spring break destination for families and community members.



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SPORTS

OIL CAPS BEAT TITANS TWICE TO OPEN PLAYOFFS

By Robin Wark
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

After grabbing a 2-0 lead, the Virden Oil Capitals want to keep playing the right way as they look to advance to round two of the Manitoba Junior Hockey League playoffs.

In game one of the best-of-seven series, Oil Caps goaltender Braxton Burdeny stopped 23 shots, while Dysen Drake recorded a hat trick to lead Virden to a 6-0 victory over the Neepawa Titans at home. Oak Lake Beach product Tyson Draper scored twice as the Oil Caps won game two 4-1 in Neepawa.

“We were happy with a number of things in our game,” said Virden head coach Tyson Ramsey. “I thought we had some nerves to start game one, but we weathered that and got some big saves early to keep them off the board. We scored first, which is always nice, and I thought we defended real well. I liked our composure in both games; we were disciplined and stuck to our game plan.

“They had a push in the second period of game two, and I thought we were able to get through that by being a little more simple and direct with the puck. We are certainly happy to be up two games to none, but we also understand it’s a long series and we need to be ready to start on time in game three at home.”

Games three (March 24) and four (March 26) were slated to be played in Neepawa after the Empire-Advance deadline. If a game five is required, it would be played in Virden on March 28. Game six would be the next day in Neepawa. A game seven would be contested in Virden on March 31.

Game One Oil Caps 6, Titans 0

With 994 fans cheering them on, the Oil Capitals

opened the postseason with a dominant win on March 20. They outshot the Titans 43-23. Virden led 2-0 after the first period and was up 5-0 at the second intermission.

“The atmosphere was great, the fans were great, and the entire team was ready to go,” Drake said. “It was good to see so many people come out to watch us and support us. There were obviously some nerves with it being a playoff game, but I think we responded well, and the support of the fans always helps as well.”

In addition to Drake, Liam Goertzen, Colten Worthington and Marshall Light scored for Virden. Hometown captain Ty Plaisier, a defenceman, recorded three assists. Hometown product Bryce Bryant, Draper, and defenceman Austin Osiowy each had two assists. For Neepawa, KC Couckuyt made 37 saves.

Game Two Oil Caps 4, Titans 1

The Oil Caps jumped out to a 4-0 first period lead on the road on March 21. They did not score again, but it was all the offence they needed. Burdeny only allowed one goal, which came in the third period.



PHOTO BY EOIN DEVEREAUX

Virden Oil Caps play Neepawa Titans in Neepawa.

“Winning both games this weekend was huge,” Draper said. “It allows the boys to carry a lot of momentum going into game three at home. We knew playing in Neepawa would be a harder game, and coming out and scoring four in the first period helped set the tone that we can play anywhere.”

Bryant and London Holett had Virden’s other goals. Burdeny finished with 26 saves. Osiowy collected two assists.

Ryan Harris scored for Neepawa. Zach Burleigh stopped 31 shots.

HARD WORK PAYS OFF AS HODSON EARNS SHOT AT JAMESTOWN

By Robin Wark
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

Through old-fashioned hard work, Lenore’s Presley Hodson has earned an opportunity to study and play at the University of Jamestown.

The daughter of Jamie and Lindsey Hodson announced her commitment to the North Dakota school earlier this year. The Jimmies compete at the American Collegiate Hockey Association Division I level.

This past winter, Hodson suited up for the U18 AAA Yellowhead Chiefs. Her coach there, Logan McGonigal, said, “Presley’s story is built on persistence, discipline, and an unwavering work ethic.”

“Earning a spot with the Jimmies ... is no small feat,” McGonigal said. “The program values athletes who combine skill with grit, and Hodson exemplified both. Her journey reflects not just athletic ability, but a mindset rooted in resilience and growth. Now stepping into the collegiate level, Hodson carries with her the same determination that got her there, ready to compete, contribute, and continue proving that hard work truly pays off.”

Hodson is excited for the journey ahead. She said: “Playing university hockey opens a whole new door of possibilities and opportunities. I’m so fortunate that I have the chance to play at a higher level and am really looking forward to playing with different girls and different coaches. I can’t wait for the fast pace, and being able to expand my game surrounded with people that will make that journey possible.”

She also appreciates all that her family has done to support her in hockey. Hodson said of her parents, “Their support of my hockey career has been the greatest push to continue showing up every day, always giving it 110 per cent, and always finding a way to dig deeper on and off the ice. I am so fortunate to have had their immense support throughout my whole hockey career.”

They certainly will be cheering her on at her next stop. What drew her to choose Jamestown?

“When I went and visited Jamestown, I immediately loved the environment and culture of the campus,” Hodson said. “The close community made me feel right at home. Everyone was so welcoming towards me, and all the girls were amazing. I knew I wouldn’t regret continuing my education and hockey career in Jamestown.”

She plans to study agriculture in university. Hodson said, “Agriculture has always been a big part of my life, and ever since I was young, I knew I loved the lifestyle and wanted to stay connected to it while attending post-secondary.”

This past season, Hodson tied for the team lead on the Chiefs with nine goals. The forward was second on the squad in scoring with 18 points in 31 games.

“Presley is one of those kids who, as a coach, you knew you could rely on in tough situations, whether it be on the ice or helping another teammate out when in a slump,” McGonigal said.

Hodson started playing hockey a bit later than most — as a major with the U11 Oak Lake Bandits. She went on to play for various teams and spent five years as an important part of the Yellowhead Chiefs organization.

“From early on, Hodson showed promise, but talent alone wasn’t what set her apart — it was her commitment to improving every single day,” McGonigal said. “Whether it meant extra hours in the gym, pushing through tough practices, or staying mentally focused during setbacks, she consistently put in the hard work that we look for as coaches at the AAA level and what programs and coaches look for at the next level.

“Her determination became especially evident during key moments in her development. Instead of being discouraged by challenges or competition, Hodson used them as fuel. She sharpened her skills,



PHOTO BY ZACHARY J. PETERS PHOTOGRAPHY

Lenore’s Presley Hodson

embraced feedback, and proved she could perform under pressure — qualities that made her stand out to recruiters.”

Hodson appreciates her time with the Chiefs. She said, “The five years I spent with the Yellowhead Chiefs taught me hard work and dedication, which has helped me become more committed and has taught me to always have a hard drive for winning, and doing my best for my teammates and myself.”

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SPORTS

REF MEMORIES



This week in my referee memories column I would like to talk about the Blanshard Bobcats hockey club of the mid nineteen nineties. This was a combined team of players mainly from Cardale and Oak River. There were several other pick-up players including one from Moline, Manitoba.

I could not remember all the players that played for those 2 seasons in that time frame. The Bobcats went to the North Central Hockey League finals 2 years in a row. In case you have forgotten, here are the names of the players I could remember with a little help from my hockey guru, Dallas Bridgeman formerly of Moline, Manitoba. To those whose names we missed, my apologies, but with what I have here goes. Coach was Wes Coulson. Players were Dallas Bridgeman, Gordy Paddock, Derek Shamray, Thomas Heapy, Blaine Heapy, Darcy Heapy, Dean McBride, Jeff Hume, Brad Pilling, BJ Birch, Neil Gillies, Darren Rozdeba, Billy Brown and Wayne Baker.

They were a strong defensive team and scored enough to go to the finals in back-to-back seasons. They were

also maybe the most sportsmanlike teams that I ever officiated. All the officials liked to do their games, not that they were easy, but when the game was over, you could share a brew or two. The game was left out on the ice.

One year, after the red line was taken out for offside passes the Bobcats used it to their advantage. The defenseman would go back into their own end and fire the puck up on the left-hand side of the ice to Derek Shamray who was deadly on the breakaway. I believe he won the south division scoring championship.

When you had defensemen like Gordy Paddock, Blaine Heapy and Thomas Heapy on the back end, getting the puck up the ice in a hurry was a huge deal in their teams' success. Jeff Hume and BJ Birch could also light the lamp quickly as well. This was possibly their last run at a championship as teams began to fold because of a lack of players. If you remember this great team from the 1995-1996, 1996-1997 they provided some great memories and showed everyone how to play the game correctly and with class and sportsmanship!

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SPORTS

JV GOLDEN BEARS HOOPS SQUAD WRAPS UP SEASON

By Robin Wark
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

The Virden Collegiate Institute Junior Varsity boys basketball team wrapped up its successful season at the AAA provincial tournament.

Despite battling hard, the team went 0-2 at the event held March 12-14 in Winnipeg. Cody McPhee, the staff supervisor for the team, said, "The boys played against teams that were much bigger than them and held their own."

Head coach Roger Branum said this year's team was fast, had hustle, got along well, and competed well against taller teams from bigger schools. He also praised the Golden Bears, the Zone 9 champions, for their dedication. His sentiment was echoed by McPhee, who said:

"These boys eat, sleep, and breathe basketball. They are in the gym whenever they can be, and there's no 'I'll just come when I feel like it' attitude."

Branum said this year's team won a couple of tournaments, was second in another, and won the consolation in one. It also persevered to qualify for the provincials, which the coach said was an accomplishment for a smaller AAA school. The format was different this season with a rural and urban qualifier. The squad's qualifier was in Morden with the top three teams earning a provincial berth. Poor weather cancelled the first day's games so, with contests being pushed, the third place game was not played. So, Virden and Morden were to play in Glenboro to make up the game, but bad weather caused the Morden team to turn around, McPhee said. Rescheduled once again, the contest was held in Virden. McPhee said "the boys loved the home court advantage" and defeated the



SUBMITTED PHOTO

The Virden Collegiate Institute Junior Varsity boys basketball team were the Zone 9 champs.

visitors 114-52.

At the provincial tournament, hosted by Westgate Mennonite Collegiate, VCI fell to the Léo-Rémillard Renards. On the consolation side, the Golden Bears battled the Béliveau Barracudas, but lost 78-74.

"They didn't give up and they kept at it. ... They played well and hustled," Branum said.

The JV boys team included: Ethan Berger, Evan Ber-

ger, Bryson Booth, Jagger Browning-Lozinski, Austin Carruthers-Salm, Jace Fernandez, Russell Genove, Ryker Higginbotham, Evan Marques, Garrett McWhirter, Salvador Sanchez, Damian Smith-Barre, Logan Stuart and Toby Whittle.

In other VCI hoops action, the varsity boys team competed in a provincial qualifier in Neepawa. It fell in two close games, McPhee said.

FROM VIRDEN TO VICTORY: FIONA GARCIA'S CHAMPIONSHIP JOURNEY

By Robin Wark
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

This past winter was a dream season for Virden's Fiona Garcia.

The second-year guard helped the Providence University College women's basketball team go undefeated in the Manitoba Colleges Athletic Conference and win the championship. The Pilots were also 10-0 in the Northern Intercollegiate Athletic Conference and won the U.S.-based league's tournament championship.

"Winning the MCAC championship meant so much to me," the daughter of Floreen and Marvin Garcia said. "Coming from a small town with not a lot of basketball opportunities, making it hard to win provincials, this championship satisfied that goal and dream. Ever since I was in high school, I have always dreamed of cutting down a championship net, and it was an unreal feeling to be able to do that in my career at Providence.

"After the first, our team was hungry for the same feeling and chased down another championship in our NIAC league. Similarly a great feeling, but also an extra sense of reward because we had to win three games in a row to win and we traveled to the states. I am so grateful to achieve these accomplishments with my team and to have my family supporting me along the way."

She emphasized her parents' support: "Whether it is driving four hours to watch home games or setting up the livestream at home, I always feel their love and encouragement. Other family members, like my older sister and my aunts, are always the loudest in the crowd and my team loves them. I couldn't have played college-level basketball without them, and I am forever grateful for it."

Beyond helping the Pilots win this winter, Garcia had several accomplishments. She was named to the MCAC all-conference team, scored 27 points against Université de Saint-Boniface, and recorded 20 points, six rebounds, six assists, and six steals versus Canadian Mennonite University. However, Garcia thinks she will remember other things about the stellar season.

"Of course, the championship games are unforget-

table, but it is also the small things and the action behind the scenes that will forever be memorable to me," she said. "The long bus rides, early morning practices, scrimmages with our practice team, and every game day. I have made so many great friendships and memories at Providence, and I am blessed to have the opportunity to play the game I love at the next level."

Garcia was a key component in the Pilots' success. She was third on the team in scoring (10.1 points per game), led the MCAC in assists, and was second in free-throw percentage (81.5).

The combo guard brought up the ball and tried to score off the dribble as a point guard. Pilots head coach Kendall Perpall said she moved to shooting guard when "we look to advance the ball to her in the fast break and look to get her open for shots in the half court."

Of his first season working with Garcia, the coach said, "I've enjoyed the hard work she puts in both on and off the court daily. She gets to her spots well with the ball, a great inside and outside scorer that can throw defenders off with the plenty of moves she uses as needed. Big heart and highly competitive."

During the season, Garcia said she felt more comfortable on the court. She said, "As a sophomore, I take on more leadership, control of the game and encouragement to my team. I know how to study my opponents better, gain strong connections with my teammates and play with college-level knowledge of the game. Feeling more comfortable on the court has also allowed me to be more comfortable in the school environment and be more involved with the community."

Garcia is studying health sciences and plans to be an optometrist. She has appreciated various aspects of studying and playing at Providence University College.

"I enjoy playing at Providence because of my teammates, travelling and the high-pace game style," Garcia said. "Ever since my freshman year, I have felt very welcomed to the team and have made life-long friends. I also love being able to travel to the states in places like Iowa, Minnesota and North Dakota to play against many different teams around that area. I love playing



PHOTO BY JULIA HERPERGER - SIC PROVIDENCE UNIVERSITY COLLEGE ATHLETICS

Virden's Fiona Garcia was a key player for the successful Providence University College women's basketball team.

fast and being able to play at max intensity, causing chaos for the other team.

"Academics wise, as it is a smaller school I love how close I am with all my professors and how convenient it is to ask questions and reach out. The faculty and student-body is also very supportive of sports events and it is nice seeing them come for home games to cheer us on. I also enjoy the Christ-centered community and getting closer to my faith, while also making many friends outside of basketball."

RM of Wallace-Woodworth presents draft budget of \$10.8 million



PHOTO BY ANNE DAVISON

RM of Wallace-Woodworth reeve Clayton Canart, wearing green on St. Patrick's Day, stands to answer ratepayers' questions. Seated at the table - councillors Lyle Kinnaird and Diana MacDonald. Others seated include ratepayers.

By Anne Davison
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

The Rural Municipality of Wallace-Woodworth is a huge municipality serving two LUDs, numerous rural residences, farms, and industries including oil and gas. The budget is large and opportunities abound. However, road maintenance is always a topic and was at this year's financial plan presentation held March 17 in Kola. There's money budgeted for it, but bottlenecks—machinery breakdowns and staff shortages—were problematic.

The municipality looks after 1,250 kms of municipal roads, and this year's budget reflects a commitment of \$770K or 41% of the at large operating budget to provide for road reconstruction and upgrades. However, with only 27% of last year's transportation budget spent, council faced questions.

Reeve Clayton Canart opened the presentation with an overview of municipal projects and appreciation for the people of Wallace-Woodworth and the staff who provide services.

Kenton groups, through fundraising have built the George White Memorial multi-sport court, along with a beautiful new playground. The kitchen in the Legion Hall is being renovated.

In Elkhorn, the museum board stepped up to "complete the metal roof renewal, protecting the local history for generations to come."

At Two Creeks, a group has installed a memorial for the former Ross School site.

He noted the municipi-

ality's cemeteries "look fantastic," with thanks to volunteers who care for them.

Canart said, "These are proof of what's possible. People who care about their communities, our volunteers are the backbone of this municipality and deserve sincere thanks."

Of the municipal staff he said, "You know, some days can be challenging and certainly even difficult in the positions they hold, so we appreciate everything they do for us."

Municipally, several key infrastructure projects have been completed. The third well for the municipal water distribution system is now finished and "operating at its intended capacity." Cemetery Road bridge, an important connection with the town of Virden, was completed early and on-budget and repairs to a Ward 1 bridge prevented potential road closure.

The municipality has also supported regional projects such as the Virden library renovation and the completed Virden airport expansion.

In his overview, Canart acknowledged a look at last year's budget shows the municipality didn't reach all its transportation infrastructure goals. "It seems to be a moving target for us... but I think we're getting closer."

He also said that developing the capability for more housing is also uppermost as businesses and services have told him that they want to hire more employees, but a housing shortage is a problem.

Budget details

Chief Administrative Officer, Iris Vercaigne

presented the budget details.

The \$10.8 million balanced budget shows a 4% increase over 2025. Tax dollar revenue remains similar. Municipal property tax rate (at large) is set at 10.841 mills, reflecting a 3% decrease of 0.299 mills from last year's 11.14 mill rate. The rate has been dropping since it's high of 19.703 in 2015, reflecting a rise in rural values.

Examples of taxation, based upon a \$250K property assessment:

Elkhorn LUD's mill rate is 17.696, (down from 18.036 in 2022) meaning a residential tax bill of \$1,990.80 as compared to \$2,029.05 in 2022.

Kenton LUD's mill rate of 18.440 (up from 17.928 in 2022) would mean a residential tax bill of \$2,074.50.

Ward 2 mill rate at 11.739 (11.692 in 2022) would mean a resident would pay \$1,320.64. Farm property tax would stay almost the same as 2022 figures of about \$760. All this based upon a \$250K assessment.

Proposed Utility Capital Projects include Kenton green sand (drinking water sulphur correction) in 2026; Kenton water main renewals in 2027; new water distribution to village of Elkhorn in 2028; new low pressure sewer system & lagoon and upgrades to water mains/services in Kola in 2027-2029; additional reservoir capacity is planned for the PWS in 2029.

Infrastructure Plans
Planned for the Public Water System (PWS) in 2026:

- Water treatment plant

- 2-MTU2 vessel replacement

- PWS pipeline expansion for future customers
- PWS Security - all sites
- PWS meter package upgrades
- Wallace booster station #3 pump upgrade

Following the budget presentation, council and staff heard ratepayers' concerns and opinions which varied from ideas about possible potential water sales business, to equity of taxation between LUDs and the three wards. A hearty discussion focused on road maintenance and snow clearing, particularly on school bus routes.

One ratepayer, a businessman, noted that he pays taxes at a business rate, but wonders why he's not seeing services such as snow clearing and sanding over icy roads.

"We're paying commercial taxes. And I'm just wondering when we'll get our commercial services back," said Adam Bajus.

Reeve Canart stated that in discussion with other municipalities many continue to wrestle with amalgamation that was mandated in 2015. In contrast, he says Wallace-Woodworth has done a good job of amalgamating, "looking at the whole municipality the best we can." He added, "But for some reason, we still can't get that service delivered that was happening prior to the amalgamation... I'm frustrated with it."

He said that it was only last year that the municipality purchased a sanding truck.

The draft financial plan is available at Wallace-woodworth.com

== CLASSIFIEDS ==

Help Wanted

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY SENIOR ELECTION OFFICIAL (SEO)

The Municipality of Two Borders is accepting applications for the position of Senior Election Official (SEO). The next municipal election is October 2026.



Position Overview:

The SEO is appointed by the municipal council and is responsible for the general direction and supervision of the municipal election process. This includes ensuring compliance with all relevant legislation, managing election logistics, and maintaining the integrity of the electoral process.

Key Responsibilities:

- Interpret and apply The Municipal Act and relevant election regulations.
- Prepare and maintain the list of voters.
- Provide public notice of nominations and elections.
- Receive and verify nomination papers.
- Appoint and train election officials.
- Establish and equip voting places.
- Oversee advance voting and election day operations.
- Ensure proper vote counting and reporting of results.
- Conduct by-elections if required.

Qualifications:

- Strong organizational and communication skills.
- Ability to work independently and exercise sound judgement.
- Familiarity with municipal governance and election procedures.
- Must be non-partisan and maintain confidentiality.
- Previous experience in election administration is an asset.

Terms & Compensation:

- Appointment begins upon passing a council by-law.
- Hours vary, with peak activity in the months leading up to and during the election (typically Sept-Oct).
- Compensation dependent on skills and experience.

Application Process:

Interested individuals should submit a resume outlining relevant education and experience to:

Grace Carr, Chief Administrative Officer
Municipality of Two Borders
Box 429, 138 Main Street, Melita, MB R0M 1L0
Ph: 204-522-3263
Email: info@twoborders.ca

PRAIRIE MOUNTAIN HEALTH
SANTÉ PRAIRIE MOUNTAIN
An area full of recreational opportunities, parks, lakes, cultural events, a sense of community and much more!

CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

VIRDEN & ELKHORN Health Facilities

Community Mental Health Worker (Virden)

Full Time positions

Cooks & Dietary Aides

Part Time & Casual positions

Environmental Services (Housekeeping & Laundry)

Casual; Full Time & Part Time positions

Health Care Aides & Home Care Attendants

Casual & Part Time positions

Licensed Practical Nurses & Registered Nurses

Casual; Full Time & Part Time positions

Security Officer (Virden)

Full Time & Part Time positions

Rehabilitation Aide (Virden)

Part Time positions

Occupational Therapist (Virden)

Full Time positions

JOIN THE HEALTH CARE TEAM!

APPLY TODAY!

www.prairiemountainhealth.ca, click on **Careers**

An excellent health care benefit package that includes but limited to health & dental benefits, pension plan & a health spending account.

We thank all applicants in advance for their interest in Prairie Mountain Health however only those candidates selected for an interview will be contacted.

These positions are subject to a Criminal Record Check (including Vulnerable Sector), Adult Abuse Registry Check, and a Child Abuse Registry Check. The successful applicant will be responsible for any services charges incurred.

ADVERTISING HERE

CLASSIFIEDS

In Memory

In Loving Memory of Donna Irene Rowand

April 22, 1963 - Mar. 17, 2025

"God saw you getting tired.
The cure was not to be.

He wrapped you in His loving arms and whispered
"come with me."

You suffered much in silence.
Your spirit did not bend.

You faced your pain with courage until the very end.
You tried so hard to stay with us.

Your fight was all in vain.

God took you to His loving home and freed you from your pain.

You didn't deserve what you've been through,
and so He gave you rest.

And by the way you lived your life, we have been richly
blessed."

Forever loved,

Mom, Larry(Maxine), Faye, and families and Chris.

Announcement

Happy 50th Anniversary Mom and Dad!



With love, from your Family

Help Wanted



EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

BUILDING, PLANNING AND MUNICIPAL BY-LAW INSPECTOR

The R.M. of Wallace-Woodworth is seeking a qualified individual for the position of **Building, Planning & Municipal By-Law Inspector**. This role is responsible for ensuring compliance with Manitoba's building codes, planning regulations, and all municipal by-laws (including zoning, property standards, nuisance) while administering development agreements and planning documentation for Trans Canada West Planning District on behalf of the Municipality.

Duties and Responsibilities

- Conduct building, plumbing, mechanical, zoning, and property standards inspections
- Review and issue building, plumbing, occupancy, and development permits
- Ensure permits and documents are uploaded to the Manitoba Municipal Reporting Online (MMO) system
- Enforce all municipal by-laws – property standards, signage, nuisance, noise, etc.
- Investigate complaints and issue warnings, orders, and violations as required
- Administer and monitor development agreements and planning documentation
- Assist with conditional use, variance, and subdivision applications
- Maintain accurate digital and paper records, inspection notes, and reports
- Provide information and guidance to residents, developers, and contractors
- Coordinate with RCMP, Peace Officers or Provincial agencies for joint enforcement
- Perform other duties as assigned by the CAO or Council

Skills and Qualifications

- Experience in building inspection, by-law enforcement, or municipal planning as asset
- Ability to read building plans and interpret zoning regulations
- Strong communication and customer service skills
- Manitoba Class 5 driver's license (clean abstract)
- Inspector certification (Parts 3 & 9) or trade background an asset

The R.M. Wallace-Woodworth offers a competitive salary based upon the applicant's experience and qualifications. A complete job description is available upon request. The successful candidate can expect a salary reflective of their experience and qualifications.

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT/RECEPTIONIST

Job Description: The R.M. of Wallace-Woodworth is seeking a motivated and professional individual for the full-time position of **Administrative Assistant/Receptionist** at the Virden Municipal Office. The Administrative Assistant/Receptionist reports to the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) and is responsible for providing frontline customer service and administrative support to the CAO and municipal departments.

Duties and Responsibilities

- Provide front-counter reception and customer service to residents, contractors, and visitors
- Answer and direct phone calls, emails, and general inquiries
- Receive, process, and receipt payments in accordance with municipal policies
- Assist with utility billing, changes of ownership, and related records
- Handle incoming and outgoing mail, deliveries, and document filing
- Provide administrative support to municipal departments including Utilities and Transportation
- Cross-training to provide coverage at other municipal offices (Kenton and Elkhorn) as required
- Active role in the Municipal Safety Program
- Uphold a strict level of confidentiality
- All other duties as assigned

Skills and Qualifications

- Strong customer service, communication, and organizational skills
- Attention to detail and ability to manage multiple priorities
- Previous office or reception experience preferred
- High school graduate at minimum; post-secondary administrative training considered an asset
- Demonstrated proficiency with computer applications including Microsoft Office (Word, Excel, Outlook)
- Ability to work independently and as part of a small team
- Valid Class 5 Driver's Licence

A complete job description is available upon request. The successful candidate can expect a salary reflective of their experience and qualifications. The position will be eligible for a full benefits package after 6 months, including employer-paid Blue Cross insurance and a matched pension.

LANDFILL SITE ATTENDANT – KENTON

The R.M. of Wallace-Woodworth is seeking a motivated individual for the position of **Landfill Site Attendant** for the Kenton Nuisance Grounds location. The Landfill Site Attendant assists the Transportation Superintendent in operating the waste disposal grounds in compliance with the Waste Disposal Ground Operating Permit for the site, municipal policies, and Workplace Health and Safety regulations.

Certificate in Landfill Operations is an asset. Applicant must be willing to take the necessary certification courses.

Description and Qualifications

- Permanent, part-time position (currently at 14 hours/week winter, 17 hours/week summer).
- Must be willing to work Saturdays, and one evening per week during the summer months.
- Direct all users to appropriate disposal or storage locations for all items being disposed.
- Ensure source separation of garbage and recyclables.
- Accept tires, general scrap iron, and spray containers; store at proper locations and keep area tidy.
- Assist in transferring or disposing of waste, as required.
- Maintain daily records of waste entering the disposal site.
- Keep all buildings and areas of the landfill site clean and well maintained.
- Ensure that fires are not set and all controlled burns are supervised and recorded.
- Report all concerns to the Transportation Superintendent and Chief Administrative Officer.
- Other duties, as required.
- Must be punctual, motivated, self-starter, and able to work without supervision.
- Good interpersonal skills to deal politely and effectively with the general public.
- Ability to meet physical demands of the position and have an excellent safety record.
- Class 5 Driver's License required.

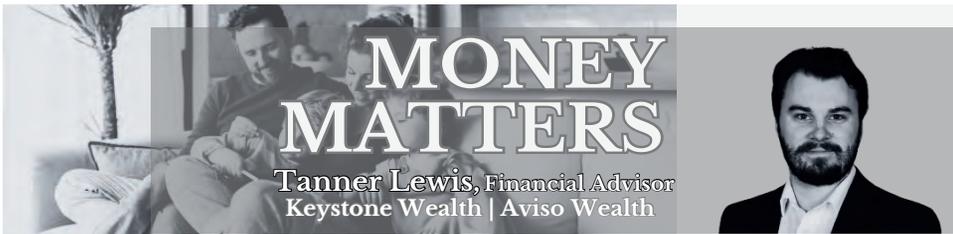
Interested candidates should submit a resume with three professional references by:

E-mail: info@wallace-woodworth.com

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

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

www.wallace-woodworth.com | 204-748-1239 | info@wallace-woodworth.com



OVERLOOKED TAX STRATEGIES BEFORE FILING SEASON ENDS

The tax deadline is fast approaching, and while most Canadians focus on basic deductions, many overlook strategies that could save hundreds—or even thousands—of dollars. These moves aren't complicated, but they require action before the clock runs out. Here are five practical tax tips you can still use to maximize your refund and minimize your bill.

1. Many Canadians leave money on the table by forgetting credits like medical expenses, disability amounts, or the Canada Caregiver Credit. If you paid for prescriptions, dental work, or renovations for accessibility, gather those receipts now. Even if you missed claiming them in previous years, you can adjust past returns for up to 10 years.
2. Donations to registered charities can generate a federal credit of 15% on the first \$200 and 29% (or even 33% for high-income earners) on amounts above that, plus provincial credits. If you haven't donated yet, consider doing so before year-end—or check if you have receipts from earlier years. You can carry forward unused donations for up to five years.
3. While the RRSP contribution deadline for the previous tax year is usually 60 days into the new year, you can still plan ahead. If you contributed early this year, make sure you claim it correctly. And if you expect a refund, consider reinvesting it into your TFSA for tax-free growth. This "RRSP refund trick" is one of the easiest ways to boost savings without extra cash out of pocket.
4. If you sold investments at a profit in a non-registered account, you might owe capital gains tax. One overlooked strategy is tax-loss harvesting—selling underperforming investments to offset those gains. Remember the superficial loss rule: you can't buy back the same security within 30 days or the loss won't count. Losses can also be carried back three years or forward indefinitely.
5. Tuition credits, charitable donations, and even capital losses can often be carried forward. If you had low-income last year and couldn't use all your credits, don't let them expire. Students, for example, can carry forward tuition credits indefinitely. Review your Notice of Assessment or CRA My Account to see what's available—you might have hidden savings waiting.

Quick ChecklistBefore April 30!

- Gather medical expenses, caregiver costs, and accessibility renovation receipts.
- Confirm charitable donations and consider pooling for maximum credit.
- Double-check RRSP contributions and plan to reinvest your refund.
- Review investment accounts for tax-loss selling opportunities.
- Log in to CRA My Account to check unused credits and carryforwards.

Tax season doesn't have to be stressful—or expensive. By taking advantage of these overlooked strategies before April 30, you can reduce your tax bill and keep more money in your pocket. Don't wait until the last minute—review your receipts, check your CRA account, and consider speaking with a tax professional to make sure you're not leaving money on the table.

Mutual funds and other securities are offered through
Aviso Wealth, a division of Aviso Financial Inc.



CLASSIFIEDS

Help Wanted

BECOME PART OF OUR GROWING TEAM!



Valleyview Co-op in VIRDEN, MB is looking for a **FULL-TIME SALES AGRONOMIST** at our Virden Farm & Ranch Centre.

The Sales Agronomist is a customer-focused role responsible for growing agronomy sales by building strong, trusted relationships with producers. Working directly with growers, this position identifies agronomic challenges, delivers practical input recommendations, and drives sales of seed, fertilizer, crop protection, custom application, and crop supplies services. This role is ideal for someone who enjoys being in the field, talking with producers, building business, and seeing the results of their efforts in strong customer relationships and sales growth.

Apply by submitting your application through the careers section on Valleyview Co-op's website at www.valleyviewco-op.crs or scan the QR to apply for current opportunities.



CO-OP AGRO



Twin Valley Co-op - Elkhorn Agro

We're hiring for 2026!

Twin Valley Co-op is seeking reliable, safety-focused Agro Operations staff who work well in fast-paced hands on roles. If you value supporting local producers and taking on a mix of yard, plant and driving tasks, we would like to hear from you!

Agro Operations/Driver – Seasonal FT
Class 1 or 3 required. \$25/hr+

Agro Operations/Admin Support – Permanent FT
Ag background & computer skills required. \$20/hr+ DOE

Summer Student – Agro
Ag experience required. PT Apr–Jun; FT summer. \$17.50/hr+

Join Our Co-op Team

Apply: hr@twinvalley.crs
Postings open until filled



TANDEM DRIVER

Mar-Dee Enterprises – Virden is looking for an experienced Tandem driver.

- Full – time employment
- Class 1A or 3A required
- Driver abstract needed
- Positive attitude, reliable and punctual, highly motivated.
- Problem solving and time management skills
- Work well in a team environment, ability to work alone.
- Good communication skills.

JOB DESCRIPTION

Transport petroleum products to designated locations in a safe and timely manner, load and unload product according to site specifications, complete daily equipment inspections and E-logs, report to supervisor, maintain and clean equipment accordingly.

Must be willing to work weekends
Immediate start date

Benefit Plan and Competitive wage
For more information call Darcy 204-522-3202
Send resumes to melita@mardee.ca



JOIN OUR TEAM IN THE EXCITING WORLD OF FIREARMS AND THE OUTDOORS!

Accounting Assistant

Location: Wolverine Supplies, Virden, MB
Employment Type: Permanent, Full-time position

We are seeking a reliable and detail-oriented **Accounting Assistant** to support our day-to-day accounting and administrative functions. This role is ideal for someone who enjoys working with numbers, staying organized, and supporting a small team in the outdoor and firearms industry.

Key Responsibilities

Processing accounts payable and accounts receivable
Preparing and sending invoices and statements
Reconciling bank and credit card statements
Data entry and maintaining accurate financial records
Filing, scanning, and general office administration
Supporting month-end and year-end accounting processes
Communicating with suppliers, customers, and internal staff regarding accounts

Qualifications & Skills

Previous experience in accounting, bookkeeping, or office administration
Basic understanding of accounting principles
Proficiency with accounting software (e.g., QuickBooks, or similar)
Strong attention to detail and accuracy
Good organizational and time-management skills
Comfortable using Microsoft Excel, Word, and email
Ability to work independently and as part of a team
Bonus: Knowledge of or experience with hunting, firearms, or the outdoor industry is considered an asset

What We Offer

Competitive pay based on experience
Supportive and friendly work environment
Opportunities for learning and skill development
Group Health Benefits

Please submit your resume and a brief cover letter to Genn@wolverinesupplies.com by **April 8, 2026**.
We thank all of those who apply but only those requested for an interview will be contacted.



1 River Valley Road, North Virden, MB
wolverinesupplies.com
204-748-2454

Public Notice



ANNUAL PUBLIC NOTICE

Additions to the Voters List and/or Personal Security Protection Requests

In accordance with Section 36 of The Municipal Councils and School Boards Election Act (MCSBEA), the Municipality of Two Borders Voters List is open for changes or revisions.

- Any person who is eligible to vote in municipal elections in the Local Authority of the Municipality of Two Borders can have his or her name added to the Voters List or have any information about the voter on the Voters List corrected.
- Any person can request to have his or her name and address obscured from the Voters List.

A person whose name has been obscured will receive a Personal Security Certificate and identification number. In a civic election, that person may only vote by Sealed Envelope Ballot and cannot vote in person at the regular or advance voting places.

To implement the above, a written request must be submitted to the Senior Election Official, in person, by e-mail, or mail to:

The Municipality of Two Borders

Melita Office
138 Main St.
Box 429
Melita, MB R0M 1L0
Phone: 204-522-3263
E-mail: info@twoborders.ca

Pierson Office
64 Railway Ave
Box 100
Pierson, MB R0M 1S0
Phone: 204-634-2231
E-mail: info@twoborders.ca

The next General Election takes place October 28, 2026.

Grace Carr
Senior Election Official

VIRDEN YARD PERSON

Mar-Dee Enterprises – Virden is looking for a full time term yard person

Monday – Friday work

Duties include: reading pumps, keeping pump islands and unloads clear of snow and debris safely. This means shovelling, chipping ice, sweeping. Emptying garbage, filling windshield washer and absorb all. Creating oil orders, stocking the warehouse, keeping the warehouse neat and tidy. Counting products in the oil shed monthly. Fixing or repairing hoses, breakaways, etc. involved with the pumps. Delivering oil to various places. We have a cardlock at Kola where you are required to read the pumps there as well as keep the sheds and pump area clean of snow and debris. So at least a valid Class 5 license will be required. Training for WHMIS, TDG and First Aid will also be required but we will make the arrangements for that. Ability to move a 205L drum with the aid of a barrel mover.

Ability to work in a team environment as well as on your own.

We require that you can read and write.

Assisting with anything the office person requires.

You will be required to write out counter invoices, so ability to take direction is a necessity.

Thinking constructively is required.

Ability to assist customers with their oil/nonpetroleum related questions, take fuel orders from customers either by phone or in person.

Keeping the office tidy

Ability to work in the elements.

Benefit package available

Competitive wage

Contact Darcy at 204-522-3202 or email melita@mardee.ca

Manitoba Community Newspaper Association Province Wide Classifieds

NOTICES

Advertisements and statements contained herein are the sole responsibility of the persons or entities that post the advertisement, and the Manitoba Community

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at (204) 947-1691 for more details or to book ads. Take advantage of our great pricing! MCNA - Manitoba Community Newspapers Association. www.mcna.com

CLASSIFIEDS

Help Wanted

Help Wanted



**RM OF SIFTON
EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY**

**GREEN TEAM AND AUGUATIC INVASIVE SPECIES SUMMER
STUDENT POSITIONS**

The RM of Sifton is seeking motivated individuals for 2 Green Team positions and 4 Auguatic Invasive Species positions. Resumes will be accepted until Tuesday, April 14, 2026.

For more information please contact the RM of Sifton Office at 204-855-2423, email info@rmofsifton.com, or visit the website.

Tender



**FORT LA BOSSE SCHOOL DIVISION
GRASS CUTTING & TRIMMING TENDER
FOR VIRDEN SCHOOLS ONLY**

The Fort La Bosse School Division invites tenders for the grass cutting, including all trimming per cut. All sand pits and sand areas tilling twice a year (end of May and first week of September) per till, these prices are for the following Schools during the 2026 and 2027 seasons.

(2-year term ending Oct 31st, 2027) for Virden Collegiate, Virden Junior High, Goulter, Mary Montgomery, please see attached sheet for specifics.

Please submit the tendered price per cut for each school you are interested in, plus any other variable charges (including GST) by replying to this tender by email before noon on April 7th, 2026. For more information please visit our website flbsd.mb.ca

Help Wanted



We are Hiring for Summer 2026 Employment!

Elkhorn Green Team	1 Position
Kenton Green Team	1 Position
Wallace-Woodworth	1 Position
Public Works Support	1 Position

Duties may include:

- Assisting Transportation, Utility, and GIS Staff
- Operating lawn mower and grass trimmer
- Maintaining Green Space on RM Grounds
- Assist in recycling programs

Program requirements:

- Work outdoors with minimal supervision
- Able to work as a member of a team
- Hold a valid driver's license and SIN
- Physically able to perform manual tasks (lift 50 lbs)
- Follow all standards of Workplace Health and Safety
- Between the ages of 16 and 29

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

The start date is as early as May 25. The end date will be on the last week of August. Subject to the successful applicants availability.

Interested candidates should submit a resume by:
E-mail: info@wallace-woodworth.com
Drop-off: Virden, Elkhorn or Kenton RM office
Mail: R.M. of Wallace-Woodworth Municipal Office
154023 PR 257 Box 2200 (Corner of 83 Hwy & PR 257) Virden, MB R0M 2C0

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

www.wallace-woodworth.com | 204-748-1239 | info@wallace-woodworth.com

Visit our website
www.empireadvance.ca

Public Hearing



**PUBLIC NOTICE
PESTICIDE CONTROL
PROGRAM**

Public Notice is hereby given that the RM of Ellice – Archie intends to conduct the following Pesticide Control Programs during 2026:

To control noxious weeds on road allowances within the Municipality. The projected dates of application will be from May 1, 2026 to October 1, 2026. The herbicides to be used include: Glyphosate, Dicamba & Tordon.

The public may send written submission or objections within 15 days of the publication of the notice to the department below:

Environment and Climate Change
Environmental Approvals Branch
14 Fultz Boulevard (Box 35)
Winnipeg, MB R3Y 0L6

Help Wanted

**Manitoba Government
Job Opportunities**

Carpenter
Regular/Full-Time
Manitoba Public Service Delivery, Brandon, MB
Advertisement Number: 44797
Closing Date: April 19, 2026
Salary Range: MM2 \$64,550.00 - \$75,694.00

The Manitoba government is seeking a highly motivated Carpenter to work within Brandon and surrounding communities with the Asset Management Division of Public Service Delivery.

Duties:
The Carpenter will be responsible for performing duties at a journeyman level in the carpentry trade. Responsibilities include the maintenance and repair of building structures, roofs, walls, windows, doors, locks, flooring, woodwork, cabinetry, furniture, etc. The position utilizes, updates and maintains an established Preventative Maintenance work order system, related reports, and documents, and may coordinate and monitor projects performed by outside contractors and ensure compliance with the Manitoba Fire and Building Codes, safety regulations and departmental policies.

For more information please visit: <https://jobsearch.gov.mb.ca/search.action> (Advertisement 44797)

Find out about other current job opportunities — click on the Jobs button at manitoba.ca.

People. Purpose. Progress.
manitoba.ca/govjobs

Manitoba 

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

Alternate formats available upon request

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Derek (204) 793-7465
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Announcement



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- Starting at \$339.00 (includes 45 lines of space)
- The ads blanket the province and run in MCNA's 31 Manitoba community newspapers
- Very cost effective means of getting your message out to the widest possible audience

Contact this newspaper NOW or MCNA at **204.947.1691** or email classified@mcna.com
www.mcna.com

SPORTS

SPORTS NOTES: POOLE, RAMPTON WIN NATIONAL TITLE AT MIDLAND

By Robin Wark
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

McAuley's Darbi Poole and Kenton's Natalie Rampton helped the Midland University women's hockey team win its first American Collegiate Hockey Association Division I championship.

The Fremont, Neb. school beat Liberty University 4-3 in an epic triple-overtime classic to win the title. Poole, the daughter of Dana and Robin, scored on a power play. In a 4-3 OT win over Maryville University in the semifinal, Poole scored on a penalty shot. Rampton, the daughter of Cameron and Sheri, made 54 saves in the semifinal.

In the ACHA Women's Division II ranks, the Assiniboine Community College Cougars, including Miniota's Kasey Fouillard, fell 1-0 in the final to Sault College of Ontario. It was the third straight year that Sault defeated ACC for the title.

Elkhorn's Colby Joseph and the Minot (N.D.) State University Beavers lost both of their games at the ACHA Men's Division I tournament. All of the ACHA tournaments were held in the St. Louis area.

Look for more on these student-athletes in upcoming issues of the Empire-Advance.

VCI Hockey

Virten Collegiate Institute head coach Doug Roach enjoyed various aspects of his hockey team this past season.

"I liked that we had two solid goaltenders (Brodie Cameron and Owen Charles) that could play the puck. We had a goaltender puck control/passing drill most practices and tried to incorporate some of that into game situations. Offence versus defence drills to get the competitive spirit going were great to watch and then things that we did in practice were carried over into games, which was nice to see. There weren't any discipline problems or bad attitudes that needed to be dealt with."

As a returning coach, he said most of the team knew what he expected from them. Roach coached the squad with his son, Logan, which was another aspect of the season he appreciated.

The team posted a record of 15 wins, 11 losses in regulation and two overtime losses. That record secured them ninth place for the playoffs. The Golden Bears fell in the consolation semifinals to the Reston/Melita/Hartney/Souris Renegades 2-1 in a best-of-three series.

VCI competed in the AA provincials hosted by Carberry. VCI had a tough loss to Russell's Major Pratt in the fifth-place game.

Wheat Kings in Virten

The Tundra Oil & Gas Place will host at least two Western Hockey League playoffs contests. With the Royal Manitoba Winter Fair displacing the Brandon Wheat Kings, the squad will play games three (March 31), four (April 2),



PHOTO BY MIDLAND UNIVERSITY ATHLETICS.

Darbi Poole and Natalie Rampton were part of Midland University women's hockey team's American Collegiate Hockey Association Division I championship.

and, if needed, five (April 3) of its best-of-seven, opening round series against the Calgary Hitmen.

Andrew Signs in ECHL

Virten's Hunter Andrew has signed an amateur tryout agreement with the professional Greenville Swamp Rabbits of the ECHL, a minor league that is two steps away from the National Hockey League. The Swamp Rabbits are an affiliate of the NHL's Los Angeles Kings.

The son of Brock and Andrea Andrew wrapped up his college career at Canisius University this past winter. He posted career highs in all offensive categories for the Buffalo, N.Y. school team.

Rookes Commits to Cougars

Manson's Kurt Rookes has committed to play hockey and study at the University of Regina. The Cougars compete in USports, the highest level in Canadian university athletics. The son of Mike and Leannae Rookes currently plays for the Manitoba Junior Hockey League's Waywayseecappo Wolverines. He was used both up front and on defence this season and finished in the top 20 in the league in scoring. Look for more on Rookes in an upcoming issue.

Davidson Recognized

Virten's Hudson Davidson received three trophies at the Campbell River (B.C.) Storm's annual year-end

awards night. The son of Karla and Craig Davidson recently completed his first season on the blue line for the Vancouver Island Junior Hockey League squad. He won the team's Academic Award and shared the Bill Walker Memorial Award, as the team's "unsung hero," with teammate Noah Spencer.

Davidson also received the prestigious Captain's Award, which goes to the player "deemed to have done the most to promote the team concept." Regarding that award, Storm general manager Lou Gravel said:

"Hudson was an obvious choice for that award for his dedication on ice, off ice and in the dressing room. Hudson is a great example for young junior players. He was also loved by his billet family."

U11 Bruins

The U11 Pierson Bruins won the consolation finals of the Hockey Manitoba C female provincial tournament. The squad includes Reston area players Isla Roper, Hadlee Flannery, Harper Flannery, and Emma Sterling. The Bruins went 3-1 at the provincial tournament in Swan Lake.

"Our team showed resilience at provincials, finishing as consolation champions," head coach Jason Bird said. "Their improvement, strong teamwork, and exceptional goaltending were key to their success."

HUTCHAG MEN'S CLUB CHAMPIONSHIP

By Robin Wark
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

The Cory Barkley rink won the Virten Curling Club's HutchAg Men's Club Championship.

In the final last week, Barkley defeated the Lyle Kinnaid rink. Barkley said:

"We played well once we got into the playoff round. Probably the hardest part in what is a pretty solid group of 21 teams playing is just getting into the playoffs, and once we had done that, we played very well in the semifinal and the final."

His rink consisted of Barkley, Jon Draper, Mike Langlois, and Jason Lewis. Barkley said he, Lewis and Draper have curled together in the league for about 15 years, while Langlois joined them about two years ago.

The skip expressed appreciation to "Jay Kinnaid and the Virten Curling Club for running a very good league, and thanks to all the teams that participate. It's a good group of guys and we're happy to be a part of it."



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Barry Hutchison presents the Cory Barkley rink with the HutchAg Men's Club Championship. From left to right are Jon Draper, Mike Langlois, Jason Lewis, and Cory Barkley.

Bob Lane a Manitoba Oilfield Museum and Hall of Fame Posthumous Inductee



Bob Lane, a life long oil man.

PHOTO BY CRAIG LANE

By Nancy Jo Moller
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

Bob Lane grew up in the Virden area and his first job while still in high school was with S & A Well Servicing. He realized that he had found his calling and went to SAIT in Calgary to complete the Petroleum Tech course. After graduation he began working for Esso in Red Water, AB. His travels began as he worked in Dubai, the North Sea, Congo, South Africa, and Norway operating “test tools” for Baker Oil. His family relocated to England while Bob worked overseas so he was able to spend time with them on rotations off. One can only imagine the adjustments he made in language, customs and work habits in these places. It became ingrained in him to carry a “safety fund” and it as something that he carried for the rest of his life. A prairie man on an ocean platform in the North Sea is something he would not have envisioned in younger years but was a challenge he met with a smile.

He and his family returned to Manitoba and

began LJ Oil Well Servicing with his partner Craig Johnson. They operated this business from 1978 to 1991 when they sold the rigs.

Bob worked as a consultant in the oilfield until 2006. As a well-respected member of the oil community, Bob mentored many workers in the field. He didn’t know anything about the oilfield when he started and received great satisfaction mentoring local employees watching them succeed.

Anyone that asked him a question had to be prepared for the response. He didn’t beat around the bush, and you always knew where you stood when you received an answer.

Bob was a humble man, who worked hard all his life and never looked for recognition. When he accepted a job with his son Craig at Tundra Oil & Gas in later life, his pride was apparent but he never hesitated in letting the boss know that there was a better way of doing the job.

A sign of his recognition and respect he earned in the oil world was apparent by the number of people who

attended his funeral from all over the world. Bob lent a “helping hand” to many businesses and individuals throughout his life and his legacy lives on in the Patch.



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Marv Hannem a Manitoba Oilfield Museum and Hall of Fame Posthumous Inductee

By Nancy Jo Moller
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

Marv Hannem is one of the respected businessmen being inducted posthumously to the Manitoba Oilfield Museum and Hall of Fame.

Marv grew up in Warburg, AB and the oilpatch drew him away from school at an early age. He started as a roughneck for drilling rigs in the province. He was no stranger to hard work as he was raised on a farm so this switch to paid work was entered into enthusiastically. After several years, a switch to a Battery Operator position in Alberta allowed Marv to change the course of his career slightly and broadened his knowledge.

After recognizing the oil boom was happening in Manitoba, Marv and his brother Del moved

from Alberta and began operating a hot oil unit. Ambition and the confidence of young men led them to form Mead Petroleum with 2 other partners. They began buying production fields as the oil extraction continued and in the 1970's formed Crown Drilling. They owned a few production fields in Kansas, travelling back and forth on a regular basis. Once they decided to focus their efforts back in Canada, they formed Cromer Valley Petroleum. Marv's employees were always excited to see him arrive, because he regularly stopped at Cromer Valley store for their delicious Pigs in a Blanket. Marv always treated everyone with respect and the feeling was mutual.

Revolving companies again, Cromer Valley Petroleum was sold, and

the new Border Energy became a family-only owned company. His sons Brad and Darren followed in Marv's footsteps with a love of the oilpatch. How could it be otherwise when they grew up listening to their dad talking about oil production with a big smile on his face. No challenge was backed away from and Marv never retired; he may have slowed slightly but was always around to offer welcome advice.

Treating people with respect was an important part of everyday life with Marv because he believed that you could attract more bees with honey. He rode out the rags to riches reversals always buffering it with his love of family. His kids and grandkids have great memories of him.



PHOTO BY BRAD HANNEM

Marv Hannem was often deep in thought about his oilfield production decisions.

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