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FEBRUARY 20, 2026 | EMPIRE: VOL 121 NO 27 / ADVANCE: VOL 140 NO 29 | PUBLISHING FRIDAYS

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## The first annual Jeff Gervin Memorial tournament



Sensei Ed Dyck in action during the individual competition.



Sensei (Dr.) Jeff Gervin deeply missed by all that knew him.

By Nancy Jo Moller  
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

The First Annual Jeff Gervin Memorial Tournament was held at Virden Collegiate Institute (VCI) on Feb. 13 to Feb. 15, 2026. Dr. Jeff Gervin, a veterinarian in Boissevain passed away in March 2025. Sensei Jeff Gervin is recognized as having spent a "lifetime" training and was a respected 7th Dan black belt and a member of the Shintani Wado Kai Karate Federation. The Federation is a non-profit inclusive organization, modeling Hanshi Shintani's kindness and humility, through the teaching of his traditional karate and Shindo. The President Sensei Denis Labbe came from St. Catharines, ON to attend this memorial. Participants and fans arrived in Virden from Edmonton, AB to Perth, ON, as well, some people traveled all the way from North Dakota, USA. The younger participants wearing their white belts to the more accomplished black belts all reflected the thought that this is not a sport community but a family.

Karate is a martial art that extends far beyond physical self-defence, deeply embedding core values of respect, kindness and family into its practice. Teachers of karate are addressed as "Sensei".

Sensei Alex Arndt, a 3rd Dan black belt from Pierson, MB, worked tirelessly to organize this event. He briefly described the

event and identified that the best person to describe Sensei Jeff Gervin would be Sensei Ed Dyck. The tremor in Sensei Ed's voice when he was asked if we could speak after his competition spoke volumes about the type of man Jeff had been.

As soon as you walked into the VCI, the show of respect by all those that attended was apparent. All participants bowed before entering and leaving the "dojo", a dedicated respectful training hall for practicing karate. The excited voices of participants ceased as the opening of the event began and all faces showed the extreme focus necessary to excel at this sport.

Watching the individual competition, you could see the participants concentration was amazing. As they entered the ring, they bowed to the judges and proceeded forward into the centre of the ring. Their faces became blank as all other thoughts were removed from their minds, as they focused on their teachings. The crowd was silent as they performed their lightning-fast moves before a panel of 5 judges. The rustle of their karate gi (uniform) was the only noise. They backed away from the ring when their performance was over, as turning their back would be a blatant show of disrespect.

read more about the Memorial tournament on page 2...

**VIRIDEN OIL CAPITALS**

**HOME GAME FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 27 VS. WINNIPEG BLUES**

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*Inside...*



**MUSEUM MANAGER P2**

**VIRIDEN OIL KINGS**

**MEET THE OIL KINGS P8-9**

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# Virден museum: Truth is stranger than fiction

## Jenn Jaffray is Virден Pioneer Home Museum year-round manager



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Jenn Jaffray at work in Virден Pioneer Home Museum.

By Anne Davison  
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

Imagine coming upon a backroad mansion. The door creaks open and within the dust and cobwebs are ghosts of antiquity. The table is set, cook pots sit cold on the woodburning stove, photos, furniture and all, just as it was - 150 years ago.

But - the mysteries of the Victorian past are available to explore, minus dust and cobwebs.

For a small fee Jenn Jaffray gives guided tours through Virден Pioneer Home Museum, introducing guests to a

bygone era. Making sense of the antiques within is part of her day-to-day work.

Jenn and her husband Jared, (Town of Virден Assistant to Chief Administrative Officer) moved from Brandon to Virден over a year ago. Jenn was initially hired as the summer museum manager. Now, she's thrilled to have a year-round role with the Pioneer Home Museum.

Jenn was ready to take on this role, she tells: "I have been researching genealogy for more than 35 years. Moving to the great town of Virден 1.5 years ago has certainly been an adventure.

"Upon moving here, I contacted the museum right away, wanting to volunteer. Previously I had a home daycare in Brandon for over 15 years, I needed a change.

"I joined the museum board and have been employed since May 2025 as the manager."

Traditionally, Virден's museum is open May through September with summer staff doing the cleaning and touring guests while faithful members of the museum board wrestle with ways and means to organize, index and present the museum's many artifacts.

Now, Jenn has taken much of that load off board members shoulders in a position that has transitioned to a year-round job.

"Summer is our busiest time, and I manage the day-to-day operations, staff, and completing museum projects to build connections and tell stories of Virден and the Victorian era."

Indeed, she's bringing relevance to the artifacts by helping the public get to know the people of the past and sharing the secrets held within the pioneer home.

Jaffray has just updated the James Bolton (family) area, and the church displays.

A story teller, but of fact not mere fancy, Jenn's research is piecing together the stories of Virден pioneers and their relevance in today's world, like the discovery that Virден's Ivens Street has a connection with Justin Trudeau (VEA Feb. 13 issue, pg.2).

Be it glorious or roguish historical research helps to connect Canadians.

Jenn says, "There are many other projects in the

works such as the founding families of Virден flip chart display, a book on all the mayors of Virден, a book on the history of the (museum) house and formation of the museum...."

She explains her purpose in the pioneer home museum and says, "My work ensures that local artifacts, photographs, and personal histories are not simply stored away, but interpreted and shared in meaningful ways.

"Virден's history is deeply significant and wanting to share these stories, help people understand where it came from, strengthen Virден's identity, and inspire pride for future generations."

Jenn is happy to help people search out their family history through the Pioneer Home Museum archives. "If anyone needs family history help or wants to book a tour, please contact me at virденpioneeremuseum@gmail.com."



## The 2025 R.M. of Wallace-Woodworth Ward 2 Water Utility Annual Report

is now available on the R.M. Website  
[www.wallace-woodworth.com](http://www.wallace-woodworth.com)

Paper copies can be picked up at the Virден Municipal Office. Please contact the office prior to pick-up.

# Memorial karate tournament

Continued from page 1

The bout portion of the competition involved two members. They bowed to each other as they entered the ring. The duration of the bout depends on the age, rank and gender of the competitors. Fighters score points using kicks, punches and takedowns. The fight is stopped each time a point is scored or a foul occurs. The camaraderie of opponents was evident as they coached each other for future bouts.

After the black belt bouts, Sensei Ed Dyck spoke about what Sensei Jeff meant to the karate world.

Ed Dyck said, he was fortunate to have Sensei Jeff Gervin as an instructor and coach. High esteem showed in his voice as he spoke of Sensei Jeff and their travels. Sensei Jeff was part of the Canadian National Team and competed in numerous locales including Italy, Scotland and Las Vegas. Ed fondly remembers competing in Italy with Sensei Jeff. They walked into the competition area and saw that the medals were massive, Jeff stated, "I'm going to take one of those pie plates home." Being a man of his word, Jeff carried home the Gold Medal. A humble man, Jeff kept his medals in a pail, he didn't need to showcase his wins, he knew what he had accomplished.

He said one of Jeff's memorable replies when asked if he was ready for a competition was "are they ready for me?"

If anyone has the opportunity to attend one of these matches, it is a learning experience into ancient martial arts that shouldn't be missed.



PHOTOS BY NANCY JO MOLLER

Shintani Wado Kai Karate Federation.

# MORE BROS.

## Simmentals

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## Community Volunteer Income Tax Program gearing up within PMH region

**Submitted**  
By PMH

The Community Volunteer Income Tax Program (CVITP) is a free service to help low-income individuals with simple tax situations complete and file their income tax and benefit return. Last year in the Prairie Mountain Health (PMH) region, volunteers helped process 4,350 tax returns and the total benefits and refunds to residents who used CVITP to complete their taxes was over \$10 million. The average return to an individual client was around \$3,500. In Brandon, 14 volunteers helped clients with their returns, and in the rural areas, there were 12 volunteers who gave of their time.

CVITP is a collaboration between community organizations and the Canada Revenue Agency. Through this program, community organizations such as PMH

bring together volunteers who prepare income tax returns for free. This program helps ensure that seniors, newcomers, students and all low-income residents maintain access to all the benefits to which they are entitled. This includes GST refunds, Canada Child benefit, MB Rent assist, Disability Tax credits, Pharmacare deductibles and more.

You can get your income tax done FREE through this program if you fall under one of the categories:

- One person with income under \$35,000/ \*Two persons with income under \$45,000
- \*Three persons with income under \$47,500 / \*Each additional dependent add \$2,500

**Local drop off sites:**

Elkhorn-Border Regional Library Elkhorn Branch; March 2 to May 1; Tues. Thurs. and Sat. between 9am and 5pm.

Reston Health Centre; March 2 to Oct. 30; Mon.-Fri. from 9am to 4:30pm

Hamiota Health Centre; March 2 to Oct. 30; Mon.-Fri. between 8am to 4:30pm

Virden Health Unit; 480 King Street, E. from March 2 to May 1; Mon. - Fri. 9am to 12pm and 1pm to 4:00pm.

**Brandon drop off sites:**

The Brandon drop-off site is located at 7th Street Health Access Centre, 20-7th Street. Drop-offs at 7th Street start Feb. 23 and run until Oct. 30, Mon.-Fri., from 1:30pm until 4:30pm. Brandon Minor Injury and Illness Clinic is offering an appointment service on Mondays from March 2 to April 27. Call (204) 578-2590 to book an appointment.

Outside of Brandon, several PMH sites are accepting drop-offs starting March 2. For a current listing of times and dates, please visit [www.prairiemountainhealth.ca/cvityp](http://www.prairiemountainhealth.ca/cvityp) or check us out on Facebook, X and Instagram @PrairieMtHealth.

Participants are asked to bring their applicable forms (including T3, T4, T5, T5007) along with any receipts for daycare expenses, charitable donations, rent, tuition and medical expenses not paid by an insurance company.

If you have questions regarding the Community Income Tax Volunteer Program, can not reach/access the sites, or would be interested in volunteering or having the program come to your community, email CVITP@pmh-mb.ca or call the 7th Street Health Access Centre at 204-578-4800.

## Manitoba Government launches grocery study, targets predatory pricing

**Submitted**  
By MB GOVERNMENT

**Study will help identify ways to lower grocery costs for Manitobans: Kinew, Sala**

The Manitoba government is launching a provincial grocery study to identify new ways to reduce food costs and improve affordability for Manitobans, Premier Wab Kinew and Finance Minister Adrien Sala announced today.

“Manitobans are feeling the cost of groceries every week,” said Kinew. “As a government, we have a responsibility to make sure life is affordable for families. This study is about going after the practices that are driving up prices and making sure grocery prices work for people, not against them.”

As part of the study, the Manitoba government will examine predatory or differential pricing practices, including cases where companies use consumer data or purchasing patterns to raise prices. These practices can result in some consumers paying more than others for the same groceries.

Consumers often cannot see or understand these pricing practices at the checkout, the premier noted, and this study will assess how pricing practices affect affordability in Manitoba and identify options to improve transparency, fairness and consumer protection.

“As finance minister, my job is to focus on two budgets, the province’s budget and your household budget,” said Sala. “This work will help identify real, workable steps to bring grocery costs down and make life more affordable for Manitobans.”

Governments across Canada have taken steps to address

grocery affordability, Manitoba is taking a leadership role by launching one of the first comprehensive, province-led studies focused on understanding grocery pricing practices and identifying concrete actions to lower costs for consumers.

“It’s great to see Manitoba leading the way on ensuring a more free and fair market for its citizens,” said Vass Bednar, managing director, Canadian Shield Institute and co-author of The Big Fix. “This study comes at a critical time, as these kinds of exploitative pricing tactics risk the fundamentals of a free market. The focus needs to be on ensuring a competitive market, grounded in privacy legislation that doesn’t allow anyone to use citizen’s data to exploit them.”

The grocery study delivers on a commitment made in the 2025 throne speech, the minister noted, and will take a comprehensive look at food prices and affordability provincially, including access, availability, market concentration and pricing practices that contribute to higher grocery costs.

The study will build on recent Manitoba government measures, including freezing the price of a one-litre jug of milk through 2026, reducing restrictive covenants in the grocery sector to increase competition, expanding the universal school nutrition program to ensure children have access to food at school and doubling the prenatal benefit to help expectant parents manage food costs.

The Manitoba government will share updates as the study progresses and will continue working to address the rising cost of living across the province, the minister added.

### THE HAMIOTA DISTRICT HEALTH CENTRE FOUNDATION INC. BURSARY FUND

• Invites 4th and 5th year students enrolled in a health-related program to apply for this \$2000.00 bursary. Contact [vwilson@inetlinkwireless.ca](mailto:vwilson@inetlinkwireless.ca) or [bennett2@goinet.ca](mailto:bennett2@goinet.ca)

• Invites Grade 12 students wishing to enroll in a health-related program to apply for this \$1000.00 bursary.

Contact [vwilson@inetlinkwireless.ca](mailto:vwilson@inetlinkwireless.ca) or [bennett2@goinet.ca](mailto:bennett2@goinet.ca)

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MARCH 31, 2026



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**Greg NESBITT**  
MLA for Riding Mountain

204.759.3313  
Toll Free 844.877.7767  
[gregnesbittmla@mymts.net](mailto:gregnesbittmla@mymts.net)  
#7 - 515 4th Avenue  
Burlington Place, Shoal Lake, MB

# Tundra

By Chad Carpenter



## Four score...

**E**ighty. At one time the age of eighty was indicative of an old person. Truthfully, I recall thinking my grandparents were ancient when they were in their sixties. Now I am eighty years old. I don't know exactly what I think of that because I've never been this age before. I recall a rather unique individual that asked me 'how old would you be if you didn't know how old you were?' Good question, cause I am having difficulty seeing myself as four score.

There has been a great deal of reflection and introspection this month. First I looked at the decades. One to ten. Lived with my parents, an older sister and a younger sister in the Kane District before moving to Graysville. Hated the move, walked home from school one day.

Ten to twenty. Got to love school, it was a safe place. Excelled in sports, volleyball team, curling and track and field. Was selected to attend the United Nations Seminar in Winnipeg - first time I attended Rainbow Stage- was the class valedictorian, and enjoyed school so much I attended an extra year and still didn't master European History for the 1500's!

Now twenty to thirty was a gong show! I married, bore two children, divorced (I realized quite quickly that God had not created me to be a human punching bag!), settled into being a single parent, remarried, gaining two bonus children. There were a number of moves in that decade. Was blessed with a stable home, another child, another move - this time into the Riding Mountain area - with new adventures.

By the time I was forty the older children were marrying and leaving home and life was full and rich. Fifty to sixty sped by. Grandchildren filled our home and our hearts. One more major move, off the farm and onto the acreage. Challenges and adventures there!

Sixty to seventy. Accepted the loss of my partner, support and cheerleader after forty years and one day of marriage. Experienced much joy and deep sorrow in that decade. The grandchildren were marrying and gifting me with great grandchildren. I was gaining training for the work I so enjoy.

Seventy to eighty. I was blessed with a relationship with a man of honour and integrity, humour and wisdom. Six years of loving and living together, another deep grief. I purchased a home. The first time I was the only one in one the decision making, and I still love it. Children, grandchildren and great grandchildren still fill my life with love and laughter.

Four score. And in all those years I have been privileged to travel: on family camping trips, visiting family all over the world, trips with friends and family. From coast to coast to coast, driving. Major flights to Australia, Malaysia and Thailand, Moscow, Paris (x2), Great Britain (x2), Iceland, Iona (x2), Holland, Poland, Ireland and who knows where next!

Eighty years old. Through it all, for all times, my anchor is my faith. "Many things about tomorrow I don't seem to understand. But I know who holds tomorrow and I know who holds my hand."

## Some things that need to be said

**I**n the midst of terror, turmoil and trouble in our world, I feel there are some things that need to be said and passed on.

Just because I (or anybody else) says things doesn't mean you have to agree. But just because we don't agree, also doesn't mean different ideas shouldn't be spoken.

I believe that the English language has always been evolving but I also believe that our language has not been improving. There are words and phrases being tossed around today that have abandoned any relation to root meanings. Our language is being used both carelessly and maliciously in attempts to re-shape our concepts of human endeavour, health and culture.

I also believe we are being flooded with information from both mainstream media and social media that is mostly used to distract us from important issues of family and community. I am mostly beyond caring what politicians say about the United States or any other parts of the world except Canada, more specifically, I care about Manitoba and even more precisely western Manitoba.

It's important to know about other areas of the world but no matter how much we care, no matter how much we worry or despair, it isn't going to change much. At the very least, we should swap despair for prayer as our prayers will do more good than worry or despair.

Events at Tumbler Ridge last week were very disturbing but they weren't surprising. Mass killings are becoming commonplace even in Canada. Perpetrators of such crimes are very sick people and they no doubt need help long before they act out their horrid fantasies. Regardless of where the mental illness comes from, would be harm-doers need help, quickly and firmly.



- I am very disappointed that we only take relatively shallow attempts to protect people from harmful actions to themselves and others. I have little or no patience with safe drug centres. Hard drug addicts are breaking the law, are a danger to themselves and to others. They need to be held in a safe environment until they have recovered. That would be costly but it would save policing and healthcare costs and be more beneficial to hard drug addicts. The same applies to homeless (unhoused) people. We aren't actually short of housing in Canada when we consider how many people own multiple homes. That situation has existed for centuries in Western culture and it's not likely to change unless we switch to communism and that hasn't worked out all that well.

If we have to slow the level of immigration and foreign student inflows, so be it. Not my first choice but until we can catch up on housing, there doesn't appear to be a better choice.

- Some people will be upset by this next statement but humans and animals are born male or female. There are rare intersex exceptions in the human population but it's less than .02 per cent. In cattle, there can be an intersex or hermaphroditic specimens. I have actually only seen that situation once. It is very rare.

I have always felt that all children should be encouraged by loving par-

ents or guardians to become whatever they want to become. In today's world almost every occupation under the sun is available and attemptable for anyone. I don't buy into the idea that you can become whatever you want to be as there are some realistic limits. In my own case, growing up to be all of five foot nine and weighing over 200 pounds, there was scant chance that I could make it to the university pole vaulting team.

My message is don't let anyone tell you (including yourself) that you can't achieve realistic goals and you will be successful and content.

And I carefully use the word content, not happy. In between my second and third year university, I decided I was going to quit, drop out. I went to the Student Advisor, Doctor Anna Storgaard and said I wasn't happy. She asked, "Whoever promised you would always be happy"? I realized nobody had promised me happiness. Looking back not only did I know what Dr. S was telling me but after almost 60 years later, I have almost always been content. Content to finish university, I have also been very content to be a politician at all three levels of government, a husband for 57 years, a father, grandfather and great grandfather. And yes, content with many friends and customers.

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

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# Miniota News

**Submitted**

By LINDA CLARK

The Birtle Collegiate Falcons hockey team is comprised of students from Birtle, Shoal Lake and Rosburn. Our Miniota students are Logan Armitage, Dallen Brown, Landon Clark, Maddox Couvier, Rain Gies, Colby Howard, Liam Lelond and Jake Muir; Birtle students are Blake Aitchison, Corbin Bell, Kyler Bray, Ashton Evans, Gracy Lee, Brody Lane, Malcolm Mc-

Arthur, Blake Ryley-Peterson and Reid Stainer; Shoal Lake students Brendan Hagyard, Chase Myhill, Aiden Stebelleski and Colby Tataryn; and from Rosburn Reid Luhowy. Coaches are Birtle teachers Derek Cross and Keifer Johnston and manager is Julie Bray. On Friday evening the Falcons held their 'Stick It to Cancer' fundraiser with a game against the Hamiota Huskies. The team with much parent and community support raised over \$15,000 to be divided

between the Hamiota Chemo Unit and the Russell Cancer Unit with a 50/50, silent auction prizes and the auctioning of their pink and white jerseys. Congratulations to all on this wonderful fundraiser and evening!

Terry and Jana Joseph are excited for the arrival, Feb. 13, of their twin granddaughters, Aria and Brynn, born to Taryn and John Fouillard, and big brothers Mack and Briggs of St. Lazare. Congratulations to you all!

Saturday, Feb. 14 was the 2 on 2 bonspiel at Miniota with 18 rinks participating and each rink receiving a cash prize.

In the evening, eight Valentine's Day Trivia Night teams' skills were tested with Risky Quizness. Mark, Cindy and Daniell Morton won 1st place.

Brittany Brown, in her own words of 'this has been a totally life changing experience' travelled to Puerto Plata in the Dominican Republic with three dentists, five assistants and two hygienists from Prairie Life Dental of Virden. They travelled with Shine the Light Initiative Missions Organization which is run out of Winnipeg. This mission focuses on providing fee dental care to the less fortunate, as well as selecting families to re-

ceive much needed newly built homes in the community of El Javillar. This year a total of 68 travelled with Shine the Light from Virden, Winnipeg and Toronto, and while they were there they built new homes for four different families along with seeing hundreds of dental patients. Brittany was fortunate to also meet the family who received the home she helped build, and a special ceremony was held on Feb. 14 to present the new homes to the families, prior to the group flying home on Sunday. Job well done Brittany! We are proud of you!

We are excited here in Miniota for the opening of

the new Miniota Thrift store presently being organized. This new business is in the Miniota CDC building which also houses OPAM (the former hairdressing salon). We shall keep you posted on an opening date and details.

"On this road called LIFE, take the GOOD with the Bad, SMILE through the SAD, LOVE what you have, and REMEMBER what you had. Always FORGIVE, but never FORGET. LEARN from mistakes, but don't DWELL on them. People CHANGE, things go wrong, but the RIDE goes on."

**Town Office: 204-748-2440**

**Viriden Landfill: 204-748-6033**

**Tundra Oil & Gas Place: 204-748-2736**



**Animal Control: 204-851-5881**

**Facility Bookings: 204-748-2440**

**Emergency After Hours: 204-851-5540**

## Flower & Garden Caretaker

### Employment Opportunity

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

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

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

Please forward resume with cover letter to:

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

## Upcoming Council Meetings

March 3 and 17

Council Meetings start at 7:00 PM

## Tax Prepayment Discounts

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

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

| Month of Payment | Discount Rate | Savings on \$1000.00 |
|------------------|---------------|----------------------|
| February         | 2.00%         | \$ 20.00             |
| March            | 1.75%         | \$ 17.50             |
| April            | 1.50%         | \$ 15.00             |
| May              | 1.25%         | \$ 12.50             |
| June             | 1.00%         | \$ 10.00             |
| July             | 0.75%         | \$ 7.50              |

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

## Employment Opportunities

### Summer Employment

- Green Team
- Head Lifeguard
- Assistant Head Lifeguard
- Lifeguard Instructor
- Assistant Lifeguard

For more information about any of the postings above, please visit [www.virden.ca/p/employment-opportunities](http://www.virden.ca/p/employment-opportunities).

Resumes with cover letter can be submitted **until April 1, 2026** to:

Faye Pope – Office Manager, Town of Virden  
Box 310, Virden MB R0M 2C0  
office.manager@virden.ca

## Public Notice - Pesticide Program

Public Notice is hereby given that the Town of Virden intends to conduct the following pesticide programs during 2026:

1. To control noxious weeds within the Town limits of the Town of Virden. The projected dates of application will be from April 1, 2026 to October 31, 2026. The herbicides to be used include one or more of the following: **Picloram \* Amitrol \* Target \* Transorb \* 2, 4-D Ester**
2. To control noxious weeds at the waste disposal grounds and surrounding area in the R.M. of Wallace, located on SE 24-11-26W. The projected dates of application will be from April 1, 2026 to October 31, 2026. The herbicides to be used include one or more of the following: **Picloram \* Round-up \* Target \* Primatrol \* 2, 4-D Ester Atrazine \* Amitrol**
3. To control rats at the waste disposal grounds at various times during the coming year using the **rodenticide Bromadiolone**.
4. To control the following insect pests including grasshoppers, mosquitoes, elm bark beetles, canker worms, etc. within the limits of the Town of Virden. The projected dates of application will be from May 1, 2026 to October 31, 2026. The insecticides to be used include one or more of the following: **Cygon 480EC \* Vectobac \* Cholorphyrifos**

Objections to the proposed program may be submitted in writing within fifteen (15) days of the publication to:

Manitoba Environment and Climate  
Environmental Approvals Branch  
Box 35, 14 Fultz Blvd.  
Winnipeg, MB R3Y 0L6

## HELEN DRYSDALE

## OUT OF HELEN'S KITCHEN

As I was browsing my older cookbooks, the 1988 Hazel M. Kellington Second edition cook book came up. Part of the forward for the book by Principal John Nelson says, "The last edition of The Hazel M. Kellington, (1982) sold 3000 copies. We know of some of the books that have gone to Australia, Europe, The British Isles and to every Canadian province." Wow! That was a well-travelled cookbook. As I reminisced over the well-worn, stained pages I just couldn't resist sharing several of the recipes. I treasured these community compiled books for their personal names and recipes. I hope these recipes provide inspiration for your meals this week.

**Dill Sauced Meatloaf**

|  |                                   |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| 1 1/2 lb. ground beef, mixed with pork | 1 medium onion, chopped (1/2 cup) |
| 1/2 cup soft bread crumbs (1 slice)    | 1/2 cup bottled dill pickle juice |
| 1 egg                                  | 1/2 tsp. salt                     |
| 1/4 tsp. pepper                        | 1/2 cup chopped dill pickle       |
| 1/2 cup ketchup                        | 1/4 cup water                     |
| 2 Tbsp. brown sugar                    | 1 tsp. Worcestershire sauce       |

Mix first 7 ingredients until well blended. Shape into a loaf in a baking or bread pan. Combine dill pickle, ketchup, water, sugar, and Worcestershire sauce. Pour over loaf after the first 20 minutes of baking. Bake in a 350 F oven for 1 hour and 15 minutes.

**German Apple Pancakes**

|                                     |                                    |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1 1/4 cups sifted all-purpose flour | 2 1/2 tsp. baking powder           |
| 3 Tbsp. sugar                       | 1/2 tsp. salt                      |
| 1/4 cinnamon                        | 2 eggs, yolks and whites separated |
| 1 cup milk                          | 3 Tbsp. butter or oil              |

1 cup pared and shredded apples

Topping: sour cream & brown sugar

Stir together the flour, baking powder, sugar, salt and cinnamon. Stir in the egg yolks, milk, melted butter or oil. Shred the apples and immediately add to the batter. Fold in the stiffly beaten egg whites. Drop by tablespoons and bake on greased griddle until bubbly. Turnover and brown on the other side. Serve with a spread of sour cream, sprinkled with brown sugar.

**Coconut Oatmeal Cookies**

This recipe I have made many times. I have never used the walnuts and baked them at 350 F. They are delicious cookies.

|                      |                    |
|----------------------|--------------------|
| 1 cup shortening     | 1 cup brown sugar  |
| 1 cup white sugar    | 2 eggs             |
| 1 tsp. vanilla       | 1 3/4 cup flour    |
| 1 tsp. baking powder | 1 tsp. baking soda |
| 2 cups coconut       | 1 cup walnuts      |
| 2 cups rolled oats   |                    |

Combine all ingredients together. Roll into balls and flatten with a fork. Bake at 325 F until brown.

## Steppin' up with confidence

**Submitted**

BY KRISTA PEDERSON

"The more you do, the more you can do, and the more you want to do." (Steppin' up with confidence manual.)

I find this to be true in other areas of life as well. Whether it is learning a new card game, or a new dance step, the enjoyment grows as you gain ability.

Steppin' Up with Confidence is a program developed in partnership with Active Aging in Manitoba. Peer leaders receive training, and lead classes, from 20 minutes to an hour in length.

The leaders bring their own energy and style into class, but the exercises are based on the training we've received.

In addition to exercises led in the 55+ buildings in the area, there are classes held at the Virden Legion, 540-8th Ave S, at 9:30am, Tuesdays and Thursdays. We end up having fun, while we're working to be stronger...the enjoyment comes quickly when we gather together,

with the promise of a coffee and a visit afterwards.

All are welcome to join!

As we age, we encounter new challenges, and we want to be ready to meet them. Exercise helps both body and mind and keeps us able to meet what comes our way. SUWC is designed to benefit any age, at any stage. We start from where you are at and build from there. The participants claim an increase in strength, flexibility, and endurance.

Of course, it is important to check with your doctor when starting any new exercise program.

Although we suggest modifications for exercises, so that you can participate, a professional, like a physiotherapist, will have better advice for your specific needs.

The aim is to keep us active, healthy and independent...and find some enjoyment on the way...Come and join us!

## Police Report

## Westman RCMP Service Report for Feb. 8 to 14

**Submitted**

BY WESTMAN RCMP

During this week, Westman RCMP received a total of 65 calls for service. Some of these calls for service include 20 traffic offences, 5 Assistance to Canadian Agencies/General Public, 5 Assaults, 2 Traffic Collision(s), 1 Mental Health Act(s), 6 Mischief files, 5 Break and Enter files, and 1 Fraud file.

On Feb. 9, RCMP received a dispatch call regarding an assault that took place the previous night in the Settlement of Sioux Valley Dakota Nation. RCMP attended the residence and spoke to the victim who advised that she had been assaulted by two males. A 31-year-old male was arrested at the residence for the assault as well as outstanding warrants from Winnipeg Police Services, he was

transported back to the Virden RCMP detachment and remanded into custody, he will appear later this month for his charges from Winnipeg in addition to the assault charge. A warrant has been granted for the other male involved in the incident.

On Feb. 11, during routine traffic patrols in the town of Cromer, RCMP observed a vehicle travelling at a high rate of speed. Radar confirmed the 17-year-old female drivers was driving at a speed of 125 km/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 \$508.

On Feb. 11, multiple calls were received regarding an intoxicated and violent individual in the Settlement of Sioux Valley Dakota Nation. RCMP attended the resi-

dence and spoke to the residents, it was disclosed that an assault had taken place and a 26-year-old male was placed under arrest. While being placed under arrest the suspect attempted to flee police. He was brought back to the Virden RCMP detachment and later released on an Undertaking to attend court in April on an Assault charge as well as a Resist/Obstruct police charge.

On Feb. 14, during routine traffic patrols in the RM Sifton, RCMP observed a vehicle travelling at a high rate of speed. Radar confirmed the 39-year-old male drivers was driving at a speed of 140 km/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 \$442.



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# VCI alum part of winning team in prestigious finance competition



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Hunter Andrew and the winning team in the Chartered Financial Analyst (CFA) Institute Research Challenge of Western New York (L-R): Robert Kincaid, Hunter Andrew, Joseph Ferreira (team captain), Cayden Jackson, Ashton Pfeil and professor Steven Gattuso.

By Anne Davison  
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

For Hunter Andrew, a Virden Collegiate Institute graduate, doing his part on a New York university team of five to win a highly regarded competition meant a new academic challenge that also spurred personal growth.

The Golden Griffin Fund team of New York's Canisius University beat out seven other teams from universities in the region to win the Chartered Financial Analyst (CFA) Institute Research Challenge of Western New York competition. It was the university's 16th straight win.

There was a selection process but Hunter, son of Brock and Andrea Andrew said, "Schooling is something I've always taken pride in, even when I was going through VCI as well, so I've been really happy to continue on here at Canisius. With smaller class sizes, you really get to know the professors, which is something I like coming from a small

town."

He credits his professors including Steven Gattuso, who runs the Golden Griffin Fund. "This program gives students hands-on exposure to professional-level financial analysis, teamwork and decision-making..."

Pleased to be chosen for the CFA competition he said of the team, "We put in a ton of work to be able to get to this point with our report and the presentation and the questions after."

But this competition was a real test of more than just his knowledge.

"I've never been so nervous," he says of competition day.

Each of the five team members were responsible for 2.5 minutes of the overall presentation and then shared duties in answering questions that followed.

Knowing the university's winning streak was on the line added to the pressure.

"It was obviously a big honour to be able to compete and then keep the legacy alive. I think that was the

thing we were probably most nervous about was losing the streak, so I'm really glad we were able to keep it alive for another year."

### Looking Forward

This win means the Canisius team will compete in upcoming sub-regionals in March which includes the schools in New York State. Regional competition could follow and then world competition is not to be ruled out.

In 2015, Canisius' GGF team won the Global Finals of the CFA Institute Research Challenge, securing first place over more than 4,000 students from 865 universities around the world.

Meanwhile, Andrew has taken time management to a whole new level as he's enjoying perhaps his best hockey year ever as a left winger on the Canisius Golden Griffins in the Atlantic Hockey Division. It so happened that Griffin's captain, Robert Kincaid was also one of the five CFA competition team members.

"I would say, just time

management has been something that has been a challenge, but I've also learned a lot on how to manage tasks efficiently through this program and playing hockey at the same time."

The Griffins sit mid-pack and with the regional CFA competition in the books, Andrew says, "We've got four games left, so we're trying to make a push to get into the top three to get a home ice advantage for the playoffs. It's tight, but it's coming down to the wire here, so it should be exciting these last few weeks."

Time and place challenges are something that Andrew and his Manitoba girlfriend have to work around. "We've been doing long distance for two and a half, almost three years now, but it's definitely taught each [of us] a lot about ourselves and working together."

While he's used to the pre-game nerves the CFA competition was new ground. "It

was definitely different from what I'm used to. I would take the hockey nerves over the presentation nerves... But it really was good. I improved my soft skills a lot on how to talk to people, how to present to people and not sound like a robot."

Canisius Chartered Financial Analyst program provides students an opportunity to manage a real-money investment portfolio through the Golden Griffin Fund.

This spring, Hunter Andrew will complete his fourth year at Canisius and he's eyeing a couple of possibilities. "I've applied for law school in Canada, and I'm waiting to hear back on that." But he hasn't ruled out more hockey. "I would love to go over to Europe if the opportunity presented itself, but we'll kind of see, it's kind of one of those things where you feel it out as you go and you talk to teams and see if there's a fit there."

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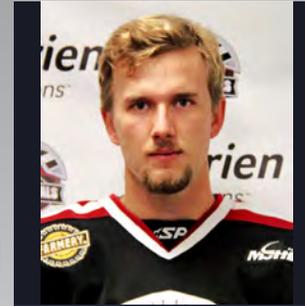
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# Come see wood carver's award-winning work

By Anne Davison  
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

Treat yourself to a viewing of Robert Heath's award-winning wood carvings, treasures within Virden's Arts Mosaic gallery - the Historic CP Station at 425, 6th Ave S.

For many years Heath's carpentry and fine woodworking skills were a feature of Virden Farmers Market. However, Heath's work came to an end when he exhausted the supply of cedar left to him by his father. At the same time, with the economic downturn, sales fell off and wood costs continued to rise.

Now he's content in his workshop, carving delicate designs. The nearby woodstove consumes the chips but Heath jokes that none of his carving works have ended up in the fire yet.

In 2003, he began the hobby and at that time Norman Lewis a carver from Killarney held a carving session in Virden. A scarlet tanager was their first project and Heath says, "The second year, as a follow-up, we went into more detail and we did a North American goldfinch. That was a turning point for me in 2004."

He took the artform seriously and began work on a pheasant, but the time and patience to perfect a carving is extensive - at that time, he said he'd bitten off more than he could chew and paused for some 10 years. Now, within the last 10 years he does as many as four pieces during the winter, until gardening takes him outdoors.

"So, I'd like to do more animals and I will always do some flowers." He loves the challenge of creating birds, but says, "Flowers allow me to get a painting done fairly quick, as opposed to a bird and all the various colours associated with colouring in a bird."

Heath's work speaks for itself with red ribbons from the Prairie Canada Carvers Association show adorning the display. "I consider myself a novice, but I won the novice (championship) in 2023."

There are three competitive categories - novice, intermediate and open. A championship win means winning



Robert with pieces on display at Arts Mosaic's Station Gallery.

four 'best in show' ribbons.

"Once you've entered in the novice and you've won four best in shows, then you automatically have to move over to the intermediate class."

Hummingbird with Poppies was Heath's 2025 entry to the Prairie Canada Carvers Association competition held in the spring in Winnipeg. Heath did not expect it to win. He was uncertain that hummingbirds visited poppies. However, the judges liked it.

It won 2nd in the Intermediate division but was also awarded the Prairie Carvers Championship meaning "the show gets to keep that exhibit. I get paid \$500 for it. And then that exhibit is raffled off the following year, which will be this year."

He plans three entries in the Winnipeg show this May 9-10: a Swanson hawk that he chalked up 185 hours perfecting, a carving of Easter lilies, and a North American goldfinch piece is in progress where a goldfinch has lighted on a thistle and another is coming in to land.

Many pieces in the Station gallery are for sale. "Everything's got a price, other than one or two that I do not intend



PHOTOS BY ALIX PORTREBKA

The beauty of a hibiscus in a wood carving.

selling, and obviously the pieces that I've got earmarked for this upcoming show are not for sale at the moment."

This collection of 44 pieces showcases the last decade of Robert's carving, including his award-winning entries to the Prairie Wood Carver Association Championship. These will be featured in the Station gallery until Feb. 28.

Robert will be available at a "Meet the Artist" hour once a week. Upcoming dates are 3pm-4pm on Thursday, Feb. 19 and 26.

## Under The Dome Education funding increase doesn't keep up with rising costs

By Greg Nesbitt, MLA  
RIDING MOUNTAIN CONSTITUENCY

Manitoba families in the Riding Mountain Constituency may start feeling the impact of the NDP's recent school funding announcement. Last week, the NDP highlighted a 3.5 per cent increase in school funding. While this shows some investment in education, a closer look suggests that the increase may not fully keep pace with the costs schools are facing.

For the 2026-27 school year, Manitoba's school operating funding is set to increase by just \$51 million, down from \$53.1 million in 2025-26. At the same time, inflation in the province sits at 3.7 per cent, meaning the funding increase of 2.9 per cent is actually a cut in real terms. Schools in Riding Mountain Constituency are already feeling the pinch, and these figures indicate the pressure is only going to grow.

For example, Rolling River received a 1.2% increase, Park West 1.0%, and Fort La Bosse 1.5%. When these modest increases are considered alongside inflation and rising salary costs, school boards may face difficult choices in balancing their budgets. Many experts are warning that Manitoba families should brace for another round of significant school tax increases if the NDP continues down this path.

School nutrition programs and critical support for students, are also under strain. Funding remains frozen at \$30 million, despite food prices rising nearly 6 per cent

across Manitoba. This means fewer resources for students who rely on school meals and even greater financial pressure on schools already struggling to meet operating costs.

The timing of these shortfalls could not be worse. School divisions are grappling with major new costs from teacher salary harmonization. Salaries and benefits are rising faster than provincial funding, leaving school boards with difficult choices: either reduce programs or pass the costs onto families through higher school property taxes.

Families deserve strong public schools without being forced to shoulder higher taxes. Properly funding schools to reflect real costs, rather than shifting the burden onto property owners, is the only sustainable way to support students and communities. Manitobans deserve funding that is fair, transparent and keeps taxes manageable while ensuring every child receives a quality education.

The challenges facing local families do not stop at education. Constituents in my riding have been contacting my office with urgent concerns about health care failures across the region. Many residents report difficulties accessing care, and there are widespread frustrations over the NDP's backtracking on agency nurse supports, leaving hospitals short-staffed. Alarming, recent news stories have highlighted increased deaths in Manitoba hospitals, underscoring the human cost of underfunded health care services.

Families in Riding Mountain Constituency are juggling multiple pressures, from school funding that may not keep pace with rising costs to healthcare

services that are stretched thin. These experiences reflect a broader need for practical solutions that support communities without placing an undue burden on families.

Riding Mountain residents deserve assurance that essential services, from quality education to reliable health care, are available when needed. Manitobans are paying close attention and are looking for governments to follow through on their commitments with tangible support for families. They want solutions that make a real difference in daily life, rather than leaving families to manage growing pressures on their own.

Greg Nesbitt is the Member of Legislative Assembly for the Riding Mountain Constituency. He can be reached at 204-759-3313, toll-free: 1-844-877-7767 or by email at: gregnesbittmla@mymts.net. When contacting our office, please include your name, address and a daytime phone number.



Tarin Nahachewsky (Tundra), Telysha Van Eaton, Breanne Kyle (Funshine Early Learning), Lance Bartel, Meraco Clayton (Kingston Midstream)



# Road allowance, pasture rates, library costs on council table

## Feb. 10 RM of Wallace-Woodworth council meeting

By Dale Davison  
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

A landowner submitted an application to the municipality to allow removal of the trees along an undeveloped half-mile section of Road 157W near Two Creeks.

Reeve Clayton Canart opened the discussion saying, "I think that we need to do a little bit of information gathering. This might seem like a simple decision, but we've already seen issues with road allowances, and... we have to follow the process of speaking to the neighboring landowner as well."

Coun. Val Caldwell added, "I'm fine with taking dead stand out, because of branches falling on fences and cropland. I'm not the biggest fan of just having a free-for-all, especially when it's an unused road allowance. That's nature. We've talked a lot about nature corridors around this table."

### Draft Reserve Fund By-laws

Council reviewed draft by-laws related to the proposed Economic Development Reserve Fund, the Recreation Reserve Fund and the Community Grant Reserve Fund.

Council discussed whether unspent grant allocations should remain within a dedicated reserve rather than returning to nominal surplus.

Coun. Lyle Kinnaird said that maintaining these reserve funds could create extra accounting work. Reeve Clayton Canart replied that maintaining funds in a reserve could ensure they remain earmarked for their intended purpose.

### Building and Development

Council discussed plans to select a new provider for building and development planning and inspection. Administration reported that five planning districts or inspection groups had been contacted requesting proposals for providing these services. Responses were received from Brandon, Midwest and Keystone Planning. There was no response from Dennis County or several other contacted districts.

Council passed a resolution to approve Midwest Planning District as the RM's designated officer for building inspection services on a temporary basis.

### Education Stakeholders meeting

Coun. Diana MacDonald attended the education stakeholders meeting in Hamiota and reported concerns about funding levels in Park West School Division.

### Community Pasture

At the Kirkella Commu-

ity Pasture committee meeting members discussed spraying for the invasive weed hounds-tongue and whether further treatment would be required in the coming year. Coun. Barb Stambuski will inspect the affected areas in the spring, and funds are being allocated in the 2026 budget in case further spraying is necessary.

The pasture numbers are projected to increase by 100 head in 2026, and the pasture rates will increase from \$9.50 to \$10.50 per head.

### Southeast Municipal Health Corporation

Reeve Clayton Canart attended the Southeast Municipal Health Corporation meeting in Moosomin. A five-year lease agreement has been negotiated which will provide stability for the clinic. The committee approved a clinic renovation project estimated at approximately \$80,000 but will likely total nearly \$100,000 to complete.

### Alert MB

Coun. Stambuski also

attended the Disaster Management Conference and focused her comments on a session about Alert MB, which uses the national Alert Ready system. Unlike Saskatchewan and Alberta, Manitoba does not currently plan to develop a dedicated mobile app.

Stambuski expressed disappointment with this approach, saying, "I am not sure that the money that they are spending on this system is going to get us what we need in this area. It's better than nothing, but I think they could have developed something that we know already works in other provinces." Alberta and Saskatchewan apps can track user location and provide earlier warnings, including tornado alerts.

Two types of alerts will be available; A "broadcast immediate," alert is issued when a life-and-safety threat is expected within 24 hours and distributed through radio, television, and digital platforms; and

"advisory alerts" which are less urgent.

### Manitoba Antique Automobile Museum

The museum reported a 2025 profit of just over \$2,000 to date. A membership drive is planned, and the preliminary budget projects income of just under \$57,000 and expenses of approximately \$52,000, resulting in an anticipated surplus of just over \$4,000.

One application has been received for the museum manager position; however, the competition remains open until the end of February. The annual meeting is scheduled for Feb. 26 at 7:00 p.m.

### Border Regional Library

After eight years as chair of the library committee Coun. Mark Humphries announced he has stepped down from the role. Jennifer Abel, who has been a board member for approximately 18 months, has taken over as chair. Humphries expressed confidence in her leadership and the fresh ideas she can bring.

With the Virden library renovation nearly complete, the total cost came in at \$613,774.87. The primary contractor accounted for \$519,434, while engineering services from Samson totalled \$91,516.

Local resident Jack Welsh donated \$85,539 and was recognized for his consistent support throughout the project. The oil and gas sector contributed \$100,000, and a government grant also provided further assistance.

Preliminary estimates show that the Elkhorn library renovation will be significantly smaller in scope than Virden's project, with early guesstimates in the \$45,000 to \$50,000 range.

The library's overall budget increase for the coming year is projected at just two per cent. This small increase covers staffing adjustments and operational costs.

### Other business

Council approved the transfer of past-due utility account balances totaling \$66,208.71 to the tax rolls for 2025.

# Thank You

Thank you to everyone in Virden and area who have supported The Virden and Area Food Cupboard with food and monetary donations throughout last year. We want to thank the following for their support this past year through sponsoring food drives, monetary donations, food donations as well as providing space for us to store our food and give out hampers to the less fortunate in our community.

- \* Virden Oil Capitols
- \* Sunrise Credit Union
- \* Virden Junior High School
- \* MLCC Staff
- \* St. Paul's United Church
- \* Mary Montgomery School
- \* Virden Collegiate
- \* Valleyview Coop
- \* Sacred Heart Catholic Church
- \* Twin Valley Coop
- \* Theatrix Players
- \* Legion Ladies Auxiliary
- \* Manson Church of Christ
- \* RCMP Staff
- \* Tundra Oil & Gas
- \* Peters Market Gardens
- \* Oak Lake Mennonite Church
- \* Wellview Golf Club
- \* Town of Virden
- \* Retired Teachers Assoc.
- \* Parrish & Heimbecker
- \* Kola Evangelical Church
- \* Greg & Diane Penner
- \* Irma McDougall
- \* Corex
- \* BDO
- \* St. Marys Anglican Church
- \* Sparwood Family
- \* Derrick Theatre
- \* Red Apple
- \* Virden Area Justice Committee
- \* VCI Gr. X Lifeworks Class
- \* Gr. V VJH Students

Thank you to those donors who contribute to the Food Cupboard through Benevity Fund, Abundance Canada, Canada On Line, United Way and Canada Helps. The clients at the Food Cupboard appreciate all the home gardeners who contribute fresh vegetables for them throughout the year. The volunteers at the Food Cupboard appreciate the support of such a caring, giving community which allows us to assist those in need in our community and surrounding area.



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# SPORTS

## OIL KINGS TAKE ON JETS AFTER SWEEPING ELKS

By Robin Wark  
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

After sweeping the Souris Elks in the opening round, the Virden Oil Kings will now battle the Rivers Jets as their Tiger Hills Hockey League playoff journey continues.

The series between the No. 5-seeded Oil Kings and the No. 4 Jets starts on Feb. 20 in Rivers. Virden plays host on Feb. 21. Game three is set for Feb. 24 in Rivers. The quarterfinal series is a best-of-five affair. If required, Virden would host game four on Feb. 25. The fifth game would be in Rivers on Feb. 28.

“Facing Rivers in the second round, we will need to capitalize on the power play, while limiting their man advantage opportunities,” Oil Kings general manager Ryan Mathieson said. “Rivers is a fast team with solid goaltending and talented defence so we will need to work to create opportunities. We are playing some of our best hockey at the right time and will look to keep that rolling the next series.”

The Jets finished the regular season with a 14-4-1-0 record to capture the fourth seed. That gave them a first round bye. The top three teams chose their second round opponents from those who advanced from the opening round with the Oil Kings being left to face the Jets.

In the regular season, former Virden Oil Capitals junior player Luke DeCorby led Rivers with 43 points and 18 goals in 18 games. Riley Shamray, one of the league’s top defencemen, had 31 points in 18 games. Goalie Riley Lamb had a 7-4-1 record with a 2.65 goals against average.

### Sweep of the Elks

Last week, the Oil Kings beat the Elks 5-2 on the road and 12-3 at home. Shawn Bowles paced the squad with five goals and 12 points. Goalies Riley Wallace and Duncan Paddock each backstopped the Oil Kings to a victory.

“In round one versus the Elks, our top line and power play were dominant and led the way for us offensively,” Mathieson said. “We had timely goals from the rest of our forward group, strong play from our D core and solid goaltending in both games.”

In game one, Virden led 2-0 at the first intermission and 3-1 at the second on Feb. 10. Shawn Bowles recorded two goals and two assists

for four points. Tanner Koroscil also had four points with a goal and three assists. Also scoring for Virden were Tristen Cross and Dillin Stonehouse. Brad Bowles assisted on three goals. Wallace had 14 saves.

The Oil Kings showed no love to the Elks on Feb. 14. They used an offensive onslaught in the final two periods to earn a 12-3 win. Virden had held a 3-2 lead at the first intermission. The

Oil Kings scored nine straight goals before the Elks responded.

With three goals and five assists, Shawn Bowles had eight points. His brother Brad recorded two goals and four assists for six points. Koroscil scored twice and picked up two assists for four points. Colby Asselstine (two), Layne Toder, Shane Price, and Brendan Berry also scored for Virden. Cross had three assists.



### PUBLIC NOTICE

#### Manitoba Hydro Integrated Resource Plan & Major New Facility Public Review

On February 2, 2026, the Manitoba Government referred Manitoba Hydro’s 2025 Integrated Resource Plan (“IRP”) to the Public Utilities Board (“PUB”) for its review and recommendations.

The IRP examines how best to meet Manitoba Hydro’s expected short-term (2030) and long-term (2035) growth in electricity consumption with different options to increase electricity supply. The primary objective of the IRP is to plan for safe and reliable energy that meets the evolving needs of Manitobans. The IRP includes both Manitoba Hydro’s electrical system and the natural gas system operated by Manitoba Hydro’s subsidiary Centra Gas Manitoba Inc.

Manitoba Hydro’s IRP includes its recommended future development plan, which incorporates a major new generating facility consisting of three new simple cycle combustion turbines at the Brandon Generating Station that will provide approximately 750 MW of capacity. In addition to the IRP, the needs for and alternatives to Manitoba Hydro’s proposed new natural gas generating facility will be referred to the PUB for its review and recommendations.

The PUB will be conducting a public regulatory review over the coming months into both the IRP and the proposed major new natural gas generating facility. While these reviews by the PUB will not immediately result in a change to the rates charged by Manitoba Hydro, the costs of the new generating facility and other aspects of the development plan are expected to have an impact on future electricity rates.

Further details related to the upcoming review are available at: [www.pubmanitoba.ca](http://www.pubmanitoba.ca).

You can share your views on the filing with the Public Utilities Board in three ways:

- **As a Presenter** – If you want to make a virtual or in-person formal presentation to the Public Utilities Board on this matter and are willing to respond to questions about your presentation, please submit an application to become an approved Presenter using the application form linked on the PUB website ([www.pubmanitoba.ca](http://www.pubmanitoba.ca)) by June 18, 2026. Presentations are limited to a maximum of 10 minutes and presenters will be scheduled to appear during the hearing in August.
- **Written comment** – If you would like to comment in writing on this review, please go to [www.pubmanitoba.ca](http://www.pubmanitoba.ca) and provide your written comment.
- **As an approved intervener** – If you want to actively participate in the public hearing as an Intervener, please go to [www.pubmanitoba.ca](http://www.pubmanitoba.ca) and apply for Intervener status on or before February 24, 2026. Interveners are required to represent the interests of a significant group of customers and may be required to combine their intervention with others representing similar interests.

A Pre-Hearing Conference with prospective Interveners will be held in the Board’s hearing room, at the address below, commencing at 9:00 a.m. on Monday March 2, 2026.

Manitoba Public Utilities Board  
400-330 Portage Avenue  
Winnipeg, Manitoba R3C 0C4  
Phone: 204 945 2638 • Email: [publicutilities@gov.mb.ca](mailto:publicutilities@gov.mb.ca)

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or [norjst@gmail.com](mailto:norjst@gmail.com)

For more information contact:  
Noren at 204 748-5567



### FORT LA BOSSE SCHOOL DIVISION

#### SENIOR ELECTION OFFICIAL

The Fort La Bosse School Division is accepting applications for the position of Senior Election Official (SEO). The next school board election is scheduled for October 2026.

The SEO is appointed by the Board of Trustees and is responsible for the general direction and supervision of the school board election process in accordance with The Municipal Councils and School Boards Elections Act. Responsibilities include managing election logistics and ensuring the integrity of the electoral process. For more information please visit our website [flbsd.mb.ca](http://flbsd.mb.ca)

Written applications from interested individuals will be accepted until February 27th, 2026 addressed to:

Secretary-Treasurer  
Fort La Bosse School Division  
PO Box 1420  
Virden, MB R0M 2C0  
Email: [kreid@flbsd.mb.ca](mailto:kreid@flbsd.mb.ca)  
Phone: 204-748-2692

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## Notice

### NOTICE TO CREDITORS

IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF ROBERT DEAN FENTY, late of the Postal District of Miniota, in the Province of Manitoba, deceased;

ALL claims against the above estate, duly verified by Statutory Declaration, must be filed with the undersigned at their office, 190 Nelson Street West, Box 520, Virden, MB, R0M 2C0, on or before the 27th day of March, 2026.

DATED at Virden, Manitoba, this 10th day of February, 2026

ANIQUE TIMMERMAN –  
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“Types of Advertising” tab for more details.

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# CLASSIFIEDS

## Obituary

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

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

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

Left with precious memories is Effie (Kallichuk) his partner for 28 years. Also left is what Glen said was his greatest achievement, his daughters and grandchildren Shannon and Ross Hookway-Tapp their son Harrison and daughter Sloanne from Toronto, ON and Dr. Carly Tapp and her daughter Autumn of Guelph, ON, sister Judy (Don) Storjord of Virden, MB, and special friend Edith Rossignol and Festus (Anthony).

In keeping with Glen's wishes cremation has taken place and a Celebration of Life will be held on June 6, 2026. Check back closer to for further details.

Glen had The Gardens Diner in Elkhorn.



## Public Hearing



### NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING 2026 FINANCIAL PLAN

**Tuesday, March 17, 2026, at 7:00 p.m.**  
**Kola EMC Church**  
**57036 Road 171 W**

PUBLIC NOTICE is hereby given pursuant to subsection 162(2) of The Municipal Act that the Council of the Rural Municipality of Wallace-Woodworth intends to present its financial plan for the fiscal year 2026 at a PUBLIC HEARING on March 17, 2026, at the Kola EMC Church, in Kola, Manitoba.

Council will hear any person who wishes to make a presentation, ask questions, or register an objection to the financial plan, as provided through the following methods:

| Method     | Important Reminders  |
|------------|--|
| In writing | To be sent ahead of time by email or regular mail prior to March 17.   |
| In person  | Individuals interested to attend the Public Hearing in person are requested to send an RSVP by phoning the R.M. of Wallace-Woodworth Virden Office at 204-748-1239 on or before March 16, 2026, Monday at 12:00 p.m. |

A copy of the financial plan will be available for review. View the document on the R.M. website, request for an electronic copy to be emailed, or pick-up a hardcopy during regular hours at the Virden, Elkhorn or Kenton offices.

Visit: [www.wallace-woodworth.com](http://www.wallace-woodworth.com)  
 Email: [cao@wallace-woodworth.com](mailto:cao@wallace-woodworth.com)

Iris Vercaigne, MBA, CMMA  
 Chief Administrative Officer  
 R.M. of Wallace-Woodworth

[www.wallace-woodworth.com](http://www.wallace-woodworth.com) | 204-748-1239 | [info@wallace-woodworth.com](mailto:info@wallace-woodworth.com)

## Public Notice



### PUBLIC NOTICE

Public notice is hereby given that the R.M. of Wallace-Woodworth's Weed Department intends to conduct the following pesticide control programs within the R.M. of Wallace-Woodworth. The projected dates of application will be from May 15, 2026 to November 15, 2026.

- To control noxious weeds on the right-of-ways within the R.M. of Wallace-Woodworth which will include: 2,4-D Amine, 2,4-D Ester, Triclopyr, Picloram, Dicamba, Glyphosate, Indazifam, Aminopyralid, Diflufenzopyr, Metsulfuron-methyl, Aminocyclopyrachlor, Fiesta, Pro-Surf II, Ag-Surf II and Gateway
- To control noxious weeds and provide vegetation management on public lands within the R.M. of Wallace-Woodworth which will include: 2,4-D Amine, 2,4-D Ester, Picloram, Dicamba, Glyphosate, Indazifam, Aminopyralid, Diflufenzopyr, Metsulfuron-methyl, Aminocyclopyrachlor, Fiesta, Pro-Surf II, Ag-Surf II and Gateway
- To provide vegetation management on industrial sites in and around the R.M. of Wallace-Woodworth which will include: 2,4-D Amine, 2,4-D Ester, Dicamba, Glyphosate, Indazifam, Aminopyralid, Diflufenzopyr, Metsulfuron-methyl, Aminocyclopyrachlor, Fiesta, Pro-Surf II, Ag-Surf II and Gateway
- To control the following pests including grasshoppers, elm bark beetles, forest tent caterpillars, cankerworms, and mosquitoes which will include: Bacillus thuringiensis, Chlorpyrifos, and Deltamethrin

Any inquires about any of the programs may be submitted in writing within 15 days of publication of this notice to:  
 Manitoba Environment and Climate  
 Environmental Approvals Branch  
 Box 35, 14 Fultz Boulevard  
 Winnipeg MB R3Y 0L6

Note: Previous submissions or objections must be resubmitted each year.

#### No Spray Program

Property owners who would like to register their property as part of the No Spray Program may contact the R.M. Virden office at 204-748-1239 to get an application form.

#### Report Noxious Weed Sightings

Help us identify noxious weeds. Ratepayers are encouraged to report noxious weed sightings by phoning the R.M. Virden office at 204-748-1239.

[www.wallace-woodworth.com](http://www.wallace-woodworth.com) | 204-748-1239 | [info@wallace-woodworth.com](mailto:info@wallace-woodworth.com)

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# SPORTS

## REF MEMORIES



February means playoff hockey. It is an exciting time of the year as teams compete in playoff series with the winner advancing and losers going home for the remainder of the season. The longer you are in the playoffs, the better the hockey. It's also a time when spectators follow their local team, home and away, which means the local rink is full of spectators.

Most of the series years ago were a best of 3, be it league or MAHA playoffs. Each game seemed like a do or die affair. As an official we had the best seat in the house, being out there on the ice.

The referee who did the first game of a series, he usually would set the tone for the series. There was a particular referee who pretty much none of us liked to follow to work the second game. It was because he never called many penalties and many of his games got out of control and a lot of silly stuff took place. I liked following Frank Taylor and Randy Kalynuk, because they set a high standard of officiating in playoff games. We all knew you had to let the teams play but not cross over the line of fairness.

One game I was the head referee in I had followed the Referee who did not call many penalties, if any, and it was a tough game. The teams had played 2 nights earlier, so the memory was still fresh from what had happened in the previous game. I knew this going into the game, so I had my standard set before hitting the ice and I knew I could not back down in any situation.

I talked with both team captains before the drop of the puck and told them that I knew the game before this one had gotten out of hand, but that I would not be letting that happen. Expect I would be calling it tight to start with, so you adapt to what I am doing.

The first period, I was tested many times but stayed true to my word on what I was calling and the 2 teams changed their way of playing. It turned into a barn burner of a game, with the game being decided in overtime.

After the game, both coaches came to the dressing room to thank the officiating crew for a job well done. We were all really high from doing a real good job. I know it took me several hours to come down from that game. It also served as a reminder that in the toughest of situations you could get through a game, no matter what had gone on in previous matches.

Until next time!

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# SPORTS

## CORBETT, HENDERSONS BOUND FOR BRICK TOURNAMENT

By Robin Wark  
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

Three young athletes from the area are looking forward to competing in a prestigious summer hockey tournament.

Virden's Astor Corbett and the Reston duo of Ryder Henderson and Johnny Henderson have cracked the roster of the 2026 Manitoba Junior Ice Brick Team. The squad will compete at the West Edmonton Mall Ice Palace in Edmonton during the Brick Invitational Hockey Tournament, which begins in late June.

In a statement, Corbett's family said he "is excited for the opportunity to learn, compete, and represent Manitoba on a big stage this summer." He also is pleased that two of his U11 Minor Gold Southwest Cougars teammates—the Hendersons, who are not related to each other — also made the squad.

The Brick, as it is commonly known, is for top players who turn 10 during the year of the tournament. Teams from across Canada and the United States compete. The event's alumni list includes many players who went on to successful National Hockey League careers, including Connor Bedard of the Chicago Blackhawks, Auston Matthews of the Toronto Maple Leafs and Ryan Nugent-Hopkins of the Edmonton Oilers.

The Manitoba Junior Ice Brick Team selection process included four tryouts over five months and drew players from across the province. Corbett said the best part of the tryouts was seeing friends he would not normally see during the regular season because they live in different parts of Manitoba. The squad will practise and compete together in the spring before heading to Edmonton.

### Astor Corbett

Regarding the Brick, Corbett said he is excited to play in the world famous mall. He is the son of Jason Corbett and Britt Lawson Corbett.

Corbett plays for both the Virden Jr. Oil Capitals U11 A team and the U11 Minor Gold Southwest Cougars. His father is the head coach of the U11 A team and an assistant coach for the U11 Minor Gold Southwest Cougars.

Robyn Brown, one of Corbett's coaches on the Jr. Oil Caps, said, "Astor is a strong defenceman. He is a good skater and thinks the game well."

### Johnny Henderson

Johnny is a goaltender. In addition to the Cougars, he dons the pads for his local Reston Rockets U11 team, which is enjoying a very strong season.



PHOTO BY SHARLA GEORGE PHOTOGRAPHY

Ryder Henderson.

Of the netminder, Rory Tycoles, one of the coaches of the U11 Rockets, said, "Johnny has strong skating skills as a goalie, that allows him to get into position and across the crease quickly. This allows him to use his strong technique and fast glove to make it difficult on opposing shooters to find the back of the net on him."

Johnny is the son of Tyler and Ang Henderson. He is pleased to be heading to the Brick and "is hoping to have fun, meet new friends and try to win the Brick tournament."

### Ryder Henderson

Ryder is looking forward to several things about playing in the Brick tournament: making new friends, learning, and getting better playing tough competition. The son of Corby and Marie Henderson is a forward.

"Ryder has many strengths to his game," Tycoles said. "He plays with speed, soft hands, a hard shot, and a great vision of the ice. Having strong skills in all areas of the game allows Ryder to be a big contributor at both ends of the ice."



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Johnny Henderson.



PHOTO BY STACEY GABRIEL PHOTOGRAPHY

Astor Corbett.



### LAST SUPPER THE CHOSEN

Please join us for the showing of The Chosen Season 5 "The Last Supper" at the Derrick Theatre in Virden. Showtime is 7:30 p.m. every Tuesday for 8 weeks starting February 3, 2026. Optional discussion follows each episode. Admission is FREE!



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## SPORTS

## OIL CAPS GO 2-2 IN BUSY FOUR-GAME STRETCH

By Robin Wark  
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

The Virden Oil Capitals earned a split in their last four contests.

The Manitoba Junior Hockey League team extended its winning streak to 12 games with a 3-2 win over Selkirk. It saw its streak snapped with a 3-2 overtime loss to Winkler on the road. The Oil Caps bounced back to beat Neepawa 5-2. The Virden squad fell 5-3 to Winkler for its first loss in regulation since Dec. 14.

"I thought we played a real good game in Winkler and likely deserved a better fate," Virden head coach Tyson Ramsey said. "We were fast, physical and created some good looks offensively. We battled back to tie the game and ultimately it came down to a penalty shot in overtime, which is tough.

"I didn't like our game at home against Winkler. I felt like it took us too long to get going after a short turnaround and being on the road in Neepawa the night before. We got our legs under us in the second half of the game but weren't able to come all the way back. A tough stretch of three in four days and certainly some good things in there to build on."

With a 31-11-3-0 record, as of Feb. 17, the local team led the MJHL's MGEU West Division by nine points over the Dauphin Kings. It has clinched a playoff spot. The Oil Capitals were slated to play the Winnipeg Blues on the road on Feb. 18 after the Empire-Advance deadline. On Feb. 21, they play in Dauphin and compete in Neepawa the next day.

#### Flyers 5, Oil Caps 3

The Flyers took a 3-1 lead in the first period Feb. 16. The Oil Caps had the 1,024 fans in attendance cheering

as they tried to battle back. In the third period, Virden got to within one, 4-3, but were unable to tie and Winkler added an empty net goal.

Carson Wright, London Holett, Colten Worthington scored for Virden. All three scored on the powerplay where the Oil Capitals went three-for-eight. Winkler scored on its lone man advantage opportunity. Virden goalie Braxton Burdeny stopped 23 of the 27 shots he faced.

#### Oil Caps 5, Titans 2

On Feb. 15, the Oil Capitals scored four straight goals to open the game in Neepawa on their way to victory. Bryan Laing, Holett, and Bryce Bryant, on the power play, gave Virden a 3-0 first period lead. Worthington lit the lamp in the second to increase Virden's lead to 4-0. The Titans opened the third period with two goals to cut the lead to 4-2. Bryant capped the scoring to make the final 5-2. He was the First Star with two goals and an assist. Worthington was the Third Star with a goal and two assists. Oil Caps goaltender Micky Gross had 22 saves.

#### Flyers 3, Oil Caps 2 OT

Connor Rieger scored on a penalty shot in overtime to lift the Flyers to a 3-2 home win. On a third period power play, Cohen Lewko had scored to tie the contest up at 2-2. Winkler had led 1-0 in the first. Oil Capitals defenceman Miguel Bonin tied the game in the second with his first MJHL goal. The Flyers went up 2-1 in the

third. Burdeny had 29 saves.

#### Oil Caps 3, Steelers 2

Worthington scored the game-winning goal on a second period power play on Feb. 10. The contest had been tied at 1-1 after one. Virden led 2-1 early in the second but the visiting Steelers tied things up.

Nate Schaefer was the First Star with a goal and an assist. Also with a goal and an assist, Brooks Siemens was the Second Star. Marshall Light collected two assists and was named the Third Star. Burdeny made 30 saves to earn the win in front of 706 fans.



PHOTO BY VIRDEN OIL CAPS

Virden Oil Capitals played the Flyers on Feb 16 in their Ag Inspired 3rd jersey.

## OIL CAPITALS FINDING THEIR EDGE ON SPECIAL TEAMS

By Robin Wark  
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

To be successful this season, the Virden Oil Capitals know their special teams need to be good — or even, well, special.

"Special teams are always important," Virden head coach Tysom Ramsey said. "Our power play has been solid for a while now and the penalty kill got off to a slow start but has been really good, as of late, and that starts with our goaltenders, they have done a great job. Down the stretch and into the playoffs, special teams can be huge and we like where we are at right now. We will continue to work on them and adjust where we need to."

As of Feb. 16, the Oil Capitals' power play ranked fourth in the Manitoba Junior Hockey League. It was converting at a 24.5 per cent rate. The Oil Caps had scored 51 goals with the man advantage, which was the third most in the league.

Virden forward London Holett was third in the MJHL with 10 power play goals. Among current Oil Capitals, Bryce Bryant, Colten Worthington and Cohen Lewko were tied for second on the team with six each.

Manson's Kurt Rookes of the Waywayseccappo Wolverines led the MJHL in power play assists with 25 in 49 games, as of Feb. 16. Bryant, a Virden product, was second with 22 assists in 45 games.

He also had six power play goals.

Of playing with the man advantage, Bryant said, "It's a great opportunity for me to use my skill and make plays and give the team the best shot to win every game."

Oil Caps defenceman Nate Schaefer was third in the MJHL with 20 power play assists in 42 games. Worthington was sixth with 16 assists in 36 games.

As of Feb. 16, the Oil Capitals' penalty kill was sixth in the 13-team MJHL. It was successfully killing off penalties at an 80.7 per cent rate.

"Our penalty kill is a group effort," Ramsey said. "Obviously, your goaltenders are important, but the rest is done by committee and we have a number of guys who have made big contributions on our kill."

Hometown captain Ty Plaisier is a key part of the Oil Capitals' penalty kill. The defenceman is among the MJHL's best shot blockers. Regarding killing penalties, Plaisier said, "I enjoy the opportunity to block shots and battle hard for the team in order to build momentum for the game."

It has been said a team's best penalty killer is its goalie. The Oil Capitals have a strong netminding duo in Braxton Burdeny and Micky Gross. The veteran Burdeny was fifth in the league in goals against average at 2.49. He paced the MJHL with five shutouts. Gross, a rookie, had a 2.62 GAA with two shutouts.



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