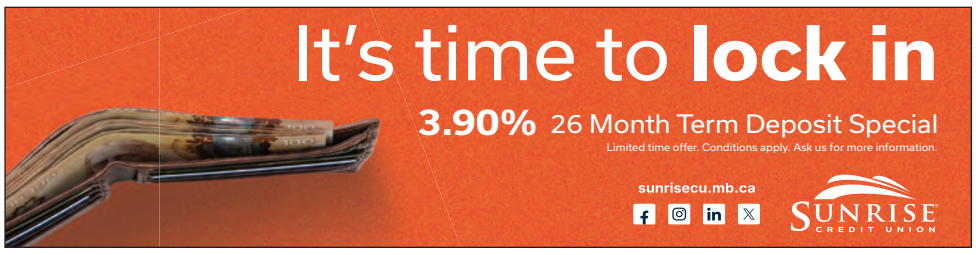
Empire-Advance

serving virden & area since 1885

NOVEMBER 6, 2026 | EMPIRE: VOL 122 NO 12 / ADVANCE: VOL 142 NO 14 | PUBLISHING FRIDAYS





Royal Purple Posters Contest



Zoe Desjardins won first prize in the High School category at the National level for the Royal Purple Brain Injury Awareness Poster Contest. She also was awarded the National Grand Champion award from all the posters at the National level. L-R Shirley Gibson, Zoe Desjardins, Fran Bayliss, Tina Williams.



SUBMITTED PHOTOS

Payton Brown Groom is the 2nd place winner in the High School category at the National level in the Royal Purple Brain Injury Awareness Poster Contest. L-R Shirley Gibson, Payton Brown Groom, Fran Bayliss, Tina Williams. See more winners on page 2.



Inside...



REMEMBRANCE DAY SPECIAL EDITION
B1-8



More Purple Poster Winners



This is Braxton Goulden, the National 1st place winner in the Grade 5-6 category for the Royal Purple Brain Injury Awareness Poster Contest. L-R are Shirley Gibson, Braxton, Fran Bayliss and Tina Williams.



SUBMITTED PHOTOS

This is Annorah Zarn from Reston School, won 2nd prize at the National level in the Grade 5 & 6 category in the Royal Purple Brain Injury Awareness Poster Contest. L-R is Fran Bayliss, Annorah Zarn, Shirley Gibson.

Virden Lions Club new members



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Oct. 27, Virden Lions Club inducts three new Lions L-R: Lion Vice-President, Lloyd Williams, new Lions Reg Orell, Dorothy (Dot) McDonald and Rudy Leroy and Lion Alex Sundell. Lion Lloyd sponsored Reg and Rudy. Lion Alex sponsored Dot. To the far right is Lion Secretary, Cheryl Herauf-Heaman who performed the induction ceremony.

Honouring Our Veterans, The Centennial Crosswalk

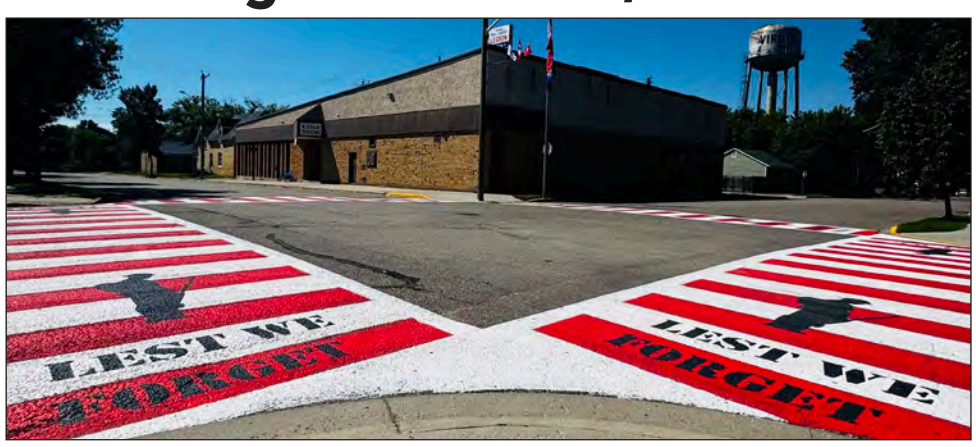


PHOTO BY LAUREN HALOWATY

A crosswalk painted in memory of Canadian Veterans, adjacent to Royal Canadian Legion Branch #8 in Virden, was completed this past summer.

By Lauren Halowaty
Empire-Advance

For most of us, the local Legion is a familiar staple that keeps our veterans' sacrifices and stories alive—a great spot to gather and hold onto those precious memories. If you're in Virden, check out the painted crosswalk next to Legion Branch #8. It's an awesome symbolic nod to Canada and the freedom our veterans fought so hard to protect. The red and white mural, featuring a soldier's silhouette and "Lest We Forget," was painted this summer by Johnson Commercial Industrial Services (JCI) out of Brandon to mark 100 years of the Royal Canadian Legion. It serves as a beautiful daily reminder that honouring our veterans isn't just for November 11th. The Ladies Auxiliary will also celebrate their centennial next year, with special events in the works!

Everyone is Welcome

Legions are community spaces much like parks—everyone is welcome, including kids! You don't need a membership or an insider connection to stop by. Just sign the guest book at the door and grab a seat. It is a super relaxed atmosphere, though the one golden rule still stands: remember to take your hat off inside!





Prepper nonsense or common sense?

By Anne Davison
Empire-Advance

What's the significance of warnings advising people to prepare to survive for three days (some say 10 days, three weeks or more)? What kind of an event would put us all off-grid for a period of time?

A personal experience this week has nudged me toward calmly going ahead and preparing.

My husband got a call from his credit card company advising that he should cancel his credit card due to the fact that one of the vendors where he used the card had their security invaded.

Is this related to two critical software vulnerabilities known as PHP2Shell that have threatened millions of websites?

According to Wikipedia, the vulnerabilities were discovered with the help of AI in August 2026 and their existence was publicly announced on 20 October 2026. AI spotted this problem before any of us humans could see it.

Could AI exploit these problems rather than just identify them? And could it cause a system shutdown of local, national or international scale? Consider the incident in France where a freezer system in supermarkets was screwed up.

"Investigators hunt hackers who attacked French supermarket fridges, with responsibility still unknown" are headlines on Oct. 13.

This would affect the food security of hundreds of thousands.

Monday, Nov. 2, the Globe and Mail published this: "European supermarket fridges hit by second suspected cyberattack" by (Stockholm, Brussels and London) Reuters reporters.

When AI is used as a refined axe to hack into a business or a government system we find out just how sharp that axe is and how ruthless the axe wielder is.

Dina Genkina in a tech magazine (spectrum.ieee.org) explains the PHP problem in a way I can comprehend: "In late October, a slew of major cybersecurity issues came to light. But none were bigger than the so-called PHP2Shell vulnerability, which put a plethora of websites, including NASA's, Wikipedia's, the White House's, and all other sites that run on Wordpress or Drupal (among others) at risk of exploits capable of both reading sensitive data and running malicious code on the host server…PHP, which originally stood for "personal home page," is a programming language created back in 1994…"

This could explain why the Canadian government and governments across Europe shut down their websites on Wednesday, October 21. According to the Canadian Press, Canada's Artificial Intelligence Minister Evan Solomon said Wednesday, "Some government websites have been taken down temporarily as a precaution against a security risk."

"Governments across Europe are increasingly telling citizens to prepare at home for a major crisis like war, extreme weather and cybersecurity threats, with Ireland becoming the latest country to push emergency preparedness guidance directly into households," says Aliss Higham, Newsweek, Sep 22, 2026.

So we can't do anything about the wars of Ukraine or Iran or most big problems of the world, but we can do something to help ourselves.

If a generator is not on your shopping list, what about a mechanical can opener?

Canada apparently says three days worth. The US government plans to implement the FORTRESS program prepare military bases to be self-sufficient for 90 days however, this won't happen over night. Top US defense officials say that it could take decades and cost tens of billions of dollars.

Let's just say - prepare ahead for a bad winter storm and get on with your day.

Before the first big snowfall, the federal government says every household should be ready to look after itself for at least 72 hours. That means an emergency kit with about four litres of water per person per day, food that won't spoil, a flashlight, a wind-up radio, medications and cash, a household plan, and a way to receive weather alerts."

Find an exhaustive list at Canada.ca under "emergency Preparedness."

LADIES AUXILARY CATERING

VIRDEN LEGION LADIES AUXILIARY ARE AVAILABLE FOR YOUR CATERING NEEDS (TEAS, LUNCHES, & SMALL BANQUETS) GIVE TRACY PAPPEL A CALL AT 204-748-7149

THE AUXILIARY ARE PLEASED TO ANNOUNCE THAT IN SEPTEMBER 2027 THEY WILL BE CELEBRATING THEIR 100TH ANNIVERSARY. (DETAILS TO FOLLOW)

Teaching the next generation to remember



Every year on November 11, Canadians pause for two minutes to remember the men and women who served and sacrificed for our country. We wear poppies, attend ceremonies, and observe moments of silence in honour of those who fought in wars that shaped the freedoms we enjoy today.

For many children, however, the world wars can seem distant. The stories of soldiers landing on beaches, serving in trenches, or flying overseas happened decades before they were born. As time passes, it can become more challenging to help younger generations understand why Remembrance Day remains so important. Yet in many ways, the importance of remembrance has never been greater.

We live in a time when war continues to affect communities around the world. Every day, news reports show the realities faced by families living in conflict zones. Children are growing up amid uncertainty, and service members continue to put their lives on the line to protect others, maintain peace, and defend freedoms.

This reality provides an opportunity for parents, teachers, and communities to help children understand that Remembrance Day is not only about looking back at history. It is also about recognizing the courage, sacrifice, and service that continue today.

The freedoms many Canadians experience every day were not given freely. They were earned through the sacrifices of countless individuals who believed in protecting future generations. Many never came home. Others returned carrying physical and emotional scars that would remain with them for the rest of their lives. These sacrifices deserve to be remembered, not only out of respect for those who served, but because they remind us of the true cost of freedom. Especially now, as elections wrap up, knowing those men and women fought for your right to do exactly that.

Teaching children about Remembrance Day does not mean exposing them to the horrors of war. Instead, it means helping them understand values such as courage, service, sacrifice, compassion, and gratitude. It means helping them recognize that behind every uniform is a person who left family, friends, and the comforts of home to answer a call to serve.

It also means encouraging conversations about peace. Remembrance Day is not a celebration of war. Rather, it is a reminder of why peace matters and why conflicts should never be taken lightly. By understanding the sacrifices made in the past and those still being made today, children can develop a deeper appreciation for the peaceful communities in which they live.

Many schools continue to play an important role in keeping these lessons alive through assemblies, presentations, poems, and visits from veterans. Community ceremonies provide additional opportunities for young people to see firsthand how generations come together to show respect and gratitude.

Parents can help reinforce these lessons by sharing family stories, attending local ceremonies, or simply taking a moment to explain why Canadians wear poppies each November. Even small conversations can leave lasting impressions.

As the years pass, the number of veterans from Canada's major conflicts continues to decline. The responsibility of keeping their stories alive increasingly falls to the next generation. That responsibility begins with education and understanding.

In today's world, where conflict remains a reality for many people, teaching children about Remembrance Day is about more than remembering the past. It is about helping them understand the value of freedom, the cost of defending it, and the importance of striving for peace.

When we teach our children to remember, we ensure that the sacrifices of yesterday are never forgotten and that the lessons they left behind continue to guide us into the future.

ROOTS & WINGS
AUD THEATRE GALA
SATURDAY, DECEMBER 12, 2026
Show Only Tickets $30
Gala Dinner & Show $100
Show - 3:00 PM
Dinner - 5:00 PM
AUD THEATRE EST. 1912 VIRDEN, MANITOBA
TICKETS AVAILABLE AT VIRDEN TOWN OFFICE
Come Celebrate the Completion of Phase 2 of the Restoration

THANK YOU VIRDEN!



I sincerely thank the people of Virden for your support and for takiing part in our municipal election.

Thank you to everyone who voted for me, encouraged me, and shared your thoughts and concerns throughout the campaign.

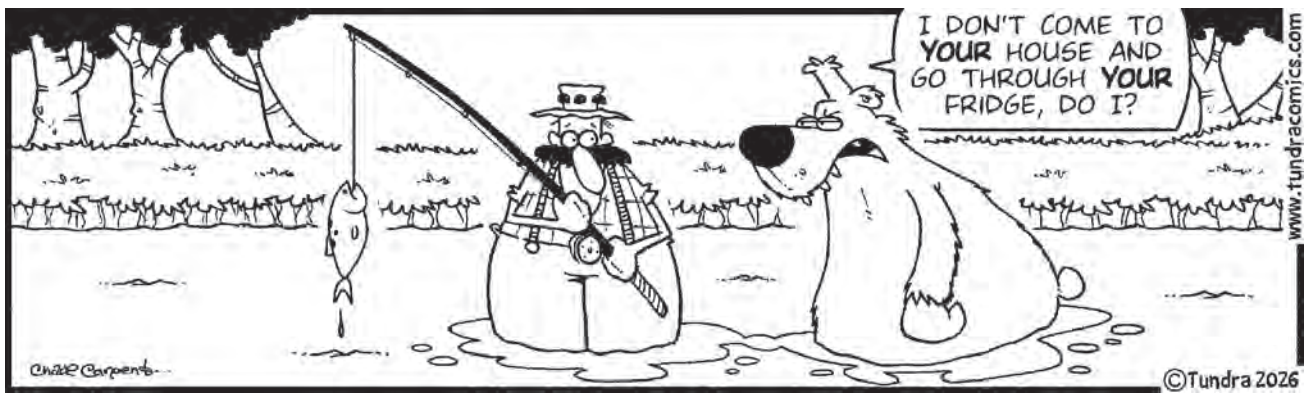
I truly appreciate your confidence and support and am grateful for the opportunity to continue serving our community.

Thank you for your support!

TRAVIS PENNER
Town of Virden Councillor

Tundra

By Chad Carpenter



Remembrance Day: A personal view

Right in the Centre

Ken Waddell



I used to know a few World War I veterans. I knew a lot of WWII vets including my Dad and four uncles. My brother was a Korean War veteran. Amazingly, there are still some of the WWll vets still alive. If you know one or get to meet one, be sure to say thank-you. You may think the world is in bad shape and you are correct. But without the efforts and sacrifice of our veterans, the world would be a lot worse.

This week, in all three of our family-owned papers, we pay tribute to our veterans. Wear a poppy, attend a Remembrance Day Service, breathe a prayer of thanks for their service and sacrifice.

My family obviously has a military background. My father came to Canada as a child in 1913 and the family settled in Montreal. Around 1917 they moved to a little stony farm at Christieville, Quebec and then to Winnipeg. One of Dad's brothers passed away at eight years of age. The four surviving sons, along with their parents all ended up in Winnipeg. Dad got married after doing whatever jobs were available across Western Canada and beyond.

Dad and Mum got married in 1932 and moved to an 80 acre farm at Muir, Manitoba (south of Gladstone). They struggled on the farm, as did many families in the 1930s. With two sons born during the Muir farm years, and with the outbreak of WWll, Dad decided to join the Army. He signed up with the Royal Winnipeg Rifles June 13, 1940. He was discharged on October 11, 1945, one day after his birthday. He was 33 when he joined up and 38 at discharge.

The years in between didn't take the expected path to military service. He rose to the rank of Staff Seargent but all based in administrative service in the army, mostly in Winnipeg.

He had suffered from Chronic Bronchitis and ear drum injuries from an early age. The Royal Winnipeg Rifles trained at Shilo and Dad's service record show he was hospitalized there. When he transferred to Debert, Nova Scotia, he took sick again and was hospitalized from from January 22 to May 3, 1941. He was sent home to Winnipeg. He served for a total of 64 months, fully trained infantry soldier, served in infantry for nine months. Later he took a CLES course as a blacksmith and welder. His papers note, he does not feel that his army services as a Postal Sorter and Post Office Superintendent have fitted him for any civilian occupation which he would like. "I am going to go back to full-time farming. When I find a farm I want to buy, I shall apply for V.L.A. Assistance."

It was further noted, "Pleasant, sincere man of 38, stocky build. With the exception of his army service, and 3 1/2 years employment in Winnipeg, as a steam fitter's helper, Waddell has been employed since leaving school at farming, operating his own dairy farm for seven years prior to enlistment. In view of this, his plan to return to full-time farming is sound. His wife and sons are also anxious to get back to a farm. He has not yet found the farm he would like to buy, and because of this, must obtain employment during the winter in order to support his family. He feels he will have little difficulty getting work at Canada Packers, where he was employed for some time as a steam fitter's helper, and for whom he worked nights for a month in 1944. Failing this, he will seek employment at any industrial work commensurate with his physical condition."

The family did find a farm at Holland, Manitoba in 1946 and stayed in the community for 40 years.



Pictured here is John Waddell with his two older sons, John and Donald. The third son, editor Ken Waddell was born eight years later.

Homebodies

Rita Friesen



Lest we forget...

The official wearing of the poppy this year is October 24 to Nov 11. It was just a few years ago that I realized that the symbol of courage and sacrifice was not to be worn after the eleventh day of the eleventh month, unless for a special service or event. The crimson poppy may be placed on a cenotaph, or at the gravesite of a veteran, stored appropriately or disposed of with dignity.

Perhaps it is my age, or my stage of life, but the poppy proudly worn, or the Canadian flag at half mast, moves me deeply. Never in my memory have I felt so thankful for this country, my country. It pains me when I hear words of blatant disrespect, see acts of violence and blatant disrespect, when there seems to be a discontent with the freedoms we take so for granted.

I think back to an old timer in the Riding Mountain hills. He came from 'the old country'. He had been in conflict, at war for his country and then a captive. He came willingly to Canada, and loved the country. When he heard anyone complaining about all the rules and regulations, the injustices - real and perceived- he would offer to send that person back to his country of origin and see if they really had anything to complain about! No one, to my knowledge, ever took him up on that.

"And the larks, still bravely singing fly, scarce heard amid the guns below.'-a line from "In Flanders Fields" by a Canadian physician serving in W.W.1, Lieutenant-Colonel John McCrae (a poem many of us learned in school) took on a deep meaning for me when a friend and I visited Auschwitz. We had just completed the tour, coming out through a courtyard that had been used by the firing squads. The entire tour was beyond sobering, beyond understanding, beyond comprehension. We stepped away from the reminders and remainders of horror, into a clear and sunny day, and overhead we heard the songbirds, delighting in life and the day. "And the larks, still bravely singing, fly…"

There is good and beauty…

There is another portion of poetry that speaks to me in this season of remembrance. " Oh! I have slipped the surly bonds of Earth and danced the skies on laughter-silvered wings:".....concluding with "Put out my hand and touched the face of God." These lines are written by an eighteen year old John Gillespie Magee (1922-1941), a member of the

Royal Canadian Air Force. He lost his life over Britain. The enthusiasm of youth, the wonder of flight, a recognition of the Divine, and a willingness to serve. I am humbled.

I honour those who served, here at home and in far away countries. I honour those who serve, here at home and far away. My heart connects with the countless women whose lives were also forever changed by the wars and violence. And the children…There is much to be deeply grateful for. There is still more work to be done but we cannot forget the cost - the lives lost and altered- that give us this foundation to build on.

Empire Advance
Serving Virden and area since 1885

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Residents question road location as council approves subdivision

By Dale Davison
Empire-Advance

A development will provide large rural residential lots next door to Virden. The RM of Wallace-Woodworth public hearing on Oct. 27 concerned a proposed public road opening to service the development. Details were made known by the developer Andrei Friesen (Landmark Planning and Design) and property owner Zac Penner. An objection was also heard.

Public Road Opening

Municipal Building Inspector & By-Law Officer, Naveen Chaudhary recommended several conditions if council decided to approve the road opening.

The developer should first enter into a development agreement with the RM on standards for any private road used as secondary access. Rights-of-way for utilities and municipal infrastructure would also have to be established and registered.

Chaudhary recommended maintaining a public road right-of-way of at least 33 feet, in accordance with municipal zoning requirements.

Andrei Friesen explained the land in question had already been designated for rural residential development through the development plan requiring provincial approval, planning district approval and municipal participation.

This development would consist of large rural residential lots, measuring at least two acres that would be unserviced by municipal water and wastewater systems, requiring wastewater to be managed through holding tanks or septic fields.

Resident raises objections

Emma Gertz submitted a formal written objection, which she read at the hearing. Gertz said, "Our concerns fall into three major areas. The safety of children and pets, the resale of our home, and the increase in traffic and neighbors in an area that currently boasts privacy and a peaceful, country-like atmosphere. To reduce these impacts, she requested that the proposed road be shifted farther south. She proposed relocating one of the subdivision roads to avoid creating a major intersection immediately beside her home.

Although her property is adjacent to Cemetery Road, the front of their home faces a quiet public lane. She stated that six families (including two young children and five dogs) currently share the back road.

Gertz stated that she was not opposed to the entire subdivision. She said that having a major access road immediately beside her home could make the property more difficult to sell and reduce its market value.

Development Rights

Friesen stated that residents living on an existing settlement should recognize that adjoining land may eventually be developed if its designation permits that use.

He said subdivision roads eventually become municipal responsibilities, with ongoing maintenance funded through taxation so designing a subdivision with the least amount of new roadway helps reduce future municipal costs.

Reeve Clayton Canart explained the RM had originally been presented with a development plan with one entrance but after discussion with the developer council advocated for a second entrance. A second access point could distribute traffic between entrances and improve emergency access. So the developer prepared another design which included a second access point.

Penner responds

Penner recognized that protecting children and pets was important. Nevertheless, he rejected the suggestion that additional traffic would automatically make the road unsafe. He stated that the development would not involve a high-speed road.

He disputed the suggestion that the subdivision would reduce existing property values and said that the development could have the opposite effect.

He concluded suggesting that council should evaluate the subdivision based on the actual development proposal and planning requirements rather than on predictions about potential future problems.

Longstanding Intention to Develop

Coun. Barb Stambuski said, "The RM actually owned the east side of this at one time, and we sold it to Zac and his company under the premise…that it actually always would be subdivided into rural residential lots."

She estimated that the transaction had occurred approximately 12 to 14 years earlier.

Subdivision application approved with conditions

Council approved the subdivision application subject to conditions.

The developer must obtain a zoning by-law amendment to rezone the property from Rural Limited to RR2 Rural Residential Two-Acre zoning.

Variance orders must be obtained for any proposed lots to permit lot widths below the standard 200-foot minimum

All municipal taxes, penalties and levies must be paid in full.

A development agreement covering road construction, drainage, municipal services and inspection.

Rights-of-way needed for utility services and municipal infrastructure must be registered.

The developer must obtain a provincial water infrastructure permit before beginning any construction along provincial water infrastructure and an engineered drainage plan must be obtained, along with a licence to construct any water control works associated with the subdivision.

The development must maintain the required setback distances around abandoned and non-abandoned wells.

The developer must complete a heritage resource impact assessment before any development occurs.

Town Office: 204-748-2440

Virden Landfill: 204-748-6033

Tundra Oil & Gas Place: 204-748-2736

VIRDEN
CENTRE OF IT ALL

Animal Control: 204-851-5881

Facility Bookings: 204-748-2440

Emergency After Hours: 204-851-5540

Cemetery Donations
April 16, 2026 - October 1, 2026

- The Norsworthy Family
- Marlene Cantlon
- Wanda Brown
- Noreen Baskerville
- Estate of Charles James (Jim) Heaman
- Karen E Anderson
- Everett Kruger

Upcoming Council Meetings
November 17
Council Meetings start at 7:00 PM

George Canyon and Aaron Pritchett at the AUD Theatre

Children Believe are proud to present CCMA winners, and beloved Canadian Country superstars George Canyon and Aaron Pritchett as they unite for their coast to coast Cowboy Christmas Tour.

- December 7, 2026
- VIP Doors Open at 6:30pm, General Admission Doors Open at 7:00pm, Concert Starts at 8:00 PM
- Tickets available at the Town Office and Online
- For more information and to purchase your tickets please visit: Showpass / George Canyon and Aaron Pritchett 2026 / Virden

Remembrance Day
We will Remember them

The Town Office, Tundra Oil & Gas Pace and the Virden Landfill will be closed on November 11.

2026 Citizen of the Year
Nominations now open!

Nominate a deserving citizen for Citizen of the Year.

Deadline to submit your nomination is November 13, 2026.

Visit virden.ca/p/citizen-of-the-year or call the Town Office for more information.

Employment Opportunity
Sanitation II Position

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

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

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

Please forward resume with cover letter to:
Faye Pope, Office/HR Manager
Town of Virden, Box 310, Virden, MB, R0M 2C0
Email: office.manager@virden.ca

info@virden.ca www.virden.ca Town of Virden @virdentown

Helen Drysdale

OUT OF HELEN'S KITCHEN

Baked Pizza Potatoes

4 baking potatoes
3 Tbsp. softened butter
1/2 tsp. dried oregano
1/2 tsp. pepper
pizza sauce
1/4-1/2 cup milk
2 Tbsp. Parmesan cheese
1 tsp. salt
1 cup peperoni or salami cut into quarters
1 cup shredded pizza cheese blend

Poke washed potatoes with a fork, rub with oil and bake at 375^{0}F for 45-55 minutes, or until a fork easily pierces the center. Allow to cool enough to handle. Cut the potatoes in half lengthwise. One at a time, hold each half with a towel and scoop out the flesh into a bowl, leaving a sturdy 1/4-inch shell so that they can be stuffed. Avoid over-mashing the potato filling. Stir in milk, butter, Parmesan cheese, oregano, salt and pepper. Add the pepperoni pieces and divide filling among potatoes. Top each with 1 tablespoon pizza sauce and sprinkle evenly with the cheese. Place the potatoes back in the oven and bake until the cheese is melted, 10 to 15 minutes.

Cheesy Herb Potato Fans

Crispy on the outside, tender on the inside, an easy to make side dish that has fancy appeal.

6 baking potatoes
salt and pepper for sprinkling
1 green onion, sliced
1/3 cup melted butter
2 Tbsp. Dash or herb of choice
3/4 cup shredded cheese of choice

Cut each potato into "fans" by cutting almost through the potato. Place the potato beside a large wooden spoon and take a knife and cut down until it touches the edges of the spoon handle leaving slices attached at the bottom. Place potatoes in a greased 9x13 baking dish. Fan potatoes slightly. Pour a little of the melted butter over each potato, distributing it evenly. Sprinkle each with some salt and pepper to taste and Dash. Bake in a preheated 400^{0}F oven for 50-60 minutes or until tender. Total time will depend on the size of your potatoes. A knife inserted in the potato should go in smoothly with no hardness detected. Sprinkle cheese over potatoes and bake a few minutes more until cheese is melted.

Potato Biscuits

These biscuits go well with any main meal or served with your favourite jam. They are made moist and tender with the addition of mashed potatoes,

1 1/2 cups flour
1/2 teaspoon salt
1 cup mashed potatoes
3 tsp. baking powder
1/4 cup butter
1/2 cup milk, approximately

Preheat your oven to 400^{0}F. In a mixing bowl, combine flour, baking powder, and salt. Cut in the cold, cubed butter until the mixture resembles coarse crumbs. Add the mashed potatoes and mix in. The amount of milk needed varies so add part of the milk, stir gently and add more milk as needed to make a dough. Stir until just combined. Turn the dough out onto a floured surface. Lightly roll or pat out to about 1/2 inch thick and cut with a biscuit cutter. Place biscuits on a baking sheet and bake for 15-20 minutes or until golden brown. Serve warm.

Miniota News

Submitted
By Linda Clark

October 31st with such beautiful weather brought out lots of trick and treaters along with many parents also in costume. It was wonderful to enjoy the visits with so many.

Arrow River folks were pleased to hear of the arrival of Ivy Jean, a daughter to Troy and Laura Lockhart and to grandparents Murray and Lori Lockhart. Little Ivy carries the wonderful name of her great grandmother Ivy Lockhart, a lady who was well admired in our community. Welcome Ivy!

We extend our sympathy to Gordon Sheane and his family, Melissa and Luke and their son Lucas, and Jason and Hannah and their son Jakub of Winnipeg on the death of their wife, mom and grandma Lisa. Our sympathy also to Gordon's siblings and their families, Raymond and Laurie Sheane, Ruth and David Henderson, and Andrew and Connie Sheane and also to Lisa's mom, Janice Simpson and family at Virden.

Our community is appreciative of the opportunity to be able to attend the annual Remembrance Day service presented by students of our Miniota School. This year the service will be held on Tuesday, Nov. 10th at 10:30am. Lest We Forget.

"War can never be waged in the name of God. There is no such thing as a holy war: only peace is holy. We must rebuild peace everywhere, not prepare for more wars." -Pope Leo X1V

Police Report

Westman RCMP Service Report for Oct. 18 - 31

Submitted
By Westman RCMP

During the week of Oct. 18 - 24, Westman RCMP received a total of 68 calls for service. Some of these calls for service include 16 traffic offences, 5 Assaults, 2 Assist other agencies, 4 Mental Health Acts, 2 False Alarms, 2 Mischief, 3 Wellbeing Checks, 4 Utter Threats and 4 - 911 Acts.

On Oct. 18, RCMP received a call regarding a male who had threatened to harm a family member in the Town of Melita. Members attended and spoke with the complainant and obtained a statement. Members located a 36-year-old male suspect who was arrested and charged with Utter threats. The suspect also had active warrants, and the male was remanded into custody. RCMP continues to investigate.

On Oct. 20, during a routine patrol in the Town of Virden, RCMP observed a vehicle travelling at a high rate of speed. Radar confirmed the driving speed of 129km/hr in an 80km/hr zone. A traffic stop was conducted, and the driver was issued a Traffic Offence Notice for Speeding which carries a fine of $692. The driver was also issued a Traffic Offence Notice for Operate vehicle with a number plate obstructed which carries a fine of $203.

On Oct. 21, RCMP received a call of a Domestic Assault in Sioux Valley Dakota Nation. Members attended the scene and spoke with the victim and learned that the suspect was a 26-year-old male who had physically assaulted the victim. Members obtained statement a located the 26-year-old male who was arrested and charged with Assault and Fail to comply with Probation Order. The male was lodged and is scheduled to appear in court later.

On Oct. 22, during a routine patrol in Sioux Valley Dakota Nation, RCMP observed a vehicle travelling at a high rate of speed. Radar confirmed the driving speed of 83km/hr in an 60km/hr zone. A traffic stop was conducted, and the driver was issued a Traffic Offence Notice for Speeding which carries a fine of $351.

On Oct. 22, during a routine patrol in the RM of Wallace-Woodworth, RCMP observed a vehicle travelling at a high rate of speed. Radar confirmed the driving speed of 122km/hr in an 100km/hr zone. A traffic stop was conducted, and the driver was issued a Traffic Offence Notice for Speeding which carries a fine of $338.

During the week of Oct. 25 - 31, Westman RCMP received a total of 67 calls for service. Some of these calls for service include 14 traffic offences, 4 Assaults, 4 Assist other agencies, 2 Mental Health Acts, 3 False Alarms, 2 Mischief, 3 Wellbeing Checks, 2 Utter Threats and 5 - 911 Acts.

On Oct. 25, during a routine patrol in RM of Two Borders, RCMP observed a vehicle travelling at a high rate of speed. Radar confirmed the driving speed of 121km/hr in a 90km/hr zone. A traffic stop was conducted, and the driver was issued a Traffic Offence Notice for Speeding which carries a fine of $456.

On Oct. 26, during a routine patrol in RM of Sifton, RCMP observed a vehicle travelling at a high rate of speed. Radar confirmed the driving speed of 127km/hr in a 100km/hr zone. A traffic stop was conducted, and the driver was issued a Traffic Offence Notice for Speeding which carries a fine of $403.

On Oct. 28, RCMP responded to a report of a disturbance in the Town of Melita. Complainant advised a 15-year-old male was causing disturbance and had assaulted his girlfriend. Members attended and obtained statements from the complainant and witnesses. Members located and arrested a 15-year-old male for one count of Assault. The male was released on conditions and is scheduled to appear in court.

On Oct. 29, RCMP responded to a report of a Domestic Assault in Sioux Valley Dakota Nation. Complainant advised her partner who was intoxicated had assaulted her. RCMP along with the assistance of Safety Officers attended the scene. Safety Officers had located and arrested a 35-year-old male who was transported to Virden RCMP detachment. Members obtained statement from the complainant, and the male was charged with Assault and Utter threats. The male is scheduled to appear in court. RCMP continues to investigate.

On Oct. 30, during a routine patrol in RM of Sifton, RCMP observed a vehicle travelling at a high rate of speed. Radar confirmed the driving speed of 135km/hr in a 110km/hr zone. A traffic stop was conducted, and the driver was issued a Traffic Offence Notice for Speeding which carries a fine of $378.

On Oct. 30, during a routine patrol in RM of Sifton, RCMP observed a vehicle travelling at a high rate of speed. Radar confirmed the driving speed of 136km/hr in a 110km/hr zone. A traffic stop was conducted, and the driver was issued a Traffic Offence Notice for Speeding which carries a fine of $391.



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SPORTS

Oil Capitals ranked fifth nationally after going 2-1

By Robin Wark
Empire-Advance

The Oil Capitals fell to the Waywayseecappo Wolverines 4-1, beat the Swan Valley Stampeders 3-2 and defeated the Winkler Flyers 8-5. As of Nov. 2, Virden sported a Manitoba Junior Hockey League-best record of 13-3-0-0. The Oil Capitals were fifth in the Canadian Junior Hockey League Top 20 Rankings.

Tyson Ulmer scored in all three games last week and recorded two game-winning goals.

"Tyson had a great week and has had a great season to this point," Virden head coach and general manager Tyson Ramsey said. "He does everything well and can be a valuable guy in any situation we put him in. His work ethic is unmatched. He has a great hockey mind and is always wanting to get better. He brings energy to any line he plays on and forces other guys around him to play harder. His hard work is paying off right now and allowing him to get on the scoresheet. We are very lucky to have a player like Tyson, who is so important on and off the ice."

The Oil Capitals were scheduled to host the Winnipeg Monarchs on Nov. 5 and 8. The Nov. 5 game was after the Empire-Advance deadline.

Western All-Star Challenge

Three Virden Oil Capitals players, Ahmad Fayad, Spencer Kuntz and Christian Pitz, were selected to represent Team MJHL at the Western All-Star Challenge, Nov. 2-4 in Martensville, Sask. Oil Capitals certified athletic trainer Dana Warrener was also selected to join Team MJHL for its two contests against the Saskatchewan Junior Hockey League.

Draper Honoured

Oil Capitals forward Tyson Draper was named the MJHL's Manitoba Pork Peak Performer for October. The Oak Lake Beach product scored 11 goals and recorded nine assists for 20 points in 12 games. As of Nov. 1, he paced the league in goals (14) and points (27).

"Draper put together six multi-point outings, scored two game-winners, and capped off the month with a two-goal, two-assist performance in a win over the Flyers," the MJHL website stated about Draper's stellar October.

In addition, Draper was selected as the Oil Capitals' CD Oilwell Player of the Month. The team posted on social media:

"His offensive production, hard work and consistent play have made him a valuable part of the Oil Caps strong start to the 2026–27 MJHL season."

In other Oil Capitals news, goaltender Micky Gross was called up to the Western Hockey League's Brandon Wheat Kings for their Nov. 1 home game against the Swift Current Broncos. Gross backed up Filip Ruzicka in the 7-2 loss.



PHOTO BY VIRDEN OIL CAPITALS

The Virden Oil Capitals won two of their three games last week.

Oil Caps 8, Flyers 5

The Oil Capitals got off to a strong start in Winkler on Oct. 31 and kept scoring on their way to victory. Virden led 3-0 after the first period and 5-3 after two.

"I thought we were able to get to our game early in the first period and forced them to defend," Ramsey said. "We played with pace and made good puck decisions for the most part and were able to dictate the pace of play."

Draper scored twice and recorded two assists for four points. He was the game's Second Star. Brooks Siemens' goal and two assists earned him the First Star, while Carson Wright was the Third Star with two goals and an assist. Ulmer scored the game-winner in the third period. Grady Taylor got his first MJHL goal. Cole Dupuis capped the scoring with a power-play goal. Gross made 13 saves for Virden.

Scoring for Winkler were Owen Wallace, Carson Hiebert, Kam Thomas, Hudson Champagne and William Lyons. Jackson Dunn stopped 29 shots.

Oil Caps 3, Stampeders 2

The Oil Capitals scored three straight goals, including two by Ulmer, to defeat the Stampeders on Oct. 30 in Virden. After a scoreless first period, the Stampeders galloped to a 2-0 lead with goals by Noah Stott and Hunter Toth, who scored shorthanded. Bryan Laing got Virden on the scoreboard with a power-play goal. With one second left in the period, Ulmer knotted the score at 2-2 with an unassisted goal. In the third period, he scored on the power play.

Ulmer was the First Star of the game. Pitz, who had an assist, was the Second Star and Laing was the Third Star. Gross stopped 26 shots. Easton Falls made 36 saves for Swan Valley.

Wolverines 4, Oil Caps 1

In an afternoon contest on Oct. 27 in front of many school classes, the host Wolverines led 1-0 after the first period and 3-1 after the second. Ulmer scored Virden's goal. Oil Capitals goalie Kasey Fuson made 22 saves on 26 shots.

Jonah Lemoine scored twice for Waywayseecappo. His teammates, Henry Thunderblanket and Noah Oughton, also had goals for the hosts. Mariko Bercier had 30 saves.

From newcomer to captain, Schaefer finds home in Virden

By Robin Wark
Empire-Advance

Nathan "Nate" Schaefer has found his second home in Virden.

It took a few stops to get there. The Harper Woods, Mich., product joined the Virden Oil Capitals in the 2024-25 season after already playing for two other junior teams that campaign. Now in his final junior season, the Manitoba Junior Hockey League defenceman wears the captain's C and is a key contributor on the blue line.

"Nathan does so many good things on and off the ice," Virden head coach and general manager Tyson Ramsey said. "He is dedicated to getting better every day whether that is on or off the ice and he is a great example for our younger guys. He has been so loyal to our program since he arrived here two seasons ago and that made him an easy choice to be our captain."

Schaefer is proud to be the team's captain.

"It means a lot to me to wear the C," he said. "I love getting to help lead such a special group."

When asked about his leadership, Schaefer said, "I feel I help lead this team through motivation on the bench and helping to produce on the ice and making my teammates around me better."

The 5-foot-11, 157-pounder is a crucial player on the Oil Capitals' back end. Last season, he made the MJHL First All-Star Team while recording 46 points in 54 games. Schaefer won the team's 2025-26 Cross Plumbing & Heating Top Defenceman Award.

"On the ice, he is an elite skater and puck mover," Ramsey said. "He has one of the best sticks in the league and defends hard. He is always an offensive threat with a great shot and can join the rush with great feet. He plays in all situations for us and is very reliable. We are very proud of Nathan and his commitment to our program."

Through 12 games this season, as of Nov. 1, Schaefer ranked seventh among MJHL defencemen with 11 points, including two goals. He had a three-point performance in a 7-6 overtime victory over the Selkirk Steelers on Oct. 24, scoring once and adding two assists.

His strong start came despite missing games with an injury between Sept. 25 and Oct. 11. He handled the setback with his typical team-first attitude.

"At first, I was definitely disappointed to miss a couple games," Schaefer said. "But, the team was playing so well, it took some pressure off and allowed me to focus on getting healthy."



PHOTO BY VIRDEN OIL CAPITALS

Captain Nate Schaefer leads the Virden Oil Capitals in various ways.

Schaefer grew up roughly 15-20 minutes away from Detroit. He headed north for junior hockey and played his rookie season with the British Columbia Hockey League's Blackfalds (Alta.) Bulldogs, Flin Flon (Man.) Bombers of the Saskatchewan Junior Hockey League, and, finally, the Oil Caps. Schaefer was a key cog on the Virden squad when it made a playoff run to the MJHL finals last season.

Off the ice, he billets with Dave and Lynette Jordan. He said he has enjoyed playing for the Oil Capitals because of "getting to volunteer around the city, and being around a great group of guys and staff all year."



SPORTS

Hunter shines on world stage with medals and records

By Robin Wark
Empire-Advance

Competing against some of the world's best masters powerlifters, Virden's Brenda Hunter returned from Reno, Nev., with two competitive medals from the World Classic and Equipped Masters Powerlifting Championships.

Hunter helped Canada earn team silver in the Women's Masters 3 division at the prestigious event. She also won bronze in the squat discipline in the Women's Masters 3, 84 kg weight class. All athletes received a participant medal at the Oct. 15-24 competition.

"I enjoyed the whole experience of international competition and the camaraderie of being part of Team Canada," Hunter said. "I traveled with my regular companions: a fellow powerlifter from Brandon who competed in the same session as me (Brenda Billings, M3 84+) and my coach, Joey Simms. We were required to use one of the Team Canada coaches as our handlers for the comp, but it was nice to have him there supporting me and helping with warm up, the mental preparedness of the sport, communications with coaching staff, and to be our chauffeur."

In her division, Hunter placed fifth overall with a total of 350 kg (771.6 lb), breaking her own national record. She bench-pressed a personal-best 67.5 kg (148.8 lb) and set a national record with a 155 kg (341.7 lb) deadlift. Hunter finished fifth in both lifts and squatted 127.5 kg (280.9 lb) to earn bronze.

"This was actually the lift I was most disappointed with even though I ended up with the bronze, because I know I can squat more than I did," she said. "There was no getting around the Icelandic gal who won the gold medal; she actually set a new world record. But knowing I can do more and not executing, it was frustrating. I was having an issue with depth again, so to secure the bronze for Team Canada, we played it safe.

"The upside is it gives me some new goals to work toward. Getting my squat depth consistently at the heavy weights. Working on building my bench and deadlift. My ultimate goal from the very beginning was to squat over 300 lbs and pull over 350 lbs and to bench my bodyweight. The first two are well within reach if I can execute them in competition."

The event featured athletes from 43 countries. In her category, Hunter competed against athletes from eight different countries.

"It was fun to see how you stack up against some incredibly strong women from around the world," she said.

While Hunter competed in Reno, she was enthusiastically cheered on back in Manitoba. She noted that the live-feed commentary was great and helped those new to the sport understand it.

"I felt very supported by all the people whom I knew were watching as I was getting text messages of congratulations and encouragement throughout the evening," Hunter said. "This was the first time I'd competed this late in the day so it made for a very long day. Usually we compete first thing in the morning, occasionally in the afternoon, but this was a first at night. It started at 6 p.m. Pacific time, which made it 8 p.m. at home and we didn't finish up until around 9:30 p.m. (11:30 in Manitoba)."

"Hunter did not start powerlifting until 2023. Her training is a little unconventional by design, she said, 'so I don't get bored or burn out, plus it makes for a more well-rounded athlete - mobility, strength and endurance.'"

She trains at Southwest Strength, a CrossFit gym, and participates in group classes with some additional strength work. Hunter has also tested herself in endurance events, completing three Spartan races over the past two years and taking part in a modified HYROX fitness competition.



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Brenda Hunter (R) earned a bronze medal in the squat discipline at the World Classic and Equipped Masters Powerlifting Championships.

Spartan races combine trail running with obstacles such as climbing, carrying and crawling, while HYROX combines running with functional workout stations.

"I like to challenge my body in different ways and see what it is capable of doing, and it keeps things interesting," Hunter said.

She said being in a competition setting "always lights a fire under my butt and gets me excited for the next one." She has her eyes on the 2027 nationals in Nanaimo in February, the worlds in St. John's, N.L., and the Commonwealth championship in two years in Scotland.

"There will be some super strong women moving up from M2 in the next two years, so I will have my work cut out for me. But life is about more than chasing the next

THHL Spotlight: Oil Kings split, Icemen ready for home opener

By Robin Wark
Empire-Advance

The Oak Lake Icemen are looking forward to their first home opener in nearly a decade and a half, while the Virden Oil Kings seek to build on their first victory of the season.

Goaltender Brodie Cameron and the Oil Kings shut out the Icemen 15-0 in Virden before falling 5-3 to the Hartney Blues on the road. This is the Icemen's first season in the Tiger Hills Hockey League. The last senior team to represent the community competed in the North Central Hockey League in 2011-12. The Icemen host the Pilot Mound Pilots on Nov. 7.

"It's been quite a few years without the Icemen in Oak Lake," Icemen player and organizer Terrence Crampain said. "Back then, the rink was always full. So, people around town are talking about senior hockey being back in Oak Lake and are pretty excited for that. The first game at home will be a good one, with Pilot Mound just coming back into the league this year, and it's our first year of everyone playing together. Definitely looking forward to seeing the community come together for that one."

As of Nov. 1, the Icemen were 0-2-0-0. The Oak Lake squad is laying the foundation for the future with what Crampain described as a "really good group."

Oil Kings

Virden (1-2-0-0) plays in Melita on Nov. 7, hosts Rivers on Nov. 12 and travels to Minnedosa on Nov. 14.

At home on Oct. 30, the Oil Kings won the first game of the renewed Highway 1 rivalry. Virden led 7-0 and 10-0 at the intermissions, respectively.

Rylee Zimmer scored four goals to pace the Oil Kings. Nolan Wallace and Jackson Orr each scored two goals and recorded three assists to each post a team-high five points. Dylan Halliday had a goal and three assists for four points, while Keenan Skrupa finished with four assists. Virden's other scorers were Tyson Zimmer (two), Chase Cochrane, Shane Price, Dexen Routledge, and Jaden Browning-Lozinski. Andrew Gerrand had three assists. Cameron stopped all 17 shots sent his way.

"I think on Thursday night, we were able to develop some strong chemistry overall as a group," Wallace said. "A lot of new bodies were added to the lineup and lines and pairings that had not played together before, and we all sort of settled in and got to know each other a bit better as that game went on. I think our ability to distribute the puck and play a connected game together gave us that success in the offensive zone.



PHOTO BY DALE DAVISON

This one isn't going in. Icemen goalie Jayden Hodson shuts the door on Virden's Shane Price on Oct. 9 in TOGP.

"That success also stemmed from Brodie backstopping us, as he was solid all game long for us. He was composed in the net, and, even though it was a quieter night, he stepped up with some huge saves to bail us out of a couple situations. He was also tremendous at helping us break the puck out with his puck-playing abilities, which in turn allowed us to get up the ice quicker as a unit and generate more offence."

Icemen goalie Jayden Hodson made 23 saves on 33 shots, while teammate Greg Higgens stopped 24 of the 29 shots he faced.

In Hartney on Nov. 1, Wallace gave Virden a 1-0 lead on a first-period power play. The Blues scored two straight goals in the second period to take a 2-1 lead before the Oil Kings' Tyson Zimmer knotted the score at 2-2. In the third period, Hartney took a 4-2 lead before Tyson Zimmer answered for the Oil Kings. The Blues closed things out with an empty-net goal.

Virden goalie Duncan Paddock had 28 saves. Blues netminder Justin Holder stopped 44 shots. Daylin Smallchild led Hartney with two goals.

SPORTS

VCI football season comes to an end

By Robin Wark
Empire-Advance

A successful season has come to an end for the Virden Collegiate Institute football team.

On Oct. 31, VCI fell 37-8 to the Interlake Thunder in the semifinals of the Rural Manitoba Football League's Doug Steeves Cup playoffs. After earning one win in 2025, the Golden Bears completed the regular season with a 5-1 record to top the RMFL West Division.

"I really liked the group of kids we have this year, and believed we could make it to the final," VCI head coach Marc Talbot said. "The thing I will remember most about this team and this year is the attitude. That could be in part the winning season that we had, but the atmosphere around the team was good."

Semifinal Contest

The RMFL's Doug Steeves Cup playoff bracket features the top two teams in each division, while the Murray Black Cup is for the other four teams that made the postseason.

As the West's No. 1 seed, VCI faced the Thunder, who finished second in the East with a 5-1 record. Both teams' lone regular-season loss was to the East's top seed, the St. Vital Mustangs, who Interlake will face in the championship tilt.

VCI hosted the Thunder on Halloween and had an inauspicious start.

"With a fumble on our second play of the game and a high snap to our punter on the third play, we gave the Thunder a pretty easy start," Talbot said. "They were able to score quick on the short field that we gave them."

During the contest, Talbot noticed the Thunder were able to move the ball down the field, although "Our defence did well to stop them once they got within 20 yards of the end zone. That puts our offence in a tight spot with a long field to work with." On the other side of the ball, VCI found it difficult to gain yards. Talbot said "Our blocking was not up to par, and the Thunder were able to break through and make tackles before our running backs could get going."

Seeking a spark, VCI moved Isaiah Barrate to offence for a few plays in the second half. It paid off when Golden Bears quarterback Cohen Canada found him for a 63-yard touchdown pass.

"He was able to pick the ball off his shoe tops, I think he may have even juggled it a bit, then ran away from the Thunder defenders," Talbot said.

Dixon Tough ran in the two-point conversion. However, VCI was unable to add to its point total.

Senior Success & Rookie Promise

The semifinal was the final football game as Golden Bears for Ryder Kotylak, Shane Blackshaw, Barrate, Reed Plaisier, Tough, Lucas Branun and Idrees Saban.

"They will be missed," Talbot said. "They did a great job this year helping the team, mainly the new players, learn how to play. Some of them even helped with the flag football that we had in the spring, and I believe they will help again."

The Grade 12s who played last season also helped recruit.

"With a hard season last year… they managed to convince their classmates to play," Talbot said. "Our rookie list consists of two Grade 12, four Grade 11, two Grade 10, and eight Grade 9 students. We even had some Grade 9 players earn starting positions on the team."

Having a strong turnout for the squad was advantageous in various ways.

"The numbers are good to have for the early games, when temperatures are high and the players need a break, and for the later games, when your body gets beat up a little and you need to take a breather. If we can keep the roster above 30 players, that would be great," the coach said.

Award Nominees

Barrate and Kotylak are VCI's nominees for two of the RMFL's annual awards. Barrate was nominated for the Most Outstanding Player - Defence award and the Parker Guy Memorial Award. The latter is for a player who "exemplifies character through involvement in football" and is named for the former Neepawa Tigers player, who passed away from cancer at age 19.

Kotylak has been nominated for the Most Outstanding Player - Special Teams award and the Norris Aitken Memorial Award. The Aitken award is presented to a student-athlete "who combines football ability, academic ability and other criteria schools deem to be an asset to all-round individuals. … Norris Aitken was a longtime coach of the Dauphin Clippers and a commissioner for the RMFL for several years."

Tough was nominated for Most Outstanding Player-Offence. Cole Walker is VCI's nominee for Most Outstanding Offensive Lineman, while Lucas Branun will represent the Golden Bears in the Most Outstanding Defensive Lineman category. Evander Barrate is up for Most Outstanding Rookie.

Freeman rink captures Atkins title, earns provincial berth



SUBMITTED PHOTO

The Freeman rink of lead Aaron Macdonell, second Ryan Ostrowsky, fourth stone Dallas Burgess, and skip Jace Freeman won the Atkins Curling Supplies Classic.

By Robin Wark
Empire-Advance

Last weekend, Virden's Jace Freeman led his rink to a bonspiel title and a berth in the provincial championship.

The Freeman rink won the Manitoba Curling Tour's Atkins Curling Supplies Classic. It was held at the Assiniboine Memorial Curling Club in Winnipeg on Oct. 30-Nov. 1. The victory also earned the team a berth in the Bunge Championship, Manitoba's men's provincial curling championship, scheduled for Jan. 26-31 in Altona.

"Winning the berth early will allow the team to reduce their busy schedule a little, and maybe focus on a practice weekend or two to help prepare for provincials as opposed to travelling to more Manitoba qualifying events," said Graham Freeman, the team's coach.

Team Freeman posted a 23-7 record over its first five competitive men's events. Recently ranked No. 40 in the world, it is expected to climb into the 30s.

The Atkins Curling Supplies Classic featured 16 teams competing in a triple-knockout event with the top eight making it to a single-elimination playoff bracket. Team Freeman lost two of its first three games before finding its stride.

"We then started to get things rolling in the 'C' event and eventually rattled off five straight victories to come out on top," Graham Freeman said.

In the quarterfinal, the Freeman rink defeated defending Manitoba champion Braden Calvert 6-4 in what Graham Freeman described as "a very tight game that came down to last rock." The semifinal was also close, with Team Freeman getting by Brett Walter 8-7. Freeman then defeated Hayden Forrester in the final 6-3.

Next up for the team is a trip to Calgary for the Original 16 Men's Cash Spiel, a World Curling Tour event, Nov. 6-8. It will play a couple more MCT and WCT events before Christmas. Jace Freeman is the son of Roxanne and Graham Freeman.



Virden U13 win at the end of the third



PHOTO BY MIKE WADDELL

Rivers U13 hosted Virden on November 1 and after a hard fought game managed to overcome Virden 4-3. The winning goal came late in the third period.



PHOTO BY CHRISTINE WADDELL

Rivers third goal, game tying goal in the U13 game Nov. 1.

Winnipeg Jets



The Winnipeg Jets are in big trouble. They have lost nine in a row and after watching the game today and the complete lack of effort especially from the veterans, maybe it's time to go in a different direction. Their penalty kill and power play were ranked 22 in the league and today only became worse as they surrendered a short-handed goal in the first period which would end up being the game winner.

The team today had one great scoring chance. That's it! That's a horrible result for a professional team.

What ails the Jets? Lack of compete would be one of the obvious answers! The defense is too small to clear anyone from the front of the net and the forwards are not picking up anyone either. Lazy penalties are not helping out either. It seems like the puck is a hot potato that no one wants to hold on to. Next up is Montreal and that may well be loss number 10 on Tuesday.

Kyle Connor is the only forward that can actually score and he was the Jets best forward on Sunday. Connor has 11 goals and has accounted for 32 percent of the Jets scoring. Cole Perfetti has six goals, Mark Scheifele has 2 goals, Gabriel Vilardi has 1 as does Moran Barron. Adam Lowry has 2 goals, and Neil Pionk has 3 tallies. A bunch of players have 1 goal. The Jets lost 11 in a row last year and are getting dangerously close to that number again and the season is just a month old.

What is the solution? Should you fire the General Manager? Do you fire the Coach? Do you play the kids from the Manitoba Moose, the Jets farm team?

Do you get rid of the veterans? What to do? Maybe Hellebuyck was right to want out of Winnipeg! Then there is who, do you hire as GM and Coach. Well, I have a coach picked, John Tortorella would be at least entertaining. Bruce Cassidy is available.

The next worry if you are the Jets owner is how many people are going to shell out a lot of money for a ticket to watch what we have seen from the Jets recently? Sad to say, but there is always next year. Play the kids and see what happens.

MHJL REPORT

Submitted
By Derek Holtom

The MJHL just announced their roster for the Western All-Star Challenge which will take place Nov. 2 to 4 in Martensville, Sask. The annual showcase pits top under-19 talent in a pair of games to help move more players to higher levels of hockey.

The team will feature players from eight MJHL teams – headlined by the Swan Valley Stampeders and Niverville Nighthawks who each have four players taking part. The four Stampeders include forward Crosby Harrison (who only recently rejoined the team after starting the season in the WHL), goaltender Joe Naccarato, defenseman Owen Lutgen and forward Trace Langan.

The Winnipeg Monarchs and Virden Oil Capitals both have three players, meaning 14 of the team's 20-player roster come from these four teams.

The Dauphin Kings have a pair of players (forward Quinten Fisk and goaltender Tate Barnaby), with the rest of the team coming from the Selkirk Steelers, Steinbach Pistons, Waywayseecappo Wolverines and Winkler Flyers. The Wayway representative on the team is defenseman Adam Chipelski. The MJHL already announced the coaching staff – Dwight Hirst from the Niverville Nighthawks Josh Gratton from the Northern Manitoba Blizzard Head, and Landyn Cochrane from the Waywayseecappo Wolverines.

Virden Oil Capitals Athletic Therapist Dana Warrener and Waywayseecappo Wolverines Trainer/Equipment Manager Jason Hart will also join the MJHL for the three-day event.

The Winkler Flyers sport two of three spots on this week's MJHL Manitoba Liquor and Lotteries Players of the Week. First up is Flyers forward Cole Landreville who had four goals and two assists to earn his honour. Next up is Winkler goaltender Jackson Dunn. He went 3-0, sporting a 1.38 GAA, a .943 save percentage and one shutout to earn his award.

The final winner of the week is forward Jacob Morrison from the Selkirk Steelers. He had two goals and five assists for seven points in three games to earn his award.

From the trade front, the Winkler Flyers have shipped forward Noah Stott back to the Swan Valley Stampeders for a player development fee (PDF). Stott played with the Stamps last season.

The Selkirk Steelers sent defenseman Gavin Lafferty to the Winnipeg Blues for a PDF. The 18-year-old Minnesota product started the season in the NAHL with the Elmira Aviators, with zero points in three games.

And the Winnipeg Monarchs sent forward Ben Dnes to Humboldt of the SJHL for a PDF. Dnes had one goal in one game with the Monarchs before moving west.

And how cool was it so see former Portage Terriers netminder Jason Kasdorf get to play for the Jets in their alumni game against the Montreal Canadiens/

Kasdorf, who led the Terriers to a league championship in 2011, was drafted by the Jets in the sixth round that same year. However, he was dealt to Buffalo and never played a game with the Jets, though he did spend some time in the Moose organization.

Playing for your hometown NHL team in any capacity, but especially an alumni game, would have to rank right up there. Sharing the ice for the emotional return of Jets all-time fan-favourite Dustin Byfuglien would have to make the experience even more memorable.

And for the MJHL, it never hurts to have one of your alumni take part in such a high-profile event.



Elkhorn SAIL Community Meal



PHOTO FROM KAREN MITCHELL

Butch Fleury entertains the crowd at Elkhorn SAIL's Community Meal.

Submitted
By Karen Mitchell

Despite the temperature dropping outside, inside the Elkhorn Legion Hall the temperature and spirits were right on point!

Friday Oct. 16, Elkhorn SAIL held a Community Meal of ham and scalloped potatoes, veggies, salad, jellies, and an array of delicious homemade desserts. Feeding just over 40 people both inside the hall, and take-outs, Kristina Walker (SAIL Meal Coordinator) outdid herself yet again.

"It is always so wonderful to see the residents come out and have a great meal, socialize, and share in some good visits and laughs," tells Karen Mitchell, SAIL Resource Coordinator. "The whole purpose of these gatherings is exactly that. To get people out and about, gathering with friends and neighbours and what a better way to do that then gather around a delicious meal."

After residents filled their bellies, Mitchell welcomed to the stage, Butch Fleury, who entertained the crowd for over an hour. "We had people singing along and with a little encouragement, several were up and dancing," described Mitchell. "It was definitely a great afternoon for all involved."

Elkhorn's next Community Meal will be their Christmas meal on Friday, December 18. "We will be serving up a traditional turkey meal with all the fixings and have Three's Company booked to lead us in signing Christmas Carols."

Residents are strongly encouraged to sign up ahead of time as proper planning involves knowing how many are attending. For more information, please reach out to Elkhorn SAIL.

The Virden SAIL fall supper happened on Thursday, Oct. 29. We had two settings, with 50 people attending each one. Cooks Vickie and Yvonne provided a fabulous turkey supper, complete with all the trimmings. The volunteers from the community as well as the SAIL board, helped with everything from set up and decorating, meal delivery, to serving and cleanup. Jenn Jaffrey, from the museum, brought artefacts to enjoy and encourage conversation throughout the meal. It was a special evening to remember the past and enjoy being together now.

Elkhorn Halloween Fun



PHOTO BY ED JAMES

Firefighters dressed up in their gear to hand out candy in Elkhorn.

By Ed James
Empire-Advance

This is the first Halloween I can remember in many years where it was a warm and bright evening for trick or treating. It seemed so different, not to see the children bundled up in winter coats over their costumes. Many homes in the community had Halloween displays in front of their homes. At the park was a huge inflatable pumpkin that glowed in the night. A large group of children made a stop at the Elkhorn Lodge and Manor senior homes, where they collected treats and had a visit with a special grandparent who lived there. In the Elkhorn Manor parking lot, the local Elks Club was on hand giving out candy treat bags with the help of Charley, the Halloween Elk. While over at the fire station community volunteer firefighters where also giving out treats! Many seniors in the community donated candy treats to the Elks candy treat drive and in return a sign was placed in front of their homes, so they were not disturbed by roaming, candy hungry children. The warm evening made for a perfect Halloween night with a few people in the village having one last night bon fire gathering. The next day there were no reports of any mishaps or problems in the community. Now that Halloween is over, its only 53 more days until Christmas! How time flies when you are 80 years old.

To the Ratepayers of the Prairie View Municipality

I want to take this opportunity to express my thanks for the opportunity to serve you these past 12 years, first as your reeve and then as deputy reeve, and also to the ratepayers of the former RM of Miniota and fellow councillors whom I served with for my first 4 years as a councillor. I want to acknowledge fellow councillors, Delbert Cole for his 12 years and Morley Butler for his 28 years upon their retirement. It has been a privilege to have worked with many councillors through the years, and I thank each of you for your expertise, the history and love you carried for your municipality, for the debates, the conversations and for the laughs.

Thank you to the many fellow municipal politicians from surrounding municipalities. It has been a pleasure to get to know and to work with you on committees. I shall miss these interactions at meetings and conventions.

I have loved municipal politics since a child when my dad was a councillor for the RM of Miniota. Upon the death of my husband Bill in 2010, who was the reeve of the Miniota municipality at that time, I decided I also wanted to be a part of our municipal politics. I do not regret having made that decision, for it has been a wonderful 16 years learning and serving. Municipal Politics, known as the grassroots level of politics, is the level of government closest to the people. Indeed, that is true as people are not afraid to challenge you, debate with you, request of you, and yes while it is not always done in the nicest of ways, as councillors we listen and debate the many concerns. We have made mistakes through the years, but we have also accomplished much with some very big projects completed for the betterment of this municipality.

I am incredibly proud of how Prairie View worked through amalgamation. It was not easy but at the end of the day, we came together as a council seeing our municipality as one, and no longer divisions around the table as to north versus south, and south versus north. Proud to say I was told just recently by Minister Glen Simard that Prairie View is one of the amalgamated success stories.

I want to express my thanks to our CAO, Charlene, her administrative staff, to Rodney and Patrick, our lead hands and their public works staff, for all your support and work for this municipality. While as a council we set policy and make decisions at the table, it is you who have carried out the workload. Thank you.

I want to thank Ian Cottingham and Trevor Clark for putting your names forward, and I hope you enjoy municipal politics as much as I have. Good luck as you become part of the next council.

Congratulations to all in surrounding municipalities who have received the bid from your ratepayers to serve them. May your tenure also be successful.

Thank you once again. Indeed I am proud of our Prairie View Municipality.

- Linda Clark



Bridge replacement tops council agenda

By Dale Davison
Empire-Advance

At their Oct. 27 meeting the council of Wallace-Woodworth received an update on the McLeod Bridge replacement project.

Reeve Clayton Canart reported that the neighbouring RM of Prairie View, "Is not in the position right now to share in the cost of the replacement of that bridge." Canart suggested that Wallace-Woodworth could approach Prairie View again in 2027 to request a contribution toward the project.

During the discussion Coun. Val Caldwell said, "We actually should have something in place so that when we do inspections, we actually share the inspections with them on those borderline bridges and culverts." Because the bridge is a shared asset Caldwell suggested there should be a written agreement identifying responsibilities for maintenance and inspections.

CAO Iris Vercaigne also indicated that work on the project might begin somewhat earlier than previously anticipated.

Council approved a design-build contract with Samson Developments for the McLeod Bridge

Culvert

Council approved a culvert inventory purchase from Atlantic Industries Limited of $97,551 for various sizes of culverts and couplers.

Rural Water Pipeline Extension Agreement (17:03 – 17:50)

Council authorized an agreement with the Manitoba Water Services Board for the Ward 1 meter upgrade project, part of the rural water pipeline extension initiative.

Elkhorn Light Up

Council approved a funding request from the Elkhorn District Chamber of Commerce for $1,000 in financial support for the Elkhorn Town Light Up event, and also approved the street closure on Maharg Avenue for the event.

Elkhorn Post Office

A quotation of $12,450, was accepted from Pinnacle Plumbing and Heating to replace the heating system in the Elkhorn Post Office. The existing heating equipment had previously failed, and replacement parts are no longer readily available. The system is approximately 25 to 30 years old.

Elkhorn Local Urban District (27:49 – 29:29)

Coun. Denis Lachapelle reported the LUD committee reviewed the community sidewalk plan and proposals for seasonal cemetery maintenance contracts.

The 2026 Christmas banquet is scheduled for Dec. 4 at Elkhorn Hall, with Cleaver Catering providing the meal.

The report concluded with recognition of Kevin Tuttehill, who has chaired his final Elkhorn LUD meeting. Appreciation was expressed for his work as chairperson.

Westman Emergency Group: Emergency Notifications, Manitoba 511 and Disaster Preparedness (29:39 – 31:40)

Coun. Val Caldwell attended the Westman Emergency Group meeting where a concern was raised about problems with the emergency notification system. Caldwell reported that notifications were not consistently reaching residents. An example was the Elkhorn tornado, for which a notification had not been issued.

Caldwell also expressed frustration with the effectiveness of Manitoba 511, the provincial highway information system. and said, "When you look at Saskatchewan and Alberta it's a bit of an embarrassment how our Manitoba 511 is run."

Zoning Bylaw Amendment for Former Roseberry Inn

Council held a public hearing to consider a bylaw amendment proposing to change the zoning designation of a property from Commercial General (CG) to Local Commercial Residential (LCR).

The property, located at 104 Rachel Avenue East in Elkhorn was formerly operated as the Roseberry Inn. The owner is seeking the zoning change to convert the building into a primary single-family residence accommodating a multigenerational family.

Municipal administration recommended approval of the former Roseberry Inn rezoning

Virden Pioneer Home 2026 report

Submitted
By R. Kristjanson

The Virden Pioneer Home Museum (VPHM) had another good year in 2026. The museum was open to the public from May 15 to Aug. 30, operating with a part-time manager, Jenn Jaffray and three student museum guides.

Since the staff hired this year were all high school students, it put a great deal of responsibility on our manager to be at the museum during the day until the students arrived from school. The museum operated from Tuesday to Saturday throughout the time it was open. Staff dealt with six school and daycare tours as well as a rock painting project held on a Saturday. As well there were small group tours throughout the summer including collaboration with Sail, and Prairie Gateway (Tourism). Plus, the museum functioned as a venue for a family reunion.

Besides conducting tours, staff researched family histories for descendants of former residents of Virden, authored articles for the local paper on artifacts in the museum and updated the displays within the museum (such as reorganizing and updating the flip charts in the annexes). The staff was also busy inputting items on social media, and the museum had a resolute following on our website.

We held Museum Day in early August and despite the fine weather, it was not as well attended as previous BBQs. With help from the local fire department, the Royal Purple, Fort La Bosse School Division and friends of the museum, the BBQ ran very smoothly.

Museum Day will be moved into July as it may have been too close to the Indoor Rodeo resulting in a lower turnout. Staff even participated in the parade.

Two board members and a volunteer took on the job of re-staining the fence this year and saved the museum a considerable sum of money.

In late August, the Winnipeg Paranormal Group staged an evening at the museum with two sessions which were well attended. With the museum board and volunteers as help, the Paranormal evening was a phenomenally successful event. Judging by the number of people who were unable to attend because of limited space, the event is likely to return next year.

Our Treasurer, Susan Ivey, has decided to step away from the day-to-day job of balancing the books for the museum after 28 years of dedicated service. She is however, staying on the Museum Board as an advisor for the grants funding program and sorting through old files to take to the Town for safe keeping. The Town of Virden will look after the books for the museum. The museum obtains its funding from Federal, Provincial, and Municipal sources and a generous grant from the Town of Virden.

Like many organizations in this community, the Museum Board is quite small. The chairperson opens each meeting with the offer to have himself impeached, but the board is aware of his old tricks and refuses his offer. The Museum Board would welcome any and all new members who undoubtedly will bring fresh ideas to the organization. Please contact Rick Kristjanson at 204-748-2808 if you are interested.

Finally, a conservator from the Association of Manitoba Museums visited the museum this summer and made several recommendations as how to improve the operation of the museum. Our manager is reviewing the report for future projects for the museum. One recommendation from the conservator was that the windows in the old building should be upgraded and the board is working with the Town as to how to proceed. Since the building is a Heritage Site, there are strict Provincial guidelines that must be followed.

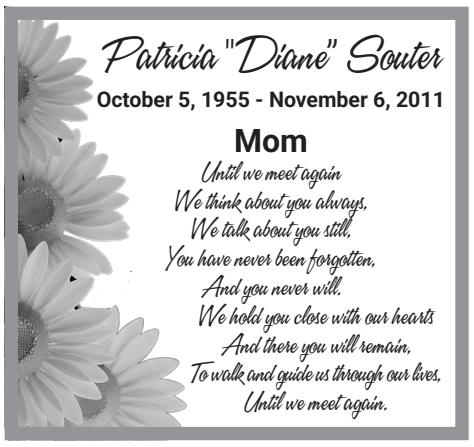
The VPHM has a new data base (Musetoba) for all the artifacts in the museum, and our manager is tirelessly inputting the items in our new program.

In conclusion, the museum is a vibrant part of the cultural fabric of Virden, and the Museum Board is looking forward to 2027 for more of the same.

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We thank all candidates for applying. Only those selected for an interview will be contacted.
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Town of Virden

STATEMENT OF OFFICIAL RESULTS

I, the undersigned, the senior election official in the local authority, certify that below is an accurate summary of the votes counted for each candidate in respect of this election.

TOTAL NUMBER OF VOTES

FOR MAYOR

Names of Candidates	Number of Votes Given
Dunning, Bruce	402 Elected
Williams, Tina	375 Not Elected

FOR COUNCILLOR

Names of Candidates	Number of Votes Given
Penner, Travis	621 Elected
Savy, Marc	610 Elected
Maxwell, Tara	549 Elected
Grumpelt, Lynette	535 Elected
Halowaty, Gord	458 Elected
Makarchuk, Tom	431 Elected
Girardin, Lomer	295 Not Elected
Hunt, Alfred	257 Not Elected

I also certify that 12 ballot papers were declined, rejected, spoiled or taken from the voting station.

Dated at Virden this 29th day of October, 2026.

Rhonda Stewart
Senior Election Official

CLASSIFIEDS

Obituary

IN LOVING MEMORY
KENNETH WAYNE (STATS) COLEMAN



Kenneth Wayne (Stats) Coleman passed away peacefully at his residence of Victoria Landing in the comfort of family and friends on Oct. 27, 2026 at the age of 78 after a two-year battle with ALS (Lou Gehrig Disease). Ken was born May 3, 1948 in Virden, MB to Albert and Doris (Price)Coleman. Ken spent his early years in the RM of Archie before the family moved to Virden when he was in Grade 4. He attended Mary Montgomery School, Goulter School and Virden Collegiate Institute before attending Brandon University, graduating in 1975.

Ken began his career in the newspaper industry in the sports department at the Brandon Sun in September 1977. Two years later, he moved to New Westminster, BC where he spent three years with the Columbian Newspaper. That was followed by three years teaching at Birtle Collegiate from 1982-83. After a short stint back at the Brandon Sun, Ken spent three years working for the Brandon Wheat Kings before finally returning to the Brandon Sun news department where he finished out his career, retiring in May 2006.

Ken's greatest passion in life was sports. Besides being an avid golfer, Ken was an equally avid volunteer, spending countless hours at hockey rinks, baseball parks and golf courses for both international, national, provincial and local events. The Brandon University Bobcat Hockey program and the Manitoba U18 (Midget) Hockey League - particular the Brandon Wheat Kings - held a special place in my heart. It was through these many activities I earned the nickname Stats and made most of my lifelong friends. Another of Ken's pastimes was genealogy, which included extensive travel and countless hours scouring the Internet to trace every branch of family. At the same time, I did research or assisted many families and friends develop their family trees.

Ken was pre-deceased by mother Doris (1958) and father Albert (1998). Ken is survived by brother Ron (Linda) Coleman, niece Rhonda Stark, nephew Darcy (Kim) Coleman, great niece Janelle (Nathan) Dufour and great nephew Brady (Delanie) Stark, along with many extended family members and wonderful friends.

Thank you to the staff at Prairie Mountain Health, the staff and residents of Victoria Landing the team at ALS and especially to Kens family and friends for their love and support during time of need. Also, a very special thank you to his cousin Doreen Angus, a very special lady, who catered to Kens every need since diagnosis of ALS.

A Celebration of Life will be held at Knox United Church, 18th and Victoria, Brandon on Wednesday, Nov 11, beginning at 1:00 PM. In lieu flowers, donations in memory of Ken may be made to Brandon Christmas Cheer, the ALS Society of Manitoba or a charity of your choosing.

Obituary

IN LOVING MEMORY
MURREY CHARLES ANDERSON
DECEMBER 16,1962 - OCTOBER 25, 2026

Murrey Charles Anderson passed away peacefully on Sunday, October 25,2026 at the age of 63. His Celebration of Life will take place on Saturday, November 7, 2026 at the Virden Legion Hall at 2:00pm.

Murrey was born in Rimbey, Alberta on December 16,1962 to Agnes and Lawrence Anderson. When he was three years old, Murrey moved with his family to the Penny farm in Virden, Mb. During this time Murrey was a ring bearer at his Uncle Brian Penny 's wedding where he met his future wife, Colleen Norton, who was the flower girl.

Murrey grew up, went to school and helped on the family farm. He graduated from High School and went to college where he earned his electrician's ticket.

In 1989 Murrey was reintroduced to Colleen and started a long-distance relationship. They were married in Minnesota in 1991. They lived in the United States for the next three years where Murrey continued to work as an electrician. They moved back to Virden in 1994 when Murrey's mother was diagnosed with cancer. He worked on the family farm once again. After a while Murrey went to Fort McMurray to work in the oil fields. When he came home, he started short haul trucking. Murrey loved trucking and worked in that field until his death.

Murrey also enjoyed spending time with his family. He collected comic books with his son, rode his motorcycle and collected Harley collectables which all the children enjoyed buying him for Christmas and birthdays. He also was a brown belt in Tae Kwon Do, liked to draw, read and continued to learn.

He had a deep faith in Jesus Christ and was always willing to help others and live out his faith.

Murrey is survived by his wife, Colleen, two daughters, Elizabeth Dawn and Hannah Lyn two sons, Noah Christopher and Zachary Thomas Anderson; As well as his sister Patsy Anderson and brother Shaun (Tina) Anderson.



Murrey was predeceased by his parents, Agnes and Lawrence Anderson.

The family would like to express their appreciation to the Virden Medical staff that cared for him throughout his sickness.

Notice

Municipality of Two Borders

NOTICE OF PUBLIC AUCTION
SALE OF LANDS FOR ARREARS OF TAXES
MUNICIPALITY OF TWO BORDERS

Pursuant to subsection 367(7) of The Municipal Act, notice is hereby given that unless the tax arrears for the designated year and costs in respect of the hereinafter described properties are paid in full to the Municipality prior to the commencement of the auction, the Municipality will on the **2nd** day of **December, 2026**, at the hour of **10:00 AM**, at Municipality of Two Borders, 138 Main Street, Melita MB, proceed to sell by public auction the following described properties:

Roll Number	Description	Assessed Value	Amount of Arrears & Costs for Which Property May be Offered for Sale (the "Arrears")
23500	LOTS 15, 16 AND 17 BLOCK 5 PLAN 15 BLTO EXC OUT OF SAID LOT 15, THE WLY 25 FEET IN NW 1/4 21-1-28 WPM - 43 THOMPSON AVE., LYLETON	L -$500 B -$21,300	NO RESERVE (Arrears $7,046.27)

The tax sale is subject to the following terms and conditions with respect to each property:

- The Municipality **may** exercise its right to set a reserve bid in the amount of the arrears and costs for any property.
- The Municipality makes no representations or warranties whatsoever concerning the properties being sold.
- If the purchaser intends to bid by proxy, a letter of authorization must be provided prior to the start of the auction.
- The successful purchaser must bring to the auction and pay to the MUNICIPALITY OF TWO BORDERS a non-refundable deposit (the "Deposit") in **cash, certified cheque or bank draft** in the amount of:
  - i) The Arrears for the property PLUS
  - ii) If the property is non-residential property, GST (5% of the Arrears) or, if the purchaser is a GST registrant, provide a GST Declaration PLUS
  - iii) A fee of $504.00 for preparation of the transfer of title documents.
- The successful bid + GST + $504 is the "Purchase Price".
- If the Purchase Price is greater than the Deposit, the balance must be paid within 20 days of the sale.
- If the Purchase Price is less than the Deposit, the excess will be refunded to the purchaser within 5 days of the sale.
- In addition to the Purchase Price, any property taxes issued, but not yet due, and any unpaid municipal utilities must be paid by the purchaser within 20 days of the sale.
- The purchaser will be responsible for registering the transfer of title documents in the land titles office, including the registration costs and land transfer tax, if any.
- The risk for the property lies with the purchaser immediately following the auction.
- The purchaser is responsible for obtaining vacant possession.

Dated this 20th day of October, 2026.

Managed by:
TAXervice

Grace Carr
Chief Administrative Officer
MUNICIPALITY OF TWO BORDERS
Phone: (204) 522-3263
Fax: (204) 522-8706

Notice

Fort La Bosse School Division

STATEMENT OF OFFICIAL RESULTS

I, the undersigned, the senior election official in the local authority, certify that below is an accurate summary of the votes counted for each candidate in respect of this election.

TOTAL NUMBER OF VOTES

FOR TRUSTEE WARD 1

Names of Candidates	Number of Votes Given
Russell, Craig	395
James, Bonnie	389
Theriault, Michael	60

I also certify that 1 ballot papers were declined, rejected, spoiled or taken from the voting station.

Dated at Town of Virden this 28th day of October, 2026.

Kent Reid
Senior Election Official

Manitoba Community Newspaper Association Province Wide Classifieds

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A century ago



Norwegian Chemical engineer, Erik Rotheim, received the first patent for an aerosol dispenser spray.

In November 1926, Prime Minister William Lyon Mackenzie King moved aggressively to secure Canada's independence on the world stage.

There were three major political milestones defined this month. The Balfour Declaration and full autonomy (November 15-22). Prime Minister Mackenzie King attended the Imperial Conference in London. There, the Balfour report was adopted, officially declaring Canada and other British Dominions completely autonomous, equal in status and no longer subordinated to the United Kingdom.

The Balfour Declaration of 1926 (The Constitutional Document). This was the declaration that fundamentally transformed the British Empire and shaped Canadian Independence.

It was a document issued at the 1926 Imperial Conference in London. It formally declared that Great Britain and its self-governing Dominions which included Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa and the Irish Free State and Newfoundland were constitutionally equal in status. It stated that they were autonomous communities in no way subordinated to one another and freely associated under a shared allegiance to the British Crown.

It was drafted by a committee chaired by Arthur Balfour, hence the Balfour Declaration. The push for independence came heavily from Canadian Prime Minister William Lyon Mackenzie King and South African Prime Minister J.B.M. Hertzog.

Why does it matter? It laid the groundwork for the 1931 Statute of Westminster, effectively creating the modern British Commonwealth and giving Canada complete legal control over its own domestic foreign affairs.

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Artists celebrate Marlene Balzar Memorial Gallery



SUBMITTED PHOTOS

"Wolf in Snow" oil painting by the late Marlene Balzar.



"Heron" oil painting by the late Marlene Balzar.

By Anne Davison
Empire-Advance

Arts Mosaic held a reception for Virden Art Club on Oct. 29. The gallery exhibition features the work of the late Marlene Balzar, a beloved member of the Virden Art Club.

Curated by her family, the memorial gallery celebrates Balzar's life and talents.

Brenda Cameron spoke on behalf of the Club expressing sympathy to her family in attendance. Cameron said she "wanted all to know what a delightful addition Marlene made to our regular meetings and classes. She will certainly be missed at our classes and gatherings."

The family made a donation to the club, suggesting the funds be applied to additional supplies and also used to bring in artistic instructors.

"We are so grateful to Marlene's family... we are honored to be recipients of such generosity," said Cameron.

Lauren Shymanski, Arts Mosaic manager said of the reception, "It was a beautiful and moving night, laughs were had, stories shared, tears shed. It was truly an honour to work with the Art Club to honour Marlene like this. I only met her a few times, but she was an incredible person."

On the Arts Mosaic website Virden Art Club invites visitors to see Marlene Balzar's work saying, "We, her fellow Virden Art Club members, hope you enjoy this look into Marlene, her engaging personality and her eclectic and inspiring works."

Guests at the reception Thursday evening enjoyed vocalist/guitarist Darrell Corbel's music, a compilation of old favs: "Bitter Green" by Gordon Lightfoot, "Poems, Prayers and Promises" by John Denver and "Both Sides Now" by Randy Scruggs.

The Memorial Gallery is on display until Nov. 13.

What a thrill!

By Lauren Halowaty
Empire-Advance

Goulter School kicked off their thrilling 'Halloweekend' on Friday, October 30th, with an energetic outdoor dance performance to Michael Jackson's iconic "Thriller!" To burn off plenty of excited pre-Halloween energy before trick-or-treating the next evening, the spirited students performed the full dance three times in a row. Mrs. Jill Radwanski did a phenomenal job bringing all the students together, from eager kindergarteners all the way up to Grade 4, to collaborate seamlessly in such a massive group activity, which is certainly no small feat!



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Goulter School students perform the "Thriller" dance, led by Mrs. Radwanski (left, in pumpkin onesie).

The students looked extra cool as they perfected their eerie zombie walks, striking spooky poses, and roaring as they lifted their claws—err, hands—from side to side. Up above, a drone captured spectacular aerial footage of the entire crowd grooving in unison. Even several enthusiastic staff members joined in on the spooky fun, showing off their best undead moves right alongside the kids. By the end of the third gruelling dance, quite a few exhausted students were truly looking zombified and ready to head back inside the warm school. It was a wonderful and memorable finale to a fantastic, spooky week. Anticipation is already high for this year's upcoming Christmas Concert at Goulter School, which is also being thoughtfully organized by the talented Mrs. Radwanski!



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November 6, 2026

Special Edition

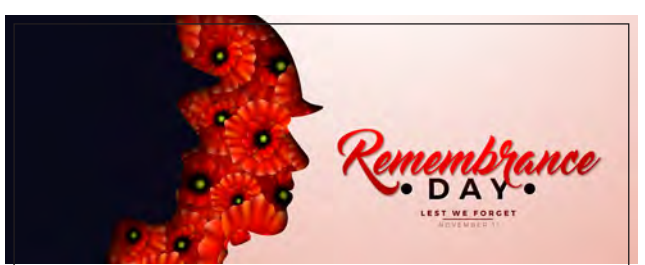




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Honouring & Remembering
CANADA'S VETERANS

Students picture Harmony in Humanity



Virden Lions and the Gr. 7 winners of the Lions Peace Poster contest (Back row adults): Lion Joan Veselovsky, Jason Routledge (Gr. 7 teacher), Lions Barry O'Grady, Lloyd Williams (President), Alex Sundell; Darrell Corbel (Gr. 7 teacher), and Hannah Cantelo (Gr. 7 teacher); (middle row) Emmy Gray, Lincoln Hunter, Abbi Rust, Amelia Genaille, Devon Kliever, Tia Bazinet, Blaer Boultbee, (front row) Ava Hedley, Mya Duncan, Austin Rowan, Conner Elliot, Callie Benett, Bryn Lee Casson, Layla Arndt, Aleeah Flannery and Jan Samson and first place poster, Braxton Goulden.



PHOTOS BY ANNE DAVISON

First place winner in the Lions International Peace Poster – Braxton Goulden

By Anne Davison
Empire-Advance

Every year Virden Lions Club involves Gr. 7 students in the Lions International Peace Poster Contest. The theme this year was "Harmony in Humanity".

On Oct. 30, organizer Lion Joan Veselovsky, along with several Virden Lions, awarded 17 students out of 49 for their careful and creative work.

Gr. 7 classes came together in the library. Enthusiastic cheers accompanied the awards.

"Every winner received $10 prize money, with the overall winner receiving $30," said Lion Joan. "It's evaluated on following the theme, plus artistic expression."

Braxton Goulden's winning poster at this 5M13 District level, which includes Lion groups in the USA, will go to the next level of competition.

The posters will hang for the remainder of 2026 in the Lions Hall. In January these posters are usually displayed in Arts Mosaic's gallery, before being returned to the young artists.









Honouring & Remembering CANADA'S VETERANS



PHOTO FROM VIRDEN PIONEER HOME MUSEUM

Some uniforms from local and surrounding area veterans, and other war memorabilia at the local Virden Pioneer Home Museum.

Service Times

Virden - Auditorium Theatre @ 10:00 doors open, service at 10:45

Oaklake - Oak Lake Community Hall @ 10:30

Kenton - Kenton Memorial Hall @ 10:45

Pipestone - Pipestone Memorial Park 10:40 am

Elkhorn - Elkhorn Legion @ 10:45am

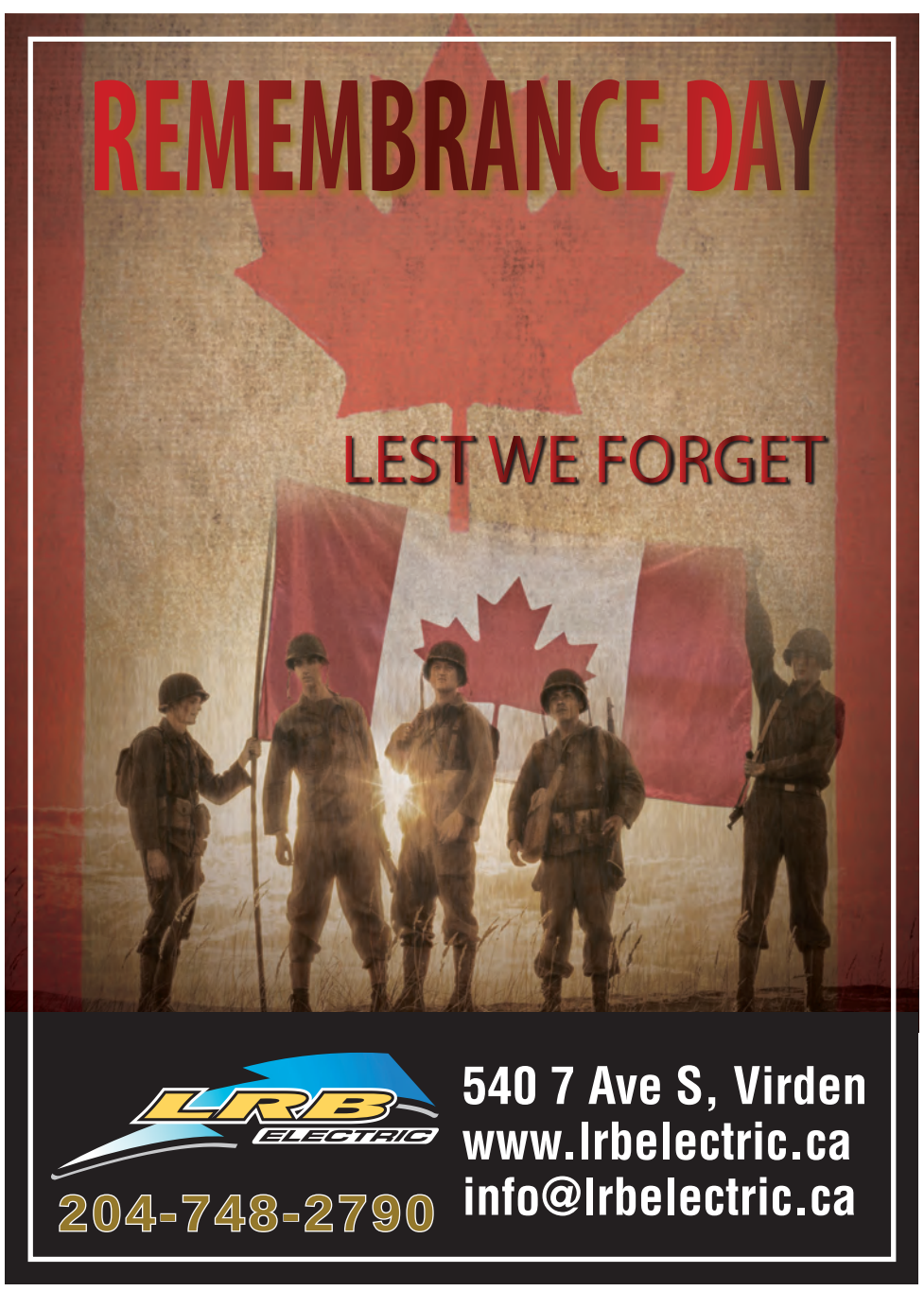
In Flanders Fields

By John McCrae

In Flanders fields the poppies blow
Between the crosses, row on row,
That mark our place; and in the sky
The larks, still bravely singing, fly
Scarce heard amid the guns below.
We are the Dead. Short days ago
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,
Loved and were loved, and now we lie,
In Flanders fields.

Take up our quarrel with the foe:
To you from failing hands we throw
The torch; be yours to hold it high.
If ye break faith with us who die
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow
In Flanders fields.







Honouring & Remembering CANADA'S VETERANS

Veterans on display at the Virden Pioneer Home Museum

PRIVATE JAMES MCLENNAN LAING



PHOTOS FROM VIRDEN PIONEER HOME MUSEUM

Story
Originally enlisting with the 181st Battalion, James was then taken on the strength of the 18th Reserve Battalion and finally the 44th Battalion once in Europe.
Personal Information:
Date of Birth: February 16, 1890
Place of Birth: Aberdeenshire, Scotland
Family: Jean Lindsay (wife), George (son), Jessie (daughter)
Religion: Presbyterian
Trade: Labourer
Physical Appearance: 5'7", fair complexion, brown eyes, brown hair
Military Information: Residence at Enlistment, Brandon, Manitoba; Enlisted, Oct. 30, 1916 in Brandon, Manitoba at the age of 26; Regimental Number, 865800; Regiment, Canadian Infantry; Unit 44th Battalion; Army Forces.
Death and Commemoration: Date, October 28, 1917; Place, Attack south of Passchendaele; Age, 27; Cause, Killed in Action; Buried/Commemorated at Ypres Menin Gate Memorial, West-Vlaanderen, Belgium.

CORPORAL JOHN STANLEY JOSLIN



Story
John was in business at a hardware store in Fairlight, Saskatchewan when he took up the call to fight. He enlisted as a private with the 78th Battalion, even after passing the officers' course, to get overseas as fast as possible. He was a member of the Lebanon Lodge #43 A.F. and A.M. in Virden and was held in the highest esteem by those in his community. His epitaph reads, 'In loving memory, Of our son and brother, He rests with God'.
Personal Information
Date of Birth: April 6, 1890
Family: William W. (father), Mary (mother)
Religion: Church of England
Trade: Hardware Merchant
Physical Appearance: 5'8", medium complexion, blue eyes, brown hair
Military Information: Residence at Enlistment, Virden, Manitoba; Date, March 16, 1916 in Brandon, Manitoba at the age of 25; Regimental Number, 15285; Regiment, Canadian Infantry; Unit, 1st Regiment Canadian Mounted Rifles Battalion; Army forces.
Death and Commemoration: Date, Sept. 29, 1918; Place, St. Olle, France; Age, 28; Cause, Killed in Action; Buried/Commemorated at: Raillencourt Communal Cemetery Extension, Nord, France.

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for glory lights the soldier's tomb,
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Honouring & Remembering
CANADA'S VETERANS

1914 War Story, General Leman



FILE PHOTO

From the story was a grainy image of General Leman, but with the help of modern technologies, we are able to see what he may have looked like in person.

By Lauren Halowaty
Empire-Advance

Sifting through the archives in the office, while maybe boring to some, brings me so much joy. It takes me back to a time that we can only read about or see portrayed in a motion picture on one of the many streaming services. Going back over a hundred years also means that all we have left are these papers and passed-down stories, with no actual people left who lived or wrote them to tell us firsthand. While I love history and all its quirks and surprises that I sometimes come across in the archives, I also encounter things that make me sad. I've cried in that back room when reading about hardships, wars, and things I'll likely never have to experience in this lifetime—not like our ancestors did.

I'm in my mid-thirties, and going to school in the '90s as a child, we often learned about World War II and were fortunate enough to hear stories from veterans straight from them. We didn't know much about World War I, but what I do know is that it started in 1914. I found this story from the Virden Empire-Advance in the October 15, 1914 issue. Reading a story from 112 years ago at the tips of my fingers sometimes feels surreal. I wanted to share it word for word, as though to take you back in time to October 1914, as if you were reading it in real time. Enjoy.

LAST AWFUL DAYS IN FORTS AT LIEGE: Graphic Account of Gallant Defence by General Leman, the Belgian Commander

This is the story of the fall of Liege in the simple graphic language of a German officer. It was told to a Dutch representative employed by a big international news bureau. General Leman's defence of Liege combined all that is noble and all that is tragic. The commander of one fort, at the moment when the bombardment was at its heaviest, went mad and shot his own men. He was disarmed and bound.

Capola and another fort were destroyed by bombs dropped from a Zeppelin. The other forts were swept away like sand castles on the seashore before the relentless waves of our 11-inch siege guns. As long as was possible, General Leman inspected the forts daily to see that everything was in order. General Leman decided to hold his ground or die. Steadily his gunners were shot down and he, himself, helped to man the guns. For some time, with a mere handful of men, he held out, but nothing could have stood against the hail of shells from our guns.

When the end was inevitable, the Belgians disabled the kit, and exploded a supply of shells kept in readiness. Before this General Leman destroyed all plans, maps and papers relating to the defences. All supplies were also destroyed.

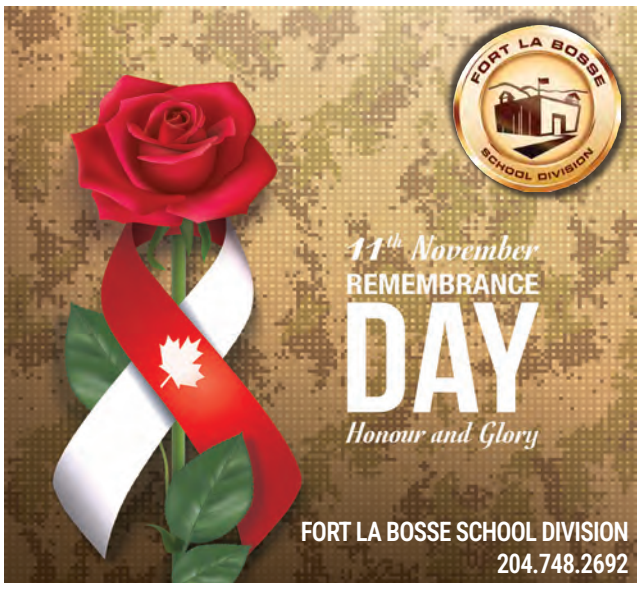
With about one hundred men, General Leman attempted to retire to a higher fort, but we had cut off their retreat. By this time our heaviest guns were position and well-placed shells tore through the cracked and battered masonry and exploded in the main magazines. Pieces of stone and concrete 25 cubic metres in size were hurled into the air. When the dust and fumes passed away, we stormed the fort across ground literally strewn with the bodies of one hundred defenders. All the men in the fort were wounded; most were unconscious. A corporal with one arm shattered valiantly tried to drive us back by firing his rifle at us.

Buried beneath the debris and pinned beneath a massive beam we found General Leman. With a gentleness and care which showed our respect for the man who had resisted us so valiantly and stubbornly, our infantrymen released the General's limp form and carried him away. We thought him dead, but he recovered consciousness, and looking around, said, "Put in the despatches that I was unconscious." We brought him to our commander, General Von Emmich, and the generals saluted. We tried to speak words of comfort to the old General, but he was heedless.

"I was unconscious, be sure to put that in your despatch," and more he would not say. Extending his hand, our commander said: 'General, you have fought gallantly and nobly held your forts.'" "General Leman replied: 'I thank you, our troops have lived up to their reputations.'"

With a smile, he added, "War is not like manoeuvres." He referred to the fact that General Von Emmich was with General Leman during the last Belgian manoeuvres. Then unbuckling his sword, General Leman tendered it to General Von Emmich. "No," replied the German commander with a bow, "Keep your sword. To have crossed swords with you is a great honor."













Honouring & Remembering
CANADA'S VETERANS

Military Service Ran Deep in Phillips Family of Findlay, MB

Submitted
By Kim MacKenzie

Seven Brothers, Two Sisters, One War

We can't begin to imagine the stress and anxiety the parents of those whose sons and daughters leave home to serve their country in time of war. Mathew and Bertha Phillips of Findlay, Manitoba raised a family of 16 children (8 boys and 8 girls). With the onset of WWII they were about to see nine of these children step forward to do their part.

Alexander (Alex) the eldest born in 1909 served overseas with the Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry (PPCLI) from 1939 – 1945. Alex saw liberation in Italy. Alex married Blanche Gonty, had three children and ran a garage in Minto until his death in 1978.

Alvin (b. 1913) and joined the Princess Patricia's serving in the horse brigade in Winnipeg. Alvin worked on the home farm, then highway construction. He married Lorna Bagnall but had no children. Alvin died in 1980.

Albert, twin to Alvin, served in the Royal Canadian Air Force on the east coast working as a member of the ground crew servicing, fueling and maintaining aircraft. Albert married Ester Boyce of Oak Lake in 1944, had one son, David. Albert passed in 1978.

Sidney Hugh Phillips (b.1914) enlisted with the PPCLI in Winnipeg on March 19, 1943. Sid spent time in Shilo in the motor pool transporting troops to the train. Sid was discharged on June 5, 1944 and sent home on hardship leave to manage the farm. Sid married Joan Duncan of Deleau in 1947, they had three sons. They continued to farm the home farm until retirement. Sid passed away in December 1997. He was a member of the Souris Legion for 60 years.

Horace, (b. 1917) enlisted in the Royal Canadian Artillery on March 17, 1941. Horace's active duty did not last long. On August 19, 1942, he jumped off a landing craft during the Dieppe Raid into over 6 feet of water. When he came up all others on the craft had been killed. Horace was taken prisoner and from there was marched to Germany where he spent the last three years of the war in a German Stalag camp. Upon his arrival home Horace farmed with his brother Sidney for a few years. He then married Mabel Lawrence and moved to Winnipeg. They had 5 children. Horace died in 1977. Horace was a member of both the St. James Legion and the Souris Legion.

Keith, (b. 1918) like his oldest brother Alex served with the PPCLI from 1939 – 1945. Serving with the Canadian Army, Keith was captured by Japanese forces during the defense of Hong Kong in December 1941. He spent the remainder of World War II enduring notoriously brutal conditions in a Japanese prison camp before being liberated at the end of the war. Keith married Lottie Chalmers, lived in Winnipeg for many years and had four children. Keith and Horace only lived two streets apart in Winnipeg.

Matthew (b.1920) eager to follow in his brother's footsteps enlisted in the PPCLI, Winnipeg June 27 1940 at 20 years of age. He completed basic training and soon thereafter transferred to the Coastal Defence Anti-Aircraft Artillery Training Centre in Halifax, NS as a Gunner. While there Matt learned that the Airborne was looking for young, fit soldiers to train as paratroopers and in 1943 he applied, was accepted and sent to Fort Benning, Georgia where he underwent an arduous training regimen at the Parachute School. Upon graduation Matt became a member of the elite First Canadian Parachute Battalion.

He was sent to England and joined the 6th Airborne Division and began training the next several months for the invasion of Normandy. In the early hours of June 6, 1944 Matt parachuted into Normandy and upon landing was met with a fierce firefight, skirmishes continued for the next few days. On June 8, 1944 Matt was wounded during an exchange of bullets and suffered injuries to his hip and left lower arm. The war was over for Matt and he began a long recovery from battle wounds both physical and mental.

Matt married Audrey Todd of Oak Lake through the years they had 9 children (6 boys & 3 girls). After the war, Matt returned to working the gold mines in Bissett MB until moving to Nelson BC in 1957. Matt worked numerous jobs until finding the perfect fit with Canada Post Office until his retirement in 1985. He was a proud member of Branch 51, Royal Canadian Legion in Nelson for over 60 years. Matthew A Phillips passed away 16 March 1997 in Nelson BC

Two of the Phillips daughters also did their part. Shirley (b.1922) and Pat (b.1927) left the small community of Findlay for Toronto where they contributed to the war effort. Shirley married in 1946 and raised three children. She passed in 1998. Pat married in 1946, had three children. Pat died in 1976.

Sons in law, Bill McDonald, married to daughter Florence was in the air force and Philip Cook, married to daughter Claire, was in the Royal Canadian Navy.

One cannot imagine the sleepless nights and the constant worry that must have consumed Matthew and Bertha back home on the farm at Findlay. Matthew Phillips would pass in 1944 before wars end. How unfortunate he would never know all his sons would make it home. The Phillips family knew sacrifice too well.

The Phillips family continued to serve into the next generation.

Kimberlee Phillips (b. 1959), the 7th child born to Matthew & Audrey, the granddaughter of Matthew & Bertha was inspired at an early age by her father's wartime service and initially joined the Navy League Cadets in Nelson BC as a Wren at 8 years of age, rising to become the first female Chief of the Corps. She later joined the Canadian Forces and had a successful career in the Communications Branch rising to the rank of Warrant Officer before retiring after 23 years of service.

Thank-you to the Phillips Family for their dedication to service.







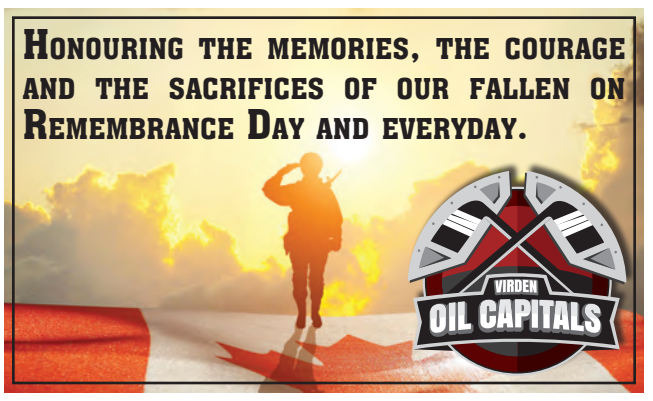












Honouring & Remembering CANADA'S VETERANS

Phillips Family of Findlay, MB

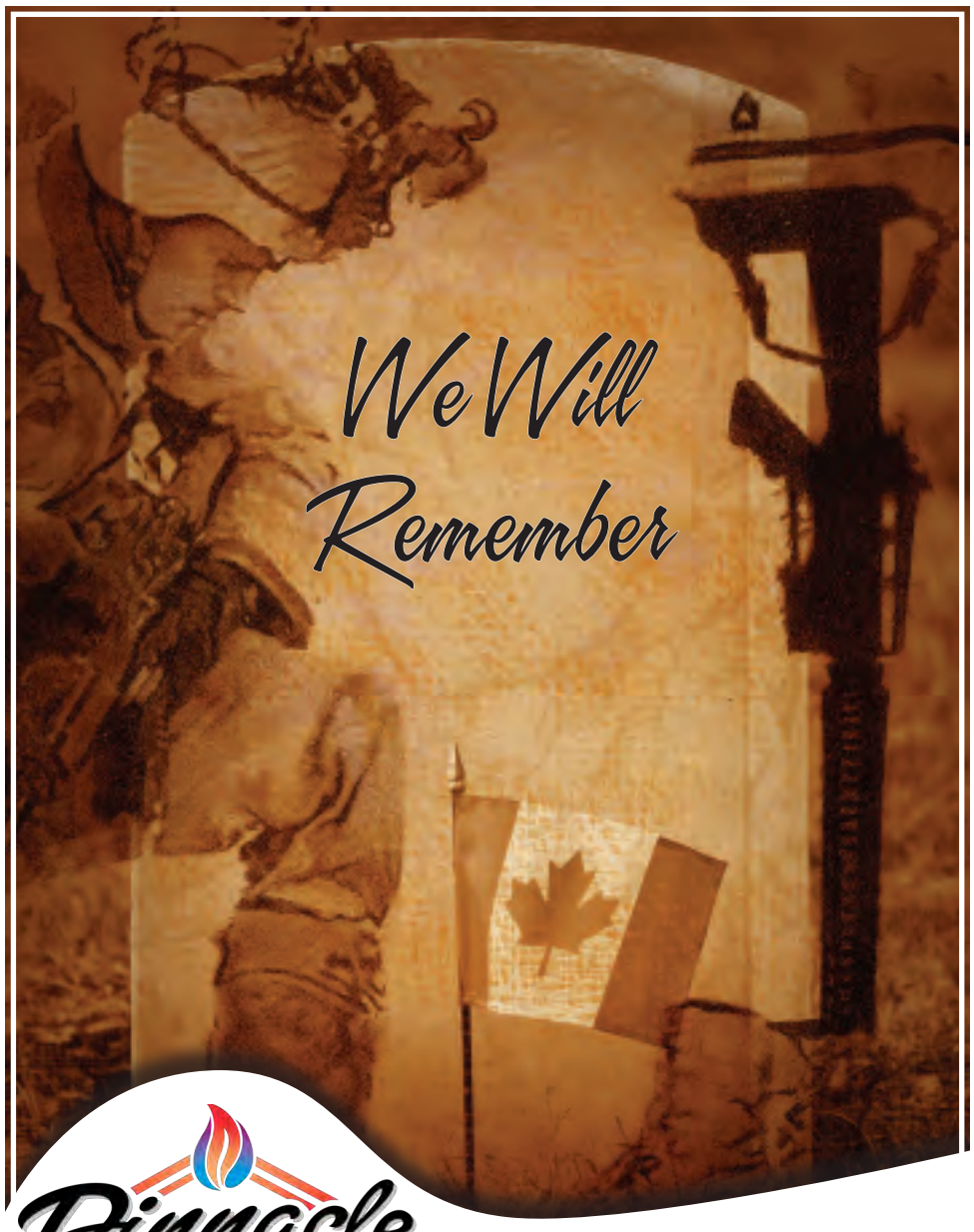


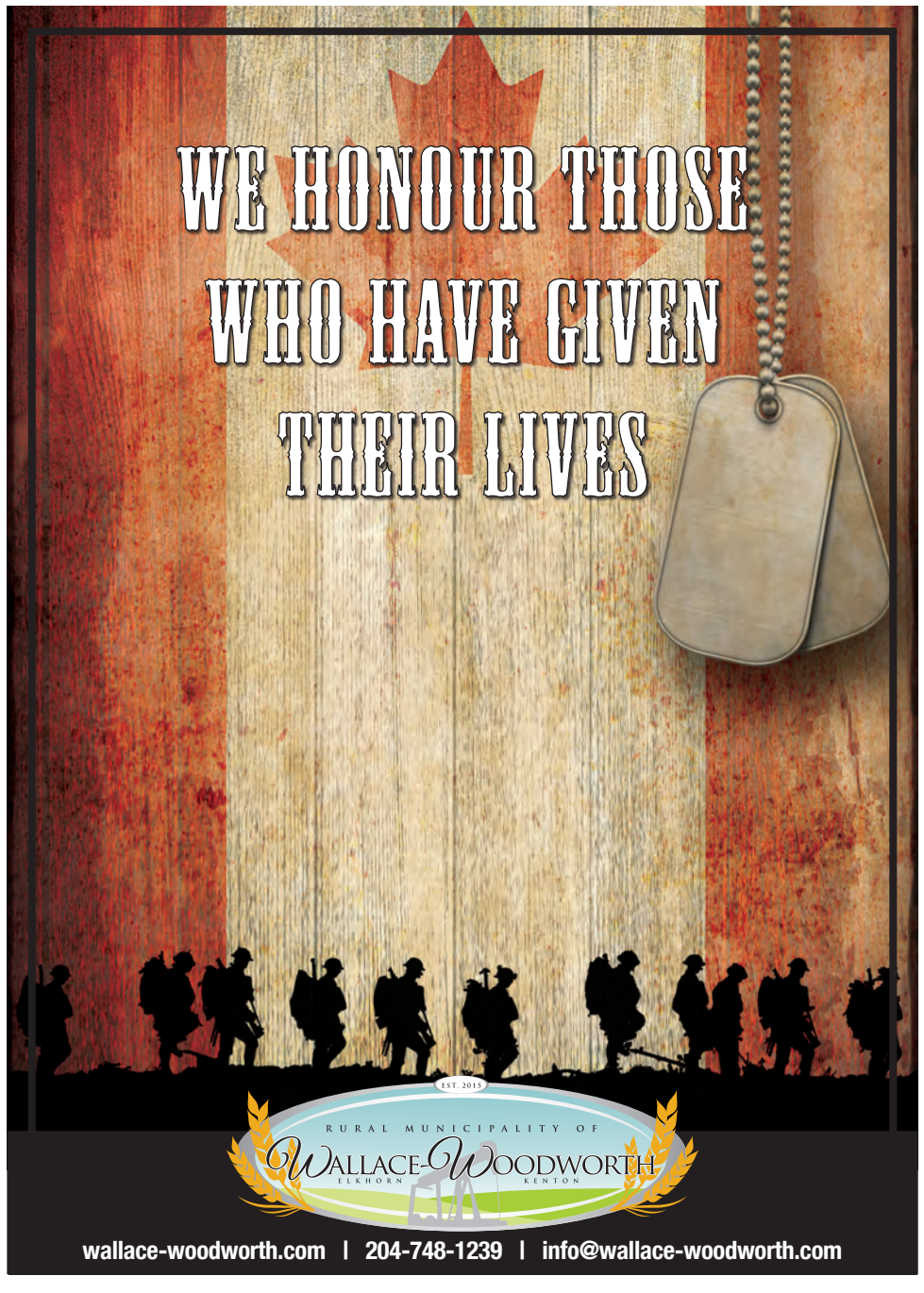
SUBMITTED PHOTO

The Phillips Brothers of Findlay, MB photo taken in 1939 after the first two had enlisted. L-R: Keith, Sid, Horace, Alvin, Bob, Matt, Ab and Alex.



An ad seen on every second page in the 1941 newspapers, recruiting men to join the Canadian Army.





Honouring & Remembering CANADA'S VETERANS

Echoes from the 1941 archives, a look at ads during a time of war

By Lauren Halowaty
Empire-Advance

Turning the yellowed, fragile pages of a 1941 edition of the Virden Empire-Advance is like stepping directly into the heart of a community mobilized for survival. Nestled between quiet reports of local church services, updates on beekeeping, and classifieds for used farm tractors lay unmistakable, bold declarations of a world at war. On nearly every page, the Canadian government and local war committees issued urgent appeals to the men and women of southwestern Manitoba. To read these newspapers today is to realize that Remembrance Day is not merely about distant battlefields in Europe or the Pacific; it is about how completely the war reached into the living rooms, banks, and main streets of towns like Virden.

"A Call to Duty" at the Local Armoury

In the summer of 1941, young men opening the Virden Empire-Advance were met with stark, heavy-inked headlines: "MEN ARE URGENTLY NEEDED FOR CANADA'S ACTIVE ARMY." The rhetoric left no middle ground. "Make no mistake about it . . . This is your call to duty . . . Canada's Freedom is Threatened . . . You are needed now," the ad declared, warning that "there's no room for talkers or skulkers!"

For a farmhand or clerk in Virden, the call was made personal and immediate. Across from news of local livestock sales, illustrations showed Canadian soldiers pointing directly at the reader: "You are needed NOW!" Accompanying ads promised a sense of purpose and pride, "Step Up and Step Out . . . In a Uniform" and "Be a Man Among Men!", offering $1.30 a day, trade training, and the chance to be a "vital cog in Canada's great mobile war machine." The path from the newsprint to the front lines was remarkably short: recruits were instructed simply to report to The Armoury, Virden.

The Home Front: Gasoline and War Savings

For those who remained in the community; farmers, store owners, mothers, and ministers, the newspaper made it clear that no one was exempt from the war effort. Directly alongside recruitment drives were conservation campaigns. One advertisement featuring a motorist under the hood of his car urged townspeople to "GO 50/50 WITH OUR FIGHTING FORCES" by driving slower and conserving fuel. "Spare and Share your Gasoline for VICTORY!" the notice read, reminding residents that every gallon saved went directly to powering the tanks and transports overseas.

Where cash was concerned, the messaging was equally direct. Under the bold, dramatic headline "Help Smash Hitler," an advertisement featuring an RCAF pilot encouraged families to purchase War Savings Certificates. Dubbed "Canada's Army of 2,000,000 Regular War-Savers," citizens were encouraged to authorize automatic monthly bank deductions, promising a 25 percent return in seven and a half years while directly funding the war effort. The slogan was simple: "You Serve by Saving."

The Quiet Power of the Contrast

What makes these 1941 archives so poignant eight decades later is how two completely different worlds sat right beside each other on a single page. Right beside an ad asking citizens to "Help Smash Hitler," a small column titled "Ebor District News" noted that local women had dispatched a box of knitted sweaters, mitts, and pyjamas to the Red Cross in Winnipeg. Just below it, St. Paul's Church posted its schedule for Sunday morning Communion. On another page, notices for lost cattle and sewing machine repairs sat right next to urgent calls for artillerymen and tank drivers.

That striking contrast captures the true spirit of Remembrance Day. The people who answered those urgent ads were not anonymous figures from history books; they were local citizens who paused their ordinary prairie lives, their farming, their church services, their family gatherings, to step into uniform or sacrifice at home.

As we pause this Remembrance Day, looking back through the pages of the Empire-Advance reminds us that peace was made not just by armies of young men, but by real neighbours from our own small town.



An ad from the 1941 newspaper; "Smash Hitler".

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FOR THOSE WHO LEAVE
NEVER TO RETURN
& FOR THOSE WHO RETURN
BUT ARE NEVER THE SAME.
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We reflect on the contributions made by those who lost their lives in service to our country, our values and the preservation of peace.
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