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MAY 8, 2026 | EMPIRE: VOL 121 NO 38 / ADVANCE: VOL 140 NO 40 | PUBLISHING FRIDAYS



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Sew much fabric, sew little time



PHOTOS BY NANCY JO MOLLER

Overhead view of the magnificent array of craftsmanship displayed at Crazy Stitches Quilt show.

By Nancy Jo Moller
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

Sacred Heart Parish Centre was home to a display of meticulous work during the Crazy Stitches Quilt Show on May 2. Loving effort was proudly displayed with quilts draped over the

pews to showcase that imagination can truly take flight. Vintage quilts showed they were made to last and recent projects reflected a rainbow of colours.

Proceeds raised from a Quilt Raffle and admission are being donated to Virden and Oak Lake daycares.



'Back in the Saddle' quilted by Sharon Frattinger for her son and daughter-in-law. Quilt Kit was purchased at Custom Creations in Virden.



'Lego Quilt' made by Edith Hutchison for her grandson quilted by Megan Harper.

Inside...



HERB AND ZELDA ADVENTURES CONTINUE *P6-7*



GORD BAMFORD IN VIRDEN *P2*

Virден Community Chamber of Commerce work to change the future for Westman Residents

By Nancy Jo Moller
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

Virден Community Chamber of Commerce has been working diligently organizing and promoting the Celebration Tour of Gord Bamford with special Guest Dallas Alexander in Virден, MB on May 8, 2026. The added excitement of watching Brendan Lyons, who has many local relatives, play in the band is a definite highlight. The intimate setting in the Sunrise Banquet Hall located at Tundra Oil & Gas Centre will provide the audience with a rare chance to enjoy a show without the distraction of thousands of fans. The proceeds from this event are part of the local fundraising for the YWCA Westman Women's Campus Project in Brandon. When Non-Profit Organizations can work together and 'Pay It forward' to provide needed resources for the local communities it is a 'win-win' situation. Local donors from the Westman region are quietly stepping forward to support this life-changing project. By attending and/or sponsoring the concert on Friday night, the local community has an opportunity to make a real impact by fundraising for this very worthwhile cause.

The YWCA Westman Women's Campus will be built at the former site of Meredith Place. Meredith Place served the community and was located in downtown Brandon for over a century. When aging infrastructure became too costly to maintain, the building was



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Gord Bamford comes to Virден May 8, 2026.

demolished in 2023. The flat lot in downtown Brandon remains empty until the \$40 million required for this project is raised. The planning began for a new facility that will provide emergency housing and support for women and children fleeing from violent situations. The goal is to support independence, health and long-term stability to those in need. By providing immediate and longer-term housing that will support health, education, cultural learning while providing a safe space for women and their children to heal, grow and build their lives free from violence.

Fire hall funding questioned at RM council meeting

By Dale Davison
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

Brian Heaman attended the April 28 Wallace-Woodworth council meeting to ask

about the municipality's support for the fire hall addition project in Virден.

Heaman said, "I just wondered why we're not contributing to the firehall addition in Virден because we've been collecting since 2015 for that exact thing."

Reeve Clayton Canart stated that discussions between the Town of Virден and Wallace-Woodworth, regarding construction or renovation options for the Station 1 firehall, began years ago. He said initial plans were considered too costly which led to delays and exploration of other alternatives.

These included possible relocation to a larger site, which was rejected as Virден preferred to keep the hall within town boundaries. Renovation designs were also developed, with input from firefighters and board members, and both councils worked to develop reliable cost estimates.

It was January, 2026 when the Town of Virден announced a \$1.5M grant toward their \$3M plan for an addition and renovation to Wallace District Fire Department hall.

The plan included a 65-foot by 80-foot addition onto the rear of the existing fire hall to house the fire trucks. The existing building will undergo renovations that would include an area for firefighters' equipment.

continued on page 3...

Manitoba RCMP Traffic Services seizes 4.5 kilos of cocaine, charge Alberta male

Submitted
By MB RCMP MEDIA RELATIONS

On May 1, at approximately 4:30

pm, RCMP Traffic Service pulled over the driver of an eastbound SUV travelling on Highway 2, in the RM of Sifton.

RCMP conducted a compliance check on the driver and subsequently took him into custody. A search of the SUV then uncovered approximately 4.5 kilograms of vacuum-packaged cocaine that had been hidden throughout the vehicle.

The street value of the cocaine seized by RCMP is estimated at approximately \$350,000.

Joseph McPherson, 31, of Hanna, AB, has been charged with possession of cocaine for the purpose of trafficking.

He was remanded into custody. The investigation continues.



SUBMITTED PHOTO

4.5 kilograms of vacuum-packed cocaine hidden in SUV.

For further information, contact: Manitoba RCMP Media Relations Unit

DIG This...

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TRACTOR



Farm girl to fitness leader: Nykoliation inspires her community

By Anne Davison
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

A Brandon woman, born in Hamiota, raised on a Lenore farm and schooled at Virden is being recognized for something she simply considers part of her everyday life — helping others feel stronger, healthier and connected.

Gail Nykoliation has built a lasting impact in Westman's wellness community through her work as a fitness instructor, mentor and motivator and on April 24, she was celebrated as one of two YWCA Women of Distinction recipients for Healthy Living, Recreation & Wellness.

The award took Nykoliation by surprise. "I was completely stunned," she said. "To me, it's just something I do."

The daughter of the late Stanley and Leslie Nykoliation, life on their Lenore farm instilled a mindset in Gail — the importance of making a deliberate choice and the value of hard work.

By day, Nykoliation works in information technology with the Government of Manitoba, part of the Digital Technology Solutions division. But outside office hours, she has spent decades fostering a fitness community that reaches people of all ages — from young dancers to seniors.

Gail Force Fitness is her coaching business, but she has also volunteered in the fitness world.

"I'll go out of my way to help anybody if they ask, you know, to offer suggestions, to be helpful... because I'm so inspired by some of these women I've seen, and still continue to see, that are in their 60s, 70s, and 80s, and I look, and I think, I want to be like that.

Unlikely path

"I really enjoyed the people, and I enjoyed the atmosphere," said Gail Nykoliation. Her path into fitness wasn't a straight line.

Active in school sports growing up, Nykoliation lost that routine during her university years and found herself struggling with her health in her early 20s.

At one point, she was about 100 pounds heavier than she is now. The diets of the day weren't the answer.

A friend hounded her to take part in a fitness class. "I remember my first class... I was a lot thicker than I am now. I wasn't healthy, I was overweight, and I was at the back of the class."

She can relate to the effort of body and mind to get started on a new trajectory.

"We did the warm-up, and I thought, oh my gosh. Like, I was in my early 20s, and I was exhausted, but it was really fun. I bought a month membership. I was on a tight budget, and I wasn't going to waste my money, so I kept going.

Here's where 'choice' kicked in: "Nothing really happened. But I really enjoyed the people, and I enjoyed the atmosphere. And so then after a month, I just kept going and going. And

you know, a year and a half later, I had lost significant weight, really started to tone."

What kept her coming back wasn't immediate results, it was the people.

She was soon invited to begin teaching fitness classes, the start of what would become a lifelong passion.

"It's about being fit and healthy..."

said Nykoliation

Multiple qualifications

Since then, Nykoliation has earned

numerous certifications in group fitness, personal training, nutrition, and specialized programming for children, seniors and pre- and postnatal clients. She has taught at several facilities in Brandon, including GoodLife Fitness, and has spent more than 15 years working with dancers at Steppin' Time Dance Studio.

Throughout it all, her focus has remained clear. "It's about being fit and healthy and understanding what your body can do."

Her inclusive approach welcomes participants of all abilities, encouraging them to find confidence in their own progress.

Her work expanded in new ways during the COVID-19 pandemic. When gyms closed and isolation set in, Nykoliation quickly launched online classes and small-group outdoor sessions, helping people stay active and connected during a difficult time.

"It became a lifeline for so many of us," she said.

Organized by gym member Cherise Coleman, the nomination included input from more than two dozen people whose lives Nykoliation has touched over the years.

"It's overwhelming to hear that it's the best part of someone's day," she said.

She has two daughters, Em and Laura, and her partner Joshua Finn was at the awards night to share her joy as she was called to the stage along with another winner, Dr. Alise Gaiser, founder of The Wellness Clinic.

A regular runner who participates in multiple races each year, Nykoliation entered the Winnipeg Police Services half marathon last Sunday, running an 8:10 minute mile finishing in fourth place among 38 in the female 50-54 category.



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Gail Nykoliation treasures her YWCA Women of Distinction Award in the Healthy Living, Recreation & Wellness category.

CELEBRATING 120 YEARS OF SERVICE

Virden and District Health Auxiliary Spring Luncheon
Friday, May 22, 2026
Sacred Heart Parish Centre
11:30 am – 1:00 pm
\$15
Salads, sandwiches, dessert,
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Takeout available by calling
Glenda (204) 748-8682 by May 25
Display of artwork from the Virden Art Club

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Fire hall funding questioned at RM council meeting

Continued from page 2

Wallace District Fire Department (Station 1) is located at 330 - 11th Ave. S., within Virden where it serves as the primary emergency service hub for the town and surrounding RM of Wallace-Woodworth.

Station 2 is located in Elkhorn providing coverage for Elkhorn and western parts of the RM of Wallace-Woodworth. The two fire halls work together as needed.

Only last year, Station 1 and Station 2 each got their own fire chief.

Cory Nixon, formerly the deputy chief of WDFD, moved into the position of Virden's Station 1 fire chief while Aaron Lewis became fire chief for Elkhorn's Station 2.

Canart explained that while the Town of Virden was ready to proceed with a renovation, the municipality was not comfortable moving forward because of uncertainty about cost estimates.

Canart noted that while renovation was not their preferred approach, they agreed to help the Town move ahead, and provided a letter of support for a grant application.

As part of that understanding, funding for capital infrastructure was split, making Virden responsible for Station

1 while Wallace-Woodworth assumed responsibility for Station 2. The existing fire agreement and collaboration remained unchanged.

Heaman said, "We've got like \$1.12 million in a fund for a fire hall and we've got a fire hall addition happening and we're not helping with it."

Canart replied, "We each decided we would create our own reserve account so Virden created their own and Wallace-Woodworth created their own so that if the fire hall didn't go through... we would still have that money to be able to use for our own purposes."

He added, "That money is not allocated to have to go to a hall or a renovation or a building. We may use that money to purchase a new truck or to buy whatever we may need for an apparatus. It was originally designed around the need for a hall renovation and upgrade, but it wasn't defined that that's what it had to be spent on."

In the early stages of the process concerns were raised that the current fire hall site lacked sufficient room for future expansion, particularly given the increasing size of firefighting apparatus and anticipated growth.

Canart emphasized that the delay was not due to unwillingness to contribute, but rather concerns about financial accuracy, developing clear plans and ensuring a responsible decision.



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

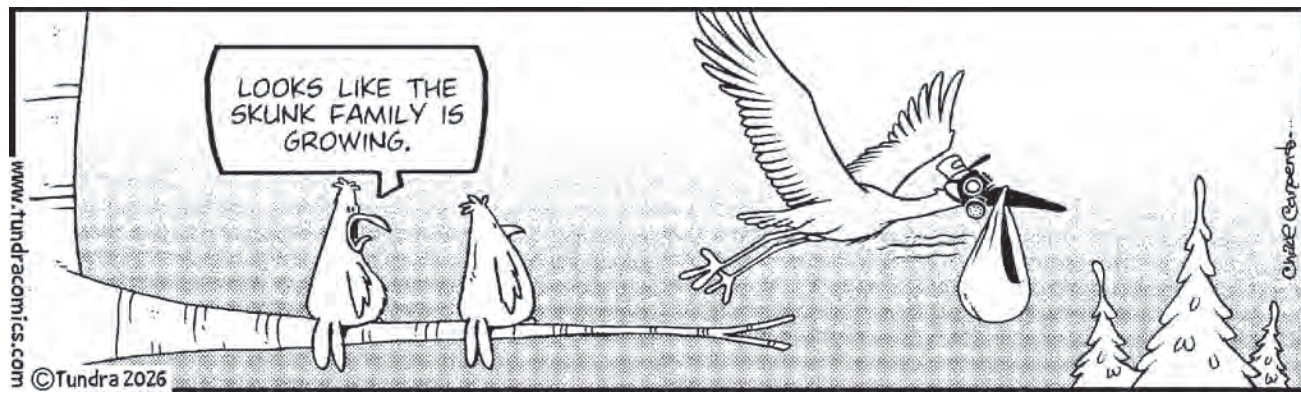
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- Saflufenacil
- Carfentrazone-ethyl
- Pyraflufen-ethyl
- Bromoxynil
- Clopyralid
- Glyphosate
- Dicamba
- 2, 4-D
- 2, 4-DB
- Aminopyralid
- Propyzamide
- Indaziflam
- Chlorsulfuron
- Fluroxypyr
- Aminocyclopyrachlor
- Aminopyralid
- Diflufenopyr
-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

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

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

Tundra

By Chad Carpenter



Give to us laughter...

Tucked into my hymnbook is a rather seldom sung hymn. Under the subtitle "Renewal Transformation" is a relatively new song simply entitled 'Give to Us Laughter' written by Walter Farquharson in 1974. For beauty and depth it stands solid with the ancient hymns from centuries past. On the second Sunday after Easter some faith families celebrate Holy Humor Sunday, a day that we can laugh at life and death, knowing that the Easter story proves the defeat of death and the promise of a life after the body dies. This is one of my favourite Sunday's. We share cartoons and intersperse the service with good clean jokes. We are reminded that both joy and sorrow, laughter and tears are gifts from God's good hands.

That's the intro folks!

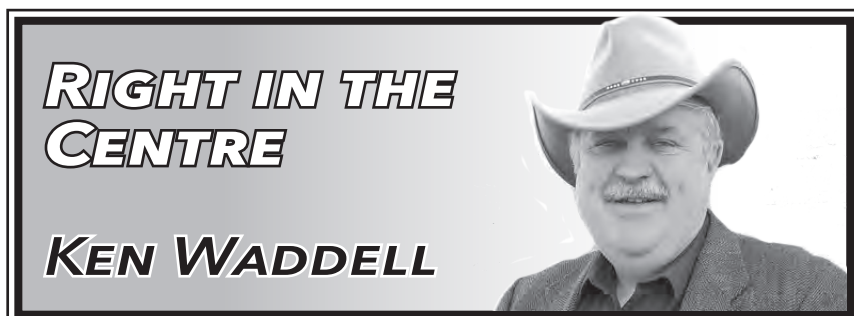
Once again I am privileged to play with babies and toddlers and many ages of little people. There is something so contagious about a wee one's honest laughter. Whether playing the age-old peek-a-boo, or blowing raspberries on a baby's bare tummy, hearing them laugh, that deep belly shaking laugh, brings me to laughter as well. Repetitive foolishness, of which I tire before they do!, can produce wave after wave of chortles and deep laughter, the eyes crinkling at the corners, the head thrown back....such delight. There can come the stage of the foolish giggles...those gaggle of girls going into spasms of laughter, and please, dear God, not at a meal table or when we are trapped in a moving vehicle! They feed off each other's energy until nothing is sacred, and nothing can stop them. When I am in a good headspace I find it endearing....not always there though!

One of the verses in the hymn says 'even in sorrows and hours of grief, laughter with tears brings most healing relief.' A number of years ago I received a most kind thank you letter from a family member with whom I had met to create a fitting farewell service for a loved one. As the family shared stories about the life and antics of their father, and the wife recounted adventures shared with her husband, laughter and tears moved among us. The kind words thanked me for allowing laughter to flow for with it the healing had begun. Isn't that a wonderful thought? 'Why do we worry that we will lose face, why act like king for the whole human race?' Mr. Farquharson surely understands humanity.

As adults, time spent with those we trust, allows us to laugh with others and at ourselves. Personally, as I age, there are more moments when I choose to laugh at situations I find myself in - did you know there is a skill to getting up off the floor? Those old hips and knees need help! Time with friends and shared laughter refreshes us. That never changes. Spending time with our elders, we find it has been a good visit when we can bring a smile to their face, and a great visit is we can share laughter, usually at a revisited memory, often from childhood.

Here's to an abundance of laugh lines!

Memory Lane



This week I want to walk down memory lane. I was born in 1948. On May 14, 1948, David Ben-Gurion proclaimed the establishment of the State of Israel in Tel Aviv, marking the end of the British Mandate. The declaration followed a 1947 UN partition plan for a Jewish and an Arab state. I have often made a mental note that my birth year was the same as the birth of modern day Israel.

In 1948, a lesser but still important event to took place. The Manitoba Liberal government of Premier D.L. Campbell began the rural electrification program. It was a game changer for farms and many rural towns. While some farms had windmill powered 32 volt electricity systems, most did not have electricity. Once "hydro" came along, life on the farm changed drastically. Farm homes got electric lights and electric appliances. Electric stoves, fridges, clocks, toasters and frying pans became commonplace.

Installing hydro was not automatic, there was a cost involved. My parents only bought the farm at Holland, Manitoba in 1946, after five years of dad's army service and eight years of farming at Muir, Manitoba with what might have been called mixed results during the "dirty thirties". Needless to say money was scarce and so it took until 1954 to get our farm wired. My uncle, who was a self-taught electrician, and my dad ran power to the house and the barn. No more milking cows in the short daylight hours by the light of a coal oil lantern. I can honestly say that I did my homework in grade one by the light of an Aladdin coal oil lamp.

The 1950s were eventful years where anything seemed possible. We could learn about the world by radio, by movie house newsreels and then television. In later life, when I asked my dad "What was the best invention you have ever seen?" He was born in 1907 and so when we had this "best invention" discussion, he was about 65 years old. His unhesitating reply

was "Television". While my dad could remember his Scotland childhood, the trip to Canada by ship, the hard scrabble existence in Montreal and then more hardship on a rock-infested rural Quebec farm, the criss-crossing of Canada with multiple jobs, he had seen a lot but with television he could see even more. Even after all that, his favourite was hockey night in Canada and he was a Toronto Maple Leafs fan. Yes, we watched the Stanley Cup play-offs the last time the Toronto Maple Leafs won in 1967.

The 1950s shaped my life for sure. 4-H clubs and school activities were all life-shaping activities.

The 1960s were tumultuous times as the world was changing fast. Cars were really quite good, the trucking industry came into its own. The music industry exploded with Rock'n'roll and many different music genres.

In 1966, I graduated from Holland High School. The Duff Roblin PC government brought in widespread school consolidation and Holland High School closed. It was deemed that a high school every second or third town was all that could be maintained and staffed.

In 1967, I met my wife Christine, who was raised at Scarth, Manitoba. In 1968, after two summers of working for the Manitoba Department of Agriculture, I came back to university

at the end of summer. Almost immediately, having been elected as Director of Student Services at the University of Manitoba Student Union (UMSU), I was appointed manager of the U of M newspaper, the Manitoban. That too was a career and life changer. Although it has not been continuous, we have been in the newspaper business over a period of 58 years.

1970 was a tough year but was also filled with blessings. Our oldest son was born, I graduated from University but I had four jobs in the months from May 1970 until January 1971.

We moved from Winnipeg to Carberry, back to Winnipeg and then to Neepawa by Jan. 1971. Our second son was born in 1971.

We started farming in 1975, started a dairy farm and an auctioneering business in 1979. Our farming career came to an end in the mid 1980s as ever-rising interest rates, some bad crop years and admittedly, some bad decisions on our part defeated our farming dreams.

I hope that you find my ramblings a little bit interesting. If anything interesting comes through let it encourage you. Don't quit, learn from your mistakes and successes. Keep strong relationships with people and God.

I have often said and written, stick to the four Fs-Faith, Family, Friends and Finances and in that order.

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Town Office: 204-748-2440

Virден Landfill: 204-748-6033

Tundra Oil & Gas Place: 204-748-2736



Animal Control: 204-851-5881

Facility Bookings: 204-748-2440

Emergency After Hours: 204-851-5540

Public Notice: Spring Clean Up

April 28 – May 19

- Town crews will pick up refuse excluding industrial waste
- Leaves and grass must be bagged or boxed
- Occasional branch trimming pickup only
- All material must be placed on the boulevard or lane
- To ensure pick up or for more information, please call the Town Office at 204-748-2440.

Notice of Registration of Prospective Candidate for General Municipal Elections

Town of Virден

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 Virден office, 236 Wellington Street West, Virден, 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 Virден office.

Rhonda Stewart, SEO

Phone: 204-851-0769

Email: rlstewart64@outlook.com

Dated at Town of Virден, Virден, MB on April 14, 2025

Upcoming Council Meetings

May 21 & June 2

Council Meetings start at 7:00 PM

Tax Prepayment Discounts

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

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

Month of Payment	Discount Rate	Savings on \$1000.00
May	1.25%	\$ 12.50
June	1.00%	\$ 10.00
July	0.75%	\$ 7.50

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

Summer Day Camp

Registration Opens May 12 at 9:00 AM

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

2026 Swimming lesson registration opens May 11

Victoria Day Weekend

Closed May 18

- Virден Landfill
- Town Office
- Tundra Oil and Gas Place

Employment Opportunity

Manager of Utilities

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

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

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

Please forward resume with cover letter to:

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

Municipal Clerk/RCMP Detachment

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

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

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

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

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

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

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HELEN DRYSDALE

OUT OF HELEN'S KITCHEN

This week's recipes come from the 1993 cookbook called "Our favorite Recipes" from Eastview Lodge. In 1963 Mr. John Marriott left part of his estate to the town of Neepawa to establish a fund to erect and maintain an "old folks home" in Neepawa. The Town Council looked to the neighboring municipalities, government grants and borrowing money to get this project off the ground. In 1967, the 75-bed facility was officially opened. In 1971, a 50-bed addition was opened.

The administrator at the time was Herb Osmond and Anna Lustig was the director of Nursing. The Lodge Board in 1993 was Velda Bradley (Chairman), Don Hockin (Vice Chair), Hugh McCamis (Secretary Treasurer), Lois Aitken, Darlene Gillies, Ron Goldade, Ken Hermiston, Jim Kuharski, Elviss Sumner, and Arnold Suski.

This cookbook has 12 bran muffin recipes and 6 banana muffin recipes.

Clam chowder

Alice Peech for Tena Hrycak

1 cup carrots, cut in cubes	1 cup finely cut celery
1 cup onions	1 cup potatoes, cut in cubes
1/2 cup cut up green peppers	1/2 cup cut up red peppers
3/4 cup corn kernels	1 1/2 tsp. salt
4 1/2 cup water	2 cans baby clams with the juice
1 can drained and rinsed broken shrimp	
White sauce:	
1/4 cup butter	1/2 cup flour
1 1/2 cup milk	1/2 cup whipping cream

Bring the first 9 ingredients to a boil and cook until just tender. Do not overboil. Make white sauce. Add to the vegetables: stir and simmer for 2 minutes. Add baby clams with juice and shrimp; simmer for 3-4 minutes. Enjoy

Perogie Casserole

Beatrice Higgins, A. Rainka's daughter

15 lasagna noodles	2 cups cottage cheese
1 egg	1/4 tsp. onion salt
1 cup shredded cheddar cheese	2 cups mashed potatoes
Salt and pepper	1 cup butter
1 cup chopped onion	

Cook onion in the butter. Set aside. Cook and drain noodles. Place a layer of noodles, then cottage cheese with the egg mixed in, another layer of noodles, the potatoes and cheddar cheese (mixed together), another layer of noodles, then the onions and butter. Bake for one half an hour at 350°F. Serve with sour cream.

Welsh cakes

Doreen Howatt

3 1/2 cups flour	1 1/2 tsp. baking powder
1/2 tsp. baking soda	1 tsp. salt
1/2 tsp. cinnamon	1 cup white sugar
1 cup margarine or Crisco	2 eggs, well beaten
1/2 cup milk	1 cup currants

In a medium-sized mixing bowl, whisk together the dry ingredients. Work in the butter until the mixture is evenly crumbly. Add the milk/egg mixture, mixing until everything is moistened. Mix in the currants. Roll out on floured board 1/4 inch thick; cut with a cookie cutter. Bake in an electric frying pan at 325°F for about 3 minutes on each side. I don't use oil in the frying pan.

Oat and honey bran muffins

Grace and Marion Moore

1 cup rolled oats	3/4 cup wheat germ
1/2 cup natural bran	1/2 tsp. salt
1/2 tsp. cinnamon	1 cup butter milk or soured milk
3/4 cup liquid honey	2 eggs beaten
1/2 cup oil	1 cup whole wheat flour
2 tsp. baking powder	1 tsp. baking soda
1/2 cup raisins	

Combine oatmeal, wheat germ, bran, salt, cinnamon, and buttermilk. Mix well and let stand 15 minutes. Add honey, eggs and oil. Mix well. Combine flour, baking powder and baking soda. Add to egg mixture. Stir just until moistened. Stir in raisins. Bake at 375°F for 20-25 minutes until set in the middle. Cool on a wire rack.

Strawberry Bavarian Cream

Lynne Deeley

10 oz. frozen sliced strawberries, thawed
1 cup boiling water
1 small pkg. strawberry Jello
1 cup whipping cream

Drain berries; reserve syrup. Pour boiling water over Jello and dissolve. Add enough cold water to reserved syrup to measure one cup, then add to the Jello mixture. Chill until almost set. Prepare whipping cream. Beat Jello until foamy. Fold Jello and strawberries into whipped cream. Refrigerate until ready to serve.

Police Report

Westman RCMP Service Report for Apr. 19 to May 2

Submitted

BY WESTMAN RCMP

During the week of Apr 19 to Apr 25, Westman RCMP received a total of 66 calls for service. Some of these calls for service include 19 traffic offences, 1 Discharge a firearm with intent, 2 False Alarms, 4 Assault, 1 Break and Enter, 4 Mischief files, 2 Wellbeing Checks, 2 Mental Health, and 1 Uttering Threats Against a Person.

On Apr. 21, RCMP received a report of a family argument in progress in the Community of Sioux Valley. Members attended and spoke with individuals separately and investigated further which revealed a family argument escalated to a 35-year-old female physically assaulted her common law partner who had visible injury. The female was arrested and charged with one count of Assault and was released with conditions to attend court at a late date.

On Apr. 24, RCMP received a report from a male victim who reported he was shot at by unknown individuals at the Community of Sioux Valley. Members attended the scene and spoke with the victim who was not injured and advised the suspects had fled the scene on foot prior to police arrival. Members located multiple empty shells of a firearm at the scene. Additional resources including Police Dog Service attended the scene and tracked the suspects to a residence. Members arrested the occupants of the residence and recovered a homemade shotgun in plain view. A 28-year-old female was charged with Possession of Firearm, Possession of a Restricted Firearm, Careless use of a Firearm and Weapons Possession Contrary to Order and Failure to Surrender x2. The female was remanded into custody.

On Apr. 22, RCMP received a report from Sioux Valley Safety Officers who had responded to a report of a Domestic Assault in the Community of Sioux Valley. Safety Officers advised they had attended the scene where a female victim was assaulted and had visible injuries which required an ambulance. Members attended and obtained a statement from the victim where an Assault was disclosed. The victim was transported to the hospital by EMS. Members located the male accused, the male was arrested for Forcible Confinement, Failure to Comply with Probation Order x2 and Assault Causing Bodily Harm. The male was charged and remanded into custody.

On Apr. 25, RCMP received a report of a Break and Enter at a residence in the Community of Sioux Valley. Complainant reported a male accused had entered their residence and was seen stealing items within the residence which was recorded on their security camera. Members attended the residence and obtained statements from the homeowner. Members located the male accused who was arrested and charged with Break and Enter to a residence and Failure to Comply with Probation Order. The accused was Remanded into Custody.

During the week of Apr. 26 to May 2, Westman RCMP received a total of 71 calls for service. Some of these calls for service include 26 traffic offences, 4 False Alarms, 3 Assault, 1 Robbery, 1 Drug Trafficking, 1 Resist/Obstruct Peace Officer, 2

Wellbeing Checks, 3 Mental Health, 3 Fire Prevention Act, 5 911 Act and 2 Uttering Threats Against a Person.

On Apr. 26, RCMP received a report from a female victim who requested to speak with police at a residence in the Community of Sioux Valley. Members attended the residence and spoke with the victim who disclosed that she was being threatened by her ex-boyfriend. Members obtained statements and collected further evidence. Members located the male accused, who was arrested and charged with one count of Uttering Threats. The accused was remanded into Custody.

On Apr. 26, RCMP received a call from an employee who requested police assistance with removing an intoxicated male at local commercial business in the Town of Virden. Members attended the scene and spoke with the male accused who was intoxicated and was very agitated and belligerent towards the staff and the police. Members provided multiple commands to the male accused who refused to comply. After a struggle with members, the accused male was arrested and charged with Resist Peace Officer x2 and Disorderly Conduct in or around License Premises. Once sober, the accused was released on conditions and is scheduled to appear in court at a later date.

On Apr. 30, RCMP received a report from a community member of a Break and Enter at a residence in the Community of Sioux Valley. Members attended the residence and spoke with the complainant who advised the accused male had gained entry to a residence and had physically assaulted the homeowner and pointed a CO2 weapon and stole some belongings prior to leaving the residence. RCMP continues to investigate.

On May 1, during routine patrols in the RM of Pipestone, RCMP conducted a traffic stop with a BC marker to verify a driver's license, vehicle registration, and sobriety. Upon contact, members located unstamped tobacco in the plain view inside the vehicle. The driver was detained, and the search for the vehicle revealed several cocaine bricks. The male driver of the vehicle was arrested for Possession for the Purpose of Trafficking - Cocaine and was remanded into custody. RCMP continues to investigate.

On May 2, RCMP received a report of a single vehicle rollover in the Community of Sioux Valley. Complainant advised the vehicle was in the water upside down with two people trapped. RCMP along with Safety Officers, EMS and Fire attended the scene. Members obtained statements from witnesses who confirmed the driver's identity. The male driver showed impairment signs at the scene and blew FAIL on the ASD. The male driver was arrested and transported to Virden Detachment where he provided two samples which were twice the legal limit. The male driver was charged with Operation while impaired, Operation while equal to or exceed 80mg%, Operation while prohibited and Driving a Motor Vehicle Contrary to the requirement of Ignition-Interlock Program. Once sober, the accused was released on conditions to attend court at a later date.

Two candidates seek Turtle Mountain seat



Wally Daudrich.



Mark Custance.

SUBMITTED PHOTOS

By Anne Davison
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

Two businessmen are candidates for the PC seat in the constituency of Turtle Mountain.

The Member of the Legislative Assembly for Turtle Mountain, Doyle Piwniuk announced in December 2025, that he was not going to run in the next provincial election. He is serving his term until voters of Turtle Mountain choose a new representative for the riding.

The scheduled provincial election is next fall, October 5, 2027 but the parties want to be ready in case the election is called earlier.

Candidates Wally Daudrich and Mark Custance share some of their ideas.

Daudrich

Wally Daudrich finished a close second in the Manitoba Progressive Conservative leadership race one year ago and he is now pursuing the Opposition party's nomination in the Turtle Mountain constituency.

Best known as a hotel and ecotourism operator based in Churchill, Daudrich now lives northwest of Morden.

Daudrich compares potential prosperity in southwest Manitoba with that of Texas, but here, he says it hasn't been encouraged to bloom and adds, "We want government to get out of the way."

He thinks that oil and agriculture are complementary, but speaks with skepticism about the prospect of a carbon capture project in the region.

"Rather than pump plant food into the ground, let's build a pipeline," he says, adding that there's a better business case for the oil industry.

Daudrich is concerned about protecting surface and mineral rights in the light of recent government legislation designed to open the way for developments such as deep carbon capture and storage.

He's convinced that Manitoba's oil patch has more to offer. From discussions with some business people in the industry, he asserts that Manitoba should be refining its own crude, particularly for diesel fuel.

"The oil field can help the farm."

He cites road infrastructure and water management as basic needs, noting that in some parts of southern Manitoba water wells have run dry.

Daudrich says, "Farmers need more water retention."

He asks, "What did the land used to do for us? It was a water battery."

Building more small dams would be a benefit he says, and could help to replenish aquifers. This could also benefit tourism by managing lake levels where low summer levels and algal blooms have become a problem.

Born and raised in Manitoba, at 17 Daudrich began as a guide in the northern tourism industry, eventually establishing Lazy Bear Expeditions in Churchill, where he lived and worked for 45 years.

The Daudrich family now live about four kms from the Turtle Mountain riding boundary.

He's not worried about navigating the large, east-west constituency of Turtle Mountain and in some cases he'll travel by air. "I'm a pilot with a plane hangered about a

kilometre from my house."

Recently, Daudrich has had a court battle to protect his Churchill business and he says he's ready to move things ahead for the constituency of Turtle Mountain too.

Custance

Mark Custance is serving in his first term on Two Borders municipal council.

He's been directly involved in agriculture and local business. He and his wife Kendra have built a vegetable business, beginning with Real Garlic, which they purchased from an Oak Lake grower. A couple of years ago they added a hydroponic leafy vegetable business called Real Greens. Their Manitoba grown greens can be purchased at a local co-op any time of year.

Raising a family of five, Custance is invested in the area and says it's the right time to get involved in the direction the province is taking.

"Manitoba has been lagging behind in economic growth, and that's something we need to change. That's what pushed me to step forward. I'm not doing this to be a politician; I'm doing it to represent the communities we call home and make sure their voices are heard."

Having had the chance to work alongside municipalities, farmers, businesses, and families across the region he says, "Lately, a lot of conversations are about rising costs and the pressure people are under, and that people don't always feel like they're being heard."

Agriculture has been the basis of southwest Manitoba's economy and the oil and gas sector has been a real boost.

"You see it in jobs, local businesses because of it," he said of the oil patch. "They give back and it's made a difference for a lot of families and communities across southwestern Manitoba."

He'd like to see the energy sector continue to grow, but he's not so sure there's the ability to refine the product in southwestern Manitoba.

"I think the focus should be on the opportunities in front of us while we work on creating the conditions that make other projects possible. We don't have pipeline infrastructure in place, so a lot of oil moves by truck to hubs like Cromer and into the U.S. by truck."

Custance adds, "There's opportunity around things like lithium extraction from existing processes, gas capture, and even power generation."

He's had a few conversations about the carbon capture project proposed for the area, and says, "Just like the refinery, I'm not sure the infrastructure is there to make it work. I'd also want to be careful that it doesn't impact mineral rights holders or the industries that are already operating here. It's also not something I've heard people asking for."

To vote

No date has been set yet for the Turtle Mountain nomination election.

Residents within Turtle Mountain constituency must be a member of the PC Party of Manitoba in order to vote for one of the above candidates. It is confirmed, both candidates have been approved.

Life in the slow lane

By Gerry Nolan
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

Seeding time on the farm south of Harding really never started until around the May long weekend. We cleaned our own seed as we had a seed cleaner. It was set up in an old granary then was moved into the loft of the new barn. We used 5-gallon pails to put grain into the cleaner, then shovelled the clean grain into a pile that would be ready to head to the field. I do not remember how we got the grain cleaner into the loft. My brother Lynn was a big strong guy, so he probably just lifted it up to the loft.

The first thing done in the field was cultivating using a 13-foot cultivator, followed by a 12-foot drill. It took days to get the crop in, but that was what we had. After planting wheat and oats, the field was harrowed. We always waited for a growth on the field as sprays were not used very much back in the day. I do not know if dad would believe the size of the machinery used today and the cost of the equipment. Huge tractors and seeders, sprayers and fertilizer tanks dot the horizon, and the number of acres seeded in a day is incredible. On our half section, seeding could almost be completed nowadays in one day before breakfast!

We rarely fertilized back then as everyone summer fallowed fields. Today nobody really summer fallows. Kids like me worked for our neighbours doing summer fallow on open air tractors and earned our spending money. We thought we had the world in the palm of our hand.

Farming is completely different today and you know that is only around 70 years or so. I have said it before, and I am going to say it again. You motorists out there, please slow down and yield to the farmers and their equipment as they move from field to field this spring. As everyone knows, spring is a little behind this year, and the farmers will surely be stressed about getting the crop in. The least we as motorists can do is to slow down and give them a wave.

Thank you to all the farmers who invest thousands of dollars in the spring of the year, hoping to harvest a good crop. Be courteous to these guys, you know they feed the world, and I have not met anyone yet who doesn't like to eat!

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Wildlife policy to be made public

Town of Virden Regular Council Meeting, April 28

By Anne Davison
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

With spring comes a review of the wildlife policy and a plan to make information readily available to the public.

Councillors asked for minor amendments such as explicitly naming beavers within the list of wildlife species, rather than grouping them under general categories.

Council clarified that the document is formally a policy not a bylaw.

Coun. Marc Savyn noted, "These are only guidelines..." adding, "It's really good that we have guidelines now for our residents."

Mayor Williams agreed that the intent is to provide residents with practical direction, not impose mandatory requirements. She said of the document, "This is what we're willing to do and what we suggest."

Coun. Bruce Dunning noted that there are Provincial regulations that must be followed. He said, "That's their (the public's) responsibility to become familiar with that."

Councillors made the motion that the Town of Virden develop a public policy on controlling wildlife within town boundaries. That was carried.

Coun. Lynette Grumpelt asked that the wildlife policy be shared with the public. She said, "In the interest of clear and outright communication with our public, could we possibly insert this into the newspaper or have this in a public-facing document that is shared broadly with our entire community in the next week or two?"

Staff agreed to provide information to the public. Assistant Chief Administrative Officer, Jared Jaffray added that documentation from the Conservation Office will be included.

Asphalt Deficiencies
Prior to approving the bill payments, councillors had questions.

An item was identified as a holdback pay-

ment for asphalt work completed last October. Council generally agreed that if deficiencies—such as cracking in newly laid asphalt—remain unresolved, the municipality should continue withholding payment to ensure repairs are completed.

Dutch Elm Disease Expenditures

Coun. Travis Penner expressed surprise at the cost (about \$68,000) for Dutch Elm disease management and questioned whether it fell within the approved budget.

Mayor Williams noted Virden has many large elms that are costly to remove.

Once identified by inspection, those elm trees must be removed. Government grants cover some of the work. Administration indicated that additional details will be provided to clarify budget figures and any external funding contributions, such as those potentially involving Manitoba Transportation Infrastructure (MTI), particularly for work connected to areas like King Street.

Insurance Cost Increase

Councillor Travis Penner observed that the cost for insurance had increased and questioned if it exceeds the budgeted amount.

Mayor Williams agreed, saying, "It's gone up 10 per cent every year."

Assistance Chief Administrative Officer Jared Jaffray said the increase was indeed in the budget.

Chief Administrative Officer Neil Smith asked if there'd been a recent appraisal, which figures into premium costs. He said, "Because it's the deductible versus what's on the appraisal."

Facility Maintenance and Plexiglass Replacement

A question came from Coun. Lynette Grumpelt regarding plexiglass replacement in the recreation facility. She was curious about the breakdown between product cost and the shipping fee.

CAO Jaffray said, "One pane of Plexiglas

is \$478, so \$956 for two panes, \$87.50 for freight to ship that here."

Councillors noted that freight charges were lower than expected, and they discussed stocking extra panes to mitigate future delays and costs.

New AMM Resolutions include ARBI

Council was reminded of upcoming deadlines for submitting resolutions to the Association of Manitoba Municipalities. June 1 is the cutoff and council targeted the May 5 meeting to finalize proposals and to secure backing from another municipality.

A forthcoming resolution from the RM of Sifton was noted. Mayor Williams said, "They're putting in a request to bring back ARBI (Assiniboine River Basin Initiative) to get funding back from the province." This follows the Man/Sask drainage meeting held in Virden about a month ago. Williams noted the drainage meeting with Saskatchewan mirrors what ARBI was already doing.

Meeting Procedure

A procedure bylaw updates included a notable amendment stemming from discussions at the AMM Spring Convention. The amendment focuses on strengthening procedural clarity, particularly council meeting conduct and enforcement.

Administration explained that the changes are intended to align council operations with proper governance standards and legal expectations.

A key concern raised was the handling of disruptive or inappropriate behavior during meetings, including both in-person and virtual disruptions.

Coun. Penner noted, "There was quite a bit of meeting procedure that we may have to change..."

Mayor Williams stated, "We're going to have to."

Coun. Savy said the procedures in the bylaw have an important purpose. "We should start reading and following some of the procedures

in here because they were talking about a lot of the harassment and online and all that sort of stuff coming to council..." He added, "It makes running a meeting 100 per cent easier."

Coun. Penner brought forth a suggestion regarding a return to live streaming council meetings. He said, "Back in 2020 when we were doing online meetings and they were actually available to the general public, I used to get a lot of comments, and there were people watching, and I often thought that we should have kept doing that..."

It's something CAO Smith has provided for two previous municipalities. He said, "Council may establish a policy to provide guidelines for the live streaming recording and management of video recordings at council meetings."

Mayor Williams said,

"It may be a matter of recording and then putting out the next day. Because if we lose internet in the middle, if we're just recording it, then they can save it and put it out the next day. Because we do just lose internet in this building sometimes."

Further discussion included requirements for members attending meetings electronically, and the timeline for notifying administration when a member cannot attend in person.

The procedural amendment bylaw was given first reading. Members were encouraged to submit proposed amendments either through shared meeting notes or directly to administration before the next vote.

Council passed first reading.

Virden clean-up

Council voted to boost the town's spring clean-up with a prize donation.

In response to a request from Vibrant Virden committee, the council voted to provide a complimentary prize in the maximum amount of \$350 for the

town cleanup on May 9. Last year this prize was a basket of items which included a swim pass for Virden's pool. It was suggested they do the same this year.

Coun. Savy reminded council the event begins in Victoria Park at 9am. "You'll be provided gloves and garbage bags and you'll be sent off by the wonderful Vibrant Virden committee." He added, "I was there last year. I had a blast."

AWWD

Assiniboine West Watershed District requested the yearly membership levy and Planning and Finance committee recommended that council pay the levy of \$9,407.47 for the 2026-2027 fiscal year. That was carried.

Coun. Penner spoke up about water management that the AWWD is doing to assist the west side developments in Virden. He said, "We definitely need to keep talking to them about that flood mitigation... for Clements and Thompson Place."

Meeting coverage to be continued next week.



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SPORTS

McCOLL MADE LASTING IMPACT IN LONE SEASON WITH COASTAL TSUNAMI



PHOTO BY COASTAL TSUNAMI

Foxx McColl salutes the Coastal Tsunami fans.

By Robin Wark
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

the Coastal Tsunami.

The son of Travis McColl and Jacqueline Rookes was a key player and leader on the second-year Gibsons, B.C.-based hockey team's blue line. It was his first and only season with the Tsunami after playing for the Manitoba Junior Hockey League's Swan Valley Stampeders and the Red Lake Miners of the Superior International Junior Hockey League.

"The biggest thing I enjoyed about playing for the Coastal Tsunami was playing in front of a good environment of hockey fans and the different aspects of Canada on the West Coast. Waking up, going to the rink with it being plus 10 out in the mornings makes you really enjoy the game a little more. Being a part of a second-year team was fun, because I got to share my knowledge and got to learn a lot as well, and, with it being a second-year team, the community has rallied around to make it feel like the program has been around for hundreds of years."

He was named the team's Top Defenceman. The 5-foot-8, 160-pound athlete was the Tsunami's top-scoring blue liner, placing sixth overall on the squad. Known for playing a physical style, he paced the team in penalty minutes with 116 in 46 games.

"Foxx brought to the back end the ability to quarterback a power play and create offence with his smooth skating and offensive instinct," said Briar McNaney, who served as an assistant coach last season and now leads the team.

McCull posted junior career highs of nine goals, 24 assists and 33 points last winter. He had four power-play goals and eight assists with the man advantage. Five times last season, McCull recorded two or more assists. In a Nov. 23, 7-6 overtime win over the Delta Ice Hawks, he scored on the power play and had three assists, including posting a helper on the game-winner.

"The thing that really let me put up points this season was having a more laid-back mindset, not taking things so seriously," McCull said. "As a 20-year-old, you're in your final year of your junior career. You're just trying to make the most of it and enjoy it."

One aspect of the season he definitely enjoyed was the postseason. It was the first time the Tsunami had

Elkhorn's Foxx McColl made an impact on and off the ice last winter for



Foxx McColl, right, receives the Coastal Tsunami's Top Defenceman award.

been part of the Pacific Junior Hockey League playoffs. McCull helped them earn their first postseason victory. In the end, the team was eliminated in the first round.

"I've been in the playoffs every year of my junior career, thankfully, and you know what? It's exactly like they say, nothing beats playoff hockey. Even though we didn't get the outcome we wanted, it was fun to go on a playoff run with another great group of guys. Those are the hockey memories I'll cherish for life."

McCull was a key leader for the Tsunami. He served as an assistant captain. McNaney said McCull "led by intensity in practice and passion both on and off the ice."

He also helped the second-year Junior A hockey team continue to develop its roots in the Sunshine Coast community.

"Foxx helped grow the Tsunami name in the community through a number of different appearances with the team, the First Shift program, and with schools and was a well-regarded member of the community," McNaney said.

While he succeeded out west, McCull is appreciative of all the support he has received over the years from back home.

"Without my parents, I really don't have a hockey career—the amount of late nights, long drives and countless favours they have done for me. I don't think they know how grateful I am for it, but they are everything I strive to be when I become a parent."

McCull has been recruited by Canadian and U.S.-based post-secondary schools. As he weighs the game's physical and mental demands, he has not yet decided on his next step.

Items of Note: Gibsons is best known as the setting and primary filming location of the long-running CBC TV show *The Beachcombers*. ... Former Major League Baseball pitcher Ryan Dempster was born in nearby Sechelt and raised in Gibsons. ... In late April, it was announced that teams from the Pacific Junior Hockey League and Kootenay International Junior Hockey League, including the Tsunami, would form the new British Columbia Hockey Conference, which aims to become a member of the Canadian Junior Hockey League.

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CARSADDEN FUNERAL HOME

Herb and Zelda "Adventures in Camping"

So, Let's Get a Boat

By Nancy Jo Moller
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

"Fictional names Herb and Zelda have been used to protect the innocent from laughter."

You said what? Zelda, we don't know the first thing about them. "But Herb, you can google about them." After successfully passing their boating licenses on the internet. 'Safety first was going to be their motto.' They were set to discover the World of Boating.

Since they never operated or owned a boat before, economical prices were a concern. So, like every good farmer, Herb said, "Let's watch e-Brandon for one". After all, that was where all good purchases are discovered. So off they went to look at every boat advertised. Some were too small and looked like they could easily capsize. But did they want a motorboat, pontoon, seadoo, kayak or canoe? No discussion was ever had, Zelda just knew to take the chequebook every time and they would agree when the right one appeared.

Finally, Herb and Zelda both said, "this one looks perfect." It was a 24 ft pontoon, with lots



Relaxing day on the water.

PHOTOS BY NANCY JO MOLLER

of seating for when friends come visit, it even had a change room, bathroom and deck for a BBQ. Its length would make it stable. No thought was given on how to launch or operate it, would there be room at campgrounds to park it? These all seemed like minor obstacles until it went home with them. But it was gently used and at a

reasonable price. Perfect.

After shrewd negotiation, the boat and trailer were purchased. Once headed home, down the TransCanada Highway with a boat that threatened to bottom out on each bump, the realization came that transporting this around may not be easy. So,

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| <p>1. Activities You Enjoy (or Want to Try)
Check any that apply.</p> <p>Indoor / Sport</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Ice (hockey, figure skating, curling) <input type="checkbox"/> Court (basketball, pickleball, badminton) <input type="checkbox"/> Fitness centre / gym <input type="checkbox"/> Self led (walking tracks, stretching, yoga) <p>Outdoor / Active</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Soccer <input type="checkbox"/> Baseball / Softball <input type="checkbox"/> Track & field <input type="checkbox"/> Golf <input type="checkbox"/> Swimming <p>Creative & Skill Based</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Arts & crafts <input type="checkbox"/> Woodworking / automotive <input type="checkbox"/> Lifestyle / home skills <input type="checkbox"/> Technology / science activities <p>Other</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Motorized (boat, dirtbike, quad) <input type="checkbox"/> Clubs / Groups (4H, sport team, Ideas for Recreation: _____) | <p>2. Program Types You're Interested In</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Ongoing classes <input type="checkbox"/> Seasonal programs <input type="checkbox"/> One time workshops <input type="checkbox"/> Drop in sessions <input type="checkbox"/> Family friendly events <p>3. Preferred Age Categories
Check all that apply.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Toddler <input type="checkbox"/> Kids <input type="checkbox"/> Youth <input type="checkbox"/> Teen <input type="checkbox"/> Adult <input type="checkbox"/> Senior <p>4. Preferred Locations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Elkhorn <input type="checkbox"/> Kenton <input type="checkbox"/> Kola <input type="checkbox"/> Willing to travel anywhere <p>5. When Are You Most Available?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Weekdays - Daytime <input type="checkbox"/> Weekdays - Evenings <input type="checkbox"/> Weekends <p>How often would you participate?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Weekly <input type="checkbox"/> Monthly <input type="checkbox"/> Occasionally <input type="checkbox"/> Seasonally | <p>6. Cost & Barriers</p> <p>What cost range works for you?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Free only <input type="checkbox"/> \$1-\$20 <input type="checkbox"/> \$20-\$50 <input type="checkbox"/> \$50+ <p>What affects your decision to participate?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Cost <input type="checkbox"/> Childcare <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation / distance <input type="checkbox"/> Weather / driving conditions <p>7. How Should We Share Program Info?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Facebook <input type="checkbox"/> RM Website <input type="checkbox"/> Email newsletter <input type="checkbox"/> Community posters <input type="checkbox"/> Word of mouth <p>Optional email for updates: _____</p> <p>8. Volunteer / Instructor Interest</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Help at events or programs <input type="checkbox"/> Host or lead an activity <input type="checkbox"/> Take coaching or leadership training <input type="checkbox"/> Not at this time <p>Optional Contact (if you want to discuss ideas) -
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with much 'friendly' discussion, all arrived home safely. Now where to park it, didn't want it getting rained on. Yes, wouldn't that be foreign for a boat to be rained on. So, let's rearrange the shed, 3 hours later the 'new to them' pontoon was installed under a roof. Now let's outfit it. We need a bimini top, anchor, and bumper pads. Those were found at a John Deere dealership – a place farmers can trust. A portable camp stove was found at a local outdoors store. Life jackets were a lengthy process, thinking of all friends' sizes and purchasing one for each.

Herb looked over the boat and like all good bargains, some fixing was required. New wiring and lights were installed. The gas tank was portable and attached to the back of the boat with a gauge installed on the top. 'Remember, watch it closely.' Now, when to launch it, should friends be present to help or just launch when there is no traffic at a nearby lake. It was decided that no one else should be present to see the comedy show. Off to the lake they went, backing in perfectly to the dock despite the heated hand signals. Herb said, "Okay, Zelda, stand on the dock, and I'll back it off the trailer and pull up. You can hold it while I get the truck/trailer out of the way." Eeks, how to hold it against the dock when it is so long and no dock tie stakes. Now, Herb is saying, "jump on", didn't he realize that the boat had drifted away from dock. Okay, they were both on and ready to tour. It was a beautiful night on the lake, and all discussions were forgotten and this purchase seemed worthwhile.

Friends came and joined them on their boat, enjoying fishing and sunset cruises. There is never enough company when newly retired.

Pontoon 'Annie' became a point of frequent dis-



Pontoon Annie ready for her next adventure.

cussion. There were few lakes nearby that could be launched at, never mind figuring out how to clean and haul it. It was too long to haul with the camper so, they could either go boating or camping. The last time they used it with friends, one friend was reading the gas gauge and said, "no problem, we have lots of gas left." The motor sputtered and they quickly headed to the dock, as they surged forward the motor died. Zelda grabbed the rope and yelled to a bystander on the dock, "Catch the rope". Luckily, they did and tugged Herb and Zelda in.

Launching the pontoon seven times in three years had Herb questioning did they really need a boat. The preparation time was more than the float time and the decision was made to sell. E-Brandon, here comes the

advertisement. How many tire kickers would they get before the ideal family arrived? Well, soon after advertisement was published, an interested family arrived. The kids were so excited climbing on the boat that Herb suggested to their parents that they probably didn't even need water.

How much easier would life have been if they talked to local professionals that could advise them on Pro's and Con's of boating, researched lake sites and finally talked to their friends. A proper-sized boat for their needs could have been purchased, maybe they could have rented one to see if they enjoyed it first. With proper advice, a suitable boat and necessary equipment would have been purchased that could have saved their hard-earned money.

So, the boat was sold, what does a retired couple do next? Stay tuned next week.

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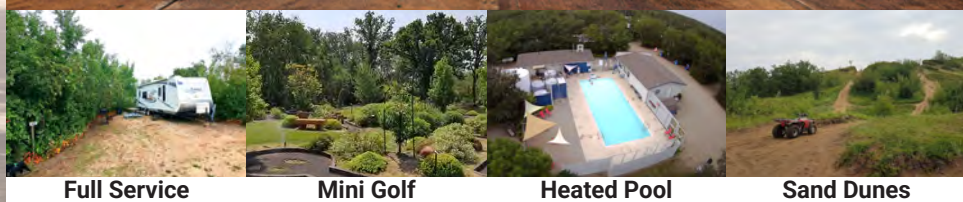


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SPORTS

SPORTS NOTES: FREEMAN RINK WRAPS UP SEASON, WILL BE BACK NEXT WINTER

By Robin Wark
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

With a recent semifinal finish at the 2026 U25 NextGen Classic, Team Freeman's curling season came to an end.

Virde's Jace Freeman and his rink have announced they will be back together for next season. The rink includes third Dallas Burgess, second Ryan Ostrowsky, lead Aaron Macdonell, and alternate Emerson Klimpke. Freeman, the son of Graham and Roxanne, said, "We can't wait!"

Regarding this past winter, Freeman said, "Honestly, the part I enjoyed most about this season was just getting to spend so much time together with our team. We're all best friends, so it was always a blast travelling to events inside Manitoba and outside the province as well."

His father coached the rink. On Facebook, the team posted a thank you to the coach for "his hard work and dedication throughout the entire season. You truly make us a better team and push us to work hard and be resilient on and off the ice."

Two of the highlights of the season for the rink were the recent NexGen event and the Bunge Championship, which is the Manitoba men's provincial championship.

Regarding the Bunge in Selkirk, Freeman said, "That was the best curling we'd played up until that point in the season, and we beat four really strong teams, including a last-rock loss to defending champs Reid Carruthers to send us to the final eight teams. We then, unfortunately, lost in the C Qualifier to my brother's team, Team Marnoch (which included Brooks Freeman), but that event was a highlight for sure."

The NexGen Classic in Edmonton included 12 of the top under-25 teams in the country. They compete for a spot in Curling Canada's NextGen Program.

"Only four teams out of 12 qualify for playoffs and we were one of them," Freeman said. "We unfortunately lost on last rock in the semifinals to the other Manitoban team there, Team Jordon McDonald. But, it was an awesome experience for us, and it was great playing against and beating some of the best young teams from across the country."

Also at the NextGen Classic, the Carman-based rink of Shaela Hayward finished second on the women's side. The skip's father, Darcy, is from Virden.

Oilers Open on May 14

The Virden Oilers senior baseball team opens its South West Baseball League season on May 14 at home. The Reston Rockets begin their campaign on May 22 in Virden. Reston's first home game is May 29 against the Hamiota Red Sox.

Cochrane to Compete in Centennial Cup

Oak Lake's Chase Cochrane is competing in the Centennial Cup, Canada's national Junior A Hockey championship in Summerside, P.E.I. May 7-17. The son of Darby and Kelly Cochrane helped the Thunder Bay North Stars win the Superior International Junior Hockey League championship. The North Stars also include former Virden Oil Capitals player Acoyen Fehr (2024-25).

The Niverville Nighthawks beat the Oil Caps for the Manitoba Junior Hockey League title. The Nighthawks, who will also compete at the Centennial Cup, include former Oil Capitals players Timothy Phillips (2022-23) and Parker Rolston (2024-25).

VCI Softball

The Virden Collegiate Institute softball team opened its home schedule against Deloraine on May 7. Its next home game is May 12 against Reston.

"We have 11 players returning from last year, so experience definitely is a strength," VCI head coach Doug Roach said. "Those 11 have attended provincials the last three years. Four in Grade 12, five in Grade 11, and two in Grade 10 this year. There are four Grade 9s also playing this year. The team has pitching and backcatching from each Grade 9-12, which is a definite asset. They are all hungry to play and hopefully ready to get dirty on the diamond. Besides pitching, we are anticipating that hitting and base running will be a big part of the year."

The head coach also explained that "We believe that all players will play a key part in each game. There is much experience with playing ball with all players this year, so each player is capable of helping the team in any game, in any situation."

LaRocque Honoured

Former Virden Oil Capital Owen LaRocque (2022-23) was named the winner of the Manitoba Major Junior Hockey League's Ron Smith Memorial Trophy as the league's Outstanding Goal-tender. The Wawanesa product posted a 15-3-1 record. He led the MMJHL with a 1.68 goals against average and a .944 save percentage.

LaRocque helped the St. Boniface Riels make it to



PHOTO BY TEAM FREEMAN

Virde's Jace Freeman skipped his rink to a successful season.

the league finals, where they fell to the Transcona Railer Express in seven games. In 2025, LaRocque was the playoff MVP as the team earned the title.

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Woodworth Spring Supper in Kenton



An amazing roast beef supper was served to all.

PHOTO BY JESSICA COULTER

By Gerry Nolan
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

A roast beef supper was held at the Kenton Legion prior to the Chase the Ace on Friday, May 1. Along with the delicious roast beef cooked by Marilyn Brazeau, the meal included peas, turnips, potatoes, gravy, coleslaw, buns and dessert.

Tickets were sold on three draw baskets with the proceeds going to the Wallace-Woodworth Fire Department. One hundred and forty-three dollars were raised. The winners were Francis Wilson, Shirley Heaman and Cheryl Hill.

Thank you everyone for supporting our Legion Ladies Auxiliary. The proceeds of the supper always goes back into the community. We appreciate everyone who attends our functions. What a great way to kick off the spring!

NHL PLAYOFFS

By Gerry Nolan
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

Round 1 of the National Hockey League playoffs are in the books for another year. How did I do with my picks?

I picked Ottawa only because they are a Canadian team to defeat Carolina. I should have used my head and not my heart. Carolina won 4 straight games to sweep the series.

Buffalo defeated Boston as I predicted. I really do not know anyone who cheers for Buffalo, but I know a lot of Boston fans who are disappointed with the outcome.

Philadelphia defeated Pittsburgh and I know Brian Mytopher, Darryl Kent and Brad Charles are doing cartwheels with the Flyer win. I have not seen Philadelphia play very much over the past few years, but it is easy to see why Travis Sanheim played for team Canada, he is an amazing player. Keep it going Philadelphia!

I picked Montreal over

Tampa Bay in what was a series for the ages. The goaltenders from each team were amazing. All the games were decided by one goal. Danny Sangster will enjoy this victory for the Habs! Go Habs, our only Canadian team left playing for the Stanley Cup.

In the west, Colorado swept the Kings which was not a surprise. The downside of this was watching the last game that Anze Kopitar will play professionally.

Minnesota defeated Dallas, as I said they would. The Minnesota Wild are a hungry team and played very well against Dallas

The Vegas Golden Knights had their hands full but prevailed over a stubborn Utah Mammoth team who were making their NHL debut. Great series though. I got this one right too.

Edmonton was defeated by the Anaheim Ducks! I had picked Edmonton, so I was wrong on this one. Anaheim could really forecheck and shut

the Oilers down and exposed their weak defense.

Coming up in the next round and we are down to 8 teams. I pick Vegas over Anaheim, but it will not be a cake walk. Minnesota versus Colorado will be a great series. I am picking Colorado but will be cheering for Minnesota.

In the east, I think Carolina will defeat Philadelphia and I hope I am wrong. I will be cheering for Travis Sanheim and the rest of the Flyers.

Buffalo versus Montreal, I am taking Montreal in this series. They are better defensively and they are the last Canadian team in the playoffs. I wonder how Gary Bettman will screw the Canadian team in this one.

So, the winners in the next 4 series I predict are Montreal and Carolina in the east. In the west it will be Colorado and Vegas.

I am hoping for Philadelphia and Minnesota to play in the final for the Stanley Cup. Will know the outcome in a couple of weeks, until then enjoy the games!



AAGM

BOARD OF DIRECTORS NOMINATIONS

Co-op is a different kind of business. And that difference begins with membership. Valleyview Co-op members support their local Co-op when they shop for groceries, purchase items for their farm or fill up with fuel. However, members can also support their community by serving on the Valleyview Co-op Board of Directors.

VALLEYVIEW CO-OP NOMINATIONS - BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Nomination packages must be received by the Valleyview Consumer Co-op administrative office by May 20th, 2026 at 5:00 p.m.

Nomination packages, which include Board of Director qualifications are available at Valleyview Co-op locations, www.valleyviewco-op.crs

MEMBERS WILL VOTE ON:

3 Director Positions - 3 three-year terms

The following Valleyview Co-op Board Members are seeking re-election:

- Jonathan Hodson
- Marnie McCutcheon
- Tayona Johnas

An election will only take place if four or more nominations are received.

Completed nomination packages can be returned to:

The Nominating Committee
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12 noon Tuesday

Fort La Bosse looks ahead to new season

By VEA Staff
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees Monday, April 13

Condensed minutes by VEA staff.

Present: Chairperson Craig Russell, Vice-Chairperson Becky Flannery, Nicole Chaske, Bonnie James, Teresa Vandenberghe, and regrets: Kayla Moore

Staff present: Superintendent of Schools Barry Pitz, Secretary-Treasurer Kent Reid, and Supervisor of Operations Mark Johnston

Motions presented were approved unanimously.

The Superintendent of Schools presented staffing motions in preparation for the 2026-2027 school year.

The Secretary-Treasurer presented a motion to approve the ACEC contract with the engineers for the VCI RTU replacement project.

The Supervisor of Operations reported that our oil and grease costs have

increased by 15-25 percent.

Invoices approved:

LRB Electric for the LED lighting upgrades at Goulter School in the amount of \$15,923.25 plus applicable taxes.

MNP Digital for progress and licensing fees for the Business Central implementation: \$10,657.50 plus applicable taxes for progress fees on the Microsoft Business Central software implementation and \$4,947.60 plus applicable taxes for Dynamic 365 Microsoft Business Central subscriptions.

Another motion was presented to approve the grass cutting tender for the Virden schools for summer 2026. Product orders and preparations for summer cleaning have begun.

In new and unfinished business Chairman Russell reviewed the details from the Board Chair meeting with the Minister of Education at the 2026 Convention.

Teachers/Staff

The Board of Trustees

accepted with regret, the resignation of Brenda Mason effective June 30th, 2026.

0.4 FTE temporary increase for Janet Rankin commencing April 27 and concluding June 30, 2026.

0.2 FTE permanent reduction in time for Courtney Howard commencing Sept. 8, 2026.

0.25 FTE unpaid Leave of Absence for Jordan Greig commencing Sept. 8, and concluding June 30, 2027.

0.15 FTE temporary increase for Deb Peters commencing April 6, and concluding June 30, 2026.

0.4 FTE temporary increase for Kim Barkley commencing April 6, and concluding June 30, 2026.

0.25 FTE temporary increase for Karli Pollock commencing April 6, and concluding June 30, 2026.

1.0 FTE Limited Teacher General Agreement for Ashley Clark commencing April 6, and concluding May 11, 2026.

Trustees commend Goulter music program presentation

By VEA Staff
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

Fort La Bosse School Division Board of Trustees Meeting Apr. 27

Condensed minutes by VEA staff.

On Monday, April 27 at the school division's Regular meeting board members and staff present were: Chairperson Craig Russell, Vice-Chairperson Becky Flannery, Kayla Moore, Nicole Chaske, Bonnie James, Teresa Vandenberghe; Superintendent of Schools Barry Pitz, Secretary-Treasurer Kent Reid, Supervisor of Operations Mark Johnston.

Music program

Jill Radwanski, Music Teacher at Goulter School, attended the meeting with Principal Will Noseworthy. Ms. Radwanski delivered a terrific presentation on the Goulter School music program. The highlight of the presentation was how she connects such things as literacy, numeracy, etiquette and community into her teaching and the students' learning of

music. The Board of Trustees appreciated this as another example of the terrific work being done in our schools.

Business

The Superintendent of Schools presented several staffing motions for adjustments to get us to the end of fiscal year 2025-2026 as well as some staffing changes for the 2026-2027 school year.

Motions were also presented for overnight off-site school activities for 3 VCI students and 10 Reston School students to participate in Badminton Provincials on April 30th – May 2 in Winnipeg.

The Secretary-Treasurer presented four policies for review. Two new policies will be approved and included in division policy while two existing policies were reviewed with no changes recommended.

The Supervisor of Operations reported that two new buses will be undergoing some warranty work.

A motion was presented to approve the payment to Brandon Elevator and Electric Ltd of \$7,843.21 taxes included for repairs to keep

the Virden Junior High elevator functional.

There will also be some electrical work required at VJH to the electrical control panels after a power outage revealed some circuit shorting.

Teachers, Staff changes Resignations & Leaves:

Michelle Hamel effective June 30.

Robert Maningas effective June 30.

1.0 FTE unpaid Leave of Absence request for Natasha Peper for the 2026-2027 school year.

Hires:

1.0 FTE for Kennedy Charles commencing May 4, 2026 and concluding June 30, 2026.

1.0 Taylor Nahachewsky commencing Sept. 8, 2026.

0.6 FTE Katie Maendel commencing May 4, 2026 and concluding June 30, 2026.

Appointment:

Tara Pitz 1.0 FTE Numeracy/Literacy Coach for the Division commencing Sept. 8, 2026 and concluding June 30, 2027.

Council seeks AMM lobby power for EMS

By Dale Davison
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

RM of Wallace-Woodworth April 28 Council Meeting

Council approved a resolution to the AMM concerning a directive from Shared Health that requires EMS units to complete priority inter-facility transfers without ensuring minimum local ambulance coverage. Council noted this could leave rural and regional communities without adequate emergency response capacity and that Prairie Mountain Health is already operating beyond capacity, with staffing shortages and vacancies affecting service delivery.

The resolution called on the AMM to lobby the Province of Manitoba and Shared Health to ensure minimum ambulance coverage within each service area, to incorporate local EMS input into dispatch and transfer decisions and to address staffing shortages.

Gopher Control

Council proposed a reso-

lution to assist Manitoba producers with improved gopher control. The resolution addresses concerns that gopher infestations are causing crop damage, increased costs, and livestock safety risks.

The key issue is that strychnine-based pest control products, which are restricted federally, are currently not available in Manitoba, while temporary emergency use has been authorized in Alberta and Saskatchewan. This creates an unequal competitive environment for Manitoba producers.

Council approved a resolution requesting the Association Manitoba Municipalities (AMM) to lobby the province of Manitoba to advocate that the federal government expand the current emergency authorization to include Manitoba.

Ducks Unlimited Canada agreement

Council reviewed correspondence from Ducks Unlimited Canada stating that they intend to create a no-break no-drain conservation agreement with

a landowner in Wallace-Woodworth. Discussion at the council table noted that, although the RM does not oppose conservation of habitat and does not propose to interfere with a landowner's right to manage the use of their property, there are concerns based on past experience with similar conservation agreements.

Coun. Mark Humphries noted that in previous Ducks Unlimited agreements there were requirements for cultivated fire breaks that appear to have been removed in newer agreements, increasing potential fire risk to neighbouring properties.

Humphries described an agreement from 50 years ago and stated, "Now obviously topography has changed, the water course has changed and now there's sections of this (area) that are not only holding water on those properties but now leaching into neighboring properties stopping cropping and stopping agricultural use. We're finding some of those old historical agree-

ments now that they won't budge on, even though they know that that agreement has caused an issue with neighboring properties."

Council decided to add clauses to future agreements that would protect infrastructure, drainage, and neighbouring properties.

Variance application

Valleyview Co-op applied to vary the municipality's zoning by-law to increase the allowable maximum height of a commercial freestanding business identification sign from 35 feet to 46 feet 2.75 inches. An existing free-standing sign at the Co-op cardlock and bulk fuel site has increased in size and requires this variance to comply with the by-law. The application was approved.

Other business

Council approved the appointment of Kathy Welsh as Assistant Senior Election Official for the 2026 municipal election. Compensation was set at a lump sum of \$3,500 and mileage was approved at \$0.55 per kilometre.

Council approved a five-year pasture lease to Lorne Andrews for \$500 per year. The rate resulted from a public tender process that received only one submission.

Council approved payment for 2026 municipal insurance through Western Financial Group, totaling \$313,612.92.

In the LUD of Elkhorn, Jack Lewis's application for the spray park caretaker position was approved. Linda Bajus was confirmed as the 2026 campground caretaker and Logan Brandon will be the Green Team representative.

Coun. Val Caldwell attended an AWWD meeting held in Miniota on April 27. She reported that questions were raised regarding governance of the organization and that changes would be made to the tendering process.

Caldwell also reported on a Westman Emergency Group (WEG) meeting. While no official budget has been finalized, the group currently holds approximately \$52,361 in its account, with a municipal

contribution of \$7,500 anticipated for the year.

Pasture Programs

Coun. Barb Stambuski attended the Kirkella pasture meeting where representatives from the Manitoba Habitat Conservancy outlined various available programs. Current pasture usage stands at approximately 1,338 head. Funding opportunities were discussed, including the Weston Family grant program, which offers both a \$40,000 complex stream and an individual stream supporting up to nine \$10,000 projects

Fire Department

Coun Diana MacDonald reported from the fire board meeting that Station 1 has responded to 26 calls since January 1, including incidents across Virden, Wallace-Woodworth, and Pipestone. Membership currently stands at 29, with one member on leave and another departing. Fundraising efforts are in progress to support the purchase of radio equipment, with approximately \$17,500 still required.



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Prairie Mountain Health employees help with the Diabetes Education presentation.

SAIL diabetes presentation

Submitted

BY JULIE MASON

With SAIL, we do our best to provide information to older adults in the community. Hosting presentations is one of the things we can do to provide people with information they need!

On Friday, May 1, we hosted a Diabetes Education presentation at the Princess Lodge. We were lucky to have three very knowledgeable Prairie Mountain Health employees there to provide information. They

made the presentation entertaining by giving the information through a Bingo game! Each participant was given a Bingo card that had images of diabetic related topics. Hailey Schurko (Registered Dietitian Educator) led the game, and she would call a certain topic and then provide information about it. This was very interactive for participants, and it allowed opportunity for lots of questions. At the end of the Bingo game, Mya Carter-Lowe (RN) and Ashton Shaw (RN)

set up to take blood sugars and blood pressure. Everyone took the opportunity to get this done and have one on one chats with the nurses. One thing we learned from this afternoon, is it never hurts to check both of those things and visit your doctor if you have any concerns.

If you are diagnosed with Diabetes and require assistance with managing it and/or require more information, contact the Chronic Disease Education Program (CDEP) at 1-877-509-7852

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SPORTS

SCHARFF, TODER SHINE AT VOLT NATIONALS IN CALGARY



Chance Toder, second from left, loves playing VOLT hockey.



PHOTOS BY WESTMAN VOLT

Cade Scharff (second from left in far backrow) and Chance Toder (gold jersey in the front) competed at the National VOLT Hockey Tournament in Calgary.

By Robin Wark
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

Two local athletes represented the region well at the National VOLT Hockey Tournament in Calgary.

Virden's Cade Scharff and Oak Lake Beach's Chance Toder competed for Westman VOLT squads at the prestigious tournament, which was held April 25-26 in Calgary. VOLT hockey is a fast-paced, adaptive team sport where players in powered carts use front-mounted sticks to pass and shoot a ball in an indoor hockey-style game.

"Cade and Chance were excellent ambassadors for Virden and Oak Lake Beach and proudly represented our program," said Westman VOLT co-founder Chad Wallin. "The amount of support from friends and family that were there to cheer them on was really nice to see."

Wallin said that both Scharff and Toder were "an absolute pleasure to coach" and to be around.

"Their positive attitudes are infectious to their teammates," he said. "They are great athletes, but even better human beings and we are fortunate to have them as part of our organization."

Wallin and his wife, Michelle, started Westman VOLT in 2022. The program has grown and sent three teams to nationals in Calgary this year.

"It was an amazing week for both athletes and families," Wallin said. "Geographically where we are located, tournaments are the only way our teams get a chance to play actual games, so it is nice for them to make new friends, and to experience the whole 'team' atmosphere of competing and bonding. Being located in western Manitoba, the closest opportunity to play games to the west is Calgary and to the east is Toronto, so having an opportunity to travel as a team is a tremendous opportunity."

He said that for some of the athletes it was their first experience at a tournament "so a lot was learned, and a lot of smiles and memories were made." The organization hopes to participate again next year.

Westman VOLT is based in Brandon. "We always welcome athletes with cognitive or mobility limitations who want to be a part of our inclusive sport," Wallin

said.

Cade Scharff

Scharff, the son of Chad and Rita, helped Westman VOLT Team Black to a sixth-place finish out of 12 teams.

Wallin said, "Cade played very well for Team Black and made some fantastic saves in goal when asked to do so... it helped his team to the semifinals, where they fell to London, Ontario, 2-1 in overtime. London went on to win the gold medal."

It was Scharff's first tournament. He said he enjoyed "being with friends and family. It was nice to play against other teams in real games with referees to learn how to play the game better."

It is Scharff's second year playing VOLT hockey. He said he enjoys "being with my friends, my coaches, and having my friends and family come watch me."

Regarding the sport, Scharff said, "A lot of different people with different abilities can play VOLT against each other. I have a great group of teammates."

Chance Toder

This was Toder's third year playing VOLT hockey. He competed at nationals in Toronto the first year and travelled to Winnipeg in the second season to take on newly created teams. This year at nationals, the veteran was counted on in different roles for Westman VOLT Team Gold. His team made it to the semifinals and placed seventh.

"Chance was also called on by his team to play a little goal and scored a key goal in his final round-robin win over Winnipeg," Wallin said.

Toder, the son of Curtis and Jolene, said he "enjoyed representing the Westman VOLT hockey team with the three teams from Brandon. ... The highlight was getting my very first national tournament goal." He appreciates all of the people and the hard work that went into making the nationals trip happen.

"I am grateful to the Wallin family for bringing Volt Hockey to Manitoba and to the coaches that support us and gave us the skills to compete.



Cade Scharff pilots his cart in VOLT hockey action.

"To the volunteers that help us work on our skills so that we would be ready for an opportunity to play the national tournament.

"And we are grateful to all of those that donated. Without everyone working as a team, none of this would be possible."

Toder said what keeps him playing VOLT hockey "is having the opportunity to play with my friends, practicing hard each week and, hopefully, one day we'll be able to win a national championship."

Driven by a desire to give back and see Westman VOLT thrive, Toder has become a leading ambassador and fundraiser. He was a guest on Dr. Jody Carrington's "UnLonely" podcast, sharing his story and spreading awareness of the sport.

Toder has been raising money to help Westman VOLT purchase another cart, which is about \$10,000. There are 10 people on the VOLT waitlist, he said.

"Our Westman team does not charge a registration fee, so this was my way to give back to the organization that gave me a chance," Toder said.

He has made motivational speeches to help raise funds. As well, Toder and his friend Zander Wallin, the son of Chad and Michelle, have a company called ZC. They sell lemonade and mini-donuts during the summer to raise money and awareness.

In Memory

THOMSON

In Loving Memory of
ROBERT APRIL 22 2017
PERRY MAY 6 2013
SUSAN MAY 14 2022

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IT'S WHAT WE FEEL WITHIN OUR HEARTS.
AS WE THINK OF YOU TODAY.
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BUT TO US WHO LOVED AND LOST YOU,
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For more info, contact Maurice Torr
(204) 729-6644, Century 21 Westman Realty Ltd, 2915 Victoria Ave, Brandon, MB.

Help Wanted



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Please email resume with references to gohardoilfieldservices@live.ca.

We thank all applicants in advance, however, only those selected for an interview will be contacted.



EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY VOTING OFFICIALS

The Municipality of Two Borders is accepting applications for Voting Officials for the Municipal Election to be held on October 28, 2026.

Duties include:

Setting up voting stations, verifying voter eligibility, issuing ballots, maintaining records, counting ballots, ensuring a fair and confidential voting process in accordance with the Municipal Councils and School Board Elections Act.

Qualifications:

Strong organizational and communication skills, attention to detail, ability to follow procedures, and maintain impartiality and confidentiality. Election experience or familiarity with election procedures is an asset. **Must be available for all advanced voting dates and Elections Day.**

Terms & Compensation:

Temporary position; training required. Compensation dependent on experience.

Apply to:

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

CLASSIFIEDS

Help Wanted



EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES ACCOUNTS PAYABLE CLERK

Job Description

The Rural Municipality of Wallace-Woodworth is seeking a motivated individual for the position of Accounts Payable Clerk at the Virden Municipal Office. This position may be offered as a full-time role or as a term appointment, depending on the successful candidate. The Accounts Payable Clerk reports to the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) and will be responsible for providing financial support to the CAO and the CFO.

Description and Qualifications

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

Skills and Qualifications

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

LANDFILL SITE ATTENDANT ~ HARGRAVE & KOLA Full-time Permanent

LANDFILL SITE ATTENDANT – KENTON Part-time Permanent

The R.M. of Wallace-Woodworth is seeking motivated individuals for the positions of **Landfill Site Attendants** for the Kenton, Hargrave and Kola Nuisance Grounds locations.

The Landfill Site Attendant assists the Public Works Superintendent in operating the waste disposal grounds in compliance with the Waste Disposal Ground Operating Permit for the site, municipal policies, and Workplace Health and Safety regulations.

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

Description and Qualifications

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

The Municipality also welcomes applications from individuals interested in relief or short-term opportunities. Applicants may indicate preferred locations (Kola, Hargrave, or Kenton) and/or availability (specific days), and flexible arrangements may be considered based on operational needs. This is a unionized position with a starting wage of \$21.01 per hour.

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

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

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

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

Tender



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- Option C: Crop production

Deadline for submission is on
Friday, May 22, 2026, at 12:00p.m.

For further information,
please contact the R.M. office.

R.M. of Wallace-Woodworth
PO Box 2200, Virden, Manitoba, ROM 2C0
Email: info@wallace-woodworth.com
Phone: (204) 748-1239

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Growing Heirlooms in Your Garden



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Heirloom seeds can be saved and planted year after year.

Submitted

BY PATRICIA HANBIDGE

Sometimes it may be confusing when you are purchasing seeds or bedding plants. There are always new names and guides coming out on what to grow and what not to grow. Let's break it down to the basics, so hopefully you are able to make good choices.

Much of what we commonly grow in the garden are hybrid plants. The seeds from hybrids should not be saved as what is grown from that saved seed will not necessarily become the expected plant. Hybrid seeds result from what is considered a terminal cross as the two parent plants that were crossed resulted in the production of a seed that is superior to the parent plants in some way. These plants that are grown from the hybrid seed are often faster growing, with more colour or bigger fruit or simply better disease resistance. However, if you save the seed from these hybrid plants, the seed will not produce a plant or a product that is the same as what you grew.

However, if you grow heirloom or heritage plants – that heirloom seed can be saved and planted year after year. Although they are naturally pollinated, they will produce seeds that are “true” and thus when collecting this seed, you will have the opportunity to grow a plant that is very similar to the parent plant. When a seed is described as “coming true”, it will grow, flower, and produce fruit that looks like the parent plants. Seed that does not ‘come true’ will often be seed that has two different parents from the same plant family. For example, green beans will cross-pollinate with yellow beans resulting in beans that can be either green or yellow or some combination of both colours. When planting a garden to use for seed production, remember that it is important to plant single varieties of those plants you plan to save seed from. Planting only non-hybrid green beans

will mean that you will have green bean seeds that will produce true green beans the following year. Keep in mind that if your neighbour is growing vegetables, there can also be cross-pollination between their varieties of vegetables and yours. Maybe you can partner with each other and each grow different types of vegetables but then share the produce. You'll have double the garden space, more vegetables and new friends for life.

There are many good reasons to grow heirlooms. There is something quite romantic to growing plants whose seeds have been passed down through the generations. It pleases me to be able to grow a plant that is almost identical to those plants my grandparents grew. Although these plants are naturally pollinated by wind, insects or other means, the characteristics of heirloom plants have developed naturally over a long period of time and thus, their characteristics are stable so your harvest will be what you expect. Over time, these plants have developed growth habits specific to certain climates and resistance to common disease issues so are definitely another reason to grow heirlooms. Another extremely important reason to grow heirlooms is by doing this you are helping to maintain plant diversity and ensuring that we do not lose valuable traits. Heirlooms have unique flavours, enhanced nutritional benefits with the added bonus of preserving and sharing seeds.

Therefore, if your goal this growing season is to grow at least some heirlooms and save your own seed, then it is important for you to plant seed that is considered heirloom or heritage in nature. Do some research, or ensure you do not miss this series of articles on growing heirlooms.

Hanbidge is the Lead Horticulturist with Orchid Horticulture. Find us at www.orchidhort.com; by email at growyourfuture@gmail.com on facebook @orchidhort and on instagram at #orchidhort.

REF MEMORIES

REF TO
WRITER

GERRY
NOLAN



This is the last of the referee memories for another season. Whether or not I will continue next fall is still a little up in the air. I just want to thank all the officials when I was beginning to officiate who took the time to help me out along the way.

Ted Little, as I had mentioned earlier, was

the man who got me started officiating. Ted had called me to thank me for remembering him in my column. Ted just recently passed away, I am so blessed that he called me, thank you Ted!

Wallace Henderson who gave me a chance to work senior hockey and who always encour-

aged me to keep going, come hell or high water. My peers who made me better, thank you.

The players of course made it all worthwhile, the memories that I have. It is funny, someone asked me just the other day if I still referee. I said no, I hung the skates up in 1996. My how time flies and even yet I am still asked from time to time, do I still referee? Thanks for reading my column, I am sure I have forgotten some games and individuals who gave me great memories. Have a great summer and we will see what happens next fall. For now, Adios!

A guide to golf etiquette

Submitted

BY METRO CREATIVE

Golf is often referred to as a gentleman's game. That descriptor is not meant to slight the millions of women golfers who love the game as much as men, but rather serves as an allusion to the decorum golfers are expected to embrace when stepping onto a course.

According to the R&A 2025 Global Participation Report, golf's reach has expanded to around 108 million people worldwide. This surge is driven by the traditional appeal of the game, but also growing interest in alternative formats, including virtual golf, and entertainment centers like Topgolf® where golf is the main focus.

As more and more people turn to golf, it is key to know the rules of play, but also the unwritten rules of the game. Golf etiquette is essential to ensuring a pleasant experience for all on the course.

Keep the pace

According to TPC Danzante Bay, slow play is a grievance of seasoned golfers. To keep the game moving, many groups now embrace hitting when you are ready rather than waiting for the person furthest from the hole to arrive. It's also proper etiquette to consider others around you. If your group falls more than one hole behind the players in front, or if a faster group approaches from behind, Hideaway Hills Golf Club says to let them play through.



PHOTO BY METRO CREATIVE

Keep the pace, respect the course and emphasize safety.

Respect the course

Golfers should remain stewards on the course during their rounds. That means replacing divots on the fairway, repairing ball marks on the green, and raking the bunkers to smooth out footprints. Leaving a clean surface for the next player is respectful.

Emphasize safety

Safety is essential on the course. It's important never to swing until you are certain the group ahead is well out of range. If a ball does veer close to another player, it is customary to shout, “Fore!” That is the universal indicator to take cover. Also, it's key to respect any quiet zones by avoiding talking or standing in a player's line of sight while they are working on a shot, advises Sunday Golf.

Golf etiquette is part of the game. Adhering to established etiquette shows mutual respect and contributes to the growing number of participants who enjoy the game.

SPORTS

SCOTT SHINES ON WORLD CUP SPEED SKATING CIRCUIT

By Robin Wark
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

Last November, Alexa Scott surged to speed skating success in Salt Lake City.

The daughter of Virden's Judy and Malcolm Scott set a personal best in the 1,000-metre race at the World Cup event there. It was a high point of a strong campaign for the former Virden resident.

"My race in Salt Lake City was definitely the highlight of last season for me," said Scott, who is based in Calgary. "I did get a PB in the 1,000m, which was 1:14.5, and it was my first time breaking 1:15. This year I would like to try and get a 1:13."

Her success in Salt Lake City earned Scott an important perk—an A-group start time for the next race. She said it was what she was most pleased with about her season.

"Only the top 20 skaters get to race the televised A-group races, while everyone else has to race earlier in the day," Scott said. "In Salt Lake City, I placed second in the B-division and was able to skate A-group the following weekend at the Calgary World Cup. You need to remain top 20 in points to stay in the A-group, which I did for the rest of the season."

In all, Scott skated in four World Cups last season. In addition to Salt Lake City and Calgary, she competed in Heerenveen, Netherlands, and Hamar, Norway.

"I love traveling to Europe to skate as I enjoy skating at low-altitude rinks quite a bit," Scott said. "It was my first time in Hamar, which is always fun to skate somewhere new."

Her success on the World Cup circuit earned Team Canada an Olympic berth for Milano Cortina 2026. In 2022, Scott, then 20, was the youngest member of Canada's speed skating team. An injury later that year took nearly two and a half years to resolve.

"I have not been able to race as much over the last few years and, because of this, I think my body got quite tired



PHOTO BY ERIC ORLOWSKY

Alexa Scott competed in four World Cup events for Canada this past season.

after travelling to four World Cups and I got sick before Olympic trials, which sadly meant I became the member to get cut from the Olympic team," Scott said.

Through her successes and challenges, she has had the steadfast support of her parents. Scott grew up in Virden until she was 10, when the family moved to Clandeboye. Her parents later returned to Virden.

"My Mom and Dad are always supporting me. They spend time out here in Calgary to help me manage my life around skating, and I wouldn't be able to accomplish anything without them."

Scott juggles her speed skating training and racing with other commitments. She is an economics student

at the University of Calgary. Scott also serves as an assistant coach for an adult speed skating group at the Olympic Oval.

"It was a fun adventure this season to add coaching to my life," she said. "I feel like coaching brought me a new perspective to speed skating and helps me enjoy my time in the sport now. Balance is always hard. I feel like I have to sacrifice a lot to skate full-time, but I just try to do the best I can."

Now that the season is over, Scott is preparing for the next one. She said: "Summer training is a lot of cycling and strength training before we get back on the ice in late June."

COLLIER SET TO GUARD BOBCATS' NET

By Robin Wark
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

Becca Collier is looking forward to stopping shots for the Brandon University women's soccer team.

The Virden Collegiate Institute Grade 12 student recently committed to playing goalkeeper for the Wheat City school squad. The Bobcats are the three-time defending Manitoba Colleges Athletic Conference women's soccer champions and two-time defending women's futsal titleholders.

"I am excited to play soccer at Brandon University because it is my chance to compete and grow at a higher level," the daughter of Beth Collier said. "The team is another thing I am excited for. The girls on the team are so welcoming. It makes the transition a bit easier knowing that I will have friends when I start my season."

Collier embraces her role as a goalkeeper.

"Whether it is organizing your players or making a save, you are always involved," she said. "I also enjoy being able to see the whole field and everything that is happening. I love the feeling of making a save and hearing the crowd let out a disappointed 'oooooh.' Something about it is so satisfying. I love making fast-reaction saves and being agile."

Since 2024, Collier has played soccer for the Minnedosa Mustangs. Head coach Ryan Skelton said: "The first time I saw Becca play goal, I was extremely impressed. ... She plays goal without fear. I knew I had to get her on my club team... From the first practice to our last game, she was



PHOTO BY DUNCAN HASKER

Becca Collier enjoys the challenge of being a goalkeeper.

committed to being the best keeper she could be. She exceeded my expectations both as a keeper, but also a natural leader. The Bobcats are extremely fortunate to sign her."

Last season, Collier co-captained the Mustangs. She has appreciated playing for the program.

"I have never had more fun playing with a group of girls than with my Minnedosa club team," Collier said. "Ryan gave me the opportunity to continue playing soccer after my Westman FC team no longer had a girls team. Ryan took the time to develop me as a player and a person. He had a huge impact on the player I am today. Ryan is also a VCI alum, so it felt like a full circle moment."

She is also appreciative of all of the backing and encouragement she has received from her mother.

"She has been my biggest support through all of my athletics," Collier said. "She made it to as many games as she could. If she wasn't there, she was the first person I was calling on the ride home to debrief. She has taken so much time off work to drive me to my games, practices, and tournaments. My mom is the reason I am the player I am today."

At BU, she plans to study education. Collier is pursuing a major in math and a minor in physical education.

"I have always liked math as my mom is an accountant. In addition to this, I am in Mrs. (Carrie) Tapp's intro to calculus and advanced mathematics class. Mrs. Tapp makes math such an enjoyable subject. I love coaching and plan to continue. I want to make a positive impact on kids. Sports do not just teach you physical skills, they teach you so many life lessons."

She coaches Grade 7-8 flag football in Virden. Collier also coaches Grade 3-4 for Virden Youth Soccer and ages 7-10 for grassroots soccer in Brandon

SPORTS

TWENTY-YEAR-OLDS HELP PROPEL OIL CAPITALS TO MJHL FINAL

By Robin Wark
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

After helping the Virden Oil Capitals reach the 2023 Manitoba Junior Hockey League final, Ty Plaisier captained the team back to the league championship series this past season.

The son of Shawn and Debra Plaisier played more than 178 regular season and 42 playoff contests for his hometown team. Although the end result in the final against the Niverville Nighthawks was not what he desired, Plaisier was pleased to compete for a title in his final Oil Capitals' season.

"We gave it our absolute all," he said. "Just having the opportunity to try and do it again was all that we could ask for, especially it being my last ever chance to get it done."

The defenceman, who also played in the Western Hockey League, was part of a strong group of 20-year-olds who helped lead the team to a successful season. The other players completing their junior eligibility were Braxton Burdeny, London Holett, Marshall Light, Austin Osiowy, and Oliver Schroeder.

"It was an amazing group," Virden head coach and general manager Tyson Ramsey said. "They are a very mature, hard-working group and they did an amazing job of leading this team to the final. We will miss them all on and off the ice and wish them all the best as they move forward with their university and hockey careers."

Plaisier was the Oil Capitals' first hometown captain since the team moved to Virden in 2012. He had four goals and posted career highs of 36 assists and 40 points last season while also being one of the league's top shotblockers. He spent parts of four seasons with the Oil Capitals.

The team posted on social media, in part: "Ty represented everything this team and this community stand for. Leadership, heart, resilience, and an unwavering commitment to his teammates and this town." Earlier this week, it was announced that Plaisier would be joining the Minot State University men's hockey team.

Moosomin's Light joined the Oil Capitals in the 2023-24 campaign via trade. The season before, Light was part of the Battlefords North Stars' Saskatchewan Junior Hockey League championship team. Last winter, the forward capped his junior career with 11 goals and 27 assists in 45 games. Despite missing two games due to injury, Light placed sixth on the team in playoff points with 10, including five goals, over 12 contests. He appreciated the way the Virden fans showed up in the postseason and cheered on their team.

"It was incredible playing in front of our fans during the playoffs. It was so loud and brought lots of energy to our team," said Light, who noted he had plenty of family and friends at every home game and many on the road as well.

Goaltender Braxton Burdeny was acquired from his hometown Winnipeg Freeze (now known as the Monarchs) before this past season. He proved to be an extremely valuable addition. Burdeny backstopped the team to 23 regular season wins and posted a 2.63 goals against average and six shutouts. In his first and only MJHL postseason, Burdeny helped the team to eight victories. He had one shutout and a 3.03 GAA.

"It was so much fun competing in the playoffs this season, it was my first time and it was everything I hoped it would be," Burdeny said. "The atmosphere in all of those rinks was so much fun to play in, especially ours. It was unmatched. Obviously, it was upsetting we didn't win, but I'm still so proud of how our group did and how much fun we had together."

Osiowy was the Oil Capitals' top scoring defenceman during the playoffs. He had 10 points, including three goals, in 14 games.

"My teammates were the biggest reason for my success on the scoresheet this postseason," Osiowy said.

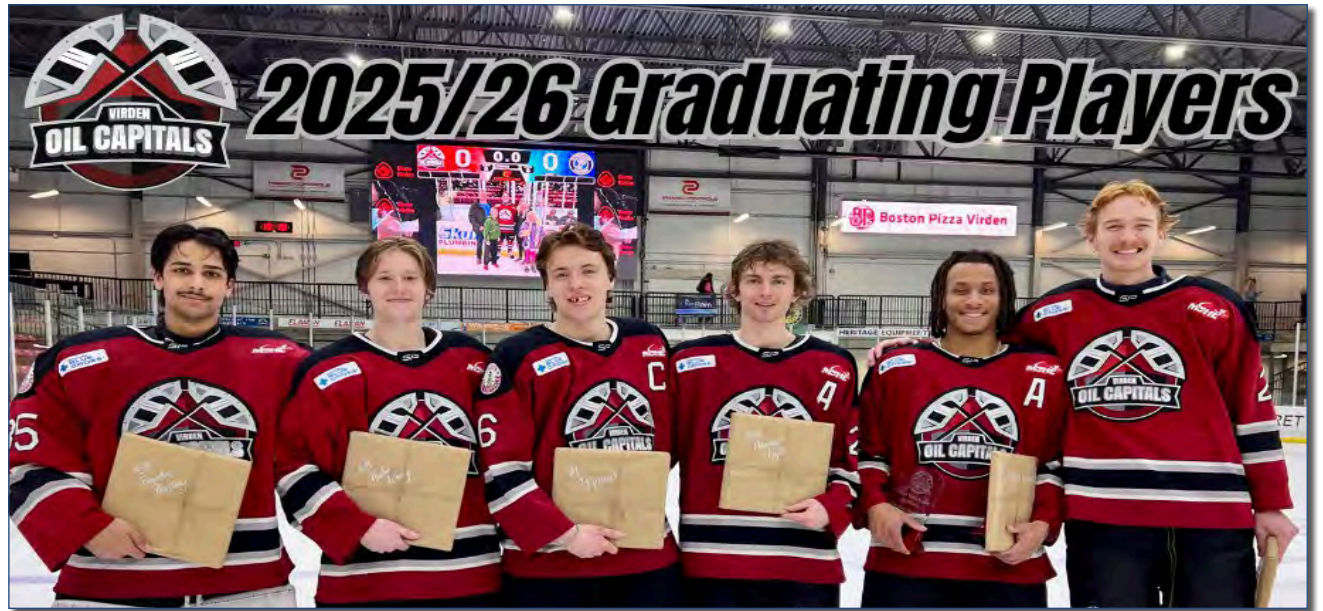


PHOTO BY VIRDEN OIL CAPITALS

The Virden Oil Capitals who wrapped up their junior careers this season were Braxton Burdeny, Austin Osiowy, Ty Plaisier, Marshall Light, London Holett and Oliver Schroeder.

"We didn't change anything specific from the regular season—we just connected really well and put ourselves in good positions to succeed offensively, which we did. I had a strong shooter's mindset, which allowed me to create more opportunities for myself and my teammates on second and third chances, which are so important in the playoffs."

Osiowy and fellow defenceman Schroeder joined the Oil Capitals this season at the Jan. 10 trade deadline. Osiowy, who hails from Calgary, came in a trade with the SJHL's Melfort Mustangs. The Oil Caps got Schroeder, a Hudson, Wis., product, from the Winkler Flyers. It can be challenging to join a team partway through a season. When asked how he was able to step in and help, Schroeder said:

"Just being able to play a simple game. Keeping my game consistent and predictable allowed me to contribute to the success of the team during the season and playoffs."

Holett joined the Oil Caps after three WHL campaigns. The Winnipegger quickly established himself as

a leader and point producer. He led the team in goals in the regular season with 32 in 57 games. Holett was third on the team in scoring with 58 points and added five goals and 10 points in the playoffs.

"Virden was the best experience I could have ever asked for," he said. "It being my last year of junior hockey, I wanted to spend it where I thought there would be the most opportunity. But I was not expecting to walk into a dressing room full of such outstanding guys. The culture at the rink was a safe space to grow and have fun playing the sport we love."

"On top of that, the sense of community I felt in Virden was like nowhere else that I've ever played. The fans, schools, sponsors, and billets did an amazing job supporting us this season which inevitably helped us make the finals."

"I am extremely grateful for the relationships I made this year and will be forever proud to have been an Oil Capital."

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