

Empire-Advance

serving virden & area since 1885

MAY 29, 2026 | EMPIRE: VOL 121 NO 41 / ADVANCE: VOL 140 NO 43 | PUBLISHING FRIDAYS

GAME NIGHT
CHEERS UP. GAME ON. GOOD TIMES.



3 Months on Us!

Finance a new camper, boat, vehicle, or trip, and you could get up to three months of payments covered.

Connect with a Sunrise lender to enter.

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



sunrise.mb.ca

Firefighters celebrate Governor General, service awards

By Anne Davison
EMPIRE ADVANCE

At Virden and Elkhorn fire stations dinner and awards evening, May 23, families gathered as honours were bestowed following a delicious roast beef meal at RCL No.8 Club Room.

Five members received Governor General Exemplary Service Medals presented by Fire Board chairperson Clayton Canart to: Cory Nixon (20 years), Chuck Heaman (30 years), Curtis Smith (40 years) and Brad Yochim (45 years). Blaine Rhodes (20 years) was not in attendance but he also receives the Governor General medal.

Wallace District Fire Department Stations 1 and 2 were praised for their dedication and service during recent remarks from Canart. "I always enjoy coming to this evening (event) when everyone gets dressed up in their uniforms and are recognized for the services they provide for everybody," he said, noting the department is "highly regarded" among other volunteer departments for its training, equipment and professionalism.

Other members of the fire board attending were: Co-chair Tara Maxwell (Town of Virden), Marc Savy (Town), and Trent Forsyth (RM of Pipestone).

Canart thanked firefighters for the services they provide both locally and along the Trans-Canada Highway, where crews often respond to calls involving travellers from outside the municipality.



PHOTO BY DALE DAVISON

These Firefighters received awards: (L-R) Back L-R) LT Dylan Holmstrom, FF Rick Walker, FF Evan Parady, FF Brad Yochim, FF Jack Lewis, DC Gareth Lewis: (Front L-R): FF Chuck Heaman, CPTN Joseph Pappel, FF Curtis Smith, LT Morgan Henry, Fire Chief Stat. 1 Virden Cory Nixon, Fire Chief Stat. 2 Elkhorn Aaron Lewis, FF John Davidson, FF Abdul Siddiqi.

Special recognition was also given to the new fire chiefs for their leadership. "Another thank-you goes out to our two chiefs, Corey (Nixon) and Aaron (Lewis). We appreciate you guys taking on the role. I know it was a lot of work and a bit of a learning curve for you guys. But you've been doing a great job...."

Station 1 / Station 2 / WDFD awards Station 2, 2024

- Training Attendance - Aaron Lewis
- Calls Attendance - Jack Lewis
- Rookie of the year - Abdul Siddiqi
- Firefighter of the year - Jack Lewis
- Officer of the year - Aaron Lewis

Station 1, 2025

- Training Attendance - Morgan Henry

- Calls Attendance - Rick Walker
- Rookie of the year - Evan Parady
- Firefighter of the year - Rick Walker

Station 2, 2025

- Training attendance - Aaron Lewis
- Calls Attendance - Gareth Lewis
- Firefighter of the year - Jack Lewis
- Officer of the year - Aaron Lewis

WDFD Service years

- Dylan Holmstrom - 5 year
- Rick Walker - 10-year
- Joseph Pappel - 10-year
- Bruce Brading - 10-year (not present)
- Tyson Vaneaton - 10-year
- Curtis Smith - 20-year
- John Davidson - 35-year

Inside...



FARMERS' ADVOCATE
P11-14



OAK LAKE RODEO P8

SPRING INTO SAVINGS!

VIRDEN DODGE.CA

CHRYSLER DODGE // Jeep RAM

• \$10,000 off DIESEL TRUCKS

• 0% financing available on select models

300 Frontage Rd, Virden - 204-748-3396 - www.virdendodge.ca



2026 RAM 2500 LARAMIE DIESEL

Was: \$118,570
Savings: -\$10,000

Now: \$108,570
plus fees and taxes



2026 RAM 2500 BIG HORN DIESEL

Was: \$100,855
Savings: -\$10,000

Now: \$90,855
plus fees and taxes

Students rewarded for Brain Love poster work



Goulter Grade 3 & 4: Hadley Whitehorn - 2nd prize within FLBSD; with teachers Kathy Welch (L), Fran Baylis (C) and Donelda Wheelans (R).



Reston Grade 1 & 2: Charlie Kernel - 3rd prize; Hunter Halls - 1st prize; Prairie Morin-Chaske - 2nd prize within FLBSD. Provincial level 1st prize - Hunter Halls.



VJH Grade 7 & 8: Will Elliott - 3rd prize; Mia Pearn - 1st prize; Jeanne Marie Besa - 2nd prize within FLBSD. Provincial level Will Elliott - 2nd prize.



VJH Grade 5 & 6: 1st prize - Braxton Goulden; 3rd prize - Fernanda Ascencio Valiente within FLBSD. Provincial level 2nd prize - Braxton Goulden.



Reston Grade 3 & 4: Sebastian Quitong - 1st Prize; Hunter Vickers - 3rd Prize within FLBSD. Provincial level 2nd prize - Sebastian Quitong.



High School: 1st prize - Payton Brown-Groom; 2nd prize - Zoe Desjardins; 3rd prize - Elise Fehr [missing from photo] within FLBSD. Provincial level, 1st prize - Zoe Desjardins and 2nd prize - Payton Brown-Groom.

By Anne Davison
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

The Canadian Royal Purple poster contest theme, Brain Injury Awareness and Prevention saw some winning work from Fort la Bosse School Division students.

The purpose of the contest is to bring awareness to students of the causes of Brain Injury, the consequences of a brain injury, and how to prevent this kind of injury.

Teachers play an important part in guiding the poster contest. Gr. 1 through Gr. 12 students are encouraged to participate and create posters from their own understanding of the issue.

The contest is at three levels - local, provincial and national. At each level the winners are acknowledged and receive cash prizes. Provincial winners go on to compete at the National level in July.

Royal Purple member Shirley Gibson describes the impact of the poster contest in Virden. "We had many posters displayed at the library. All the winners and pictures

are posted on our local Royal Purple Facebook page. There have been a lot of comments there," said Gibson.

Each school takes pictures of the presentations that are put in their yearbooks.

This year, students from Reston, Goulter, Virden Junior High, Virden Collegiate, Boundary Lane and Plainview Colonies participated. Gibson explains that all schools in the Division are given the information and encouraged to participate.

"After the National judging, one poster is chosen as the Grand Prize Winner. Last year that poster was made into a larger poster and circulated to all the lodges across

Canada to be displayed in their communities. That winner was from VCI and the poster is displayed at many of the businesses in town," she says.

Place mats are patterned after the other winning posters, "which again are used by the lodges in their communities. Here, Chicken Chef and Boston Pizza agreed to use [the placemats] to support Virden Royal Purple."

Gibson ensures copies of winning posters are made available to their creators. "Students who have winning posters do not get their original posters back but I do get copies made for them so they have something to keep."

SUBMITTED PHOTOS

VIRDEN FARMERS MARKET
Thursday 4-6:30
June 4-Sept 24.
Beside the tracks.
SEE YOU THERE!
Enter to win Market bucks!
Too become a vendor contact Maxine @ 431-763-0880

JOIN US!
50th Anniversary Tea
Wednesday June 3rd
Starting at 1:30 pm

2:00 pm Speeches
2:30 pm Cake and Refreshments

We would like to invite everyone to join us and have a tour of our library!

Reston District Library
220 4th Street, Reston • 204-877-3673

LEFT: Reston Grade 5 & 6: Annorah Zarn - 2nd prize within FLBSD. Provincial level she won 1st prize.

NorthVantage AUCTION
Trevor Dyck
tdyck@northvantageinc.com
306-339-7911

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MERVIN AND THE LATE LORRAINE SCOTT

ELKHORN, MB
Elkhorn Rink
JUNE 10TH, 2026 AT 10 AM (MANITOBA TIME)
Terms: Cash, cheque with proper ID or e-transfer.

ANTIQUE FURNITURE

- Four antique buffets
- Curve glass china cabinet
- Library desk
- Antique wooden chairs/Piano stool/Piano bench/Wooden phone/Wooden boxes/Wooden chairs
- Antique dressers/Wash board/Lamps/Wooden rolling pins
- Wash stands
- Four old trunks
- Hope chest

GLASSWARE

- Old country Rose china/Carnival glass/Cranberry glass/
- Terri Mclean plates/Avon Stiens/Antique drum set/Salt and pepper shakers
- Depression glass/Needle point picture/Moose tufting picture
- Cups and saucers
- Carnival glass/Depression glass/Old crystal
- Silverware sets /Enamel ware

SHOP-YARD-HARDWARE

- Walk behind snow lower
- Garden tiller/push lawn mowers
- Air compressor/shop vac/pressure washers
- Welder and helmet
- Vices/assortment of tools and tool boxes

HOUSEHOLD

- Upright freezer
- Fridge
- Table and chairs
- TV stand
- Electric lift chair

TOYS AND MISC

- Air conditioners
- Garden hoses/Saw horses/ladders/
- Calf-puller/wagon wheel/Branding iron
- Old Tonka toys
- 200 collectable dolls
- Assortment of old cast iron toys and trucks
- Toy pistols
- Two spring horses
- Sad irons
- Gopher traps
- Chicken plucker/Bike/Tricycle
- Lots of items packed in boxes so there will be some surprises

For complete listing go to: Global Auction Guide www.globalauctionguide.com

Mmm, Mmm, Good, another tasty meal enjoyed in the community



PHOTO NANCY JO MOLLER

Legion Fish Fry lineup anticipating mouthwatering fillets.

By Nancy Jo Moller
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

The Virden Legion Fish Fry was held on Sunday May 24 in the Legion Hall. Anticipation for this event was heard throughout the community during the week. Comments of “Are you going?” began most conversations in the area. The wait was worth it, golden fried fillets that flaked at the touch of the fork were plentiful. The accompanying buns, baked potatoes, beans and coleslaw were reminiscent of a campfire meal by the shoreline. Once again, the Legion members excelled and presented good food, value and a place that friends can relax and enjoy. The tables were full before 5 pm with expectation of more arriving shortly. We are fortunate to have this hard-working group present a variety of events for area residents.

Spring showers didn't dampen the Auxiliary Luncheon

By Nancy Jo Moller
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

The Virden & District Health Auxiliary Spring Luncheon held on May 22 at the Sacred Heart Parish Centre was an example of the community support given for this worthwhile organization. Celebrating 120 years, this group fundraises in support of the West-man Nursing Home, the Sherwood Home, The Virden Health Centre and Lab and Emergency Medical Services. In 1906, The Virden Hospital Ladies Aid Society was formed. When members of the society felt it would be beneficial to have a local hospital, they wrote to nearby facilities to discuss costs. Discovering that it would cost \$2,000 per year to operate, they quickly formed a plan. They signed up local women at a cost of 10 cents per month, then asked them to solicit donations from local businesses and households. The Virden Cottage Hospital opened its doors thanks to these determined ladies and

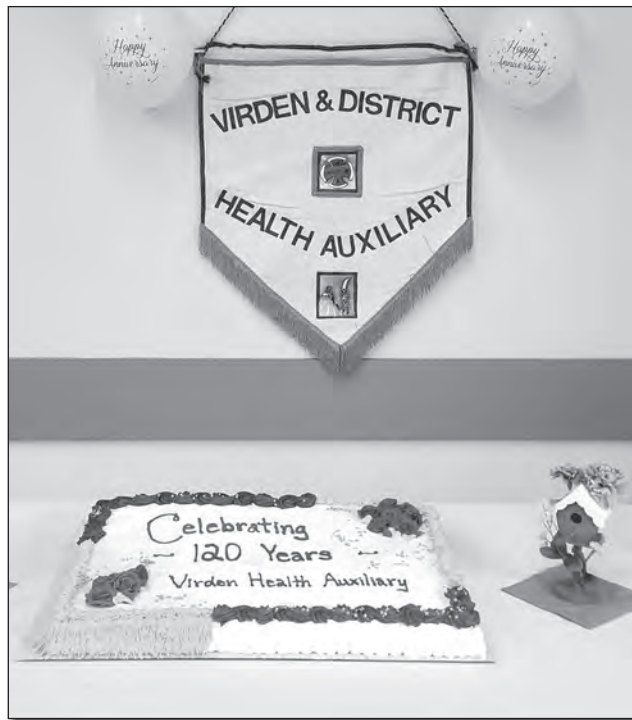


PHOTO NANCY JO MOLLER

What an accomplishment celebrating 120 years.

the community. Patients were charged \$1 or more per day to help fund costs. What a change from then to our present health care system. Today, the Health Auxiliary is active in its community, by participating in blood donor clinics, flu clinics, staff appreciation teas, and raising funds

in support of the Virden hospital. Winner of the 50/50 draw was Lil Wadham and Dianne Hayward won the door prize. Talented Virden Art Club members created an eye-catching display showcasing a variety of pictures and techniques.

Valley Riders 4-H Club exhibit their 'Helping Hands' motto



PHOTO BY DREDA BRAYBROOK

Members of the Valley Riders club participated in cleaning a winter paddock preparing it for summer grazing. Their club believes in horse health and gave their willing hands to Dreda Braybrook on Friday May 22 near Virden. This is an example of 'Learn to do by doing'. A local resident provided a tractor to assist their efforts.



ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2026

Please join us in person at Tundra Oil Gas Place,
Sunrise Banquet Hall, 900 5th Ave S, Virden.

Virtual attendance is not available.

VALLEYVIEW CO-OP
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Wednesday, June 3rd 2026

7:00 p.m. Call to Order

Advance registration is required. Scan the QR code or call 204-748-6700 ext 311 by June 3rd, 2026 at 12:00 p.m.



BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

Only three nominations were received for the three available director positions.

As a result, the election is uncontested, with incumbents Marnie McCutcheon, Jonathan Hodson and Tayona Johnas standing for re-election by acclamation, subject to member approval at the Annual General Meeting.

Those holding an active Valleyview Co-op membership prior to January 31 of 2026 are eligible to participate in the acclamation process at the Annual General Meeting.

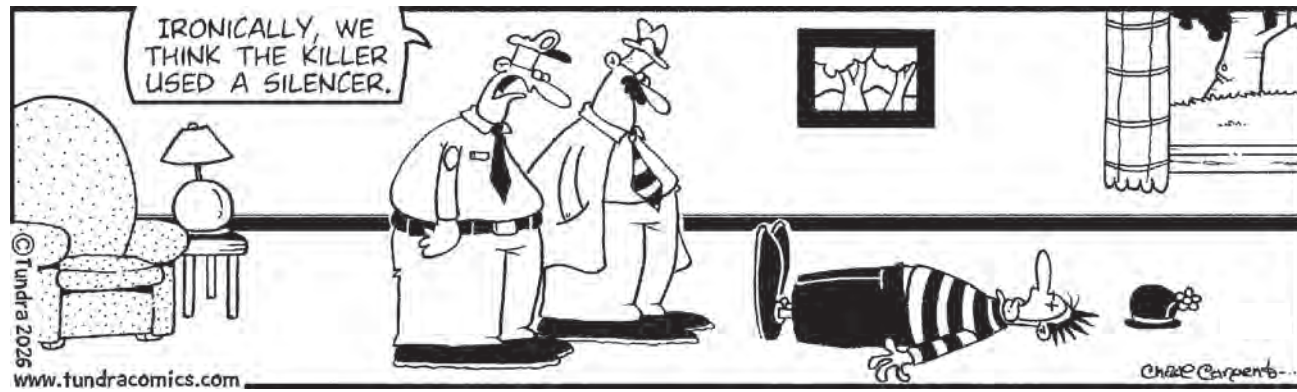
Please send any questions in advance to member.relations@valleyview.crs no later than **June 2nd, 2026**.

valleyviewco-op.crs

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Tundra

By Chad Carpenter



Ever changing...

There are a whole lot of things that change, daily, weekly, monthly, yearly... you get the picture. What caught my attention this week was farm grain storage. Travelling hither and yon this week I covered a lot of territory. The grain handling systems on many farms I saw have a larger capacity, by far, than the country grain elevator of my early years.

My earliest memories of granaries come from my grandparents' farms. My paternal grandfather was an advanced farmer for his time. The storage unit was a drive through system- huge doors on each end of a long building. Teams in one end, off load, and out the other. I have no idea of the capacity, to me it was really big! When my father chose to set out on his own, it was, at the beginning, hard scabble farming. Heck, our home was a converted granary. The building storing the grain was a patched up possibly ten by twelve foot wooden structure. Tin cans had been flattened out and nailed over rodent holes, on the floor and on the walls. Turnbuckled rods kept the walls together. They were at the ideal height- to whack your head on when you were shovelling the grain out! I can bring to mind the itchiness of the oats and barley, the smooth sound of flowing wheat or flax...

I recognise that the wooden bins were indeed an appearance of progress. Painted bins added importance, and a row of bins was affluent. Then came the round metal bins, short, squat sentinels of the farmyard. They became larger, much larger, and then we saw hopper bins, white guards flanking the perimeter of the working farm yard. Then hopper bins with aeration fans.

Now the systems are immense, ginormous, monstrous! There are auger networks, walkways, antennas I assume for communication, aeration tunnels, and rows of bins, that again, probably hold more than the country elevator of the fifties did! I am impressed. That is a whole lot of changes!

The elevators at Graysville, I think a Pool, and a UGG, had personality. So did the operators. That little dust filled office, with gosh awful coffee, had the moisture tester and the permit books. Yes, I really do remember permit books! Having no brothers, I was privileged to haul grain. This was with a half ton truck. You drove up the ramp, had your vehicle's front wheels on the lift mechanism, and stepped out. As the front end rose, you opened the tailgate and the operator sifted a handful of the grain, sometimes taking a chew of the grain, and when all was said and done, you waited for the truck to descend and drove home, ready to repeat the trip if there was room on your permit. As the trucks got bigger, and had their own hoist, the procedure was much the same. Even at the time I appreciated the fact the elevator man allowed me to clean the box, never offering to help the slip of a teenage girl. (And, yes, I was a slip of a girl!)

So many changes in farming. In almost everything. One can only imagine what comes next.

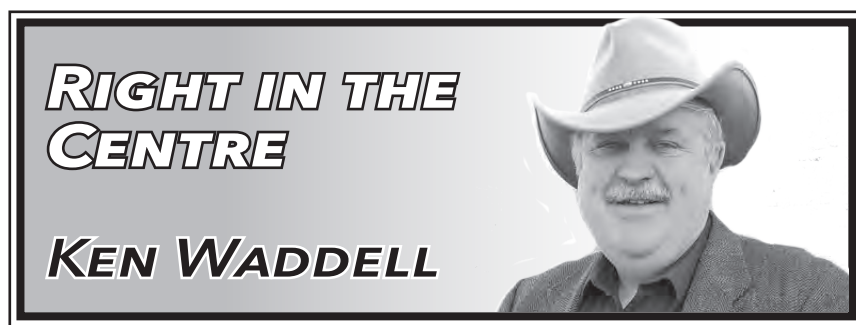
Summer is finally here, we hope

In our version of the newspaper business we get to take a measure of weather and travel conditions to our communities every week. Papers are printed on Wednesdays at Struth Publishers in Killarney, home of the Killarney Guide. That way we get a report on roads to the south every Wednesday. The Struth family owns the only newspaper printing plant in South-western Manitoba.

Our drivers head out each Thursday morning for one or two days of paper deliveries. We have four drivers and vans heading your way every week. With all our papers, staff and readers depending on the trips those days, we watch the weather forecasts very closely. I have three rules about deliveries. For the past 36 years, I have told my drivers that they make the call about road conditions. I will not make them go out in road conditions they don't feel safe about. I say, "I want you home safely, the vehicle home safely and the papers delivered safely and in that order."

Now that the weather seems to have turned to summer, there is some less stress. That said, two weeks ago when the big wind storms hit, the weather was warm enough but the dust and high winds made for some dangerous driving conditions. So after a few dicey days of driving over the last few months, we are looking forward to summer.

In our weekly travels, we see crop seeding, spraying, harvesting along with various aspects of the cattle business. We also see some wild-life activity just about every week. Last week, was a first for us as we are pretty sure there was a coyote chomping down on a moose carcass. We see lots of bald eagles, many



“ As we move into real summer we need to pray for more timely rains, protection from wind and hail. ”

different kinds of hawks, coyote and fox sightings are fairly common. But most important, we see people and all the things that they do to make our area a wonderful place to live.

I find it gratifying to see all the activity across the communities we serve. So I am looking forward to summer. Even the lack of rainfall has been a blessing as the big air seeders have hammered in a lot of crop in the past three weeks. Some timely rains are making everything grow and with this week's heat, the world is becoming greener by the hour. Yes, summer is finally here, we hope.

As we move into real summer we need to pray for more timely rains, protection from wind and hail and protection for all our farmers and everyone associated with farming. This year, my wife Christine and I have reflected on our own farming

careers. We were both raised on traditional mixed farms, family owned at Scarth and Holland respectively. We both attended university and I worked as an Ag-Rep with the Manitoba Department of Agriculture for around 10 years. We went farming in 1975 and got caught up in the high interest rate inflationary years of the 1980s. We had to give up farming but we are pleased now that two grandchildren and a son are involved directly in the Ag industry. It makes us smile with a touch of gratitude.

So here's hoping and praying for a good summer of crops and safety for everyone. And please folks, don't be speaking words complaining about farmers when your mouth is full. Farmers feed us all.

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

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Rain or Shine, the BBQ Fundraiser for VCI Safe Grad was Smokin Hot!



PHOTO BY NANCY JO MOLLER

The VCI Safe Grad Fundraiser BBQ was set up in front of Guild Insurance, Virden on Friday May 22. Where else could you get a delicious burger or hotdog and drink with a donation to keep our local graduates safe on their milestone night. The smiles were contagious as the burgers were being flipped. Vehicles filled the lot as hungry passersby lined up for a tasty lunch.

Town Office: 204-748-2440

Virден Landfill: 204-748-6033

Tundra Oil & Gas Place: 204-748-2736



Animal Control: 204-851-5881

Facility Bookings: 204-748-2440

Emergency After Hours: 204-851-5540

Virден Skate Park

Open daily from 10:00 AM – 8:00 PM

Remember:

- Helmets are strongly recommended.
- Please be mindful of other riders' abilities, be respectful and have fun!

The Disc Golf Course is Now Open

Free to Use!

The course is 9 holes long and starts at Centennial Park by the Canopy.

Discs are available to borrow from the Border Regional Library.

Upcoming Council Meetings

June 2 & 18

Council Meetings start at 7:00 PM

Summer Day Camp registration open

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

Tax Prepayment Discounts

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

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

Month of Payment	Discount Rate	Savings on \$1000.00
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.

Employment Opportunity

Manager of Utilities

The Town of Virden is accepting applications for the full-time position of Manager of Utilities.

Under the general direction of the Operations and Facilities Manager, the position oversees and manages the full spectrum of utility services (water and wastewater) and supervises Operations staff with certifications in any of the four water and wastewater operator disciplines. They will assist the Operations and Facilities Manager with the direction and work planning for Utilities. They will be expected to communicate professionally with both residents and contractors. The position will provide administrative support and assistance to the Operations and Facilities Manager in this area.

Full job description is available on the Town of Virden website.

Please forward resume with cover letter to:

Neil Smith, Chief Administrative Officer
Town of Virden
Box 310, Virden, MB, R0M 2C0
Email: cao@virden.ca

Municipal Clerk/RCMP Detachment

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

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

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

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

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

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

HELEN DRYSDALE

OUT OF HELEN'S KITCHEN

The first Neepawa Saint James Anglican church was built in 1889. In February of 1897 that church was destroyed by fire. The new church was started in May of the same year. The new church cost \$3,500 to build.

In the early 1950s a local group of Anglican ladies "The Evening Branch of the Women's Auxiliary" was involved in church and community work. This faithful group of women sold carnations for Mother's Day, catered to banquets, held rummage sales and did various other work to raise money. Discipleship in action, they supported the church, Children's Aid, the Red Cross and the Salvation Army Red Shield among other things. In 1954 they published a cookbook with some of their favourite recipes.

Local merchants advertised in the cookbook and the ladies requested that readers patronize the advertisers in their book. No ten digit phone numbers in those days. At Neepawa Groceries, owned by Reg Williams, the number was 97. Miss McDougall at the Churchill Block phone number was 6. She sold "quality coal and insurances of all kinds except life insurance." Justin Hipwell was the manufacturer of Hips fruit flavoured syrups and apple cider, phone number 423. Sunnyside Meat and Groceries gave you smiling service at number 10. For your "prescription specialist" phone Wicketts Pharmacy at 456.

I will share several of their recipes and perhaps you will remember these family names.

Apple Alexandria salad

-Mrs. E.H. Drayson (Mary)

3 large tart apples	1 orange
2 medium sized carrots	1 medium sized Spanish onion salt and pepper
salt and pepper to taste	salad dressing or mayonnaise

Dice apples and orange. Slice carrots thinly or grate them, also the onion. Sprinkle with salt and pepper. Dress with salad dressing. Serve on lettuce.

Yorkshire Steak dinner

-Mrs. D. Bennett (Marge)

1 lb. minced beef steak, brown in skillet	1/2 onion chopped fine
1/2 tsp. poultry seasoning	1/2 tsp. salt
1 egg	1 cup milk
7/8 cup flour	1/2 tsp. baking powder
1/4 tsp. salt	

Combine meat, onion, poultry seasoning and salt. Put it in a very hot with oven at 400°F and heat it. Beat egg, add the rest of the ingredients and beat one minute. Pour over hot meat and bake at 400°F for 30 minutes.

Savoury canned beets

-Mrs. W. Greenhalgh (Irma)

3 Tbsp. minced onion	6 Tbsp. butter
1 1/4 tsp. salt	1 Tbsp. white sugar
1/4 tsp. cloves	3 Tbsp. vinegar
4 cups chopped canned beets	

Sauté the onion in butter in a saucepan until tender. Add the salt, sugar, cloves and vinegar and cook 5 minutes. Add the beets, stir and heat well.

Afternoon tea cakes

-Mrs. P. Murray

2/3 cup Eagle brand sweetened condensed milk	2 cups shredded coconut
1/2 cup chopped maraschino cherries	1/2 cup chopped dates
1/2 cup chopped walnuts	

Mix milk, coconut, cherries, dates and walnuts. Drop by spoonfuls on greased baking sheets. Bake at moderately hot oven (350°F) for 12 minutes or until brown. Remove from oven at once.

Miniota News

Submitted

BY LINDA CLARK

Hats off to the Miniota Arrow River Donor's Choice Committee and the many canvassers for another wonderful charity drive.

The 2026 donations are as follows: Cancer, \$1,892; CNIB, \$537; Red Cross, \$722; Kidney, \$747; Child & Family Services, \$490; MS, \$777; Diabetes, \$1,057; Arthritis, \$842; Alzheimer's, \$1,012; Crohn's/Colitis, \$707; Compassionate Friends, \$370; Heart, \$1,572; Lupus, \$487; Lung, \$637;

Hamiota District Health Centre Foundation, \$857; Miniota Municipal Services to Seniors, \$1,332; Miniota Museum, \$750; Miniota & Area Foundation, \$2,855; Handivan, \$930; and S.T.A.R.S., \$3,432, for a total of \$22,005. Thank you to all who donated.

Jerri and Lincoln Judd travelled to Mississauga, Ont., where Lincoln, a member of the 15U Brandon volleyball team, played at the nationals. They placed 39th out of 96 teams. Congratulations, Lincoln! As well as volleyball, both Jerri and

Lincoln enjoyed some sightseeing.

Adrianna Cousins, a member of the Russell club volleyball team, attended the nationals in Calgary. Congratulations, Adrianna!

Both Saturday and Sunday, one could hear the cheering from all over town as the annual baseball tournament was held. Miniota teams were pleased to host visiting teams from Birtle, Bois-Sevain, Hamiota, Rocanville, Russell, Virden R & F, as well as the 13UAAA Midwest team versus Winnipeg North.

"Life is a balance of holding on and letting go." — Rumi

Police Report

Westman RCMP Service Report for May 17 to 23

Submitted

BY WESTMAN RCMP

During this week, Westman RCMP received a total of 87 calls for service. Some of these calls for service included 40 traffic offences, 2 False Alarms, 3 Assaults, 2 Wellbeing Checks, 5 Mental Health, and 7 - 911 Calls.

On May 18, RCMP received a report of an Assault in the Town of Virden. Upon arrival, members spoke with the victim who reported he was physically assaulted by a male suspect who also had damaged the mirror on his vehicle. Members gathered evidence; obtaining statements and video surveillance and arrested a 32-year-old male. The accused was charged with Assault and Mischief and was released on conditions to appear in court at a later date.

On May 19, during a routine traffic patrol on Highway 1 in the RM of Wallace-Woodworth, RCMP observed a vehicle travelling at a high rate of speed. Radar confirmed the driving speed of 146 km/hr in a 110 km/hr zone. A traffic stop was conducted, and the driver was issued a Traffic Offence Notice for Speeding, which carries a fine of \$521.

On May 19, during a routine traffic patrol on Highway 1 in Virden, RCMP observed a vehicle travelling at a high rate of speed. Radar confirmed the driving speed of 149 km/hr in a 110 km/hr zone. A traffic stop was conducted, and the driver

was issued a Traffic Offence Notice for Speeding, which carries a fine of \$561.

On May 20, during a routine traffic patrol on Highway 21 in Sioux Valley Dakota Nation, RCMP conducted a traffic stop with a vehicle which had a burnt-out headlight. Upon arrival, the driver of the vehicle admitted to driving the vehicle without a driver license. RCMP completed checks and confirmed. The driver was issued a Traffic Offence Notice for Drive without a Valid Driver License, which carries a fine of \$298.

On May 23, RCMP received a report of an Impaired Driver in the Town of Reston. RCMP made patrols and located the vehicle. A traffic stop was conducted; driver was identified and showed signs of impairment. ASD demand was completed and resulted in a FAIL. The driver was placed under arrest for Impaired Operation and was transported to Virden Detachment. The driver provided two separate samples which resulted in 230mg% and 210mg%. The driver was charged with Operation while Impaired, Operation while Impaired exceeding 80mg%. The driver was also issued a Traffic Offence Notice for Unlawful Transportation of Liquor, Operate a Vehicle Without a Supervising Driver and Drive a Motor Vehicle contrary to the Requirements of Ignition Interlock Program. Once sober, the driver was released with conditions to appear in court later.

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EFFICIENCY MANITOBA

Nesbitt encourages Manitobans to support real affordability relief

By Greg Nesbitt
MLA - RIDING MOUNTAIN

Greg Nesbitt, MLA for Riding Mountain, is encouraging Manitobans to sign the Progressive Conservative Caucus petition calling on the

provincial government to increase Manitoba's Basic Personal Exemption to \$30,000.

The proposal would eliminate provincial income tax on the first \$30,000 Manitobans earn, providing up to

\$1,500 in annual savings for individuals and more than \$3,000 for many two-income families.

"Families in Riding Mountain are working hard, but every month feels more expensive," said Nesbitt. "Groceries cost more. Housing costs more. Transportation costs more. Mani-

tobans need relief that is significant."

The petition comes as Manitoba families continue to face rising costs across nearly every part of daily life, while the current provincial government is increasing income taxes and education property taxes.

"Increasing the Basic

Personal Exemption is practical, fair, and focused on working families," said Nesbitt. "This proposal would allow Manitobans to keep more of what they earn while helping local businesses and communities grow stronger."

The Progressive Conservative proposal would

create the highest Basic Personal Exemption in Canada and would return hundreds of millions of dollars directly back into the Manitoba economy.

Manitobans can sign the petition online at:

No Provincial Income Tax on the First \$30,000 You Earn

First-year medical students participate in 'Rural Week'



PHOTO BY PRAIRIE MOUNTAIN HEALTH

PMH Associate Chief Medical Officer Dr. Kyle Conrad,

shadow physicians, connect with healthcare teams, and explore local services, while also engaging in community activities that showcase rural life.

PMH Associate Chief Medical Officer Dr. Kyle Conrad, a past Rural Week participant, understands the program's impact. Dr. Conrad is also a family practice anesthetist based in Brandon, while also supporting Minnedosa, Neepawa and Northern Manitoba.

"My experience with Rural Week played a significant role in shaping my career. I clearly remember how welcoming the community was and how proudly they showcased the care and services they provide. That experience has stayed with me, and I'm proud to continue providing care in rural and northern Manitoba. Rural Week is an essential recruitment initiative—it's about more than healthcare; it's about the strength of our communities and the people who make them thrive."

PMH extends sincere thanks to physician preceptors, healthcare professionals, and community volunteers whose dedication makes Rural Week possible. The program's success reflects the commitment and hospitality of participating communities.

Rural Week was introduced in 2003 as an optional experience within the University of Manitoba's first-year medical curriculum and became a mandatory component the following year.

cine, Shared Health (Manitoba Healthcare Providers Network), and Manitoba's rural regional health authorities, Rural Week offers students valuable first-hand experience in rural and northern medical practice, while highlighting the benefits of living and working in these communities.

This year, Prairie Mountain Health is hosting 41 students

across 14 communities, including Brandon, Carberry, Dauphin, Deloraine, Grandview, Hamiota, Killarney, Minnedosa, Neepawa, Roblin, Russell, Souris, Ste. Rose, and Virden.

The program introduces students to both the clinical and community aspects of rural healthcare, often their first exposure to rural practice. During the week, students will

By Blaine Kraushaar
PMH COMMUNICATIONS

An enthusiastic group of first-year medical students from the University of Manitoba's Max Rady College of Medicine will participate in Rural Week across the Prairie Mountain Health (PMH) region from May 25-29 and June 1-5.

Coordinated annually by the Department of Family Medi-

OLD SAYINGS

REF TO
WRITER

GERRY
NOLAN



Here are a few more examples of the old sayings I started writing about last week.

·Red sky at night, red sky in the morning. This refers to red sky at night indicates dry, high pressure air moving in. Red sunrise suggests sunlight passing through incoming moisture.

Ed. note: I was taught a longer version- Red sky at night, sailor's delight, red sky in the morning, sailor's take warning. KW

·Don't get your knickers in a twist. This is a lighthearted way to tell someone not to overreact. This is a much more playful way to calm the situation by the modern "calm down". This phrase points a silly mental picture and often diffuses tension with a smile!

·Hold your Horses. This phrase reminds people to rein in the horse and their impatience. In other words take things slow and easy, do not get so excited.

·You'll catch more flies with honey than vinegar. Being kind and polite is much more effective in getting what you want than being harsh or rude.

·Don't count your chickens before they are hatched. This refers to someone who should not depend on something hoped for until they are certain that it will happen.

·There is no point in beating a dead horse. This simply means to keep talking about a subject that has already been discussed and or decided.

·I'm plum tuckered out. The meaning of this is you are completely exhausted or extremely tired. It is a phrase used to express extreme fatigue.

·And finally, the last one for this week is, and you heard it on the Beverly Hillbillies, "You all come back now you hear!"

**BE ON
TIME!**
Advertising
deadline:
**12 noon
Tuesday**

SPORTS

MHSRA SEASON TOTALS FOR LOCAL MEMBERS



PHOTO BY NANCY JO MOLLER

Jo-Hannah Logan of Lenore riding in the Junior High Girl's Breakaway. Jo-Hannah is currently in first place in this event.

By Jessica Coulter
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

Manitoba High School Rodeo Association (MHSRA) regular season finished up this past weekend, in Oak Lake.

Results are from the MHSRA website. Finals for Junior High (JH) riders will be May 29 – 31 in Gilbert Plains. High School (HS) finals are scheduled for June 12 – 14 in Virden.

All details are from the MHSRA website.

AMELIA CRAWFORD ~ VIRDEN, MB		
Event	Place	Points
HS Barrel Racing	16	17
HS Goat Tying	6	59.5
HS Pole Bending	10	38

BODEN BOND ~ KENTON, MB		
Event	Place	Points
HS Team Roping	1	98
HS Tie Down Roping	5	54
HS Trap Shooting	1	77

BROCK BROWN ~ VIRDEN, MB		
Event	Place	Points
JH Boy's Breakaway	1	103
JH Boy's Goat Tying	3	83
JH Ribbon Roping	7	56
JH Team Roping	9	17

CARTER BROWN ~ VIRDEN, MB		
Event	Place	Points
HS Steer Wrestling	1	10
HS Team Roping	13	28
HS Tie Down Roping	2	84

DALLY BROWN ~ VIRDEN, MB		
Event	Place	Points
JH Barrel Racing	2	106
JH Girl's Breakaway	2	50
JH Girl's Goat Tying	8	57
JH Pole Bending	6	70
JH Ribbon Roping	8	56
JH Team Roping	10	17

DAWSON BROWN ~ VIRDEN, MB		
Event	Place	Points
HS Team Roping	5	69
HS Tie Down Roping	11	12

DENVER GOMPF ~ OAK LAKE, MB		
Event	Place	Points
HS Team Roping	2	87
HS Tie Down Roping	1	92.5

EMILY WARKENTIN ~ VIRDEN, MB		
Event	Place	Points
JH Barrel Racing	1	109
JH Girl's Breakaway	9	8
JH Girl's Goat Tying	7	60
JH Light Rifle	8	43
JH Pole Bending	2	110
JH Ribbon Roping	20	6

FINLEY ROSS ~ VIRDEN, MB		
Event	Place	Points
JH Barrel Racing	18	5
JH Girl's Goat Tying	17	1
JH Pole Bending	18	7

GARRETT GOMPF ~ OAK LAKE, MB		
Event	Place	Points
JH Boy's Breakaway	2	76
JH Boy's Goat Tying	2	104
JH Chute Dogging	6	34
JH Ribbon Roping	9	53
JH Saddle Steer	1	60
JH Team Roping	3	44

GRACIE JOHNSTON ~ GRISWOLD, MB		
Event	Place	Points
HS Barrel Racing	18	11
HS Goat Tying	18	16
HS Pole Bending	17	20

HALLE GRAY ~ ELKHORN, MB		
Event	Place	Points
HS Barrel Racing	24	5
HS Breakaway Roping	8	27
HS Goat Tying	11	41

HENRY STEWART ~ VIRDEN, MB		
Event	Place	Points
JH Boy's Breakaway	10	33
JH Boy's Goat Tying	14	29
JH Bull Riding	3	10

HUDSON BOND ~ KENTON, MB		
Event	Place	Points
HS Barrel Racing	2	98
HS Breakaway Roping	9	23
HS Pole Bending	6	46

JEMMA DAY ~ VIRDEN, MB		
Event	Place	Points
JH Barrel Racing	5	77
JH Girl's Goat Tying	5	69
JH Light Rifle	3	86
JH Pole Bending	5	72
JH Ribbon Roping	12	32

KEIGHTLEY STEWART ~ VIRDEN, MB		
Event	Place	Points
HS Breakaway Roping	5	32
HS Goat Tying	12	39.5
HS Pole Bending	26	7

JO-HANNAH LOGAN ~ LENORE, MB		
Event	Place	Points
JH Barrel Racing	11	28
JH Girl's Breakaway	1	56
JH Girl's Goat Tying	2	109
JH Light Rifle	1	117
JH Pole Bending	10	28
JH Ribbon Roping	4	63

KESLER BROWN ~ VIRDEN, MB		
Event	Place	Points
JH Boy's Breakaway	3	72
JH Boy's Goat Tying	1	131
JH Chute Dogging	1	111
JH Ribbon Roping	1	107
JH Team Roping	1	85

LEIGH DAY ~ VIRDEN, MB		
Event	Place	Points
HS Barrel Racing	9	37
HS Light Rifle	2	111
HS Pole Bending	8	41
HS Trap Shooting	3	49

LEO KING ~ LENORE, MB		
Event	Place	Points
JH Boy's Breakaway	14	11
JH Boy's Goat Tying	7	59
JH Team Roping	4	44

MADDIE WARKENTIN ~ VIRDEN, MB		
Event	Place	Points
HS Barrel Racing	4	73
HS Breakaway Roping	18	8
HS Pole Bending	18	20
HS Trap Shooting	4	47

RALLY KING ~ VIRDEN, MB		
Event	Place	Points
JH Boy's Breakaway	15	6
JH Boy's Goat Tying	12	29
JH Team Roping	8	19

RORY HAGAN ~ VIRDEN, MB		
Event	Place	Points
JH Boy's Breakaway	8	39
JH Boy's Goat Tying	11	33
JH Light Rifle	4	64
JH Ribbon Roping	16	19
JH Team Roping	7	35

SADIE BROWN ~ VIRDEN, MB		
Event	Place	Points
HS Barrel Racing	1	107
HS Breakaway Roping	11	19
HS Goat Tying	9	46.5
HS Pole Bending	20	16
HS Team Roping	14	26

SLADE HAGAN ~ VIRDEN, MB		
Event	Place	Points
HS Reining Cow Horse	3	32
HS Team Roping	9	38
HS Tie Down Roping	10	25
HS Trap Shooting	6	21

SLONE BROWN ~ VIRDEN, MB		
Event	Place	Points
JH Boy's Breakaway	4	66
JH Boy's Goat Tying	6	64
JH Chute Dogging	5	40
JH Ribbon Roping	3	63
JH Team Roping	2	85

SPENCER GOMPF ~ OAK LAKE, MB		
Event	Place	Points
HS Saddle Bronc Riding	1	48
HS Team Roping	3	87
HS Tie Down Roping	7	46

XYLIA PLAISIER ~ VIRDEN, MB		
Event	Place	Points
JH Barrel Racing	17	6
JH Pole Bending	14	24
JH Ribbon Roping	17	19

Virден Lions presents donations to well-deserved recipients



Virден Lions Club Members and Recipients of their 2026 donations.

PHOTO BY NANCY JO MOLLER

By Nancy Jo Moller
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

On Tuesday, May 19, 2026, at the Virден Lions Hall, presentation of donations to several local organizations was held. The Virден Lions Club is a group of service minded women and men interested in strengthening their community and the surrounding area. Hence their motto, "WE SERVE" is a clear statement of their dedication to support their local population and surrounding regions. The Virден Lions Club was chartered in 1956 with 29 original members and has continued to serve in the district for the past 70 years. They have donated more than one million dollars to

local projects and organizations in that time. Their fundraising endeavours include but not limited to operation of the Virден Lions Park Campground, used battery collection, highway ditch clean up to protect the environment and numerous local events including the Virден Lions Club Pancake Breakfast. The local Lions believe that building a strong community starts with the young and continues a lifetime.

The 22 recipients who benefited from heartfelt donations in 2026 included S.T.A.R.S. Foundation, ACL Virден, Canadian Red Cross, CancerCare MB Foundation, Diabetes Canada, Heart & Stroke Foundation, MB Brain Injury Assoc., Sherwood Nursing Home, Virден Auditorium Theatre, Goulter School

Breakfast Program, Virден Junior High Breakfast Program, Virден Cub/Scouts, Virден Girl Guides, Virден Minor Hockey, Virден Minor Ball, Wallace District Fire Department, Youth for Christ, Southwest Judo Club, Virден Youth Soccer, Multiple Sclerosis Canada, Mary Montgomery Breakfast and Alzheimer Society of Canada.

Recipients in attendance briefly described how the funds received would be spent and expressed their thanks to the Lions for their support to their organizations.

The night was concluded with beverages and a tiramisu crafted by one of the club members.

Reston Art Club 37th Show and Tea



PHOTO BY KEVIN REID

Submitted
BY BEV REID

On Saturday, May 9, from 2:00 to 4:00 pm over 70 people gathered at the Reston United Church Hall viewing the artwork and enjoying a social time over refreshments.

Fifteen members displayed over 200 pieces of art using various mediums such as acrylics, watercolour, coffee, scratch art, plaster art and hand painted rocks. Artists showing were Kristen Bodin, Janelle Campbell, Monica Campbell, Donna Davis, Robin Duncan,

Amy Elliott, Emily Elliott, Cindy Emery, Sylvia Halls, Cathy House of Brandon, Judy Lochhead, Mina McDowell of Deleau, Marianne Olfrey, Bev Reid and Gwen Thomson.

Added features were the tablecloths, table runners and coasters placed on the tea tables and member tables, each specially designed by members of the art club. Members donated a door prize which included paintings. Diamond Dots, plants, jam, candles and surprise packages.

Last October, several art club members trav-

elled to Joan Trott's cabin near Hamiota and enjoyed her instruction in watercolour techniques which were used to create a simple painting. We are looking forward to returning in September for further instruction.

Our paintings are presently displayed in the RES showcase and at Virден Medical Clinic and are changed several times a year.

New members are welcome. If you are interested, contact any art club member for more information.

Manitoba RCMP launching new community notification system in select detachments

Submitted
BY D MEDIA RCMP

The Manitoba RCMP is introducing a new community notification system aimed at improving how important public safety information is shared with residents.

Beginning May 21, 2026, the Manitoba RCMP will launch a pilot project using Rave Mobile Safety, a voluntary mass notification platform that allows local RCMP detachments to send timely and targeted alerts directly to community members by text message, email, or automated phone call.

The pilot program will be introduced in the following detachments:

- Thompson
- Norway House
- Dolphin
- Winnipegosis
- Oakbank / Beausejour
- Morris / Emerson

The system will be used to share important community-focused information such as public safety advisories, missing person information, requests for public assistance, traffic or road condition alerts, crime prevention messaging, and other urgent "need-to-know" notifications.

Rave Mobile Safety will complement existing RCMP communication channels, including local detachments social

media pages, by providing a more direct and accessible way for residents to receive timely updates.

"Strong communication is an important part of community safety," said Cpl. Terry Sundell, RCMP Community Engagement Services. "This new system will help us share important information quickly and directly with residents so they can stay informed and take appropriate action when needed."

The platform is voluntary and designed with privacy and accessibility in mind. Residents can choose how they receive alerts and can update or remove their subscriptions at any time. Notifications will initially be available in English and French.

The Manitoba RCMP emphasizes that Rave Mobile Safety is not intended to replace the provincial Alert Ready system or emergency services. In an emergency, residents should still call 911 or their local police emergency line.

The pilot project is expected to run for approximately three months while the Manitoba RCMP gathers feedback and evaluates the program.

Residents interested in subscribing or learning more about the program are encouraged to follow their local RCMP detachment social media pages for upcoming registration information and launch details.

Golden Bears and Saints take to the field for an action-packed night



The Saints show their determination.

PHOTO BY NANCY JO MOLLER

By Nancy Jo Moller
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

Virten Collegiate Institute (VCI) Golden Bears alumni and Virten Junior High Saints displayed their skills and sportsmanship

in the exhibition game held on Friday May 22. While the Saints members lacked the size and training of the Golden Bears, they had the heart. The Golden Bears members commanded the field with their strength

and know-how, but the Saints evaded the Bears and scored a well-deserved touchdown proving agility can overcome experience. The night was full of coaching techniques and good-hearted fun to entertain the fans.

Repairs on Elkhorn Grain Elevator



Elkhorn elevator repair day.

PHOTO BY ED JAMES

By Ed James
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

Once called Prairie Sentinels, almost every western community had its tall local grain elevator, wherein the early days the farmers with horse drawn wagons brought in their harvest each year. If they had time or required supplies, the men would do some related business or maybe have a beer or two. The women might go to the general store, while the children were often just content to see what was going on outside the family farm in the community. The elevators were owned by different companies, the most common being the Manitoba Pool grain company. During my time in Elkhorn, there were once two elevators, then just the Pool elevator. When it closed down in the 90's, the last elevator manager was Bill Glover, who still lives in the community with his wife.

Many of the smaller community elevators shut down as the modern large grain hauling trucks could haul the crop to a larger centre for shipment

across Canada and around the world! The Pool building and its equipment was sold to local Elkhorn area farmer, Rodney Shepherd. During the latest high wind storms the Elkhorn elevator received some damage along with other community buildings and several trees. Recently, the Elkhorn elevator had the damage repairs done by the help of a very large, long neck crane and

crew from G. Payette Repairs and Maintenance of Roseisle, MB. The repair crew was lifted in a work basket and completed the work in one bright sunny day.

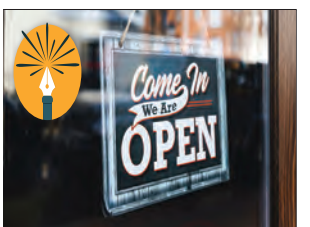
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Farmers' Advocate



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\$99,000 dedicated to sustainable sustainable greenhouse research

Submitted

ASSINIBOINE COLLEGE

Dr. Poonam Singh's research on more environmentally sustainable ways to grow greenhouse plants has received a \$99K boost from the Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership (S-CAP).

Ornamental and nursery plants—which include things like outdoor perennials for home beautification and flower, vegetable and fruit crop production—use peat moss as the primary growing component. Dr. Singh, a faculty researcher in the Russ Edwards School of Agriculture & Environment, is leading an applied research project to help growers reduce environmental impact without compromising plant performance. Her project, 'Exploring potential of biochar and sheep wool waste in ornamental and nursery plant production' has also received nearly \$20,000 in industry investment.

"This most recent funding allows us to turn sustainability research into practical solutions growers can actually use," Singh said. "It gives us the time and scale needed to properly test new materials before they reach commercial production."

An environmental priority

Peat moss is used for its consistency and growing properties, but is harvested from peat bogs, which play a critical role in carbon sequestration, water retention and biodiversity, so the harvesting of peat is problematic for the en-



PHOTO COURTESY OF ASSINIBOINE COLLEGE

Pictured: Assiniboine College's Dr. Poonam Singh inspecting plants within a greenhouse. Dr. Singh's research has recently received a major funding boost from the Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership.

Inset photo: Dr. Singh showcasing how sheep's wool waste is being utilized as part of her sustainable greenhouse research.

vironment.

"Peat bogs store enormous amounts of carbon and water, so reducing peat use is an environmental priority," Singh said. "Even replacing a small percentage of peat can make a meaningful difference when you consider how widely it's used in horticulture."

Singh's research will evaluate whether biochar can partially replace peat in container growing systems.

Biochar is a carbon-rich material similar to charcoal. It is produced through

the high heat and low oxygen processing of organic waste like wood chips, and crop residue. By doing this, the waste materials will not be reduced to ash and can be converted into carbon rich solids. It also helps soil breathe more efficiently, hold water effectively during drier phases, and makes nutrients easier for plants to use, all while storing rich carbon in a stable, long-lasting way. Singh's research will explore potential of biochar made from cattails (wetland plants) to

be used as a peat extender in soilless media mixes.

The project will also look to sheep's wool waste as a potential replacement. Wool has properties that support moisture retention and slow nutrient release, and early trials have shown encouraging results, including strong plant growth and reduced reliance on synthetic fertilizers.

"This most recent example exemplifies our college's highly successful, unique, signature approach to applied research" said

Dr. Deanna Rexe, Vice President, Academic at Assiniboine College. "We proactively work with business and industry to identify priorities for their work, and then we partner to access funding, mobilize our faculty expertise, and include our students in the applied research process as part of our 'Learn by Doing' philosophy of education. This knowledge mobilization and training ecosystem works because of our commitment to sustaining quality partnerships that help

to strengthen Manitoba's advantage."

For her part, Singh said the research recognizes that peat is unlikely to be fully replaced in the near term, but evidence-based reductions could have significant environmental benefits.

"It's not just about replacing peat," she said. "It's about understanding how alternative materials perform and how they can realistically fit into existing production systems."

Continued on third Advocate page

Thank you for keeping up with the agricultural industry and reading the Farmers' Advocate feature!

'Critical weed-free period' update

Farmers' Advocate Staff
FARMERS' ADVOCATE

The Manitoba Canola Growers have released the result of beneficial research for the province's producers. A study was conducted by researcher Robert Gulden, University of Manitoba, on the 'critical weed free period' (CWFP). Researched from Apr. 1, 2022 to Mar. 31, 2026, the project re-evaluated the prior recommendations for the canola crop's CWP, which was developed in 2001.

"CWFP is the time during the crop's growth is the time during the crop's growth stage when weeds must be controlled to prevent significant yield loss," the release explained. "Herbicide applications applied too early, too late or too frequently, can reduce return on investment of herbicides, cause yield loss, and accelerate resistance issues."

The importance of updating the CWFP information was attributed to canola hybrids having improvements in the early season, herbicide options, and farmers beginning to push the limits for seeding rates of canola.

"As a result, there was a need to examine the relationship between canola crop density, herbicide systems, and the CWFP for current canola hybrids," said the release.

The CWFP update project saw 15 trials conducted across western Canada from 2022 to 2025, with three canola plant stand densities being tested (Three, six and nine plants per square foot). Additionally, two herbicide systems— glufosinate and glyphosate— were used.

"A stacked trait hybrid, tolerant to both herbicides, was used for this trial for consistency when testing herbicide timing and plant density. Weed measurements included emergence timing, species present, and density. Final canola seed yield was collected for all treatments," the release added.

Research results

Gulden's research has found, overall that the average CWP in canola is from emergence to the five to six leaf stage.

The report also stated that weed density had the greatest influence on the CWFP.

"The higher the number of weeds in one area, the longer the canola crop needed to be kept weed-free to protect yield," the research findings explained. "In areas where there was extremely low weed density, the canola crop required very minimal in-crop weed management to maintain yield. Highly competitive weed species, like creeping thistle, lengthened the CWFP even if the overall number of weeds were low."

Delving further, the report added, "A plant stand of 6 plants/ft² provided the strongest crop competitiveness against weeds. A plant stand lower than 6 plants/ft² had a longer CWFP by one to two leaf stages, meaning that the crop had to be kept weed-free for longer, up to the seven to eight-leaf to maintain yield."

The study also found that glyphosate requires earlier applications compared to glufosinate due to the herbicide's slower activity.

More can be learned about this project by visiting the project's Canola Research Hub page, located at <https://www.canolacouncil.org/research-hub/updating-the-critical-weed-free-period/>.

Keystone Agricultural Producers vigorously serving farmers

Advocate Staff
FARMERS' ADVOCATE

Jill Verwey, formerly of Neepawa (Springhill District) is President of Keystone Agricultural Producers (KAP). Verwey farms at Portage La Prairie and she was guest speaker at the May 13 meeting of the Neepawa Rotary Club.

Verwey said "KAP is Manitoba's general farm policy organization, we represent all Manitoba farmers and 18 commodity associations. I want to start by saying that there's no better place to talk about agriculture than Neepawa. You understand, probably better than most, just how important farming is to this province."

KAP is a non-profit organization founded in 1984 and it currently has over 5000 direct-paying farmer members, who produce a wide variety of agricultural products.

KAP's vision is a prosperous future for all Manitoba farmers.

Verwey said. "Agricultural issues in Manitoba are diverse and impact different commodity sectors and a wide range of stakeholders. Our mission is to be the unwavering voice for farmers, addressing the most pressing issues facing our industry with tenacity and resolve."

As a grassroots, farmer-driven organization, KAP's policies and advocacy direction is set by our members."

KAP relies on producers who are passionate about agriculture to get involved to make the organization better and more effective.

Verwey explained that, "This includes drafting resolutions, attending meetings, voting at our Annual AGM or running to represent one of our 12 districts (Neepawa is in District 7), or running as a group member director or getting elected to KAP's



PHOTO BY CHRISTINE WADDELL

Neepawa Rotarian Sophie Collier (left) invited Jill Verwey (Baker), KAP president to speak at the May 13 Rotary luncheon. Verwey was raised near Neepawa in the Springhill District

executive as President or Vice-President. KAP has a strong focus on advocacy, engagement and outreach, as well as regulatory modernization. Agriculture is facing more pressure and more public scrutiny than ever before. Concerns include environmental expectations, animal care standards, land-use discussions, labour regulations, and trade uncertainty continue to be top issues."

In recent times, supply chain disruption has meant higher costs - with fertilizer and fuel prices increasing.

"We continue to advocate for the needs and priorities of farmers to ensure the business and trade environment reflects those needs. That's why we released KAP's Manitoba Agriculture Trade Action Plan, focused on the key areas which the province of Manitoba should prioritize when looking at trade and how agriculture is impacted by government policies and initiatives. We support stable, rules-based trade, and strategic relationships, all of which are essential for long-term success of farm operations."

KAP has delivered on a number of wins for Manitoba

Farmers. At the federal level, one of the most significant shared successes for agriculture was the removal of the federal consumer carbon pricing regime, eliminating added costs for producers related for drying grain and regulating temperature in livestock buildings.

There has been important progress with the passage of Bills C-244 and C-294, advancing right-to-repair and interoperability which focused on right to repair and interoperability, issues that directly affect farm efficiency and costs.

Here at home in Manitoba, KAP was proud to help deliver on several outcomes that benefit producers across the province, including: \$500,000 in additional money for the Sustainable Agriculture Manitoba (SAM) program

- Changes to the Disaster Financial Assistance (DFA) program focused on the removal of the complex ownership requirement and the increase of the maximum yearly gross revenue and compensation rate to reflect modern farm operations.

- Securing the inclusion of marked gasoline & diesel in the 10 per cent permanent reduction in fuel tax

- Renewed multi-province funding agreement with Western College of Veterinary Medicine (WCVM) for 5 additional seats, for a total investment of \$8.3 million from Manitoba

- Increases to Manitoba Agricultural Services Corporation (MASC) lending limits and also Young Farmer loan limits

- Opening of 2 new MASC service centres in Shoal Lake and Virden

- Release of a provincial Economic Development Strategy

- Appointment to Manitoba's US Trade Council, advising province on CUSMA

- Continued investment in and prioritization of the Port of Churchill

- Appointment of Manitoba's Trade Representative in Washington, DC, and

- \$100,000 in funding for the Career Pathways Program to develop an online portal that highlights career pathways in agriculture and works to solve labour shortages

Continued on fourth Advocate page

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Supporting real-world research adoption

Continued from first Advocate page

The project is supported by industry and community partners to ensure the research reflects real-world production conditions, including Carbon Lock Tech, Manitoba Nursery Landscape Association, Canadian Co-operative Wool Growers Ltd., Sioux Valley Dakota Nation, and Vanderveen Greenhouse.

Partner involvement supports testing across a range of products and growing practices, while also helping identify pathways toward commercialization and adoption.

“This work only happens because industry, communities and researchers are moving in the same direction,” Singh said. “Our partners help develop and process these materials, and we work together to test and refine them so growers can adopt them with confidence.”

Support for applied re-



PHOTO COURTESY OF ASSINIBOINE COLLEGE
Pictured: Dr. Poonam Singh.

search in horticulture and ornamental production is a growing area of focus for the S-CAP funding program as an important part of broader sustainability efforts.

Singh said recognizing the environmental footprint of intensive growing systems such as greenhouses and nurseries is an important step in advancing sector-wide sustainability.

“Assiniboine’s recognition as one of Canada’s Top 50 Research Colleges reflects the applied,

industry-focused work our faculty are doing,” said Chris Budiwski, Dean of the Edwards School. “Dr. Singh’s research is a strong example of how public investment and industry partnerships can support innovation that benefits both producers and the environment.”

As the project moves forward, Singh plans to share findings with growers, industry partners and other researchers to help support real-world adoption.

Manitoba crop report

Farmers’ Advocate Staff
FARMERS’ ADVOCATE

Note: Written with information courtesy of Manitoba Agriculture.

There is plenty to consider when growing crops as an agricultural producer. Thankfully, as of May 21, Manitoba Agriculture has received no reports of disease issues.

Additionally, annual weed growth is reported to be slow due to cool weather.

However, recent rains and warming weather are expected to bring a flush of new growth. Winter annuals such as shepherd’s purse and stinkweed are noted to be starting to bolt and flower. Perennials such as dandelions, as can be seen on lawns throughout the region at this time as well, are also flowering.

The pest perspective

On the pest side of things, due to the cooler spring weather and many fields yet to have crops emerge, Manitoba Agriculture has yet to receive reports of “economic populations or levels of crop damage from insects”.

Of note, however, is that some cutworms, wireworms, and flea beetles are being noted—albeit at small levels thus far.

What to know about cutworms

Cutworms are nocturnal, feeding at night. The dingy and redbacked cutworm are often the two most abundant species

in Manitoba.

To check for cutworms while scouting your fields, producers should dig around damaged plants. They can also sometimes be found hiding under stubble or plant debris.

The depth at which cutworms may inhabit the soil is dependant on how old the larvae are, and the moisture level of the soil.

Manitoba Agriculture reports that a study from Ontario on dark-sided cutworm found younger larvae were generally six to 13mm deep near the base of the host plant.

Alternatively, older larvae were just under the soil surface in wet weather, but were found in dry weather at a depth of eight to 10 cm (three to four inches).

It should also be noted that cutworms may be more abundant in patches, or a specific area of a field.

Producers are advised to make note of the size of cutworms discovered as well. Small larvae are reported to pose the greatest potential for damage, as they still need to feed and grow. With the cool spring we have experienced, larvae are anticipated to likely still be small.

Species that overwinter as partially grown larvae may be larger than other species that overwinter as eggs. For example, the dingy cutworm (larval overwinter), and the redbacked cutworm (egg overwinter).

The full Manitoba crop report can be found at www.gov.mb.ca/agriculture/crops/seasonal-reports.

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HyLife named one of Canada's Best Managed Companies

Pork company honoured by Deloitte for 22nd year

Advocate Staff FARMERS' ADVOCATE

HyLife has received a significant honour for a 22nd year. Last week, the Canada-based international pork processing and shipping company was named by Deloitte as one of 'Canada's Best Managed Companies'. Canada's Best Managed Companies is noted to be the country's leading business award programs, which recognizes "excellence in private Canadian-owned companies".

According to Deloitte, eligible companies are evaluated based on strategy, culture and commitment; capabilities and innovation; and their governance and financials.

"Our company thrives because of our people. This recognition reflects their dedication, passion, and



PHOTO COURTESY OF HYLIFE

HyLife's credits its success to all who work at the company.

commitment to delivering excellence every day," said Karan Sangfai, president and CEO of HyLife. "From our farms and feed mills to our processing, logistics, sales, and support teams, each person plays an important role in helping HyLife continue to grow as a premium pork company. We are proudly rooted in Canada and trusted around the world."

At the local level, Neepawa representative Lindsay

Hextall, senior director of human resources, stated, "Being recognized with Platinum status for more than two decades really comes down to how we support and grow our people. At HyLife—and here in Neepawa—we've worked hard to build a culture where employees can grow their careers and play a part in our long-term success. That focus on our team is what helps us keep performing at a high-level

year after year."

While the global pork company's story began with a small prairie farming operation in rural Manitoba in 1994, HyLife now employs more than 2,600 people and delivers to more than 20 countries worldwide.

HyLife is headquartered in Southeast Manitoba, and also includes associated facilities both in and just outside of Neepawa.

When farmers succeed...

Continued from second Farmers' Advocate page

KAP has joined several initiatives nationally and internationally to advance ag priorities, including:

- In 2025, KAP partnered with CFA on the Summer meeting and Federal-Provincial-Territorial meetings and farm tours with representatives from across Canada (in July and September).
- Participating in the Midwest Legislative Conference in Saskatoon in July 2025, meeting with and building relationships with Canadian and American legislators
- Attending the Tri-National Agriculture Accord in October 2025, which took place in Morelia, Mexico
- We cross-border events including SARL in New Orleans a few months ago in January.
- We continue to work closely with the Manitoba government on expanding trade and other delegation opportunities

Verwey noted that, "KAP had multiple appearances before House of Commons and Senate committees. We're also deepening our partnerships across government and industry and continuing to grow KAP's presence and ensure agriculture remains top of mind for government. Moving forward, our priorities include a heightened focus on young farmer engagement, because the next generation is the future of this industry.

We will continue to prioritize trade, labour, business risk management, economic development, and building strong partnerships.

Farms and the broader agri-food sector generate billions of dollars for Manitoba each year.

And every farm family supports local businesses, local schools, and local communities like this one. We know that when farmers succeed, Manitoba succeeds.

That's why what we do at KAP matters."



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SPORTS

SWBL: HOME CROWDS FUEL OILERS

By Robin Wark
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

The Virden Oilers are proud to play at home.

The senior baseball team will play three of its first five contests of the South West Baseball League season at home. In June, the Oilers have a stretch of four straight home games.

“Home games are the best,” veteran Virden player Riley Hole said. “We get some of the best crowds in the league. A bunch of us older guys have young families and it’s always great having them in the crowd and on the diamond after. Our fans always show up and usually there’s always a great 50/50.”

The Oilers’ diamond looks a bit different this season. A new scorekeeper tower has been added, as well as a new visiting team bench. Hole said. “We have the best sponsors in the league and it allows us to maintain the diamond.” Like a bride-to-be preparing for her wedding day, Virden baseball teams have long taken pride in their diamonds.

“Virden always had great diamonds,” Hole said. “The old diamond was always a fun and well maintained diamond. It’s important to all our players that this diamond is well maintained. Brett Braybrook and Des Koop always did a great job when they took care of it and we feel the same. Everyone contributes, whether you’re a 10-year veteran or a high schooler that’s in their first year.”

After weather postponed their scheduled season opener, the Oilers started the season on the road in Brandon. They fell 4-3 to the Brandon Young Guns on May 19. Braeden Lewis and Toby Troughton drove in runs for the Oilers. Nathan Rowan started for Virden and struck out five in four innings of work.

The Oilers lost 13-9 to Reston at home on May 22. Jeff Peel drove in two runs for the hosts. He also struck out four in 1.33 innings of relief.

On May 24, the Hamiota Red Sox won 9-5 in Virden. Lewis drove in four runs and stole two bases.

The Oilers were to play in Oak River on May 26 after the Empire-Advance deadline. They host the Brandon Cardinals on June 2.

Reston Rockets

The Rockets have started the season with a 1-2 record, with both losses coming by one run. The Reston team opened the season with a 13-9 road win against Virden. Billy Patmore drove in two runs for the Rockets, while Branden Ripley swiped two bases. John Patmore went the distance on the mound to earn the win. He struck out seven.

The Rockets were on the road for two games on May 24. They fell 15-14 in Wawanesa. The Rockets came back from an 11-1 deficit after four innings to make things interesting. Billy Patmore, Jamie Williams and Aiden Jasper each drove in three runs. John Patmore collected three doubles and had two RBIs. In Brandon,



PHOTO BY KELBY LEWIS

Virden Oilers #11 Jace Freeman pitching on Friday, May 22.

the Rockets lost 9-8.

The Reston team hosts the Hamiota Red Sox on May 29. The Rockets are in Rivers on May 31.

RAMPTON RISES TO THE OCCASION IN MIDLAND'S CHAMPIONSHIP RUN

By Robin Wark
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

Kenton's Natalie Rampton made her mark during the Midland University

women's hockey team's national title run.

The goaltending daughter of Cameron and Sheri Rampton backstopped her Fremont, Neb., school to a semifinal victory en route to its first American Collegiate Hockey Association Women's Division I championship in the St. Louis suburb of Maryland Heights, Mo. Rampton turned away 54 shots to help her No. 2-seeded Warriors to a 4-3 overtime semifinal win over St. Louis' No. 5-seeded Maryville University.

“I was most pleased with my resilience in this semifinal game,” Rampton said. “Maryville is a very respectable team; they have some standout players who I knew would put up a fight in this semifinal game. I had to battle some adversity in this game, being down by two.

“After they scored the five-on-three player advantage goal to tie the game with only 10 seconds left on the penalties, I kept my composure as I knew there was still a lot of game left to play. We had 10 penalties, including a five-minute major, giving Maryville many five-on-four and five-on-three opportunities, but I treated each penalty kill as a challenge. I kept a level head in this very tense overtime win, which allowed me to perform at my very best.”

In an epic championship tilt, the Warriors beat top-seeded Liberty University, 4-3, in triple overtime. Meghan Stewart, one of Rampton's goaltending partners, made 78 saves against the Virginia team on her way to being named the tournament's Most Valuable Player. Warriors co-captain Taylor Bell delivered the game winner after 117 minutes of play.

“I was filled with relief when Taylor scored the game-winning goal after nearly six long periods,” Rampton said. “It was an indescribable feeling to beat the defending champions and finally bring home a national championship for Midland University. I still don't think I've quite wrapped my head around the magnitude of being a national champion and the best team in the ACHA.”

Her family was in Missouri to support her—as they have throughout her days on the ice. She knows many others were cheering from home.



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Natalie Rampton was a key contributor to the Midland University women's hockey team's national championship.

“My family has always been a huge part of my hockey career,” Rampton said. “My dad was a goaltender when he was young; he coached me for many years, teaching me everything he knew, and then got me training with his old friend Brian Elder (former pro goaltender) once I started to take goaltending seriously. My whole family has been my biggest fans throughout my career; my parents and grandparents (Pat and Stan Rampton) attended every game possible, and spent hours driving me to practices and games throughout my 16 years of hockey.

“In fact, I had my dad, grandparents, and my great-aunt (Valerie Running) from Wisconsin all in the stands in St. Louis to cheer me on during nationals. I also had an

abundance of people from back home in Manitoba tuning into the livestream. My phone blew up with messages after the semifinal game, congratulating me and wishing my team luck in the finals.

“I would not have made it as far as I have in my hockey career without all of these people supporting and encouraging me along the way. Goaltending, in my opinion, is the most mentally taxing position in hockey; it takes a strong-minded individual to be able to perform under this type of pressure. It is my support system that has given me this mental toughness.”

The championship capped a strong second season for the goaltender. According to achahockey.org, she had a 1.23 goals against average with a .940 save percentage during the regular season.

“Natalie Rampton is a competitor,” Midland University head coach Jason White said. “She is soft-spoken and very sweet, but when she gets between the pipes she turns into the ultimate competitor. Nat has had unbelievable numbers as a goalie at Midland and brings a calmness to the team when she is in net. She is very structured and athletic, which has been a big part of her success at Midland.”

Rampton recorded two shutouts last season. She stopped 11 shots as the Warriors blanked Lindenwood University, 7-0. Rampton made 29 saves in a 0-0 tie versus Minot State University.

“My team made a huge contribution to my own success this season,” she said. “The team bought into the systems implemented by Coach White that ultimately led to our team's success. I could always rely on my team to have my back, and they trusted me to give them the best chance to win, bailing them out at times. Having full faith in my team meant I could focus strictly on my own game.”

Off the ice at Midland University, Rampton is an accounting major with a compressed major in mathematics.

“I started university as a mathematics major, but after being enrolled in a couple of accounting courses, I knew I wanted to follow this path instead. I feel that accounting is the perfect mix of math and analytical thinking that will challenge me. I have acquired a summer student position at MNP in Virden this summer, which will provide me with my first real look into this career.”

SPORTS

SPORTS NOTES: CHARLES HELPS 'CATS TO CHAMPIONSHIP

By Robin Wark
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

Viriden's Kendall Charles is a softball national champion.

The daughter of Joel and Dori Charles helped the North Dakota State College of Science women's softball team win the National Junior College Athletic Association Division III World Series. Charles is a first-year student-athlete at the Wahpeton, N.D.-based school. It was the second straight national title for the Wildcats and their third in four years.

The squad overcame tough competition, a 19-hour bus ride and rainy weather to earn the championship in the Syracuse suburb of DeWitt, N.Y. The Wildcats won their first three games, including a victory over Caldwell Community College. Caldwell battled through the elimination bracket of the double-elimination tournament to face the Wildcats in the championship round. Caldwell won the first game 17-6, but NDSCS responded with a 15-3 victory in Game 2 to capture the title.

Roach to be Honoured

Viriden's Doug Roach will be part of the Brandon University Sports Wall of Fame Class of 2026. He is slated

to be inducted as a community leader on Nov. 15 at the Victoria Inn Imperial Ballroom.

After a strong junior hockey career, Roach suited up for the Bobcats for four seasons and was named the team's Most Valuable Player in 1989-90. Roach has made a lasting impact as an educator, coach, volunteer and broadcaster. After beginning his career at McAuley School, he became a key figure at Viriden Collegiate Institute and in Viriden-area sports. He has coached football, hockey and fastball while leading championship teams. Since 2022, Roach has also served as broadcaster for the junior Viriden Oil Capitals hockey team, entertaining and informing fans with his insight and unique style.

Taylor wins NAHC Title

Oil Capitals prospect Grady Taylor helped Team Manitoba win the male National Aboriginal Hockey Championships title earlier this month in Regina. The Brandon defenceman signed with the Oil Caps last fall. The Team Manitoba roster also included goaltender Urijah Moosetail, who has been called up as an Oil Capitals backup in the past.



PHOTO BY NDSCS ATHLETICS

Kendall Charles helped the North Dakota State College of Science women's softball team win the National Junior College Athletic Association Division III World Series.

FORMER WESTMAN MAGIC STARS REUNITED IN HALL OF FAME



The 1998-2003 Westman Magic were inducted into the Manitoba Softball Hall of Fame.

PHOTO BY THE MANITOBA SOFTBALL HALL OF FAME

By Robin Wark
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

Years after making their mark on the softball diamond, some local former athletes reunited with teammates as Hall of Famers.

The 1998-2003 Westman Magic squads were inducted into the Manitoba Softball Hall of Fame on May 2 in Brandon. In 1997, coaches suggested a group of 15-year-olds compete in the Manitoba Ladies Super Softball League. Beginning in 1999, the team won a pair of provincial championships and a bronze medal at the former "midget" level and added a gold and silver in the junior ranks. During those years, the Magic went to nationals three times and Western Canadians once. Reston's Terri (née Anderson) Williamson was a member of the Magic and attended the induction ceremony.

"It was a great opportunity to reconnect with old teammates as well as their families," she said. "Social media has allowed us to keep tabs on each other's life, but it was nice to get to see them in person, discuss where life has taken us, what our families are up to, etc. It was also great to see most everyone's parents in attendance at the HOF induction as well. Our parents and families were a big part of our Magic family - supporting us in everything."

Former Viriden resident Erica (née Cochrane) Mock, who now lives in Buffalo, Wyo., also was in attendance. She enjoyed reconnecting with former teammates and said, "The ceremony brought back so many great memories and reminded me just how much I loved playing softball and being part of that team."

Carla (née Dudenhofer) Cook fondly recalls travelling with the Magic.

"The most memorable are the road trips to practices and tournaments with family and teammates. We spent a lot of time together practicing and playing and we all

got to know each other's families very well. Friendships that are still strong all these years later," said Cook, who grew up on a farm near Arden and now lives in Reston.

Many Magic players went on to compete athletically at the post-secondary level. Playing for the team also impacted them in other ways. For example, Williamson has been involved in sports in various ways in Reston.

"The Westman Magic had a huge impact on my development as a young adult and my desire to stay connected to softball as well as baseball," she said. "As an adult and parent, I realize what an impact our Magic coaches had on us as teenagers as well as all the work that happened in the background to keep the organization running. My years in the Magic program were formative years in my development. Those years taught myself and my teammates - hard work, drive, how to face challenges and how to compete at a high level - all skills which we have carried with us. Minor sports are a passion of mine and I hope that through my involvement with baseball and softball, that I can give kids a similar experience that I did playing minor sports and especially my teenage years in the Westman Magic program."

While based in Brandon, the Magic drew players from around the Westman region. Westman coach Brett Turner said the Viriden area "has always been a source of good players for the Magic program." He noted the players hailing from the area during his days leading the team "were great kids to coach."

In addition to Mock, Williamson and Cook, some of the players from the area who played for the Magic in 1998-2003 were Pam Lowe Bond, originally from Bradwardine and now from Kenton; Marcy (née Heaman) Falk, originally from Viriden and now living in Altona; and Beulah product Stephanie Stowe.

Former Lenore resident Erin (née Maitland) Draper, now of Oak Lake Beach, helped coach the team. Viriden's Ray Cochrane, Erica's father, was a Magic coach from 1997 to 2001. Turner said, "He was great to work with - often had more insight into player thinking than I did."

"Being part of the Magic Softball organization was a very rewarding experience," Ray Cochrane said. "I enjoyed being part of a supportive team environment where players, coaches, and families worked together to encourage growth both on and off the field. It was great to see the athletes develop confidence, sportsmanship, teamwork, and friendships while competing and having fun. I also enjoyed the opportunity to contribute to an organization that helps young athletes build skills, character, and lasting memories."

Mock was one of the Magic players who went on to play at the post-secondary level. She was a softball standout for four seasons at Minot (N.D.) State University and also played a season of volleyball there. At MSU, Mock studied speech pathology and currently works in that field in a school setting. She appreciates her time on the diamond with the Magic.

"Softball gave me so many memories and experiences that I still carry with me today," Mock said. "I remember the hot summer days, dirty uniforms, scraped-up legs, and all the hard work that went into becoming the team we were. I remember the excitement of game days and the feeling of being out on the field playing and competing not just for myself, but for my teammates and coaches. More than anything, I'm grateful for the relationships and experiences the game gave me. Getting to play for my dad as my coach was something that made those years even more memorable to me. Being inducted alongside my teammates and coaches makes this recognition even more meaningful because it reflects everything we all accomplished together."

Life in the slow lane

By Gerry Nolan
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

Wintertime life on the farm was basically doing barn chores. You would pick a nice day when we would crush oats or barley as we fed chop to the livestock twice a day, along with hay and straw. Each morning, we harnessed up the horses as we loaded the manure onto the stone boat by pitch fork and it was taken out to the field and spread. Real good fertilizer! The livestock were untied and herded down to the well for water. We also hauled water up to the barn by a 50-gallon drum to water the pigs. This would take all morning. At night it was back out to milk and feed the cows again. It was work, but it was fun.

There was also time for recreation, mainly hockey to be played in the winter. Gordon Bond lived about a mile from our house. Gordy had a big pond just north of his house. He would take the tractor with the blade on it after the pond which, was probably frozen right to the bottom, and he would clear a section of ice off to play hockey.

The Bonds would phone the neighbourhood boys to come and skate and play on the pond. Ken Bond lives in the same house that his Mom and Dad lived in on the same farm. The Gray boys Donald and Murray, the Carter boys, Denis and Donny plus myself would show up and it was hockey day at the Bonds!

We would play away

for hours, then it was up to the house to get our skates off and warm up. Doreen Bond would have mugs of hot chocolate for us to drink. After a brief pause it would be back to the pond to play just a little longer before heading home to do the evening chores.

The Nolan family was so fortunate and blessed to have such great neighbours like Gordon and Doreen Bond, Wally and Dora Gray and Allan and Catherine Carter. In the winter as well, sometimes the adults would get together to play cards which meant the kids got to hang out and play as well.

A number of years later, Ken Bond, Donald Gray, Murray Gray, Donny Carter and myself all played for the Kenton

Sabers recreation hockey team. How's that for a great memory? Denis did not play hockey but was a pretty good curler.

Interesting how a hockey day at Gordon and Doreen Bonds would produce 5 kids within a couple of miles of one another, playing on the same hockey team, all around the same time! Thanks, Gordy, for clearing the pond so we could play hockey.

When we all played for the Sabers, after the game, the parents would come down to have a drink with the team and tell some stories. You should ask Ken Bond about Allan Carter telling Amos and Andy jokes! Great times folks, great times!

Brandon-Westman Christmas Cheer donations

By Synthia Wright
CHRISTMAS CHEER

The Brandon-Westman Christmas Cheer Registry, Inc. would like to thank the Honorable Glen Simard, MLA for Brandon East, and the Manitoba Government for its recent \$500,000 donation from US liquor sales and for targeting food insecurity in Westman. The provincial donation was received on May 1, 2026. Since then, the Registry has disbursed \$275,000 to seven local charities and \$125,000 to 38 rural Christmas Cheer Boards and food bank organizations. We sourced this information from our list of Christmas Cheer

Boards and a list of food banks from Prairie Mountain Health. The rural portion of the funding was distributed based on the recent number of families served in each case. It is worth noting that more than 20,000 families in the rural area receive food hampers from Christmas Cheer and food banks annually. On behalf of the provincial government, the Registry congratulates each organization on receiving this additional funding and wishes them success in their missions.

Visit their website at www.brandonwestman-christmascheer.ca to review the payout reports.

In my opinion: RE: Woman Killer

By Gerry Nolan
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

Michael Bridges' request for a full parole was denied, though he has been on day parole since 2024.

In 2002 Michael Bridges strangled and drowned his girlfriend, Erin Chorney (who was 18 years old) in a bathtub, then buried her body in another person's grave in the Brandon Cemetery. Michael was arrested after police set up a Mr. Big sting operation in 2004 where he confessed to an undercover police officer what he had done to her.

In 2005 Michael Bridges was convicted of first-degree murder and was sentenced to life in prison without a chance of parole until 2029. Michael appealed and claimed he was an innocent victim of police entrapment. At a faint hope hearing in 2021, a jury decided he could be allowed to apply for parole in 2026.

In 2024, the parole board of Canada granted Michael Bridges day parole for six months, with leave privileges included, which has been in six-month increments since then. He has been working full time and has been allowed weekend passes to stay in his own apartment.

In December of 2025, Michael failed a drug test for cocaine though he denied using the drug. He was tested again but it seemed to be manipulated by flushing his system with water. The third test came back negative.

A report also said that Bridges, negative attitude toward women and his behaviour changes to the worse when dealing with female parole officers compared to male staff.

Michael Bridges will continue his day parole for a period of six months. His conditions include not to consume, purchase or possess alcohol or drugs and report all sexual and nonsexual relationships

and friendships with women.

If you are reading this, I hope you are as upset as I am.

I knew Erin Chorney. Erin was a member of the youth group that I had the privilege of leading in Oxford Assembly Church. Erin, as most teenagers, had some problems that she was working through. Erin was back in Brandon the last time I saw and talked with her. I talked to Brandon Police when they had sent out a request for information to the general public about Erin. I talked to an officer mostly about her character, what she was like when she was in the youth group. Erin was a beautiful young teenage girl who was sorting some things out in her life and just wanted to be loved and accepted for who she was. Erin was gaining ground.

Unfortunately, Michael Bridges took her life. On whose authority did Michael have to end Erin Chorney's life? Michael Bridges is a murderer, a manipulator and a liar! I wonder how many people on the parole board would allow him some freedom if it was their daughter that was brutally murdered? The answer to that would be NONE! So why release this woman killer at any time back into society? We hear about so many women who are brutally murdered, abused, sold and the courts doing nothing. Our government does nothing. Michael Bridges does not deserve to ever get out of jail. In fact, like in this case where he confessed to murder why is he not given the death penalty? An eye for an eye! (*Ed. Note: Capital punishment was eliminated in Canada in 1976. KW*)

The fact that he continues to treat female parole officers badly should be warning enough that this man, Michael Bridges may very well kill again. This story is right in our own backyards! Erin will never be forgotten.

Rest in peace Erin! We miss you!



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

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- Metsulfuron-methyl
- Picloram
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- Adjuvant

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

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

SAIL hosts Healthy Eating Class in Elkhorn

Submitted
By KAREN MITCHELL

Providing education and resources to community seniors is nothing new for Seniors Access to Independent Living (SAIL) organization, however at a recent Healthy Eating Class located in Elkhorn, the combination of fun, education, hands on skill, and comradery were all included in a morning out.

In partnership with Prairie Mountain Health Registered Dietitian Chantal Morais, SAIL Resource Coordinator (RC) Karen Mitchell presented a two-part class which focused around adding protein into cooking and learning about cooking with Diabetes.

The basis of the classes was to be presented with some new recipes, new ingredients perhaps you wouldn't normally try out at home, and have the ability to prepare the dish from start to finish within the class, and ending with everyone gathering at the end to eat and try all of the creations. Each class presented 4-5 recipes with classes ranging from 6 – 10 participants.

As everyone paired off and started diving into the detailed recipes, they also had the opportunity to ask Chantal any questions they had or get tips and tricks for adding in different ingredients to make their own recipes healthier.

The classes were relaxed and positive, allowing all participants to feel encouraged, respected, and included. "Providing classes like these," explain Chantal, "is something we are very passionate about within our field. We love being able to get out and interact with people and teach them about healthy eating, as

well as voicing the importance of good nutrition such as fibre and protein in their diets."

These classes are just one example of the work that SAIL strives to bring to the table, however having the ability to collaborate with other professionals is always a great experience. "Supporting seniors in their health journey is never the work of one person, it's the result of a coordinated, compassionate team," describes RC Karen Mitchell. "Our recent cooking classes on protein and diabetes management were a perfect example of what can happen when people come together with a shared purpose.

By pooling our strengths, we were able to offer seniors more than just recipes. We provided tools, confidence, and ongoing support to help them make informed choices about their health. This spirit of collaboration is at the heart of our mission: ensuring that every senior has access to the education and resources they need to thrive."

With summer just gearing up, SAIL coordinators in Oak Lake, Virden, and Elkhorn have an array of activity and events planned to keep seniors busy and



SUBMITTED PHOTO

L-R PMH Registered Dietitian Chantal Morais, with two participants Wanda Brown and Betty Freeman.

engaged. Be sure to keep an eye on their social media pages to stay up to date on what's happening.

One event worth mentioning that is occurring in all three towns is the Alzheimer's Walk on June 18th. We invite any and all to join us in bringing awareness to this great cause. Together, we can do great things!

RCMP staffing reaches full strength in Virden

By Dale Davison
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

At the May 21 Town of Virden council meeting new RCMP Corporal Dan Guignard was introduced. Guignard who recently transferred into the Virden detachment. explained he has nearly 17 years of policing experience, including service with the RCMP, municipal policing positions, work in Rivers, and postings in places including Minnedosa and Neepawa before applying for the Virden position.

His arrival means all Town of Virden policing positions are now fully staffed. Additional officers are expected to arrive soon and the whole Westman area is on track to become fully staffed.

Sergeant Amy Doan reported that April was a comparatively positive month, with 88 total calls within the Town of Virden. Six prisoners were held during the month. Traffic-related incidents continued to make up the largest category of calls, including impaired driving investigations and traffic enforcement resulting in many tickets.

Among the more serious criminal matters were files involving assault with a weapon and assault causing bodily harm.

Doan noted the detachment saw fewer mischief-related complaints than usual during the month.

False alarms

One concern highlighted in Doan's report was the growing number of false alarm calls. Doan stressed that responding repeatedly to false alarms is not an efficient use of police resources when officers also have criminal investigations requiring attention.

Doan said, "If the RCMP is called and it's a member who isn't on duty, you're paying for not only overtime, but you're also paying for a three-hour call-out...at one-and-a-half times the rate. And perhaps if it's a building that ends up needing to be cleared, you're calling two members."

Council considered implementing a false alarm bylaw to reduce unnecessary emergency responses. Several members suggested beginning with a public education campaign before pursuing a formal bylaw.

School-related investigation

Doan addressed recent incidents involving the junior high and high school that had generated community attention. She explained that police received two calls connected to the schools. One investigation resulted in criminal charges, while the other complaint was shown to be unfounded.

Violent Offender Registries

Coun. Jessie Cruickshank asked, "With the assaults that have happened and the one that had caused bodily harm... is there a violent offender registry?" Doan replied that listing a person in the dangerous offender registry requires specific threshold including the type of offense, and conviction on multiple offences. Corporal Guignard added that the registry is not available to the general public without an Access to Information and Privacy clearance from the federal government.

DUI procedures

Doan explained that intoxicated people are typically taken into custody and held until they are sober enough to care

for themselves safely. She added that public safety remains the priority, and impaired drivers are removed from the roads immediately.

Victoria Park Vandalism

Members spoke of repeated incidents involving the same individuals damaging facilities, including break-ins at park washrooms. Coun. Marc Savys said, "Our staff locks it when they're done at 9 p.m. They break through the roof and they're partying inside." Savys asked if RCMP members could increase their physical presence in the park.

Council noted that surveillance cameras are expected to be installed with support from Manitoba's Criminal Property Forfeiture Fund.

Public Hearing

Council opened a public hearing involving a residential property owner seeking permission to construct a new carport aligned with an existing driveway.

Town of Virden development officer and building inspector Cory Nixon stated that notices had been mailed to 37 neighbouring properties. Two neighbouring residents responded but neither expressed concerns. The application requested a reduction of the required side-yard setback from four feet to two feet. Because the structure was classified as a carport, with



PHOTO BY DALE DAVISON

After the meeting Mayor Tina Williams posed for a photograph wearing a Nighthawks jersey

less than 60 per cent of its sides enclosed it was treated similarly to parking vehicles in a driveway. After the public hearing was closed council approved the application.

Manitoba Water Services Board

Council considered a late application to the Manitoba Water Services Board requesting funding assistance for the Town of Virden. Council approved the motion.

Rodeo sponsorship

Council approved a \$1,000 sponsorship request from the Manitoba High School Rodeo, the same level of support provided last year.

Municipal Administrator Certification

Assistant Chief Administrative Officer Jared Jaffray has been officially certified

as a Manitoba Municipal Administrator after completing the program in February. The ACAO explained that the certification process was completed in just under two years by taking courses consecutively.

Niverville Nighthawks

Council recognized the Niverville Nighthawks for winning the Turnbull Cup after defeating Virden Oil Capitals. Council members noted that although Virden lost the championship series, the defeat was easier to accept because Niverville went on to win the Centennial Cup in Prince Edward Island. After the meeting Mayor Tina Williams posed for a photograph wearing a Nighthawks jersey. The photo will be shared with Niverville town council as payment for a losing bet on the outcome of the playoff series.

Creativity was the theme of the day at the Virden Pioneer Museum

By Nancy Jo Moller
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

On Saturday May 23, a group of enthusiastic but not all professional painters gathered at the Virden Pioneer Museum for a day of Rock Painting. This is an event held periodically throughout the summer to have conversation and laughter on the museum grounds. River rocks of various sizes with smooth surfaces making them easier to paint were provided to the participants. Acrylic paint was applied on the rocks, then they were covered with a sealer. Imaginative minds and creative applications meant that no two rocks looked the same. Painters could leave their rocks at the museum for all visitors to view throughout the museum grounds or take them home. Museum staff created glitter tattoos that were also available. There were 25 people in attendance and tours were also done throughout the day. Some participants were from Brandon, and the rest were local. Keep an eye out for upcoming events!



Painters discussing how their rocks should look.



Beach theme coming to life.

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• Jessica Humphries, JD

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Help Wanted



**EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES
ACCOUNTS PAYABLE CLERK**

Job Description

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

Description and Qualifications

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

Skills and Qualifications

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

CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER

Job Description

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

Key Responsibilities

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

Qualifications

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

**COMMUNITY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
AND RECREATION MANAGER**

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

Key Responsibilities

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

Qualifications

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

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

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

CLASSIFIEDS

Help Wanted



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

Tender

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

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

*home quarter

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

Conditions:

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

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

Forward bids to:

Osman & Company Law Office – Land Tender
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Drawer 280
Moosomin, SK S0G 3N0



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CLASSIFIEDS

Obituary

IN LOVING MEMORY
 GLEN CAMERON TAPP
 AUGUST 27, 1946 - JANUARY 10, 2026



On January 10, 2026 God wrapped his arms around Glen and took another angel home.

Waiting at Heaven's Gates for Glen was his mom and dad, Elgin and Barbara Tapp, his three brothers Ron, Ken and Bruce, and special friend Edith Stark.

Left with precious memories is Effie (Kallichuk) his partner for 28 years. Also left is what Glen said was his greatest achievement, his daughters and grandchildren Shannon and Ross Hookway-Tapp their son Harrison and daughter Sloanne from

Toronto, ON and Dr. Carly Tapp and her daughter Autumn of Guelph, ON, sister Judy (Don) Storjord of Virden, MB, and special friend Edith Rossignol and Festus (Anthony).

In keeping with Glen's wishes cremation has taken place.

A Celebration of Life in honour of Glen will be held Saturday, June 6, 2026 at Elkhorn Legion Hall, 4 Richhill Ave. Elkhorn, Manitoba with Joyce Marsh officiating. Service time is 2:00 p.m. Manitoba-1:00 p.m. Saskatchewan. Lunch to follow.

Glen was "The Gardens Diner" in Elkhorn.

Obituary

IN LOVING MEMORY
 AARON DEAN BAILEY



Aaron Dean Bailey, beloved son of Bruce and Bev Bailey, and brother of Todd, Amber (Scott), and Tiffany (Mike) and uncle to Maycee and Hunter, passed away suddenly at his home in Virden, Manitoba Saturday, May 16, 2026 at the age of 52 years.

Aaron was born September 30/1973 in Kitimat, British Columbia. He spent his first years enjoying life and attending school with his friends.

In December 1983, Aaron moved to Virden with his family where he attended school and graduated in 1992.

He was then employed by Fontana's Trucking as an office clerk and worked for them till his passing. (34 years)

Interment will be at the Virden cemetery where a private family service will be held at a later date.

Aaron will be lovingly remembered by his family and friends.

For those who so desire, memorial tributes may be made to Canadian Diabetes Association in memory of Aaron.

IN LOVING MEMORY
 SCOTT ALBERT GERVIN
 FEBRUARY 9, 1943 - MAY 19, 2026



Scott Gervin passed away on Tuesday, May 19, 2026.

He will be dearly missed by his loved ones.

Expressions of sympathy may be made at www.memorieschapel.com. Arrangements with Memories Chapel, Brandon, 1-204-727-0330.

Manitoba Community Newspaper Association Province Wide Classifieds

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EVENTS

JOIN THE FIGHT AGAINST PROSTATE CANCER! The Motorcycle Ride for Dad is Saturday, May 30 2026, 10 AM, Polo Park, Winnipeg. Visit ridefordad.ca/Manitoba to register or make a pledge.

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Notice



NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

DEVELOPMENT PLAN – TRANS CANADA WEST PLANNING DISTRICT

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

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

DATE, TIME, AND LOCATION:

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

FOR INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:

Alleesha MacDonald
 Secretary-Treasurer
 Trans Canada West Planning District
 (204) 748-7239

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

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Municipalities push for policy changes

By Dale Davison
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

The Western District of the Association of Manitoba Municipalities (AMM) lies in the southwest corner of the province reaching from Wallace-Woodworth in the north to Two Borders in the south. The district has 24 member municipalities, the most of all AMM districts. The Western District meeting will be held in Melita on June 16. The meeting is an opportunity for municipal councillors to get together and discuss issues of common interest in the region.

These issues and their possible solutions are often distilled into resolutions requesting that the entire AMM lobby higher levels of government to act on these problems. At their May 21 meeting the Town

of Virden council considered and approved support for each of these resolutions described here.

Temporary foreign workers

RM of Pipestone addressed the chronic labour shortages in rural Manitoba. Their resolution called on AMM to lobby the provincial and federal governments to extend current permits for temporary foreign workers and to continue the program indefinitely until a long-term labour solution is developed.

Radon mitigation

Council next considered a resolution from the City of Dauphin concerning radon exposure in Manitoba where it is the second leading cause of lung cancer. The resolution asked for a comprehensive provincial radon

action strategy that would address public awareness, province-wide testing, mitigation supports, updated regulations and financial assistance programs.

Gopher infestation

Council then reviewed a resolution from the RM of Wallace-Woodworth related to severe gopher infestations. The resolution asked both the provincial and federal governments to allow Manitoba producers greater access to effective gopher control tools.

Rural paramedic training

A resolution brought forward by the RM of Deloraine-Winchester calls for the Manitoba government to implement a new training model in which every vacant Primary Care Paramedic position would immediately result in

the hiring of a trainee. Under the proposal, trainees would receive formal education, mentorship, paid training and part-time work opportunities while committing to return-of-service agreements in rural communities.

Green Team funding

Council reviewed a resolution from the Town of Melita concerning the provincial Green Team funding model asking the Manitoba government to create a simplified multi-year approval process for municipalities, and a policy that would allow municipalities to receive funding without having to complete a full application every year.

Assiniboine River Basin Initiative

The next resolution, submitted by the RM of Sifton, called on AMM to lobby the province

to re-establish the Assiniboine River Basin Initiative for 2027. Councillors emphasized that water management decisions produce the best results when all affected regions participate together, and that cooperation across provincial and international lines is essential.

Disruptive behaviour

Council considered a resolution from the RM of Alexander regarding disruptive behaviour at municipal council meetings. The resolution asks the Manitoba government to strengthen municipal authority to maintain order during meetings. The proposed amendments would allow councils to ban individuals with histories of repeated misconduct from attending meetings.

Rural entrepreneurs

Another resolution,

submitted by the Municipality of Boissevain-Morton, focused on improving access to financing for rural entrepreneurs. It called on AMM to lobby provincial and federal governments to expand accessible financing tools such as loan guarantees and flexible lending criteria.

Inter-facility transfers

The final AMM resolution came from Wallace-Woodworth and addressed concerns over Shared Health directives. This directive requires ambulance services to conduct inter-facility transfers without guaranteeing minimum local ambulance coverage. The resolution asks the province and Shared Health to change the directive to ensure minimum ambulance coverage is maintained within each service area.

Oak Lake Ambulance 50th anniversary

Submitted

By OAK LAKE NEWS

The Oak Lake Ambulance will be celebrating its 50th anniversary with a barbecue and anniversary cake on May 31. Organizers are hoping to see as many former members as possible. Everyone is welcome to come and celebrate the milestone.

Volunteer Ambulance Crew of 1976

(Ox Trails to Black Top, 1982 ed.)

The Oak Lake Ambulance Service is run through Virden District Hospital No. 10. The objective of the Hospital District is to provide competent, efficient ambulance service to all parts of the area by providing ambulances stationed at Virden, Reston, Elkhorn and Oak Lake. Basic control of the service is provided locally, with organization and management coming from the Hospital District.

The Oak Lake Ambulance Crew was first organized in 1976 and at that time was made up of 15 members. Mano Wiens was the first superintendent of the group. These people work in teams of three and one team is on call at all times. They take regular training so that they are fully qualified to operate the service.

In 1980 Oak Lake received a new, fully equipped ambulance and the crew continues to answer calls from all parts of the district. These volunteers contribute a great deal to the district. They spend many hours looking after the sick and injured who need attention.

Oak Lake Ambulance

(Oak Lake History Book Volume 2, 2025 ed.)

The Oak Lake Ambulance began operating in 1976 under the umbrella of Health District 10, which provided financial resources and management, but it was staffed 24/7 by local volunteers.

To get an ambulance licence you had to have the 16-hour Basic First Aid/CPR course, and if

you were going to drive, a Class 4 driver's licence as well. The ambulance was dispatched by Mano and Helen Wiens using the "RED phone," which was located in their home or at Mano's garage. People needing an ambulance called 855-2222.

There were no portable phones or cell phones at this time, so they had to be within earshot of the phone at all times to answer it. When a call came in, volunteers on call were phoned, so they had to be close to a phone in their homes or places of business.

The RED phone could be moved to the J&A Restaurant (Jack and Alice Smith) when Mano was out on an ambulance call, a tow job, or during the rare occasions when Mano and Helen went away. In 1980, the first van-type ambulance was provided by the government and health district.

In July 1985, the F.R.E.D. (First Response Emergency Deployment) paging system was implemented to dispatch the ambulance. People still called 855-2222, but now the phone was answered by MTS telephone operators who had very minimal training in taking or dispatching an ambulance.

This change allowed those on call to carry a pager, or "beeper" as Phyllis Weatherald fondly called it, so crew members could be out and about while still being available to respond.

Also in 1985, First Responder training was implemented. This was a 90-hour course that included oxygen and airway management, childbirth, spinal immobilization, splinting and wound management.

This training was delivered locally by Bob Findlay, who volunteered his time to take instructor training. Still, all providers could do was administer advanced first aid, provide oxygen and use the gas pedal to care for patients.

When new people joined the ambulance service, the "on the job training" was done by mentors like Mano Wiens, Charlie Abbott, Jack Taylor, Robert

Smith, Irene Sigurdson and Phyllis Weatherald, so a three-person crew would be used. Once you knew what you were doing, it was back to two people to a call unless the call sounded particularly serious. Then an extra person would always show up.

This was still entirely volunteer. In the late 1980s, it was decided that a token payment should be made for their time — \$5 for a call transported to Virden, \$10 for a call transported to Brandon, and \$20 if transported to Winnipeg.

At that time Oak Lake was doing fewer than 100 calls per year. The search for new volunteers was ongoing, as people tended not to stay on for very long because of the huge commitment of time between training and being on call.

In 1990, another new ambulance was allocated to Oak Lake — a 1990 Chevy long van. There were approximately 20 volunteers taking regular calls. Training was done locally by Judy Podobni, who had taken over the education role in 1987.

In 1998 the Health Districts were amalgamated into the Assiniboine Regional Health Authority. With this came changes that required everyone to have 90-hour Emergency Medical Responder training as the basic entry level for providers.

This resulted in it becoming harder to get enough people to staff the ambulance, especially during the daytime when people had jobs to attend. Providers were now paid to be on call and also received payment for calls attended. The on-call pay was about \$1 per hour, and if they got a call, they were paid \$8 to \$10 per hour for the time they were out on call.

Grade 12 students who had taken the training for high school credit were hired for the summer months through a wage-sharing program. Ambulances were now dispatched through 911 dispatchers who had more formal training.

To be continued next paper.

Local riders competed at MADESA MX Motocross Park



Rider #848 Savanna Feldman of Virden competed in the 250CC Junior, Ladies Open and Open Junior



PHOTOS BY JESSICA COULTER

Rider #809 Gavin Rempel of Kenton competed in the 250CC Intermediate and Open Intermediate.



Rider #727 Jayden Leslie of Elkhorn competed in the 250CC Intermediate and Open Intermediate.

By Jessica Coulter
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

On Sunday, May 24, MADESA racetrack just outside of Virden, MB held their first race of the season. The weekend event brought riders from all over Manitoba to compete.

Many riders showed up early and camped out for the full weekend. The races are part of the Manitoba Motocross (MBMX). Races run all summer at multiple tracks across the province. MADESA is host to two of these races. They had a very larger crowd this year and the weather was perfect for a good solid ride on Sunday.

The weekend begins with practice runs on Saturday and the scheduled races on Sunday, 29 races in total. Racers were as young as 4 years old up to the Plus 60 category.

The May 23-24 race round two of the summer schedule. Next weekend will be round three and will be held at the MADESA track again on May 30-31. Results for the local rides to come after next weekends ride.

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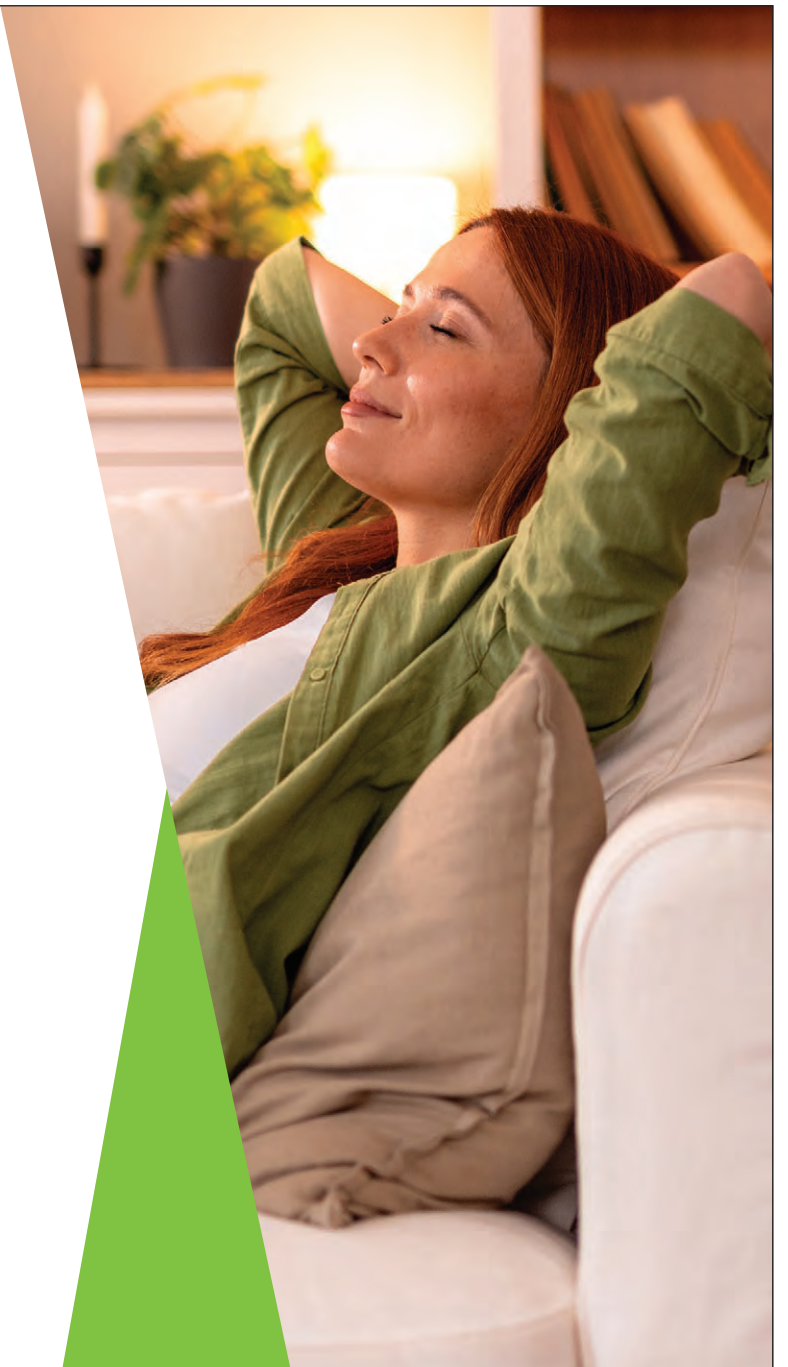
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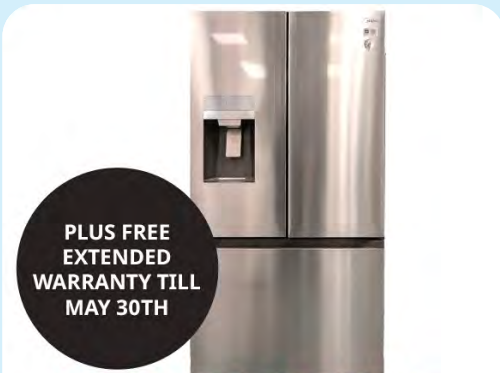


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