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SEPTEMBER 11, 2026 | EMPIRE: VOL 122 NO 04 / ADVANCE: VOL 142 NO 07 | PUBLISHING FRIDAYS



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LETTUCE CELEBRATE, AND TURNIP THE BEET AT THE HARVEST FESTIVAL



Saddle Ridge Farm set up their mobile petting zoo.



The Oak Lake Lions Club served up burgers, hot dogs and fries.



Dino-Mite Adventures brought out a ton of fun for the kids to enjoy.



Manitoba High School Rodeo Association had a two day rodeo.

PHOTOS BY JESSICA COULTER

By Jessica Coulter
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

The annual Oak Lake Harvest Festival took place on September 4 and 5 at the Rodeo and Fairgrounds. There were so many events happening throughout the days for the whole family to enjoy. Rachelle Stannage, EDO of the RM of Sifton said, "We found out that we had almost 3000 people attend. That

is so incredible!"

The Manitoba High School Rodeo Association hosted a two-day high school rodeo competition. There was Barrel Racing, Pole Bending, Bull Riding, Team Roping, Tie-Down Roping, Break-Away Roping and Saddle Bronc Riding. Competition was at both high school and junior high levels. A total of 78 competitors came out for the weekend for a total 286 rides on Saturday alone. Scores are avail-

able for all the local riders on the Manitoba High School Rodeo Association Website at www.mhsra.ca.

The Oak Lake Lions Club served up burgers, hot dogs and fries all afternoon and into the evening on Saturday. The burgers were cooked to perfection by Dale Wallace and Travis Wallace (no relationship) who managed the grill during the lunch time rush.

Read more about the Harvest Festival on page 10...

Inside...



**NEW BENCHES
DONATED BY
LIONS** P3



**REMEMBERING
9/11** P9

Old Tyme Harvest

By Ed James
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

Some say the old ways are the best ways. Sometimes the old ways of doing things can be very interesting. For the last eleven years, the farm family of Ken and Anne Wilson, located south of Wawota, SK has been the gathering place for a large group of people who want to see and remember the old ways of farming. The day-long event features a wide variety of vintage farm machinery, with demonstration of combining the grain field and the threshing of the grain with vintage farm equipment. Large crowds come to watch, learn, have fun or perhaps take a walk down the farming memory lane. As the sun-bleached red combine goes up and down the rows, a trail of straw is left behind followed by a baler.

The site has become a small display village of what life was like many years ago, with a blacksmith shop, a pioneer home and a vintage farm store museum. My favourite was a small wood stove bakery shop. After the tractor parade and static display areas, people could check out the old working farm tractors, with brands such as John Deere, McCormack, Farmall, and Oliver. Some people even had their photos taken on the old tractors. One interesting tractor that caught my attention was one with a double seater for your date? The Wawota United Church group served their "Raise the Roof Pies". Later in the afternoon, three older threshing machines were lined up in front of three small classic tractors each with a pulley and a long drive belt. The signal was given and the belts began to spin and move the many internal parts of the threshing machines. The machines shook, rattled and rumbled as the sheaves were fed into the mechanical beast by the pitchfork handling volunteers! It's not uncommon for the machines to break down and when that happens there is no shortage of old farmers giving advice to get it running again! Throughout the day, three older hand crank operated grain cleaners were busy cleaning. The



PHOTO BY ED JAMES

This famous Farmall C was one of many tractors working at the old time harvest day at Wawota, SK.

happy youngsters saw the job as a game.

After that, it was back to the wood-fired bake shop! The clean wheat was put into a crusher and after a few minutes a flow of dark, whole-wheat flour flowed into the bucket. I learned how whole wheat flour was made. It became even more interesting when the pail of whole wheat flour was put into another crushing machine and after 2 or 3 cycles, it came out a pale, white flour! Mrs. Wilson mixed the fresh ground flour with water and other ingredients that turned into dough, and Anne began to shape fresh buns. As a former city person, I found the whole process amazing! Today so many people just take food for granted, that it just appears in your local

food store. Now I know that loaf of bread has a long and interesting life story!

Later in the day, I spoke to Mr. Wilson as he was getting the fire hot for the baking oven! When asked about the days events he said, "I love doing this every year, with my family and friends and thank them all for their participation. The people who come each year seem to enjoy it as much as I do! I appreciate the many volunteers who help, the visitors who took an active part and those who just like to watch. With help of my wife Anne, son Kevin, grandson Colton and their families, it makes the day a family and friends affair and I plan to do it again next year to make it an even dozen!"

Inked and Framed: Tattoo Art in Arts Mosaic



PHOTOS BY LAUREN HALOWATY

Some of the Artist's Work displayed in Arts Mosaic until Oct. 3, Top Left: Savannah Knopp, Top Right: Steve Reshaur, Bottom Right: Drew Jones, Bottom Left: Haylee Janai.

By Lauren Halowaty
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

The live tattoo gallery at Arts Mosaic on September 3rd was a huge success, with 42 people in attendance. A highlight of the event was a captivating live tattoo demonstration by artist Savannah Knopp from Bonfire Tattoo in Brandon.

Lauren Shymanski, Arts Mosaic Gallery Manager, shared, "Attendees and artists alike loved the opening, and Savannah's live tattoo demonstration captivated the audience. There were also incredible performances by local musicians Daelyn Fefchak, Bennett Radcliffe, and Teagan Verner that made the night truly memorable."

The gallery, featuring pieces from local tattoo artists in Westman, is open now through October 3rd.

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KM's for Kyler

By Lauren Halowaty
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

Mac and Cassidy Troughton and their two young children are a family from Virden, Manitoba, and at the heart of their home is their sweet 3-year-old daughter, Kyler. Kyler is a happy, fun-loving little girl with a big personality and plenty of sass. She loves being outside, playing in forts, exploring, and—most of all—spending time with her family. Along with Kyler is her big brother, Oakley, a huge sports lover. If he isn't playing or watching sports, you can almost guarantee he's talking about them! Hockey and baseball are definitely his favourites, and he thrives whether he's on the ice or out on the field. He's an active, energetic kid who brings so much life and personality to their family.

In March 2025, their world changed when Kyler was diagnosed with Ataxia-Telangiectasia (A-T), a rare genetic disease that affects multiple

parts of the body. A-T can cause issues with coordination and balance, weaken the immune system, and bring many additional challenges as children grow. Because A-T is so rare, many people have never heard of it, including Kyler's family prior to Kyler's diagnosis.

A-T is caused by changes (mutations) in a gene called ATM, which normally helps cells repair damaged DNA and respond to cellular stress. When the ATM gene isn't working properly, it leads to the symptoms associated with A-T.

The condition is inherited from both parents through an autosomal recessive pattern: A child must inherit a mutated copy of the ATM gene from both parents to develop A-T. Parents who each carry a single mutated copy typically show no symptoms themselves. When both parents are carriers, each pregnancy carries a 25 percent chance of the child having A-T, a 50 percent chance of the child being a carrier, and a 25 percent chance of the child inheriting neither mutated gene.

For Kyler's family, raising awareness is about so much more than fundraising. They want people to know Kyler, to understand what A-T is, and to recognize why research is so vital. There is currently no cure for A-T, but ongoing research offers families hope for better treatments and, one day, a cure. They hope to help ensure that future children diagnosed with A-T have more options and a brighter future.

That vision is what inspired them to start Km's for Kyler. The 1st Annual Km's for Kyler 3K Family Walk will be held on Sunday, September 13, 2026, at the Virden Collegiate Track. Registration begins at 3:00 PM, followed by a shotgun start at 3:30 PM and a BBQ at 5:00 PM. The event will also feature bouncy castles, raffle prizes, and event T-shirts.

Everyone is welcome to join, whether walking, cheering participants on, bringing family, enjoying the BBQ, or simply helping to spread the word. Registration is \$10 per person, \$30 for a family of up to 5, and free for children ages 3 and under.

The support the family has



The Troughton's: Oakley, Mac, Kyler and Cassidy. SUBMITTED PHOTO

already received from friends, loved ones, community members, and local businesses means more to them than words can express. They truly believe that it takes a village, and they are deeply grateful to everyone helping them walk alongside Kyler and their family.

KM's For Kyler - Sunday, Sept. 13, Registration: 3:00pm, Shotgun Start: 3:30pm, at Virden Collegiate Track.

School Days Then and Now: a warm afternoon of shared memories at the Pioneer Home Museum

By Beth McConnell
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

A small but enthusiastic group gathered at the Pioneer Home Museum on Wednesday afternoon for School Days Then and Now, an intergenerational event presented in collaboration with Sail. The gathering had the kind of intimacy that encourages real conversation, stories flowed easily, memories surfaced, and everyone had time to linger over the artifacts on display.

The museum's collection set the tone immediately. Visitors explored a thoughtful assortment of school day relics: brass bells once used to call students into line, early report cards from the Virden School District, boxes of pencils and drawing instruments, vintage colour sets, and sepia-toned photographs capturing classrooms and teachers from nearly a century ago. Each item offered a glimpse into the routines, expectations, and personalities that shaped local education through the decades.

The weather cooperated beautifully, making the outdoor setting comfortable and relaxed. Attendees settled into conversation under clear skies, comparing their own school experiences with those of earlier generations. Some recalled the strictness of teachers, others the excitement of recess or the pride of receiving a good report card. The artifacts sparked memories that might otherwise have stayed tucked away.

A highlight of the afternoon came when one participant offered a song, an unexpected moment that added warmth and a touch of nostalgia to the gathering. It was the kind of spontaneous contribution that only happens in small groups, where people feel comfortable enough to share.

Throughout the event, Sail's involvement



Old School photos of classes and schools in the area. SUBMITTED PHOTO

helped bridge generations, encouraging younger and older participants alike to reflect on how schooling has changed, and how some parts of it haven't changed at all. The conversations were easy, genuine, and often humorous, proving that shared memories of school life can connect people of any age.

Together, the artifacts, faces, setting, and conversations captured a community pausing to remember its roots and appreciate the people who shaped its learning over the years. As more photos and memories are shared, the story of the afternoon continues to grow, becoming not just a look back at school days gone by, but a reminder of how those experiences still connect neighbours, families, and generations today.

Lions Club bench plaques begin appearing across Virden

By Beth McConnell
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

A new wave of community recognition is beginning to appear throughout Virden as the Town starts installing commemorative plaques on six public benches funded by the Virden Lions Club. The first plaque is expected to be mounted on the bench near the Lions Hall ahead of the club's Tuesday evening meeting, marking the start of a project that formally acknowledges a contribution made years ago but appreciated every day.

The Lions Club donated funds to the Town of Virden prior to the purchase of the benches, ensuring that several well-used public spaces would have durable, accessible seating for residents and visitors. Although the benches have been in place for some time, the new plaques will finally give public credit to the Lions Club's role in bringing them to the community.

Town staff have been preparing the plaques for installation, though sourcing the correct screws has caused a minor delay. The goal is to have the Lions Hall bench completed first, with the remaining plaques to follow shortly after.

Once installed, each plaque will serve as a visible reminder of the Lions Club's long-standing commitment to service. The benches are located at several key points around town:

- Virden Library (facing Super Thrifty) – a central pedestrian area where families, seniors, and students often pause.
- By the Lions Hall – the club's home base, making this bench a fitting starting point for the project.
- 5th Avenue and King Street – a busy intersection that sees steady foot traffic throughout the day.



Lion's club members, standing from left to right, Paul Pennycook, Bryan Hayward, Jim Tapp, Alex Grieve, Alex Sundell, Lloyd Williams and Gerald Ogilvie, Sitting, Justine Cozens, Barry O'Grady and Joan Veselovsky, show off the new bench in front of Lion's Hall on Nelson Street. PHOTO BY ERICA DARVILL

- Queen Street and 7th Avenue – near Youth for Christ, offering seating close to a hub of youth programming and community activity.
- Inside the Farmer's Market shelter – providing a welcome rest spot for shoppers during market days and seasonal events.
- 7th Avenue and Wellington Street – a bench awaiting installation, soon to join the network of Lions-funded seating across town.

Together, these benches form a small but meaningful network of rest points throughout Virden. With the plaques in place, residents will see the Lions Club's name displayed prominently across the community, a reminder of the group's ongoing dedication to local improvement, volunteerism, and service.

As installation continues, the Town plans to share photos of the completed benches. For now, the first plaque at the Lions Hall will mark the beginning of a project that celebrates both past generosity and the continued spirit of service the Lions Club brings to Virden.

Tundra

By Chad Carpenter



Fear is their stock and trade

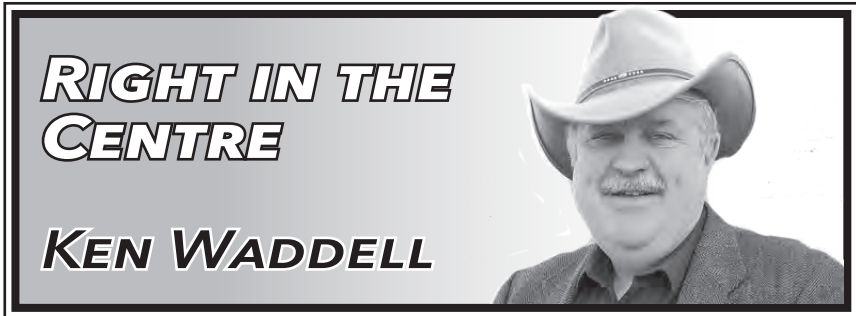
This column is based on one I wrote 25 years ago at the time of the Twin Tower attacks 25 years ago

It's interesting that since the terrorist attacks in New York and Washington that every commentator has become an expert on terrorism. To the amateur observer some things come to light very quickly. The most startling thing about terrorism is that terrorists have very different values than the average person. Attacks of terrorism are calculated and cowardly. Their most guarded weapon is the fear that the attacks instill in the hearts of the survivors.

The second thing that comes to mind is that these terrorists, whoever they may be, are very well organized and very well financed. This is no Mickey Mouse operation. This isn't some disgruntled group of kids tossing Molotov cocktails at a passing bus. There's serious coin behind this group and the movement is very large. Very well organized also, in that every time they want some publicity they just happen to have someone willing to burn a flag or stage a demonstration for the CNN camera crews.

The third thing that seems evident is that they hide behind religion. It's a facade. Religion doesn't usually promote terrorism, it doesn't promote killing people, it doesn't promote violence. It's assumed the terrorists, are Islamic but most Islamic people don't promote most of the negative things we see attached to the terrorist groups.

Terrorism is about money and it's about power. It's about people who want more than what they have or about people who had more than they have now and they want it back. It's that simple.



Unfortunately the answer is simple too. Too simple. While the theologies of the main religions of the world don't line up on every point, there is a common basis for the main religions. They acknowledge God as Creator. That's common to Judaism, Islam and Christianity. They mostly promote brotherly love and peace. In the original form and without the distortion of money, power and politics, the religions don't condone or promote what's happening in the world today.

However, God the Creator made people as free moral agents. We have freedom of choice. Our forefathers had choices. We all make choices. They affect our lives, they affect other peoples' lives, sometimes for good, sometimes for evil.

Nations make choices too. The Afghanistan nation has chosen to embroil itself in bloody civil wars, other nations have decided to try and suppress Afghanistan over the centuries. Now the U.S. is faced with a choice. They and the whole so-called free world with them were brutally attacked on Sept. 11. No doubt some people are going to die to avenge this act but is that the right choice. Perhaps the U.S., and the free world got a wake-up call on Sept. 11. Perhaps the U.S. and it's allies should spend as much time and energy on ways of reaching out to other people

as they do in figuring out ways to clobber them. If the democratic free world of economy and lifestyle is as good as we believe it is, then why don't we spend more time including other nations instead of oppressing and excluding them. That doesn't mean opening the flood gates to immigration, it means helping them where they are.

Perhaps the leaders of the nations and all the people of this world would do well to sit down and read the Jewish Torah or Christian Bible or the Koran. They would find that there is a God the Creator and there are clear instructions about how to live together in peace and harmony. They might also discover that no matter how good we are or how peaceful we are we still fall short of the glory of God, that we can't, on our own strength, gain eternal life in heaven. All three books point that out, one of them contains the answer.

Editor's note: If I were to re-write this column today, I might change it up some. But the above words are what I wrote in 2001 and I think they still would serve countries and people well if followed. KW

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



Je me souviens... I remember

Emptying the cereal box, separating the wax paper from the cardboard before recycling, had me back in the kitchen of my childhood in a flash. Back then cold cereal was a luxury; usually corn flakes or puffed wheat and sometimes rice krispies replacing the belly filling oatmeal/porridge. The paper would be carefully smoothed out and used to wrap sandwiches, cover dishes in the fridge, or become a surface on which a jellyroll could be flipped before rolling. That single layer of wax paper would be washed and dried and carefully stored for multiple uses. Now we have rolls of wax paper, rolls of aluminium foil, rolls of plastic wrap and parchment paper. (that expense usually is under the heading of groceries, and we complain about the cost of eating?) The box in which the cereal had been purchased was reused as well. It became the transportation unit for dainties and casseroles.

Now we have an array of plastic containers to meet every shape and size of baking and food storage. If we run low on custom built units, we dip into the stash of empty takeout containers. I am so certain that I am not the only one with a hoard of plastic trays - some with lids- and yogurt/sour cream/cottage cheese containers! Honestly a few of them on standby is okay but a mass of them?

Then there are paper products. I'm not certain when I met my first paper towel, full adulthood I'm sure. We had dish clothes/rags, floorclothes/rags and dust clothes/rags. And that is exactly what they were -rags, scraps of fabric that we used and reused. There were no Swiffer floor mops, it was down on your hands and knees with a pail and a rag, scrubbing the floors - often with the help of a brush. A spill did get cleaned up with a disposable paper towel. There was a rag/cloth for that as well. Dishes didn't get washed with clothes, or micro fibre clothes, or long handled scrubbies. There was a piece of fabric for each one of these tasks and they got washed, dried and used again, and again. It could be the last of a cotton tee shirt, the back of a flannel pj leg- any fabric that would absorb and could be washed with scalding hot water!

Those paper products included toilet tissue/ toilet paper whichever term your family used. Once again, I acknowledge that I am eighty. I am old, I have seen a lot of changes. Je me souviens the outdoor biffy, two holer, outhouse, privy - again whatever term your family used. I remember carefully saving the newspaper and quartering the page - so much better than the catalogue paper. And then the wonderful soft green squares of paper that protected the Christmas oranges in shipping! There was no choice of two ply or three ply! Now we rely on ready to use products. There is an elite assortment of food storage containers. There is an elite variety of methods and products for washing dishes, cleaning floors and catching spills. Every one is a household expense, usually included in groceries...hmmm

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Miniota News

Submitted
BY LINDA CLARK

Congratulations to Ava-Joy Lelond who once again is performing with Mecca Productions in Brandon. Ava-Joy auditioned for the role Cindy Lou Who in The Grinch and was awarded the part. She is busy attending practices in preparation for the show in November. As the show is double casted, she will perform in the Thursday and Saturday performances. All the best Ava-Joy with your singing and acting!

Welcome home to Leah O'Callaghan who was a patient in the Hamiota hospital for several days.

Our students and staff return to school this week, and a new year begins for them and their parents. Thinking of the new little ones starting their education in kindergarten and those entering their last year of education for grade 12. We wish all a wonderful year filled with learning and kindness for one another.

"Too often we underestimate the power of a touch, a smile, a kind word, a listening ear, an honest compliment, or the smallest act of caring, all of which have the potential to turn a life around." -Leo Buscagli

Letter to the Editor RE: Paranormal

I thoroughly enjoyed the two paranormal articles in the September 4th issue. What a treat it must have been to be involved in such an activity. Thanks for writing about it.

I'm definitely a believer.

Jennifer Gross
Oak Lake, MB

Town Office: 204-748-2440

Viriden 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

School Zone Reminder

Reduced speed limits in school zones are in effect as of September 1. Please remember to travel safely in and around school zones.

Check your mailbox! 2026 property tax notices have been sent out.

If you haven't received yours, please contact the Town Office at 204-748-2440.

2026 property taxes are due by October 31, 2026.

Upcoming Council Meetings
September 22 & October 6
Council Meetings start at 7:00 PM

Notice of Nominations

Notice is hereby given that on the following days:
Wednesday, September 16 to Thursday, September 17, 2026
Between the hours of 8:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. and 1:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.
And Friday, September 18, 2026 between the hours of 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. and
Monday, September 21 to Tuesday, September 22, 2026
Between the hours of 8:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. and 1:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.
at the Town of Viriden Civic Center located at 236 Wellington Street West, Viriden, Manitoba

I will receive nominations for the offices of Head of Council and Councillors for the Town of Viriden.

The nomination deadline is SEPTEMBER 22, 2026 at 4:30 p.m.
Nominations **cannot** be accepted after this day.

All nominations shall be made in writing and shall be signed by at least twenty-five voters, or NOT less than 1% of the voters (whichever is the lesser) of the authority or ward (as the case may be), but in all cases by at least two voters. Each nomination shall also be accompanied by the candidate's declaration of qualification.

Nominations may be filed in person at the above location, on the date and hours specified, by an agent, or by email.

To obtain a nomination paper, and / or candidate's declaration of qualification, contact the SEO at the telephone number listed below.

Nomination papers not accompanied by the required documents and not properly filed shall be rejected.

Rhonda Stewart, S.E.O.
Town of Viriden
Phone: (204)851-0769
Email: rstewart64@outlook.com

Dated at Viriden in the Province of Manitoba on August 26, 2026

Employment Opportunity Sanitation II Position

This is the senior position in the garbage collection division of the Public Works Department.

This position requires an individual that is in good health and capable of carrying out the physical requirements of the job and able to pass a medical examination. A high school diploma or equivalent is required as well as a Class 3 with Air driver's license.

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

Please forward resume with cover letter to:

Faye Pope, Office/HR Manager
Town of Viriden, Box 310, Viriden, MB, R0M 2C0
Email: office.manager@viriden.ca



Please be advised that a general municipal election will be held on October 28, 2026.

Prospective municipal election candidates must register with the Senior Election Official (SEO) during the registration period before they may begin to accept contributions, incur expenses, fundraise or borrow money for their campaign.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that I will be receiving candidate registrations:

For the office of head of council: Between May 1, 2026 and September 22, 2026
For the office of councillor: Between June 30, 2026 and September 22, 2026

at the Town of Viriden office, 236 Wellington Street West, Viriden, MB, during the regular hours of business.

To obtain a registration form contact the SEO at the email or telephone number listed below.

Registration forms are available for pickup at the Town of Viriden office.

Rhonda Stewart, SEO
Phone: 204-851-0769,
Email: rstewart64@outlook.com
Dated at Town of Viriden,
Viriden, MB on April 14, 2025

HELEN DRYSDALE OUT OF HELEN'S KITCHEN

By eating foods grown and harvested during their natural growing season, you'll enjoy a wide variety of fresh, flavorful fruits and vegetables. My garden is still moving at full steam, turning out zucchini, carrots, beans, cucumbers, beets and tomatoes to name a few.

This tomato soup recipe can be eaten fresh, frozen or canned for later use. To peel tomatoes, bring a large pot of water to a boil and prepare a large bowl of ice water. Cut a small "X" into the bottom of each tomato and place in the boiling water for 30 seconds and then transfer to the ice water to cool. The skins will easily peel.

Homemade Tomato Soup

7-8 lbs ripe tomatoes, cored and quartered
1 cup celery, diced
4-5 cloves garlic, minced
2 tsp. salt
2 tsp. dried Oregano or Basil
4 Tbsps. lemon juice (for canning only)

2 cups onion, diced
5 bay leaves
1/2 tsp. black pepper
1/4 cup sugar

In a large stainless-steel pot add the tomatoes, celery, onion, garlic, bay leaves, salt, pepper, dried oregano and sugar and cook gently, uncovered, until tender, about 30 minutes. Stir occasionally. If you'd like a thicker soup, let it simmer for a little longer to evaporate the juice. Remove from heat and remove the bay leaves. You can leave your soup with a chunky consistency if desired or using an immersion blender, puree the soup until smooth. Or let cool slightly and then transfer the soup to a regular blender and blend in batches. If the soup is too thin, you can make a mix of a little flour and water to thicken it, stir it in and let it cook for a couple minutes. To use immediately, add 1/2 cup heavy cream, half and half or whole milk to each pint of soup and return to a simmer. Do not boil. Season to taste with salt and pepper if needed.

If you are planning to freeze or can your soup do not add the cream until you are ready to use. If planning to freeze just place in desired containers and freeze. If you're planning to can your soup, prepare the canner and sterilize your jars and lids. Add 1 tablespoon of lemon juice to each pint jar, or 2 tablespoons to a quart jar. Use the soup hot when filling jars. Make sure water covers jars by about 2 inches. Cover canner and bring to a rolling boil. Process pints for 40 minutes, or quarts for 45 minutes. Remove from heat and let cool until safe to handle. Check for seal and store in a cool place.

Gingered beets

I have used ground ginger when I have not fresh ginger. Depending on your taste use

3/4 tsp. ground ginger.
1 1/2 lbs beets (around 6 medium beets)
1 Tbsp. brown sugar
1 tsp. finely grated orange peel

1/3 cup raisins
2 Tbsp. butter
1 Tbsp. red wine vinegar

Cook the beets with skins on in a pot of water for 25 minutes or until fork tender. Drain some of the beet water to cover the raisins. Meanwhile, place the beets in cold water and slip the skins off. Cut the beets into slices. Add the butter to a frying pan, add the ginger and cook for a few minutes. Drain the water from the raisins. Add all the ingredients to the pan and sauté for a few minutes until the beets are warm.

Spiced zucchini cake

Zucchini cake is the perfect dessert to make those times when you have more zucchini than you know what to do with. This cake freezes well. I usually frost it with cream cheese frosting, but it's also great plain or sprinkled with sugar and cinnamon before baking.

2 1/2 cups flour
1/2 tsp. baking powder
1 Tbsp. ground cinnamon
1/2 tsp. ground nutmeg
2/3 cup vegetable oil
1 1/2 tsp. vanilla
3/4 cup chopped raisins or walnuts

2 tsp. baking soda
1/2 tsp. salt
1/2 tsp. ground allspice
3 large eggs
1 1/4 cup brown sugar
2 1/2 cups grated zucchini

Preheat oven to 350°F. Grease and flour a 9 x 13-inch baking dish. In a bowl, whisk together the flour, baking soda, baking powder, salt, cinnamon, allspice and nutmeg. In a large bowl, stir together the eggs, vegetable oil, brown sugar, and vanilla extract. Mix in the grated zucchini. Add the flour mixture to the zucchini mixture in several intervals mixing just until combined. Fold in the chopped raisins or walnuts.

Pour batter into the prepared baking dish. Bake for 35-40 minutes or until a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean. Do not over-bake; start checking at 35 minutes. Cool completely.

Cream cheese Frosting
1/2 of 250gm package cream cheese, room temperature
1/4 cup butter, softened, room temperature
1 tsp. vanilla

1 Tbsp. milk or cream
2 cups icing sugar

In a small bowl, beat the cream cheese, butter, milk and vanilla until smooth. Add icing sugar and mix well. Frost cake. Sprinkle with nuts if desired. Store in the refrigerator.

Back to School, Back to Reality

PARENTING
WITH PURPOSE
BETH
McCONNELL



There's a particular kind of silence that settles over a house in early September. Not the peaceful, coffee commercial kind, more like the aftermath of a storm. Backpacks have been repacked three times, someone can't find their left shoe, and the lunch containers you swore you washed in June have mysteriously reappeared, still sticky. The kids are out the door, the house is quiet, and you finally exhale. But it's not serenity. It's the pause before the next round.

Back to school season has long been framed as a fresh start: crisp notebooks, sharpened pencils, smiling children marching into a bright future. But for most parents today, it's less about fresh starts and more about juggling acts. We're managing school supply lists that read like procurement orders, navigating bus schedules that change without warning, and trying to remember which child needs indoor shoes, which needs outdoor shoes, and which needs both.

And that's before we get to the emotional load. Kids are anxious. Parents are anxious. The world feels heavier than it used to, and our children feel it too. We're not just sending them off with lunch kits and permission slips, we're sending them off with pep talks about kindness, resilience, and how to handle the kid who says something they saw online. Parenting today means preparing your child for a world that moves faster than any of us can keep up with.

The truth is that most parents aren't striving for perfection. We're striving for "good enough." We're doing our best with the time, energy, and resources we have. Some mornings that means a balanced lunch and a cheerful send off. Other mornings it means tossing a granola bar into a backpack and hoping no one notices the mismatched socks.

And yet, despite the chaos,

there's something grounding about this season. The return of routine, even a messy one, gives families a rhythm to fall back into. Supper might still be rushed, homework might still be a battle, and bedtime might still be a negotia-

tion, but there's comfort in the familiar patterns. We're reminded that parenting isn't about flawless execution. It's about showing up, again and again, even when we're tired, even when we're overwhelmed, even when the school email says, "as previously mentioned" and we swear it was never mentioned.

Back to school isn't a fresh start. It's a continuation, of effort, of love, of trying. It's parents doing what parents have always done: making it work, even when it's hard.

And maybe that's the most honest version of the season. Not the polished photos or the perfect lunches, but the everyday resilience of families who keep moving forward, one morning, one lunch, one "I can't find it!" at a time.

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Virden council tackles roads, rates and recreation

Town of Virden council meeting, Sept. 1

By Dale Davison
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

Fees and rates policy

Council moved to approve the fees and rates policy for recreation facility rental, licences and forms and municipal solid waste service. CAO Neil Smith explained that council could give the proposed rates both second and third reading to set them promptly as users are beginning their budget-planning processes. Smith clarified that individual rates could be changed later but it is important to establish something in writing so the system can begin operating. By approving the policy council will not have to repeat the entire second and third reading process every time an individual rate is adjusted.

Council reports

Coun. Tara Maxwell participated in a recent public meeting to inform candidates for the October 28 municipal election the responsibilities and role of a municipal councillor. She said, "It was a really good refresher to remind you what your role is." Although fewer questions were asked than during a similar session before the previous election Maxwell said the session was still worthwhile.

Mayor Tina Williams agreed saying the event was a useful reminder that municipal governance involves more than simply following established routines and that councillors need to understand the broader structure and responsibilities of their positions.

Administration updates

CAO Smith reported that the Town is working to recruit a new recreation and event coordinator and that the process

is nearly complete.

Smith also said, "We're definitely getting closer to understanding our challenges with the water utility and trying to understand the difference between billed water and plant output." He added, "When the Routledge water line was repaired last year the plant output went down by about 1.5 litres per second (resulting in) a saving of nearly 50,000 cubic meters a year."

5th Avenue

Coun. Travis Penner argued that council needed to address the condition of 5th Avenue. The councillor described the road's condition on the Saturday night of the rodeo as an embarrassment to the Town, particularly given the thousands of visitors that attend events at Tundra Oil and Gas Place.

Penner acknowledged that rain had contributed significantly to the road deterioration but said some maintenance should have occurred before or during the rodeo.

Mayor Tina Williams added that the choice did not have to be between leaving the road untouched and undertaking a complete RTAC-standard reconstruction.

Penner asked whether the road still needed to function as a truck route. He said, "There's no reason why that road has to be RTAC anymore." And added that trucks could potentially be redirected to Provincial Road 257, which many already use. A partial truck-route arrangement might therefore allow council to consider less expensive improvements to 5th Avenue.

Penner urged council to focus on reasons to fix the road rather than

reasons not to fix the road.

Trails Master Plan

CAO Jared Jaffray reported that the Town held its kickoff meeting with Urban Systems for the Trails Master Plan on Aug. 17, and the project is now underway. The plan is a long-term guide to design, develop and manage public walking and cycling paths.

Coun. Jessie Cruickshank asked about the timeline and Jaffray replied, "It's going to be into next year by the time that they have a plan done and they're ready to present a final plan to council."

Cemetery mapping

Holly and Gary Draper have completed documenting and mapping the local cemetery, including grave locations, blocks and plots. The Drapers reported that approximately 3,200 memorials had previously been listed, but their work has increased the number of memorials documented on the Find-A-Grave website to almost 5,300. They have also identified 584 unmarked graves where the names and locations of those buried are now known even though no physical marker remains. It was noted that some small cemeteries, such as Lenore, have responded to similar discoveries by installing bricks or other permanent markers for previously unmarked graves.

Toonie

Transportation

Council considered an application from SAIL for the Age-Friendly grant connected with the Toonie Transportation program. CAO Smith explained that the Town will act as the sponsoring municipality for the organization to qualify for the funding.

Under the arrangement, the Town will administer the grant funds, and the local organization will operate the transportation program.

National Legion Week

Council considered a resolution that noted the Legion's advocacy and assistance for Canadian veterans and the contributions of Royal Canadian Legion Branch 8 to the community through remembrance activities, charitable work and civic leadership.

Council unanimously approved a resolution proclaiming September 20 to 26, 2026, as National Legion Week.

Public Hearing

Council convened a public hearing to consider the request from Christian Santos for permission to open a tattoo parlour at 264 Nelson Street West.

Town of Virden De-

velopment Officer and Building Inspector Cory Nixon stated that the proposal conforms with both the Town of Virden Zoning By-law and the Trans-Canada West Development Plan.

Coun. Maxwell asked why the business required conditional use approval as the property is already located in a commercial area.

Nixon explained that the site is zoned Commercial Central, but the zoning by-law specifically categorizes a tattoo parlour as a personal service shop, and personal service shops are conditional rather than automatically permitted uses within that zone. Examples include barbershops, hairdressers, beauty salons, tailors, dressmakers, shoe repair businesses and laundromats.

Dental and similar professional services fall within a health service classification.

Coun. Travis Penner asked, "When we approve this, we're not approving the operation of any kind? We're not licensing this thing or anything, are we?"

Nixon explained that no Town licence was being proposed and recommended that approval include a condition requiring compliance with Manitoba Health requirements. Manitoba Health would act as the regulator governing how the operation functions.

After the public hearing council approved the application under the condition that a Manitoba Health permit must be applied for and approved before occupancy is permitted. An occupancy permit must be issued before the business can occupy the premises and the conditional-use order must be acted upon within 12 months.

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Cricket's are singing

By Gerry Nolan
RIVERS BANNER

The crickets are back and that is a sure sign of fall. Harvest has begun; may it be ever so slowly because it just can't seem to quit raining. The morning dew is heavy; it is like having a shower of rain and by 8 o'clock the grass is already wet.

The gardeners are pushing toward the end of their production and of course by 9 o'clock it is getting dark out.

On June 6 our town of Kenton was hit by a vicious storm. Many homes were damaged and are still waiting to hear from their insurance company. Funny how slow the insurance companies are but do not miss a beat when it comes to them taking the money out of your bank account.

I had to replant most of my garden, which I did on June 12. The garden overall has been great, but some noticeable changes from other seasons. I had 7 corn plants that were left from the storm, so I decided to leave them be and plant new seed which I had purchased in British Columbia. The seed from British Columbia has turned out great. The cobs from the plants left from the storm really do not have much taste.

The peas just would not fill and were dying off. Lack of warm weather, too much rain, who knows? The tomatoes after 2 hair cuts do not seem to want to ripen and the cucumbers have not been

as plentiful as other years. The potatoes are hit and miss. Only the purple skinned spuds with white on the inside have done really well. The red potatoes are a disaster, maybe 2 or 3 potatoes per hill and the Yukon potatoes are not too bad.

The squash and the pumpkins are growing out of control, haircuts to them. The onions which are good got picked as the ground is so wet, I feared they may rot. My friend has his onions which are Spanish. They are soft and mushy. I encountered the same thing last year.

The potato bugs were terrible this year. I tried all kinds of treatments and finally gave up. I have never encountered so many bugs. I wonder if they just blew in with the storm back in June! I wonder if all the storms which include wind and almost 18 inches of rain in Kenton this year are having an effect on the plants.

I am sure the farmers are getting anxious with all this weather, as it will not quit raining and the fields are waterlogged. Hopefully it dries up soon so the farmers can get their crop into the bin. Remember when meeting farm machinery on the roads to slow down, get over to the side of the road and give them space. They will appreciate it and remember to thank these men and women who feed the world. With input prices so high, I am sure they are more than a little concerned about getting the crop off. Keep safe everyone!

Kenton Book Club Girls



PHOTO BY LEAH OBACH

From left to right: Mary Ann Stevenson, Leith Corney, Celia Nolan, Devon Caldwell, Leah Obach, and Debbie Routledge. Missing from photo: Rilla Hunter.

By Gerry Nolan
RIVERS BANNER

On Saturday, Sept. 4, the Kenton Book Club Girls travelled to Clear Lake for their September book club outing. The day was sunny and warm, perfect weather for strolling around, enjoying the sites and sounds and, of course, a bit of shopping.

They gathered at the DragonFly Delights for "High Tea". There they were served petit sandwiches, scones with sour cream and jam along with dainties for dessert. They also had a pot of tea to pair with their lunch.

Before leaving Clear Lake, they continued their stroll around this

beautiful scenic tourist spot then headed back to Onanole where they visited Poor Michaels Book Store. What an interesting shop to browse through!

All the ladies had such a fun day, and it occurred to them how fortunate they were to have this beautiful National Park with this gem of an attraction almost right on their front door. The town's name is Wasagaming which means "clear water" in Anishinaabe.

In 1930 the area officially obtained National status transitioning from a dominion forest reserve.

In 1931 the South entrance to the park was built and Conservationist Grey Owl arrived at the park. In 1933 the park was officially opened to the public alongside the completion of the East entrance and other rustic infrastructure projects and named Clear Lake.

Following the life story of Grey Owl, my wife Celia's mother told her that as a young girl in England her school class had gone to see Grey Owl give his lecture on Canada and his home in the park. Celia is sure that is why her family ended up moving to Canada!

Terry Fator performs

By Gerry Nolan
RIVERS BANNER

Last weekend my wife and I, along with our friends from Beulah, journeyed to Winnipeg to see Terry Fator, a ventriloquist and singer along with his puppets. He entertained us for about an hour and a half which was excellent. Fator began his career at age ten and performed at birthday parties, wedding anniversaries, really just anywhere he could get a chance to improve his craft.

In 2007, he won America's Got Talent and won a million dollars! He told us a little bit of the way you have to get to perform and to be ready on a moment's notice.

Terry is a terrific singer and to do this without moving your lips is near impossible. The only thing we could notice was when he took a big breath in was how his body would move. He sang all kinds of songs and

sounded like many of those who had made the song a hit. The songs ranged from Rock and Roll to Opera. He must have spent hours practising these songs. Some of the ones I noticed especially were Roy Orbison, Elvis Presley and many more.

Terry performed a song called "Horse in Heaven" that he had written. It was a true-life story that happened a few years ago. His brother accompanied him on the guitar. It was a song which took a few years for him to write as he had tried to write the words but somehow just did not seem correct.

The song tells of a real-life story of two young boys who were best friends, both under the age of 6 and they had wondered if there were horses in heaven? Sadly, one of the boys was diagnosed with cancer and passed away.

One night about 2 A.M. Terry, who said he had

been tossing and turning all night and had trouble sleeping, woke up and the words of the song just came to him. After years of trying to write the song, it was put down on paper and thus was written. You can find it on You Tube.

The evening was very enjoyable, funny with no foul language. It would be a perfect place to take your children. The humour from the puppets was great!

Terry, as I said, has a variety of songs that included Blues, Rock and Roll and, as I said, Opera he has performed in Las Vegas but the one place he really wants to get to is New York City and sing Opera. I believe the man will succeed as he is such a great performer and by the way he handles himself on stage.

There were some other people from Virden at the performance, and I believe we could all agree it was a wonderful evening!

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— 25 Years Later: Remembering September 11, 2001 —



PHOTO BY LAUREN HALOWATY

On one of the footprints where the towers stood is one of the twin reflecting pools surrounded by bronze panels bearing the names of those killed on 9/11.

By Lauren Halowaty
RIVERS BANNER

It is difficult to process that a quarter-century has passed since September 11, 2001. By now, none of us are strangers to how fast time moves, but that number—25 years—hits with a heavy, distinct weight. Even though the tragedy unfolded in the United States, its echo resonated across the entire globe, reshaping the modern world in an instant. For those of us who watched from afar, we may not have experienced the immediate ground-zero trauma, but the collective fear, grief, and loss of innocence changed our lives forever.

I was 11 years old, but I remember that morning with startling clarity. I was getting ready for school on a crisp, stunningly sunny September day, having just started fifth grade in a small town, Nestor Falls, Ontario. As a Millennial, my childhood existed in that sweet spot right before smartphones and social media took over. Beyond the local newspaper, satellite and cable TV were our family’s primary gateways to entertainment and breaking news.

That morning, I was sitting in front of the television watching YTV, a Canadian kids’ network, when my cartoons were abruptly cut off by a breaking news broadcast out of New York City. The news anchor announced that

a plane had struck one of the World Trade Center towers, and live footage showed heavy smoke billowing into the blue sky.

A what hit what?

Confused and mildly annoyed that my morning TV show had been interrupted before school, my mood shifted the exact moment I heard my mother gasp. Steam exhaled from the iron she was using behind me on some clothes. Looking up at her face, I saw sheer horror. I realized immediately that whatever was happening on that screen was deeply, terrifyingly serious. My sister was already en route to high school in Fort Frances, so my parents and I sat glued to the screen together through breakfast, completely frozen until it was time for me to head out the door to my elementary school.

We lived atop our family’s source of income: a hotel and restaurant in Northwestern Ontario. When it first happened, my dad was cooking in the kitchen for our guests, mostly American tourists who had traveled north to fly-in fish and hunt. Immediately after the news broke, calls came through to the few guests who had cell phones. Planes were grounded, and the nearby border crossings in Fort Frances and Rainy River were temporarily closed. It was chaos.

Before I left, my mom asked me to inform the secretary at my small, two-room schoolhouse about what was unfolding. When I arrived, I ran inside and blurted out to the secretary and my teacher that the World Trade Center had been bombed. The secretary gave me the exact same puzzled look I had worn just thirty minutes earlier, wondering what on earth this 11-year-old was talking about.

It wasn’t long, however, before reality set in. Soon enough, the old, heavy TV mounted on a rolling metal cart, a familiar artifact Gen Z might only recognize from memes, was wheeled into our classroom so we could watch the news live as history unfolded.

Canadian kids are taught basic geography, so many of us knew where New York City was on a map. But as young students, processing the sheer scale and horror of the event was nearly impossible. Overnight, words like terrorist, hijacking, explosion, 9/11, and Ground Zero forced their way into our daily vocabulary.

We watched in shock as the events in downtown New York City were followed by the attack on the Pentagon in Virginia. We would also later learn about Flight 93, where

heroic passengers and crew fought back against the hijackers, sacrificing their own lives to force the plane down in a Pennsylvania field before it could reach its intended target in Washington, D.C. In a matter of minutes, a world that had felt safe and predictable felt entirely fragile.

For the next decade, the world shifted on its axis. Fear became a constant backdrop to global news, and world politics became a topic I had to understand far earlier than I would have liked. The tragic events of that morning launched a new era marked by military interventions abroad, most notably the conflict in Afghanistan, as nations grappled with an unprecedented threat to global stability and security.

Tragically, the fallout extended far beyond the physical destruction of that day. The attacks not only claimed thousands of lives on September 11th, but they also altered the daily lives of countless people around the globe. In the tense atmosphere that followed, widespread fear and uncertainty gave rise to heightened social divides and mistrust, leaving many communities navigating a much more sensitive and difficult public climate. National security priorities shifted, borders tightened, and the balance between civil liberties and public safety was permanently redefined.

Years later, during a trip to New York City with my sister, we visited the National September 11 Memorial & Museum. Walking through the underground space brought a heavy, solemn feeling that is hard to put into words. Standing near the twisted steel and quiet exhibits brought a visceral sense of grief, but I felt it was necessary to witness that history up close. The after effects of 9/11 didn’t end when the dust settled in 2001; they redirected global politics, led to prolonged international conflicts, claimed thousands of additional lives through fallout illnesses, and fundamentally reshaped how an entire generation grew up.

September 11th remains a profound milestone in modern history, one that anyone old enough to witness will never forget. As we mark 25 years, it is critical that we continue to honour the lives lost, recognize the sacrifices made by first responders and heroes, reflect on the lessons of unity and resilience, and remember how that single morning changed our world forever.

To my readers: As we look back on twenty-five years, where were you, and what were you doing, when you first heard the news on September 11th?

International Peace Garden Hosting 9/11 Memorial Event

Submitted
INTERNATIONAL PEACE GARDENS

A special event marking the 25th anniversary of 9/11 will be held at the International Peace Garden on Friday, September 11 at 11 a.m. at the 9/11 Memorial Site. Everyone is welcome to attend this free event, and attendees should plan to arrive by 10:30 a.m.

The 9/11 Memorial Site was created with the support of the North Dakota and Manitoba governments, Rotary International, North American Firefighters Union and Manitoba Infrastructure. The site, which contains steel salvaged from the remains of the World Trade Center, was officially dedicated on September 11, 2002.

Because of the increased significance and interest with the 25th anniversary, IPG is encouraging visitors to leave plenty of time for arrival and parking. Attendees will not want to miss the initial procession, which will include Honor Guards from U.S. Customs and Border Protection, U.S. Border Patrol, Canadian Border Services Agency, North Dakota Parks & Recreation and United Firefighters of Winnipeg. The Manitoba Emergency Services College in Brandon, MB, will bring an aerial firetruck.

A variety of speakers will bring remarks from both countries with Member of Legislative Assembly David Pankratz serving as emcee. The keynote speaker is Jason Shaw, the Deputy Fire Chief with the City of Winnipeg. Shaw attended the 10th anniversary program in New York City.

Anthems will be performed by the Bottineau High

School Choir. All school districts are invited and should reach out to their respective Customs offices to ensure proper identification requirements.

“This solemn occasion commemorates a national tragedy, and also reminds us of the tremendous unity we felt as we came together in the wake of that tragedy,” said Tim Chapman, CEO of the Garden. “As we look back at the last 25 years, we also look back at the years since the founding of the Garden in 1932, and are reminded that we came together to create this Garden as a living monument to peace, and to the bond of friendship between the U.S. and Canada that has endured throughout the years.”

Gate admission fees to the Garden will be waived until noon on Sept. 11. Following the memorial event, light refreshments will be available, and the cafe and gift shop will also be open. The North American Game Warden Museum will also be open from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

About the International Peace Garden

The International Peace Garden was founded in 1932



SUBMITTED PHOTO

The 9/11 Memorial Site was created with the support of the North Dakota and Manitoba governments

and is dedicated to peace, cooperation and friendship. A year-round destination, the International Peace Garden serves as a resource for education, conservation, and entertainment for local, regional, national and international visitors. The Peace Garden is a non-profit organization supported by private funding and public funding from the state of North Dakota and the Manitoba provincial government. Learn more at peacegarden.com.

 Oak Lake 5th annual Harvest Festival



Twelve contestants took to the stage to compete for the Pin-Up Girl Contest.



Heather, the BBQ Queen won the Pin-Up Girls Contest.



The Canine Circus entertained with their high-energy dogs.



Dirty Word Customz had a fantastic heavy truck and classic car show.



The ever-popular Lawn Tractor Pull took place next to the Oak Lake Hall.

Continued from page 1...

Next to the rodeo Saddle Ridge Farm set up their mobile petting zoo. The Saddle Ridge Farm travelled all the way from Wawota, SK to share their beautiful ponies, fluffy white sheep, friendly goats, fuzzy bunnies, and a drama llama named Karen.

Canine Circus made its return to the festival on Saturday. The show celebrates the magic of dogs. These pets are full of high-energy tricks, incredible agility and a whole lot of tail-wagging. The dogs and owners put on three great shows throughout the afternoon.

Dino-Mite Adventures brought out a ton of fun for the kids to enjoy. There was a Dinosaur fossil tent with real and replica dinosaur teeth, claws and amazing dinosaur facts. A team of dino rangers roamed through the crowd with dinosaur costumes and baby dinosaurs. Large inflatable dinosaurs made it very easy to find the exhibit. To add even more fun, Dino-Mite brings its own Dino Mini Golf Course for all to play. Once the kids were done enjoying the dinosaurs, they were able to bounce and bounce and

bounce until they ran out of energy on all the bouncy castles brought to town by Brandon Bouncy Castles.

There was also a Farmers Market with many items for people to shop while enjoying all the events of the day. Among the market booths there was drink stand offering dirty colas and custom lemonades, and there was a henna/facepainting for everyone to enjoy. For the adventurous types, you could take a shot at throwing an axe at the axe throwing booth from Manitoba's only stand-alone mobile axe throwing company, Haulin' Axe.

Colleen Robbins, MLA for Spruce Woods exclaimed, "What a fun and exciting day at the Harvest Festival with my family! My grandson had an absolute blast — from the bouncy castle and petting zoo to, of course, the dinosaurs! It was wonderful catching up with so many people throughout the day. We are so fortunate to have festivals like this in our communities, and it's important to remember just how much hard work, planning, and volunteer time goes into making them happen. A big thank you to everyone who helped put together such a great event! We also managed to catch some of the rodeo, check out the great car show, and



PHOTOS BY JESSICA COULTER

"Had a great visit thanking Russell (Thiessen) for putting his name forward for upcoming election," says Colleen Robbins, MLA for Spruce Woods.



Large inflatable dinosaurs made it very easy to find the exhibit.

I absolutely loved the pin-up contest! A beautiful day spent with family, friends, and community. These are the days that make rural Manitoba such a special place to call home."

Dirty Word Customz had a phenomenal heavy truck and classic car show at the fair grounds for the 5th year in a row, which included a Tailgate Swap Meet this year for the first time. The Swap Meet ran all morning. Engines roared and smoke was flying as there were so many trucks and cars to see and more pulling in throughout the day.

Dressed to Impress, these ladies did not disappointment for the Pin-Up Girl Contest held by Dirty Word Customz. Each of the ladies came out in their best Pin-Up girl costume with their hair styled in 1940 curls. Each of these ladies were displaying the iconic bombshell look and had a story to go with their style. They were judged on their playful, flirtatious, or glamorous look. Some young girls and a couple men brought along their 40's and 50's looks too. The winner of the contest was Heather, the BBQ Queen.

The ever-popular Lawn Tractor Pull took place during the warmest part of the afternoon. Six young riders entered their own tractor designs. These souped-up tractors are built with more power and higher performance to get them to compete in the pull. There were a couple Case tractors, a John Deere, a Wheelhorse and a couple International machines. Winner of this year's pull was Ethan Hall on a 444 Case.

"The Oak Lake Harvest Festival has become a highlight of the year, and the 5th Annual Golden Harvest festival was no exception. It was incredible to see our community come together to celebrate our roots, support local vendors, and enjoy the vibrant spirit that makes Oak Lake so special. Events like this don't happen without an immense amount of hard work, and I want to extend my sincere thanks to the organizers, volunteers, and everyone who came out to make the day such a tremendous success," says Russell Thiessen, Reeve candidate for RM of Sifton.

In the evening, there was a beer garden and live bands. The RM of Sifton had two amazing acts brought out to grace the stage, Pop Vegas covered the early evening and Hicktown played the after 8pm and well into the night.

Manitoba Government announces new provincial park licence plate will feature iconic loon

Licence plates help show support for Manitoba Parks, will be available in both English and French

Submitted

By MB GOVERNMENT

The Manitoba government is unveiling new provincial park licence plates featuring a loon, the winning design chosen by Manitobans, Premier Wab Kinew announced today.

"Manitobans love our provincial parks, and this licence plate will help you show your support," said Kinew. "Thousands of Manitobans voted for their favourite design option, with the loon coming out on top. I look forward to seeing these licence plates on cars across the province—in both English and French."

Manitobans were invited to help pick a new licence plate design in support of Manitoba Parks. An EngageMB survey ran from June 8 to July 31. A total of 62,605 Manitobans responded to the survey. Following community feedback, the licence plate will be the first Manitoba specialty licence plate to be offered in both English and French, the premier noted.

A portion of the proceeds from every licence plate sold will go to the Manitoba Provincial Parks Endowment Funds through The Winnipeg Foundation, supporting park improvements that enhance ecological integrity, improve public safety, enhance accessibility and enrich visitor experiences in provincial parks.

"Our provincial parks are very special places and the new Manitoba Parks licence plates will give Manitobans a way to share their love of parks while supporting improvements that will help families enjoy them for generations

to come," said Environment and Climate Change Minister Mike Moyes. "Our government thanks everyone who took the time to vote on the proposed designs. The response was overwhelming and demonstrates Manitobans' strong support for our provincial parks."

The Nature Conservancy of Canada, a non-profit dedicated to connecting people to nature through partnership-driven conservation, habitat protection and long-term land stewardship, brought forward the application for the new plates as a way for people to show their love for the nature of Manitoba.

"Widely recognized as a Canadian symbol, the loon is a fitting reflection of the pride Manitobans feel in the natural and special places found right here at home," said Andrea Laughren, regional vice-president, Prairie region, Nature Conservancy of Canada. "Our natural spaces, including our provincial parks, support healthy ecosystems and connect people to nature, helping make Manitoba such a special place to live, visit and explore. This new licence plate gives Manitobans a meaningful



PHOTO BY MB GOVERNMENT

way to celebrate and care for what is uniquely theirs, today and for generations to come."

Since 2011, Manitoba Public Insurance (MPI) has administered the Specialty Licence Plate Program on behalf of the Manitoba government and currently offers 19 specialty plates. To date, more than 215,000 specialty plates have been sold, generating more than \$6.4 million in charitable proceeds.

The new Manitoba Parks licence plates featuring the loon design chosen by Manitobans will be available for purchase at MPI service centres and MPI brokers offices in spring 2027.

School Days Past



Myrtle Lane's school bell.

PHOTO FROM SAIL FACEBOOK

Submitted

By KRISTA PEDERSON

It's back to school week, and Virden SAIL and the Virden Pioneer Home Museum took a little time to reminisce about "School Days Past" last week. Jenn Jaffrey brought out different artifacts from the museum, including Myrtle Lane's famous bell, and her mathematic cube.

The library has lots of school related artifacts. Old textbooks, old report cards and of course, desks, slates, and more. Although

the museum is now closed for this season, you can still book tours by contacting them directly.

And if you're interested in genealogy, make sure you reach out to them.

We also pulled out a few songs from the old Manitoba school song book. That book is a little treasure, published and republished from the 40s all the way to the 60s.

The library provided several books from their collection. Do you know they have a whole collection of old yearbooks, as well as

specific histories of different schools? They are a great resource, so make sure you visit the library!

This week will be visiting the library on September 10, 1:30pm, for Tea and Tales.

Let's carry on the conversation. Perhaps you'd like to make a record of some school-time stories from when you were younger. Of course, the most famous story grandchildren hear from their grandparents, is that they had to walk uphill both ways to school. The most important aspect of your story is that you alone can tell of your specific experiences. I encourage you to have conversations and keep those memories alive.

All I know about my grandparents schooling is that they didn't have much of it. I treasure the stories they did share about their childhood. Even without formal schooling, they all did well in their lives, all were multilingual, and three out of four of them crossed oceans to make a life here. And they all encouraged their children's education.

We are fortunate to live in this time and place where we can all go to school! Time to celebrate back to school!

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SPORTS

SPORTS NOTES: VIRDEN SLO PITCH LEAGUE FINISHED WITH EXCITING A-SIDE FINAL

By Robin Wark
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

The Virden Slo Pitch League A-side final saw a repeat battle for the championship.

For the second straight year, Ballz Deep got past the Benchwarmers to win the title, this time by an 18-13 score.

“Both teams are strong and have been in the league for a long time and came prepared for a battle,” said Madison Mossop, a member of the winning team and the local slo pitch board. “Ballz Deep wanted to defend our title as league champs... Our team plays very well together, and we just tried our best to both play the field and bat strategically and remain aware of the Benchwarmers’ strengths and hold them off as best we could.”

She also noted that “the umpires, who are volunteers off other teams from the league, had some tight calls to make, but they did a great job at keeping it fair.”

The local league featured 12 teams this summer. Eleven of those competed in the year-end tournament. Bud Lightning won the B-side and Donut Slayers took the C-side title.

Messings Coming to Virden

Skate Virden is bringing two-time Canadian figure skating champion and Olympian Keegan Messing to town for a seminar on Sept. 19-20. He is known for his athleticism, charismatic performances and fan-friendly personality on the ice. The seminar is being made possible with the help of sponsors. Skate Virden’s fall programming began Sept. 8.

VCI Football

The Virden Collegiate Institute opens its 2026 Rural Manitoba Football League season on the road Sept. 13 against the St. Vital Mustangs.

“The Golden Bears are excited for this upcoming football season,” coach Marc Talbot said. “We are still excited about the



Ballz Deep won the Virden Slo Pitch League A-side final.

SUBMITTED PHOTO

late-game victory in our last game last year and working on building off that excitement.”

The team is looking to expand its numbers. Interested players are encouraged to contact the coaching staff.

The Golden Bears play in Brandon against the Neelin Spartans on Sept. 20. VCI’s first home game will be Sept. 25 versus the Park West Outlaws.

“One of the highlights happening this year is that we are hosting the Tundra Bowl,” Talbot said. “This is a rivalry game that gets played between Virden and Park West. The game will be played on a Friday afternoon. We’re hoping to get some student excitement and spectators to come out and support the football team.”

The Golden Bears host

the Swan River Tigers on Oct. 3 and the Moosomin Generals on Oct. 17. VCI’s regular season wraps up in Stonewall on Oct. 24.

Westman Magic Update

The regional Westman Magic U15 AAA softball team will be led by two coaches with Virden connections. Adam Hartman and Arjana Eilers have been tabbed to lead the

Brandon-based squad next season.

A Virden product, Hartman is well known in Wheat City sporting circles as a coach, senior baseball player and former Brandon University basketball player. Eilers is the daughter of Angie Bouchard and former Virden resident Jon Eilers. She played softball at Dickinson State University in North Dakota.

GOLD RUSH WRAP UP FASTBALL SEASON

By Robin Wark
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

The Virden Senior Ladies Gold Rush wrapped up their season with a fourth-place finish at the Westman Ladies Fastball League year-end tournament.

The squad went 2-2 at the Aug. 22 event in Moosomin. Its losses were at the hands of the eventual league champion from Swan Lake and the runner-up from Brandon.

“We had a good day of ball,” veteran player Adelle Gervin said. “We played four games and ended up coming a couple games short of the finals... It was a hot one, but we played well and had a lot of fun.”

Virden opened the tournament with a 14-3 win over Killarney in four innings. Gold Rush player-organizer Hanna Cantelo said, “We were

supposed to play them the Thursday prior to the tournament but they had to cancel so it was nice to play them first.”

In its second game, Virden fell to Swan Lake. The Gold Rush stayed alive by beating Deloraine, but fell to Brandon.

The Gold Rush was a bit shorthanded in the pitching department. One pitcher was unable to attend and another could only make the first two games. Cantelo said, “Avery Ramsey and Adelle Gervin stepped up and both pitched so well despite the heat and amount of games to play.” Virden’s final three games were back-to-back-to-back, she noted.

“It was a long, warm day, but we played some good ball,” Cantelo said.

Gervin noted that it was great to play teams such as Killarney, Brandon



The Virden Senior Ladies Gold Rush had another successful season.

SUBMITTED PHOTO

and Swan Lake from the league’s East Division, as the Gold Rush did not face those squads in the regular season. She and her teammates also ap-

preciated playing their final games of the season in Moosomin.

“We always enjoy playing in Moosomin,” Cantelo said. “They have a

great ball facility.”

The Gold Rush and the league provide an opportunity for female softball players to continue playing softball at

a high level. The Virden team features players of various ages and backgrounds. A love of fastball and camaraderie bonds the group.

SPORTS

MACKENZIE LOOKING TO FINISH JUNIOR CAREER ON HIGH NOTE

By Robin Wark
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

Pipestone's Luke MacKenzie is entering his final junior season with a strong belief in what his team can accomplish.

The son of Gavin and Cheryl MacKenzie was acquired by the Saskatchewan Junior Hockey League's Melfort Mustangs last November. He quickly earned a contributing role and helped the squad reach the quarterfinals of the league playoffs.

"Everybody coming back is excited and I think we're all hungry to win," MacKenzie said. "We have a bad taste in our mouths after our series against Battleford, so I think the guys are gonna be hungry this year to bring another championship back to Melfort."

After accumulating five points in nine games for the Manitoba Junior Hockey League's Niverville Nighthawks last season, MacKenzie was swapped to the

Mustangs. In his second game with the club, he started a three-game point streak. MacKenzie scored six goals and recorded 11 assists for 17 points in 40 games for Melfort.

"I think what allowed me to step in and contribute was just the fact that I'm an older guy now and have lots of experience under my belt," the 2006-born player said. "I was ready to embrace a bigger role and wanted to be relied upon in more situations and Melfort just made sense. My coaches helped me right from the start with fixing certain areas in my game and I felt I improved a lot on those weaknesses as the year progressed."

Mustangs head coach Trevor Blevins said it was an easy decision to add a "character young man and a good hockey player" in MacKenzie. The coach described the 6-foot-1, 196-pounder as smart with a big, strong frame and said he is tough to play against.



PHOTO BY THE MELFORT MUSTANGS.

Luke MacKenzie is ready for his second and final season with the Melfort Mustangs.

In addition to his on-ice contributions, MacKenzie is also a "big-time glue guy in the dressing room," Blevins said. Last season MacKenzie received the team's Most Spirited Player award. The coach also praised him for bringing a lot of energy, being a pleasure to coach and coming

from a quality family.

MacKenzie had to adjust not only to a new team, but also to a different league.

"My experience just from playing in the MJHL compared to the SJHL, it felt like it was definitely an older league and tighter checking. There's a lot more physicality in the SJHL, and that suited my style

well because I try to play that heavy style of game," said MacKenzie, who finished sixth on the team with 64 penalty minutes.

Through the transition, as always, he had the backing of his family.

"My family has always been supportive no matter the situation and I think they were all just excited for me to try something new," MacKenzie said. "They couldn't come up a whole lot because of the winter we had, but I imagine this fall they'll get out to a few games after harvest and everything slows down."

Blevins said MacKenzie brought a lot more consistency at the end of the year. The forward had a point in each of the last five games of the regular season. Blevins said MacKenzie took big steps in his all-around game.

MacKenzie has appreciated the opportunities he has had in Saskatchewan.

"I enjoyed the experience of the SJHL and the town

of Melfort," MacKenzie said. "Everything about it just seemed like the perfect fit once I arrived last year in November, just from day one meeting my new teammates and coaches it was great. It was cool to see all the passion from every team we played, too, in their rinks and the game tends to feed off the fans everywhere we go."

He has committed to play for Canisius University in Buffalo, N.Y., at the NCAA Division I level beginning in the 2027-28 school year. His path to that opportunity began with a taste of junior hockey in 2022-23. MacKenzie appeared in one regular-season game and one playoff game with the MJHL's Virden Oil Capitals as an affiliated player while playing for the U18 AAA Southwest Cougars. The forward split the following season between the Oil Capitals and the Nighthawks before recording 20 points in 57 games with the Nighthawks in 2024-25.

OIL CAPITALS' HOME OPENER SET FOR SEPT. 19



PHOTO BY VIRDEN OIL CAPS

Virden Oil Capitals participated in a competitive camp.

By Robin Wark
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

The Virden Oil Capitals are ready for the 2026-27 Manitoba Junior Hockey League season.

The Oil Capitals open their MJHL campaign on Sept. 18 on the road against the Waywayseecappo Wolverines before hosting the Wolverines

in their home opener Sept. 19 at Tundra Oil & Gas Place. The Oil Capitals will then host the defending MJHL and national champion Niverville Nighthawks on Sept. 25 before visiting the Steinbach Pistons on Sept. 26. The latter contest will be a matchup between two teams that met in last season's MJHL

semifinal.

Schaefer Named Captain

Nate Schaefer, a 2006-born defenceman, has been named the team's captain for this season. He joined the Oil Capitals partway through the 2024-25 campaign. Schaefer was an MJHL First Team All-Star last season.

"Being named captain of the Virden Oil Capitals is a huge honor," he said on the team's website. "The environment we have here as a team and the people around the organization have made Virden feel like a second home to me, and I'm excited to have the opportunity to lead this group and make this a special year."

Camp

The Oil Capitals' Comfort Inn & Suites Fall Camp ran Sept. 1-3 at Tundra Oil & Gas Place. It concluded with Team Red beating Team Blue in the Garry Cup intersquad game. It is named for Garry Remple, the team's dressing room attendant.

"Camp was competitive and we really liked how much of an improvement we saw in a number of players including veterans and prospects," Virden head coach and general manager Tyson Ramsey said.

Exhibition Season

The Oil Capitals opened their exhibition season on Sept. 4 with a 6-4 loss at home to the Saskatchewan Junior Hockey League's Yorkton Terriers. Oak Lake Beach's Tyson Draper led Virden with two goals. Also scoring for the Oil Caps were returning forward Bryan Laing and newcomer Hunter Ethelston. Virden's own Liam Banga made 13 saves on 15 shots. Returning goalie Micky Gross stopped 15 of the 18 shots he faced. In addition to Draper and Banga, other local players in the lineup included Virden forwards Coleton Koop and Carter White.

Newcomer Cole Dupuis scored the lone shootout goal on Sept. 5 in Yorkton to lift Virden to a 3-2 victory. Returning forward Lucas Laramee and newcomer Davian Ferland scored in regulation for the Oil Capitals. Goalie Sawyer Wallin backstopped Virden to

the win. He did not allow any of the Terriers' four shooters to score in the shootout.

On Sept. 7 in Weyburn, Draper scored a hat trick and recorded five points to power the Oil Capitals to a 5-3 victory over the SJHL's Red Wings. Schaefer had a goal and an assist. Virden's own Christian Pitz scored for the Oil Capitals. Wallin made 12 saves on 13 shots for Virden, while his teammate Adam Courchesne turned away 14 of the 16 shots he faced.

On the Red Wings' bench for the contest was Jordan Szczecinski. Coaching in two games in the preseason as an assistant, she became the first-ever SJHL female coach.

The Oil Capitals were slated to wrap up the preseason by playing the Portage Terriers on the road on Sept. 8 and at home on Sept. 9, after the Empire-Advance deadline.

SPORTS

MJHL REPORT

MJHL HOCKEY DEREK HOLTOM

The MJHL is doing a better job these days of advertising their successes, including pointing out how many of their players are moving onto higher levels.

Heading into training camps last week, there were several players who shone in the MJHL last year and are looking to make the jump to the WHL this coming season.

In Swan Valley, the three players starting the year at WHL camps are Crosby Harrison (Everett), Trace Langan (Everett), and Dayson Martin (Prince Albert).

The three members of the Northern Manitoba Blizzard who are in WHL camps this fall are Atticus Cruz (Penticton), Kasen Harrold (Seattle),

and Trystyn Sidor (Seattle).

Waywayseecappo has Cole Hunter at the Brandon Wheat Kings camp.

The two teams with the most players at WHL camps come from the two MJHL finalists last year – the Steinbach Pistons and Virden Oil Capitals.

The Pistons are missing four players - Ben Chornomydz (Penticton), Fenton Mann (Penticton), Ryker Arran (Swift Current), and Jaden Mah (Victoria).

The Oil Capitals have the most players at WHL camps, a whopping seven. That list includes Micky Gross (Brandon), Jett Deschamps (Regina), Colten Worthington (Brandon), Cohen Lewko (Saskatoon), Lincoln Black-Greaves (Swift Current), Carson Wright (Edmonton), and Tyson Ulmer (Regina).

Selkirk, Portage, Dauphin and Winkler also have players at WHL camps.

It's a double-edged sword for the MJHL. One on hand it's great to be seen as a development league, and that players can succeed and move onto higher levels from here. On the other hand,

it makes it more difficult to count on players returning year after year.

That's something the WHL is still adjusting to now that their players can make the jump to the NCAA. The American college system has taken to scooping up top WHL talent before they graduate, which in turn forces the WHL to look to leagues such as the MJHL for talent to fill the gap.

It's also interesting to see how many players are attending the camp of the Penticton Vees. Formerly the top franchise in the BCHL, the Vees are entering their second year in the WHL, making the jump to major junior last year in record-setting fashion, winning 44 games – the most ever by a WHL expansion team.

Also, two of the owners of the Vees are quite well known – current Winnipeg Jets forward Mark Scheifele and former New York Rangers goaltender Mike Richter.

Having the Vees move up to the WHL is good for them, but for junior A leagues such as the MJHL, that's just less players available to them.

NHL CONTRACTS

REF TO WRITER GERRY NOLAN



The Winnipeg Jets goalie, Connor Hellebuyck wants out of Winnipeg, even though he signed a contract at \$8.5 million a year back in the 2024-2025 season so he has a few years remaining on it.

Dylan Larkin of the Detroit Red Wings signed a 8.7 million contract and still has 5 years remaining on it.

Brady Tkachuk signed a 8 year contract at \$8.2 million per season and wanted out of Ottawa. The interesting thing is that these 3 players are all American. All 3 players signed for a combined total of over 25 million dollars per season which is paid in American dollars. The question is this, how do the general managers of these teams handle this?

Ottawa traded Brady Tkachuk for basically nothing. Draft picks are uncertain and to get a player back with that kind of contract is not

realistic. I would think Detroit and Winnipeg will get about the same amount back for their players as Ottawa did.

Connor Hellebuyck signed a multi year contract for big money, 8 years at 8.1 million a season but wants to go to a team that has a chance to win the Stanley Cup. When he signed the deal he stated he wanted to win a Stanley Cup and bring it back to Winnipeg. Did he notice how he has played in the playoffs recently?

Obviously, he has had a change of heart. Part of that may be that the GM Kevin Cheveldayoff cannot seem to get players to come to Winnipeg.

I wonder if there is anyone behind these players wanting to go to the United States to continue their careers? I think NHL President Gary Bettman may be behind this in some sort of way. Gary Bettman has never wanted a Canadian team to win

the Stanley Cup, and the proof is in the pudding.

Training camp for the National Hockey League begins in about 2 weeks and if Connor Hellebuyck does not show up at camp the Jets can suspend him without pay. The Jets would have about 8 million dollars to spend elsewhere.

If I were in the position of the Winnipeg Jets, I would let him sit at home for the 5 years remaining on his contract. His career would be over, and he would lose millions of dollars. Sucks to be him I guess!

When players sign long term contracts and for millions of dollars they should have to stay with that team. The team gave the player the money he wanted and for the number of years the player wanted. Seems to me if a player wants and signs the contract then that is the team he has to play for. The players would also lose the right if a trade was being considered by the team to which team the player would end up with. Gary Bettman can put a stop to this but I am thinking he wants to make Canadian teams pay the price so American teams will be the winners of the Stanley Cup!

TORONTO BLUE JAYS

REF TO WRITER GERRY NOLAN



As of this writing on a Sunday morning, the Toronto Blue Jays find themselves in play-off position. Who would have thought that possible the way their season has gone. Even though their pitching staff is injured and beaten up, the club has found their bats somewhat and along with playing good defence, along with pitchers from their bullpen that just does not let them down, the Jays are in the hunt for a wild card berth in the playoffs with about three weeks remaining in the regular season.

I watch the Blue Jays play whenever I can, and one thing I will say is that the Jays do not do things the easy way, which makes for exciting baseball games. They currently have a 4 game winning streak and have won more games than they have lost, over the .500 mark for the first time since they swept the Oakland Athletics to begin the season. I hope

they make the play-offs but will have to depend on starting pitching and defence team is near last in all of baseball.

The Toronto Blue Jays could have folded the tent a long time ago but have kept grinding out wins setting the stage for a great 3 weeks of baseball games.

If Vladimir Guerrero could ever get back to hitting the way he did last fall, we have a chance. He has hit only 8 home runs and batted in 54 runs, a long slide from where he was last season. He should be around the 30 home runs and 100 runs batted in.

The lack of power with the team has hurt the team, yet here we are right in the thick of things.

Canada is behind the team living and dying with every pitch, every swing and every catch, every decision made by the coaches. Good luck to the Toronto Blue Jays the rest of the season and as Yogi would say, it ain't over till it's over!

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Coming Events

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Public Hearing

**UNDER THE AUTHORITY
OF THE PLANNING ACT
NOTICE OF PUBLIC
HEARING**

 On the date and at the time and location described below, a PUBLIC HEARING will be held to receive representations from any persons who wish to make them in respect of the following matter:
BY-LAW NO. 140/2026
being an amendment to the Municipality of Two Borders Zoning By-Law No. 89/2022.

HEARING LOCATION:
Two Borders Council Chambers
138 Main Street – Box 429
Melita, Manitoba R0M 1L0

DATE & TIME:
October 1, 2026, at 10:15 a.m.

GENERAL INTENT OF BY-LAW No. 140/2026
Texts and Table Amendments
1. To Part 2, 2.14 by adding item 2.
2. To Table 14: Land-Uses - Permitted, Conditional and Accessory, item 81
3. To Part 5.2: Land-Use Lexicon: Uses of Land Defined heading of Mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction.
4. To Footnotes Forming Part of Table 15: "AG" Bulk Standards by adding item (b).
5. To Footnotes Forming Part of Table 16: "AG" Bulk Standards by adding item (b).

FOR INFORMATION CONTACT:
Grace Carr, CAO, Municipality of Two Borders, Ph: 204-522-3263

A copy of this by-law can be inspected at the Municipal Office location noted above during normal office hours (8:30 to 12:00 p.m. and 1:00 to 4:30 p.m.) Monday to Friday. Copies may be made, and extracts taken therefrom, upon request.

Any person may make a representation regarding by-law No. 140/2026, either in person or in writing, at the public hearing.

Public Hearing

PRAIRIE VIEW MUNICIPALITY
UNDER THE AUTHORITY OF THE PLANNING ACT
NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING
FOR ZONING BY-LAW AMENDMENT

On the date and at the time and location shown below, a PUBLIC HEARING will be held to receive representations from any persons who wish to make them in respect to the following matter:

PRAIRIE VIEW MUNICIPALITY BY-LAW NO. 2026-08 being an AMENDMENT to the PRAIRIE VIEW MUNICIPALITY ZONING BY-LAW NO. 2018-15, as amended.

HEARING LOCATION: Prairie View Municipality Council Chambers located at 678 Main Street, Birtle, MB
DATE & TIME: October 13, 2026, 09:05 am (0905h)

GENERAL INTENT OF BY-LAW 2026-08: To amend parts, sections, subsections, and bulk standard tables of the existing Zoning By-law 2018-15.

AREA AFFECTED: Part 2, 3, 5, 6
Table 3.2 - Use & Site Requirements: "AG" Agricultural General Zone
Table 3.3 - Use & Site Requirements: "GD" General Development Zone
Table 3.4 - Use & Site Requirements: "RR" Rural Residential Zone
Table 3.5 - Use & Site Requirements: "RR5" Rural Estate Residential Zone
Table 3.6 - Use & Site Requirements: "RS" Residential Serviced Zone
Table 3.7 - Use & Site Requirements: "RU" Residential Un-Serviced Zone
Table 3.8 - Use & Site Requirements: "CC" Commercial Central Zone
Table 3.9 - Use & Site Requirements: "CH" Commercial Highway Zone
Table 3.10 - Use & Site Requirements: "MG" Industrial General Zone
Table 3.11 - Use & Site Requirements: "I" Institutional Zone
Table 3.12 - Use & Site Requirements: "OR" Open Space / Recreation Zone

A copy of the above proposal and supporting material may be inspected at the Mid-West Planning District or Prairie View Municipality offices during normal business hours. Copies may be made, and extracts taken there from, upon request.

Representations may be made verbally or in writing at the public hearing.

FOR INFORMATION CONTACT:
Lisa Hamilton, DEVELOPMENT OFFICER, MID-WEST PLANNING DISTRICT
1-888-919-1740
devofficer@midwestplanning.ca

or

Charlene Bonchuk, CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER, PRAIRIE VIEW MUNICIPALITY
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How to apply: Please submit a resume and cover letter to apply@customizedrecruitment.ca. Applications will be accepted until the position is filled.

Notice

**NOTICE TO
CREDITORS**

IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE
OF: Gerald Seward Gatey, late of the
Town of Virden in the Province of
Manitoba, deceased;

ALL claims against the above estate,
duly verified by Statutory Declaration,
must be filed with the undersigned
at their office, 243 Raglan Street W.,
Box 520, Virden, MB, R0M 2C0, on or
before the 16th day of October 2026.

DATED at Virden, Manitoba, this 1st
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MEIGHEN HADDAD LLP
110-11th St. Brandon, MB R7A 4J4
Attention: Ashley T. Joyce

or

MEIGHEN HADDAD LLP
255 Wellington St. W. Virden, MB R0M 2C0
Attention: Ashley T. Joyce

Property: NE 1/4 34-10-27 WPM
EXC ALL MINES AND MINERALS AS SET FORTH IN TRANSFER NO. 109571.

Title No. 1539900/2
Roll No. 47300.000- RM OF WALLACE-WOODWORTH

CONDITIONS OF TENDER:

1. Interested parties must rely on their own inspection and knowledge of the property and not on any representations made by or on behalf of the Vendor.
2. Tenders must be received on or before **3:00 p.m. on Thursday, October 1, 2026.**
3. Tenders must be accompanied by a deposit of 10% of the tender by cheque payable to Meighen Haddad LLP. Deposits accompanying unacceptable bids will be returned.
4. Highest or any tender not necessarily accepted.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF SALE:

1. The closing of any purchase and sale resulting from an accepted tender will have an effective date of November 1, 2026 which shall be the Closing Date.
2. The bidder whose tender is accepted will be required to complete a formal agreement covering terms and conditions of sale within seven (7) days of the acceptance of the tender.
3. The bidder whose tender is accepted must provide evidence of the purchased funds available under conditions acceptable to the Vendor within seven (7) days of the acceptance of the tender. If the balance of the accepted tender is not paid as of the closing date the deposit may be forfeited as liquidated damages and not as a penalty.
4. The Property Taxes will be adjusted as of January 1, 2027.

For further information contact **Ashley T. Joyce**
at 204.725.8769 or ajoyce@mhlaw.ca

Notice



PUBLIC NOTICE BOARD OF REVISION

Public Notice is hereby given that the assessment roll for the R.M. of Wallace-Woodworth for the year 2027 is available at the R.M. of Wallace-Woodworth. It will be open for public inspection during regular business hours. The Board of Revision will sit to hear applications for revision of assessment on **Thursday, October 15, 2026**, commencing at **10:00 a.m.** at the **R.M. of Wallace-Woodworth Council Chambers**, 154023 P.R. 257, Virden, Manitoba (corner of 83 Hwy & PR257).

Applications for revision may be made in accordance with Sections 42 and 43 of the *Municipal Assessment Act* which in part, are as follows:

APPLICATION FOR REVISION

42 (1) A person in whose name property has been assessed, a mortgagee in possession of property under subsection 114 (1) of the *Real Property Act*, an occupier of premises who is required under the terms of a lease to pay the taxes on the property, the authorized agent of the person, mortgagee or occupier, or the Assessor may make application for the revision of an assessment roll with respect to the following matters:

- a. Liability to taxation;
- b. Amount of an assessed value;
- c. Classification of property; or
- d. Refusal by an Assessor to amend the assessment roll under subsection 13 (2).

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

43 (1) An application for revision must

- a. Be made in writing;
- b. Set out the roll number and legal description of the assessable property for which a revision is sought;
- c. Set out which of the matters referred to in subsection 42 (1) are at issue, and the grounds for each of those matters; and
- d. Be filed by:
 - (i) Delivering it or causing it to be delivered to the office indicated in the public notice given under subsection 41 (2) or
 - (ii) Serving it upon the secretary, at least 15 days before the scheduled sitting date of the Board as indicated in the public notice.

The board shall not consider applications which do not comply with the above.

The deadline for filing applications is 5:00 p.m., Tuesday, September 29, 2026.

Dated the 28th day of August, 2026.

R.M. of Wallace-Woodworth
Board of Revision
Box 2200, Virden, MB R0M 2C0

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

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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.

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Manitoba Infrastructure guide for establishing reduced- speed school zones



FILE PHOTO

Submitted

By MB GOVERNMENT

The Highway Traffic Act authorizes local governments, such as municipalities, Northern Community Councils and First Nation Band Councils, to make by-laws establishing reduced-speed school zones (RSSZ).

The Reduced-Speed School Zones Regulation (regulation) sets out requirements related to speed reductions, by-law development, and the signage necessary for the establishment of RSSZ's. Local governments opting to designate portions of roadways as RSSZ's are required to do so in accordance with the regulation. This helps to ensure that RSSZ's are identifiable and the maximum speeds within them are enforceable.

The regulatory requirements for establishing RSSZ's are set out below. The requirements are only applicable to RSSZ's. Traffic authorities will continue to have autonomy in determining the location and erecting approved signage for school areas where there is no speed reduction.

Maximum Speed in a Reduced-Speed School Zone

Local governments may determine the maximum speed in RSSZ's within the following parameters.

- The maximum speed must not be lower than 30 km/h on roadways where the posted speed limit is less than 80 km/h; and

- The maximum speed must not be lower than 50 km/h on roadways where the posted speed limit is 80 km/h or more.

Local governments may determine when speed reductions are in effect. In cases where the speed reduction is not in effect at all times, signs must be erected to inform motorists of when to slow down.

Warning Signs

Warning signs must be placed at the approach of a RSSZ to alert drivers of the up-coming speed reduction. The sign must be erected not less than 100 m and not more than 250 m before the beginning of a RSSZ's in both rural and urban areas. The prescribed distances reflect the standard under the MUTCD standard.

If the portion of roadway before the beginning of a RSSZ does not extend at least 150 m, the warning sign is not required. This exemption is intended to address situations where it is impracticable or impossible to effectively use a warning sign, i.e. where a school is located near a T-intersection or on a dead-end street. However, traffic authorities are encouraged to place a warning sign at the approach to all RSSZ's, even if the MUTCD standard cannot be met. The warning sign enhances the safety of a RSSZ and the enforceability of speeding tickets by giving drivers time to comply with the speed reduction.

Speed Enforcement

The RCMP and local police forces are responsible for speed enforcement in Manitoba, including speed enforcement in RSSZ. Speeding in a RSSZ is not a by-law offence. It is a speeding offence like any other under The Highway Traffic Act (HTA). A driver caught speeding in a RSSZ will be issued a provincial offence notice for speeding and, in most cases, be required to pay a set fine prescribed in provincial regulations.

Usually when a local government wants to reduce an existing speed limit, it must seek approval from the Highway Traffic Board (HTB). If the HTB approves the speed reduction, the new maximum speed for the specific portions of roadway is prescribed in the Maximum Speed Order (MSO) which is a regulation under the HTA.

The MSO authorizes the maximum speed and makes it enforceable; however, because the maximum speed in a RSSZ does not require HTB approval, it is not possible to authorize it under the MSO. Consequently, a by-law is required to authorize the maximum speed in a RSSZ so that it may be enforced. The by-law simply authorizes the speed reduction; it does not create an offence and is not in itself enforceable. A by-law officer is not authorized to enforce speeding offences, including speed offences in RSSZs.

Questions of Origin

By Cam Dahl, GM

MANITOBA PORK COUNCIL

Questions of origin matter. No, this is not talking about Douglas Adams and the question of life, the universe, and everything, but something more mundane yet more relevant to day-to-day life. Country of origin questions are at the heart of the trade negotiations between Canada, the U.S., and Mexico, and Canadian farmers and processors may become collateral damage if we don't pay attention.

Where did the parts to make a new car really come from? Did the steel and aluminum originate in North America or were they imported from a third country? Where did the meat in the grocery aisle originate? Did it come from jurisdictions with regulatory systems that I trust or from some place else? Who grew my food?

Canada and the U.S. have a history of disputes involving food labelling. In 2009, the U.S. activated a law requiring mandatory country of origin labelling for red meat products. The regulations stipulated that retailers needed to identify where the animals were born, raised, and processed. Processors were required to segregate animals that were born or raised in Canada, which disrupted the integrated North American markets for both pork and beef. Consumers faced increased prices at the grocery stores as the cost of segregation, at least in part, was passed on to them. Hog farmers and beef producers lost income. Canada and Mexico took the case to the World Trade Organization (WTO) and ultimately won that six-year process, however, this did not deter those advocating for country-of-origin labelling. Origin labelling for meat is back on the table, and because the WTO's dispute process is broken, another challenge of U.S. legislation will not save our bacon this time.

There are two separate examples of the return of the origin debate in food. On January 1st of this year, new U.S. regulations came into effect that significantly tightened the rules behind the voluntary "Product of the U.S.A." label. Manitoba's hog farmers are watching the response from U.S. retailers closely. If retailers want to use the "Product of the U.S.A." label, their suppliers will



FILE PHOTO

Country of Origin is still a big trade issue for Canada.

need to eliminate purchases of pigs born in Manitoba. What will this mean for the approximately three million weanlings that Manitoba sells into the U.S. every year?

The second example relates to the U.S. Farm Bill. On August 6th, the U.S. Senate's Agriculture Committee voted to incorporate mandatory origin labelling for beef into the U.S. Farm Bill. We would be naive to think that the push for mandatory labelling will stop at beef.

Legislators are responding to consumers who want to know where their food comes from. Farmers and processors should acknowledge the desire of many consumers for transparent information on questions of origin. These questions are not going away, and it is best for farmers across North America if all the sectors of animal agriculture work together to answer them. If we don't answer these questions then governments will regulate how they are addressed and that will inevitably harm our ability to deliver nutritious, safe, and affordable food.

To start we need to clearly communicate that when it comes to food safety and the security of supply, animals raised in Canada are not much different from animals raised in the U.S. We have similar regulations on farm inputs, like veterinary drugs. We have compatible food safety standards. Canadian and U.S. farmers have comparable production practices. When U.S. consumers indicate that they would prefer not to buy foreign born meat, they are generally not including Canada in their definition of "foreign."

Farmers across North America must work together to demonstrate the value of our integrated market for agricultural products and food. Because of this integration, consumers have greater choice. Disrupting integrated North American markets will increase retail prices. The integration of North American value chains increases the security of our food supply, which is especially important during times of geopolitical uncertainty.

How do we accomplish the seemingly conflicting goals of protecting the integrated North American market for food while providing consumers answers to questions of origin? One solution is the development of a product of North America label or product of Canada and the U.S. label. Consumers would be assured that the meat they are purchasing was derived from animals that were born, raised, and processed by Canadian and U.S. farmers who follow the regulatory standards that have the confidence of consumers.

A Canada-U.S. label will require farmers, processors, and governments on both sides of the border to agree on the label requirements, auditing processes, and enforcement. This is no small task, and it will take some work to get ranchers in Texas to agree with hog farmers in Manitoba, but the undertaking is not impossible. The renegotiation of the Canada-U.S.-Mexico agreement presents a clear opportunity to move forward with this solution, but governments will not move first. Leadership first needs to come from within farm organizations and processors.

Virden Theatre Productions Presents Dear Evan Hansen

Submitted

By MICHELLE CHYZYK

Virden Theatre Productions is gearing up to present its most dramatically powerful musical yet. When the long-awaited performance rights for Dear Evan Hansen were released in January, VTP was thrilled to apply—and even more thrilled to be awarded the rights to present the Manitoba premiere of this extraordinary musical.

Winner of six Tony Awards®, including Best Musical, as well as a Grammy® Award and the Olivier Award for Best Musical, Dear Evan Hansen is a deeply personal and profoundly contemporary story about connection, loneliness, family, and the way we live our lives.

At its heart, Dear Evan Hansen tells the story of Evan Hansen, a young man struggling with social anxiety who desperately longs to connect with his peers. When a classmate dies by suicide, Evan unexpectedly finds himself at the center of the tragedy. In a misguided attempt to comfort the grieving family, he allows them to believe that he and their son, Connor, were close friends.

What begins as a small lie quickly grows beyond Evan's control. He creates a fabricated email account to support the illusion of their friendship, and when a fake suicide note finds its way online, Evan suddenly becomes the unintended face of a viral movement about loneliness, friendship, and belonging.

As his newfound social status skyrockets, Evan becomes increasingly entangled in the lie. His relationship with his own mother begins to suffer as he embraces his "shiny new family." He finally captures the attention of the girl he has always dreamed of—and, most importantly, he is no longer invisible.

But how long can the fantasy last?

Eventually, Evan is forced to make a choice: Will he continue to surrender himself to the world he has created, or will he risk losing everything he has finally found?

With a soaring, contemporary score by award-winning songwriting duo Benj Pasek and Justin Paul, Dear

Evan Hansen has resonated deeply with audiences around the world. Its powerful music and emotionally complex story have made it one of the most celebrated musicals of its generation.

A Remarkable Cast

From the very beginning, we knew that finding the right performers for the demanding role of Evan Hansen would be essential. Evan requires an actor who can navigate tremendous emotional depth while also delivering a vocally challenging score.

We are incredibly fortunate to have two outstanding young performers sharing the role: Aaron Cox of Brandon and Dylan Southam of Virden. Both are Vocal Majors studying music at Brandon University, and these two soaring tenors have poured their hearts and souls into every inch of this production. Each brings his own unique interpretation and extraordinary talent to Evan Hansen.

We promise—you will be blown away!

Heidi Hansen — Ramey Praznik

Crocus Plains teacher Ramey Praznik brings a brilliant interpretation to the role of Heidi Hansen, Evan's caring single mother. Heidi works tirelessly to provide for her son and does everything she can to understand and support him.

Audiences will be amazed by Ramey's powerhouse vocals in "Good for You," followed by her sincere and deeply moving performance of the emotional ballad "So Big/So Small." When asked about why teens should attend, Ramey said, "Being a human is hard, but being a teenager is harder. Teenagers should see Dear Evan Hansen because it normalizes conversations about mental health, validates the intense feelings of loneliness many teens face, and teaches us that we are not defined by our worst mistakes."

Connor Murphy — Jackson Hacault

Jackson Hacault made his VTP debut last year as Nigel in Something Rotten! This year, he takes on the pivotal role of Connor Murphy, the teenager whose death sets the story in motion.

Jackson brings tremen-

dous depth and vulnerability to this central character. His talent as a true triple-threat performer is undeniable, and we are thrilled to see him take on such a challenging role.

Zoe Murphy — Charley Dunning & Daelyn Fefchak

Evan's romantic interest, Zoe Murphy, will be portrayed by two of Virden's finest young vocalists: Charley Dunning, a first-year Journalism student at the University of Regina, and Daelyn Fefchak, a fourth-year Vocal Performance Major at Brandon University.

Both young women possess beautifully refined voices, captivating stage presence, and a sincere acting ability that makes Zoe's journey come alive. We are so thrilled to welcome them back to the AUD stage. Virden proud!

Larry Murphy — Dean Munchinsky

Dean Munchinsky delivers a powerful performance as Larry Murphy. Dean brings sophistication and nuance to every dramatic moment, while also working closely with the cast to help each performer understand and deliver the honest communication at the heart of the story.

Dean is, in the truest sense of the word, a people builder—and his influence

can be felt throughout this production.

Cynthia Murphy — Jenna Bertrand & Kat Yanchycki

VTP is always excited to welcome new actors to our stage, and this production is no exception.

The role of Cynthia Murphy will be shared by two remarkable women: Jenna Bertrand of Brandon and Kat Yanchycki of Sandy Lake.

In their lives away from the stage, both are caring, dedicated mothers balancing busy careers. On stage, they bring warmth, authenticity, and tremendous heart to the role.

Alana Beck & Jared Kleinman

Two characters bring plenty of personality, humour, and energy throughout the show.

Alana Beck is played by vivacious Brandonite Jules Labossiere, while Jared Kleinman is brought to life by dearly loved VCI music teacher, Luke Munchinsky.

We truly cannot imagine anyone doing these roles better!

The Music of Dear Evan Hansen

One of the great joys of Dear Evan Hansen is its extraordinary score. Audiences will experience the beauty and power of this music performed by some of Westman's most outstanding vocalists accompanied by an incredible live



SUBMITTED PHOTO

orchestra featuring violin, viola, cello, keyboard, guitars, bass, and percussion.

From intimate and heart-breaking ballads to fast-paced, energetic musical numbers, the award-winning score by Benj Pasek and Justin Paul carries the emotional journey of the story from beginning to end.

A Manitoba Premiere Not to Be Missed

Dear Evan Hansen is more than a musical. It is a story about the universal human desire to be seen, heard, accepted, and loved. It asks difficult questions about loneliness, family, friendship, truth, and the consequences of our choices. The subject matter has required us to take great care in our process and we feel fortunate

that, within our cast and crew are 5 women who work year-round supporting and counselling youth.

Virden Theatre Productions is honoured to bring this remarkable show to our community as the Manitoba premiere. Of note: we will be only the second theatre group in all of Canada to bring this masterpiece to the stage.

With an exceptional cast, a live orchestra, a stunning contemporary score, and a story that will stay with you long after the final curtain, Dear Evan Hansen promises to be an unforgettable theatrical experience.

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A new chapter begins for Wayne and Sandra Unger



SUBMITTED PHOTO

With two decorated cakes, Wayne and Sandra Unger celebrate retirement and "A New Chapter" after leading Virden's Oxford Assembly where Pastor Wayne ministered for over three decades.

By Anne Davison
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

Truly, a new chapter has begun for Rev. Wayne and Sandra Unger and for Oxford Assembly congregation - the Pentecostal church in Virden.

After giving leadership to the faith community for 33 years, Pastor Wayne has retired.

As he does every year, Wayne has been helping his brother-in-law in Saskatchewan with harvest and help-

ing a local producer as well.

He's been busy and asked if retirement feels good, he said, "So far, it's still kind of normal. I haven't really found out what it's going to be like being retired. I've never done it before, so..."

He's been the Virden Oil Capitals chaplain and rest assured, that is going to continue.

Sunday, Aug. 30, was a special Sunday. The community was invited to join the Oxford congregation in worship and to stay for a

barbecue afterwards.

On Saturday, Aug. 29, the church family gathered at John and Brooke Ross's farm for a celebration.

A farm get-together was very appropriate as both Wayne and Sandra were raised on farms, he in the Arden area near Neepawa and Sandra in Saskatchewan.

After a first year in the ministry at a small church in Saskatchewan as a single guy, Wayne asked Sandra to marry him.

They'd met the year before

while he was a student in the Saskatoon bible school, and she visited the school.

"I thought she was pretty cool, and she is still pretty cool," says Wayne. "The best thing that's ever happened in my life other than my relationship with Jesus."

After seven years in Saskatchewan, Wayne received a call from Manitoba-Northwestern Ontario ministry office (Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada) inviting the couple to Virden's church where they've become part of the community over three decades.

At home in Virden

For the foreseeable future Virden will continue to be home.

"We've been here 33 years, and you know, the people have been so gracious to us - the church and the community of Virden.

"Our kids call this home when they come back (to visit)."

The retirement celebration included the younger generation of Ungers with daughter Breanne (a school teacher) and husband Jamin and their daughter and son from Saskatchewan; son Blake; and son Brandt with

wife Eden (worship leaders in a Calgary church) and their two daughters attending.

Blake has recently purchased a home in Virden where he works remotely in an IT career.

Wayne reflected on his pastorate in Virden.

"We started here in September of 1993 and we've had various opportunities to go to other places, other communities, churches have called us."

However, he said, "People like us, I like the people, I don't feel nudged to move."

The couple with farm roots valued stability in the Virden community, saying it was a good place to raise their children. "We didn't want to be one of those people that moved around all the time."

His life as a leader has always been about serving, "Being called to serve is a higher calling than a calling to a particular place... and I think Sandra would say the same thing, we're called to serve."

Sandra retired from teaching two years ago. "We're excited about what's in store for our next chapter in our lives."

A friend and long-time

church board member, Tully Hatch, was one of several who spoke at the retirement party.

Sandra, a talented musician and vocalist often led in worship and Tully said of her, "There was anointing on her music. When she led, you could really sense the presence of the Lord."

He appreciated the couple's kindness and the clear messages of salvation through Christ that came from the pulpit.

"Pastor Wayne, who was a great preacher, very positive, always had a kind word to say. They both lived God's word."

His address included some teasing and noted that they were a fun couple, great athletes and he issued a warning to anyone who would engage in a game of golf or baseball with Sandra and Wayne.

In an afternoon that included tears and laughter, Tully's tribute included this thank you: "You have encouraged us, challenged us, laughed with us and prayed with us and pointed us towards the Lord and although we are sad to see you go, we are also so thankful for the years you've given us and for the ways God has used both of you."

A voice for local education: Gary Draper reflects on 30 years as a trustee

By Anne Davison
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

Schools in every community have the oversight of an elected board of trustees who represent their community. School boards across Manitoba are having an election for trustee positions on Oct. 28, along with the municipal election.

Former trustee Gary Draper says it's an opportunity to make a difference. He should know, he gave 30 years of service to education as a member of the Fort La Bosse School Division Board of Trustees.

Here's a conversation we had.

Q. Gary, how can a school board trustee make a difference?

A. When you join, you're just one member of the board, but you get an equal say into all issues. And I know when I was there, we listened to every trustee, everything they had to say. It's a good place to come up

with new ideas.

Q. You must have found something pretty satisfying there.

A. It was always, you could never take anything for granted, and like it was challenging with changes in the government, every time the stripes changed in Winnipeg, you had to change to follow their direction. So, it was always challenging... on the other hand, it was really rewarding to see the kids graduate.

Q. Describe the relationship between teachers, and elected school board members.

A. Well, the school board makes the policies that the staff implement, and we usually make the policies based on staff input as to the right direction to go. So, when you involve everybody and when you're transparent, like I believe we were, it leads to a good outcome.

Q. You were president of the FLBSD Board of Trustees, can you talk about

particular challenges?

A. Some of the most challenging things were just trying to prepare a budget to give the kids the best... without being a huge burden on the taxpayers. So, there was a balancing act to, you know, supply what we could supply and not raise taxes as much as a lot of other divisions had to.

Q. Does the area's taxation base influence that?

A. We have a good assessment base, and that was the envy of a lot of divisions for sure.

Q. While working with the local school board, you also spent 10 years on the provincial trustee association's executive, two of which you were president of the Manitoba School Boards Association. Has there been pressure to erase divisional lines and get rid of elected boards?

A. The former PC government, you know, wanted to do away with local taxa-

tion. And I guess that works in other provinces, but it doesn't give the divisions the freedom to do what's best for their own communities first.

Q. So they wanted more provincial oversight and to paint each school division with one brush?

A. Divisions were treated more all the same, and you know that every community's not the same. Every community has its uniqueness... so divisions need that flexibility to prepare the students the best they can.

Q. Was president of Manitoba School Boards Association a challenging role?

A. That's where I got to meet, you know, rub elbows with all the government ministers... the ones that make the rules. But again, it was challenging, but it was worth it. I never regretted a minute of it.

Q. What did you accomplish on the Manitoba

executive?

A. You look out for your division first and you defend your division... And if you help your own division, you're helping everybody else around you, too.

Q. What about other divisions who are, as you say, all very different?

A. The executive is made up of trustees from all across the province, so you've got every part of the province's perspective on issues going forward.

Q. And this brings me to another point. Do you feel that education has managed to keep the reading, writing, and arithmetic, the actual nuts and bolts of basic learning, has that stayed where it should?

A. It seems to come and go. You might go for a period of time when the basic reading, writing, and arithmetic, like the old days, is stressed more, and then you go through a period of time where it's not stressed as much. So, again, it all

depends on the strength of the government and what they feel the direction is that the provinces should go.

Q. So is there potential to influence what the Department of Education decides to do?

A. Oh yes. If you were on some of the provincial committees, you had input... I was part of the Finance Committee for the two years that I was president, so I got to sit down on a regular basis with the Deputy Minister of Education and usually the Deputy Minister of Finance and their main people in Winnipeg. That was rewarding at times, like when you could convince them of a need in the western part of the province.

Q. So you're saying that a school board position is an important role that people need to consider and realize it could be an opportunity to make a difference.

A. Absolutely always is.