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JUNE 19, 2026 | EMPIRE: VOL 121 NO 44 / ADVANCE: VOL 140 NO 46 | PUBLISHING FRIDAYS

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## Grade 4s celebrate Mardi Gras style

By Anne Davison  
EMPIRE ADVANCE



Combined Gr. 4s are on stage in Victoria Park.

PHOTOS BY ANNE DAVISON



Grade 4 students and their teachers paraded 'Mardi Gras style' from Goulter School toward Victoria Park.

Next school season a fresh group of Gr. 5 students will enter Virden Junior High. In preparation for that, on June 12, Goulter School Gr. 4 students met Mary Montgomery Gr. 4 students for what Goulter music teacher Jill Radwanski has named a Mardi Gras Meet Up in Victoria Park.

Radwanski reported, "The kids had a blast connecting the two elementary school grade four students."

Here's how it unfolded:

At Goulter, students lined the sidewalk, cheering on the Gr. 4 march. Principal Will Noseworthy said this could be the first of an annual event.

At 1pm students from both schools paraded down the street toward the park, playing instruments and singing "Oh When the Saints Go Marching In."

Upon arrival in Victoria Park both Gr. 4 classes joined their voices (75 students) to sing, "We Are the Children of Tomorrow."

Cupcakes were served and students were called forward in an alphabetical order. Mrs. Radwanski hoped this would provide an opportunity for the kids to "socialize and get to know each other, as they will be in classes together in Gr. 5, in the fall."

The schools visited Virden Victoria Park and the stage and celebrated. Staff from FLBSD were on hand providing sound support on the bandstand and a philanthropic grant from Virden Collegiate supported the endeavor which included costuming and a fabulous bubble-maker to give the New Orleans style vibe.

Inside...



## TOURISM AWARDS 2026

P8-9



## VCI CHOIR

P2



# VCI Choir sings



The Tutthill Construction Shield presented by Laura Wright to conductor of VCI Choir Mr. Luke Munchinsky.



Tristan Plaisier, Charley Dunning and Avrin Krieser were recommended to perform their Speech Arts monologues at Provincials in Winnipeg recently where Avrin received 1st place and Tristan received 2nd. Charley performed two vocal pieces that she was also recommended for and although she was not a winner, her performances went well. Tristan and Charley were recipients of Virden Music & Arts Festival senior scholarships.

By Anne Davison  
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

VCI Gr. 9-12 Choir performed a varied repertoire for family and friends in the AUD Theatre on Wednesday, June 3. The evening included choir director Luke Munchinsky’s farewell presentation to each of the graduates, students that he has guided from Gr. 9 and on.

Gr. 12 choir students included: bass singer Cade Scharff; tenor Tristan Plaisier; altos Charley Dunning, Ariannah Kerr and Brenna Stewart-Barre; and soprano voice Avrin Krieser.

For Virden Music & Arts Festival executive, Judy Poole, Joyce Davies and Laura Wright presented awards to the choir, individual vocalists and to speech arts students.

Andrea Neufeld was the piano accompanist. Choir selections included arrangements of “You Are the Sunshine of My Life” by Stevie Wonder, Curtis Mayfield’s “People Get Ready” and “The Times They Are a-Changin’” by Bob Dylan, to name a few.

# Daelyn Fefchak sings with national choir



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Manitoba representatives to the National Youth Choir of Canada are prepped for the final concert (L-R): Ian Olson, Bennett Radcliffe, Faye Desjarlais, Daelyn Fefchak, Jackson Hacault, Aaron Cox.

By Anne Davison  
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

Konektis Choir’s trip to Podium (choir festival) in Victoria B.C. included cheering on Manitoba youth in the National Youth Choir of Canada. It was another highlight of Podium because four of Konektis Choir’s young voices had been selected to represent Manitoba in this choir, one being Virden’s Daelyn Fefchak, a student in Brandon University music/education program.

In her report to the Manitoba Choral Association, Fefchak said, “My two weeks in the National Youth Choir of Canada were genuinely two of the best weeks of my entire life.”

The music affected her from their first rehearsal, she says, “when the richest alto section I ever heard joined us sopranos on our melody....”

A commissioned composer for NYC repertoire, Katerina Gimon, asked the choristers their thoughts on what it’s like to be a young person today.

Fefchak relates, “She took our words and ideas and used them to write her composition, ‘Through the Noise.’”

A pre-recorded digital track mingled with the choir voices to create a chaotic soundscape.

“Within her piece I saw some of my own words, quoted exactly as I wrote them.”

A young audience related to the message of the music. Fefchak said, “When we performed the piece for high schoolers, some of them began to cry and told us that they felt understood. That experience reminded me just how powerful music can be for sharing experiences, and will continue to inspire me in my performance and my teaching for the rest of my life.”

# Save the Date

VIRDEN & DISTRICT 4-H FAT STOCK  
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Virden Ag Grounds  
Show Time: 9:00 a.m. Sale: 6:30 p.m.

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asabeski@mbhabitat.ca



# Virden Royal Purple Luncheon      Donations boost Health Auxiliary



Lunch is served! Cold plate ham and salads. SUBMITTED PHOTO

**By Jessica Coulter**  
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

On Friday, June 12, the Virden Royal Purple Lodge 220 hosted their luncheon and invited everyone to attend. Over 80 people came to enjoy a cold plate luncheon at Sacred Heart Catholic Hall and many stayed to visit. The door prize was won by Darla Hayward and the 50-50 Draw was won by Gwen Charney. The door prize was purchased by the Royal Purple, it was a small tabletop light up. The cold plate lunch consisted of sliced ham,

variety of salads, buns and dessert. The committee who planned the luncheon were Sharon Sawyer, Karan Galbraith, Linda White, Donna George, Marlene Heaman, Evelyn Hayward and Shirley Gibson. All members of Royal Purple were asked to contribute food. “Everyone seemed to be enjoying their time as many had an extra cup of coffee and stayed awhile to visit. We were very pleased with the turnout and appreciate the support of our community,” says Shirley Gibson, Virden Royal Purple member.



SUBMITTED PHOTO

The Health Auxiliary was able to purchase two blood pressure machines for the WestMan Nursing Home with the support of the Virden Area Foundation. Pictured are Thelma Quinn, Health Auxiliary president, Virden Area Foundation board member Laura Wright, and Candice Van Damme, Client Care Coordinator for the WestMan Nursing Home. More donations were made, check back next week.

## Oak Lake Walleye Spawning Bed: Strengthening habitat for future fisheries

**By Dario Alba, SRWD OPERATIONAL ADMIN.**

Oak Lake’s walleye are getting a long term boost thanks to a new, purpose built spawning bed installed this winter by the Souris River Watershed District (SRWD) and partners. This \$74,500 investment in fish habitat is designed to support a stronger, more resilient walleye population for years to come. Constructed through the ice during the winter of 2026, the new spawning bed was established using a mixture of coarse gravel and larger rock ranging from 350 to 400 mm in diameter. The varied substrate was designed to provide suitable spawning habitat for walleye while also creating structural complexity that benefits a variety of other aquatic species. As ice melts and spring flows return, these rocks settle to the lake bed and create ideal spawning conditions—clean, well oxygenated spaces where walleye can deposit and fertilize their eggs. This type of rocky habitat mimics the natural shorelines and shoals walleye prefer, which have become less common due to shoreline alteration, fluctuating water levels, and sedimentation in many prairie lakes. Oak Lake lacks the structure walleye require for spawning, walleye most likely spawn in the Pipestone Creek. The Oak Lake spawning bed is the result of strong collaboration among local and provincial partners. The project was presented by Dean Brooker, General Manager of the Souris River Watershed District, alongside Scott Phillips, Councillor for the Rural Municipality of Sifton and SRWD board member; Brody Kitch and Erin Dunbar with Manitoba Fisheries; Carol Graham, Director of Conservation with Manitoba Habitat Conservancy; and Glen Simard, Minister of Municipal and Northern Relations. Their shared goal is to protect and enhance Oak Lake’s fishery while supporting local recreation, tourism, and community well being. Careful planning and communication have been central to the project. Over the winter, heavy trucks and equipment operated on the ice to haul and place rock, creating temporary hazards for snowmobilers, ice fishers, and other lake users.



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Interpretive sign describing the Oak Lake Walleye Spawning Bed at Sifton Park.

SRWD issued public notices asking residents to use caution around machinery, rock piles, and rough, uneven ice, and to keep children and pets away from the construction zone. These safety messages helped ensure the work could be completed efficiently while keeping the public safe. The spawning bed complements ongoing efforts to safeguard Oak Lake’s water quality and aquatic habitat. Oak Lake and its aquifer are important regional resources, supplying drinking water, supporting agriculture, and providing valued recreation opportunities. By investing in fish habitat, SRWD and its partners are supporting both ecological health and the local economy—benefitting anglers, cottage owners, and visitors who enjoy the lake. The project is also aligned with the priorities of Manitoba’s Fish and Wildlife Enhancement Fund, which supports on the ground conservation work that protects and enhances fish populations and habitat across the province. A new interpretive sign at Sifton Park highlights the role of the walleye spawning bed and encourages responsible lake use.

It asks boaters to avoid anchoring on the spawning bed, operate at idle speed near shallow habitat areas, and respect the lake by cleaning, draining, and drying watercraft to prevent the spread of aquatic invasive species. These simple actions help protect not only walleye, but the broader aquatic community that depends on healthy near shore habitat. The Souris River Watershed District thanks all project partners, funding agencies, and community members for their support. Together, this collaboration is building a healthier Oak Lake—one that can continue to provide quality fishing, safe drinking water, and vibrant shoreline communities for future generations.



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

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

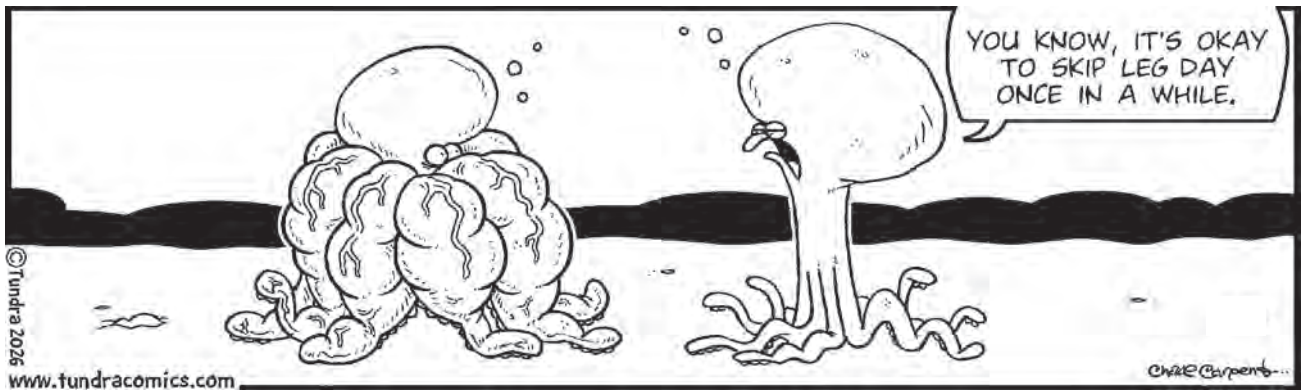
Any person may, within 15 days after the notice is published, send a written/email submission to the department below, regarding the control program or register with the department their written objection to the use of pesticide next to their property.

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



# Tundra

By Chad Carpenter

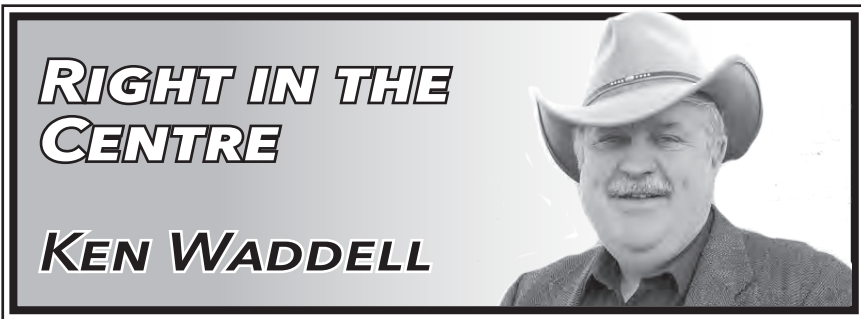


## Advertising pays off every time

This week I am going to write about a topic that is obviously near and dear to my heart. My wife and I have invested a lifetime into rural communities in south-western Manitoba. Christine was born at Virden and raised at Scarth and attended high school in Virden. Some of her ancestors were the earliest European people to come to the Virden District. They include the Milnes, the Jeffreys, the Ivens families and a bit later the Lobels. My Manitoba roots aren't as deep as Christine's but my family lived in Wapella, Saskatchewan (The McFadyens) and then Winnipeg (The Waddells) and then Muir (near Gladstone) and then Holland. We are pretty much rural based and have a fair amount of farm, business and rural experience and yes, newspaper experience. We started in the newspaper business in 1968 and for the sake of keeping track, that's 58 years ago. We have been blessed with an ever larger family, hundreds of friends and I daresay, very few people who dislike us. Those few that do, are polite enough not to say much. We love the newspaper businesses and after the aforementioned 58 years, we have some ideas and observations about how to make it work.

In our opinion, newspapers need to be small and locally owned and managed. The Manitoba landscape is littered with the shadows and remnants of dead newspapers, almost all of which were corporately, out-of-province owned.

Copies of newspapers can be sold over the counter, distributed by subscription or, as in our case, distributed free. Our three papers are handed out in about 160 locations from Ste. Rose to Reston, from Westbourne to Elkhorn. They are in news stands and many, many stores. In the case of stores and other businesses, owners seem happy to have customers come



into their establishment to pick up the paper.

Advertising is the life blood of newspapers. I do have a concern that has developed over the past few years. It's no secret that advertising that was once common in newspapers all the way back to the founding of our papers in the 1890s to early 1900s has changed. There used to be ads, and sometime very large ones, for groceries and automobiles. Many ads have shifted to flyers, TV and the internet. For a while, government ads almost all disappeared to social media and facebook. It is switching back some and for that we are thankful. While social media has its place for sure, you would think that governments should be advertising with Canadian media, not California based internet companies.

Please consider using your local paper to advertise. Yes, it costs some money, but if nobody attends your event, it costs a lot of money too. If a \$50 ad brings in even a few more people to your event, it should be a good return on the investment.

Be sure to advertise early. Most community newspapers come out on Thursdays or Fridays. That's way too late to advertise an event that is happening on the immediate Saturday or Sunday. People are very busy these days and need to plan ahead for a week or two.

Check with your local paper and ask about discounts on multiple

ads. And please, get the ad in early enough that it can be designed with a strong visual appeal. Nothing drives a newspaper crazy faster than having to make up ads at, or past, the deadline.

There is one local type of advertising that I think, needs to be revisited and that's local events. We are grateful for all the local event ads. What drives us crazy is the events and organizations that don't advertise anywhere except on social media. We were told about a local event only advertised on social media in one of our communities recently, and it should have been a very important one. It should have had 100 or even 200 people at it. There were two. That's an extreme example but it is indicative of certain facts. Many people don't look at social media. Much of social media is reels that have absolutely nothing to do with our local communities. Ok, folks, how many pet videos, prank videos and yes, even pornography do we need? What, if any, good does some of the garbage on social media have that benefits our local communities? At best, it's humorous and at worst it's harmful. Someone recently said with the internet, we get fresh water and sewage out of the same pipe. I know that sounds harsh, but think about it for a moment.

Thanks for keeping your local newspaper in mind, we have been around for long time and hope to be around for a long time to come.

### Homebodies

RITA FRIESEN



## Contentment...

It would be safe to say that much of my adult life I have been content. There have been times when I have been restless, and too many times when I have been anxious, but a deep contentment anchored those emotions. Okay, to be honest, contentment settled in after a disastrous early marriage. Those brief years, and I would have been classified as an adult, were not stable or safe, two of my necessities for contentment. I was truly blessed with finding/being found by two good, honest men of integrity. That was sequentially, not simultaneously!

This line of thought came as my dog Arie and I were out walking. After far too long, we have resumed daily excursions — shorter than usual — as I recover from a pinched nerve and tendonitis in a major backside muscle set. Perhaps my deep gratitude for my recovery spawned the thought of this deep contentment that I am currently enjoying. I love my home. This spring saw the completion of several major projects. I could certainly have appreciated my home without them, however these improvements not only make my day to day easier, they will enable me to be comfortable in my home as I continue to age.

There was a time when my home was filled with background noise; I don't appreciate noise for the sake of noise anymore. I even gave my TV away, and it was a smart one. I have space for my hobbies and my books. I have time. I have time to simply sit, to visit with friends, to work at my own pace. I cook and bake when I am so moved, not out of necessity. I'm really ok with leftovers, and can enjoy soup or chili or more days than I probably should. The yards are perfect for me.

Yes, plural. The front yard is for looks, even went so far as to have some dandelion control last year. There are chairs on the deck, not often a body in the chair. The middle yard is my den. There are raised vegetable beds, raspberries, strawberries, one goodberry, several hap-saks, some saskatoons and three apple trees. There are bird nests and a bird bath, lawn chairs and a fire pit. Mowing and trimming are a nightmare. The very back yard is so basic, nothing but grass. And I love each of these spaces.

My contentment runs deep. I have people to love, and those who love me. Sticky hugs from little people fill my heart to overflowing. Letters, in lovely block letters, from great grandchildren grace the fridge. Phone calls and face times are gifts. No doubt, I've learned a great deal about relationships in my eighty years, have had to make some tough decisions, but I am so content with those who choose to be in my life — friends and family.

This contentment is anchored in and by my faith. I have tested the faithfulness of my God, and have never found her wanting. I am striving to say with the assuredness of the Apostle Paul 'I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation'. Not quite there yet, but well on my way.

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Serving Virden and area since 1885

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News Media Canada  
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Owner/Publisher/Editor: Ken & Christine Waddell

Publishers Assistant: Nancy Jo Moller



# Miniota News

Submitted  
By LINDA CLARK

Congratulations to Joe Lane and Shae Kuntz, along with big brother Kolter, on the birth of

Lilly Anne on May 20.  
The Little Buckaroos and Barrels was held Saturday, June 6, at the home of Desmond and Jaylene Stone.  
Miniota Golf Club held a successful fundraising tournament on June 6. Although the weather did not cooperate and a few golfers got a little wet, it did not dampen their spirits. The Golf Club donated its half of the 50/50 proceeds to the Little Valley Jamboree in support of Reese Sheane, son of Joey and Mallory Sheane, who is participating in this year's jamboree. The Golf Club is appreciative of everyone who helped make that possible.  
Our community extends congratulations to Murray and Bev Peel of Brandon on the occasion of their 65th wedding anniversary on June 17. Family and friends gathered to celebrate with them on June 13 at their home in Rotary Villa. What a wonderful milestone for Murray and Bev.  
The Miniota Rink Enhancement Committee sponsored its second annual golf tournament on June 13, with 104 golfers participating. The winning team consisted of Foster Couvier, Kurt Rookes, Ty Kirk and Fred Hersak. Congratulations to the winners.  
Following the tournament, a smoked pork supper was held at the hall, with Ross and Crystal Howard overseeing the meat cooking. An auction followed, raising approximately \$30,000 toward Phase 3 of the enhancement project. The board is most appreciative of all the support it has received to date.  
Congratulations to Miniota's lone high school graduate, Maddox Couvier, son of Mark and Cody Couvier, who will graduate with his classmates from Birtle Collegiate on June 23. Best wishes, Maddox, in all your future endeavours.  
Our Miniota community extends its deepest sympathy to Judy and Blair Kidd on the death of Judy's sister Linda Rowan Wilson

at her home in Florida on May 31st. We extend our sympathy also to her husband Douglas Wilson, Linda's children Josh Rowan DeChellis and Kaylee Rowan DeChellis and all extended family members.  
We extend our sympathy to Eleanor Cousins and her family on the death of her sister-in-law, Faye Cameron of Brandon; and to Faye's husband Glen, their family, and extended family members.  
Our thoughts are with those communities and farm families who suffered extensive damage in the wind, hail and tornado conditions recently.

### Isabella News

These days it seems to be storm after storm. This past week, the Isabella area experienced wind damage, with bins blown down at two farms and the loss of three large spruce trees on the Isabella church grounds.  
Congratulations to Ceri Doran on her retirement following a long nursing career at both the Birtle and Hamiota hospitals. Thank you for your years of service to health care, and best wishes in retirement, Ceri.  
Hazel Wall and Linda Clark, along with many friends from the Rothesay district, attended the 105th birthday celebration of Edith Edmundson at the Prairie Mountain Regional Museum in Shoal Lake.  
Edith was raised in the Rothesay district before spending her married life and raising her family in the Shoal Lake community. She was a dedicated community citizen who worked tirelessly



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Miniota Fire Department has a new truck. Chief Nick Young describes the benefits: "It's a more dependable, modern and effective method of tackling wildfires in our coverage and surrounding areas... and can be used effectively with only one member in our current world of limited resources and members, especially during daytime work hours."

for the betterment of her community. In recent years, she has resided with her daughter Rhonda in British Columbia.  
Guests were delighted to see Edith, who, despite reaching the remarkable age of 105, greeted visitors personally and enjoyed every visit. Congratulations, Edith, and how wonderful that you were able to come home and celebrate with family and friends.  
Also noted among the large crowd were former Rothesay residents Bill White and Molly Ashcroft and her husband John Douglas, who travelled from Alberta to attend the birthday celebration.  
Quote of the week: "Real love doesn't shout, and it doesn't need a spotlight. It shows up quietly. It lives in a simple gesture, in an old song ... and it has the power to heal absolutely everything."

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

## We're Looking for Cheerleading Coaches!

We are seeking motivated individuals with a background in cheer or gymnastics!  
If you are interested, please contact Tara Davies at [events.program@virden.ca](mailto:events.program@virden.ca)

## Tax Prepayment Discounts

The Town of Viriden 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 |
|------------------|---------------|----------------------|
| 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.

## Upcoming Council Meetings

July 14  
Council Meetings start at 7:00 PM

## Summer Day Camp registration open

Email Tara Davies should you have any questions at: [events.program@virden.ca](mailto:events.program@virden.ca)

## Notice of Registration of Prospective Candidate for General Municipal Elections

### Town of Viriden

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Rhonda Stewart, SEO  
Phone: 204-851-0769, Email: [rlstewart64@outlook.com](mailto:rlstewart64@outlook.com)  
Dated at Town of Viriden, Viriden, MB on April 14, 2025



# Police Report

Submitted  
By WESTMAN RCMP

## Westman RCMP Service Report for May 31 to June 6

During this week, Westman RCMP received a total of 61 calls for service. Some of these calls for service include 13 traffic offences, 1 False Alarms, 2 Assaults, 1 Wellbeing Checks, 5 Mental Health, 6-911 Calls, 3 Fire Prevention, 2 Utter threats and 4 Mischief.

On June 2, RCMP received a call from a male who reported a 71-year-old female had attended his residence and had damaged his vehicle by ramming her walker into his parked vehicle. Members attended and obtained statement from the complainant. Members located the 71-year-old female who was charged with one count of Mischief and was released on conditions to appear in court later.

On June 2, RCMP received a complaint from a female who discovered inappropriate pictures of an underage female on a phone which belonged to a family member. Members attended and a statement from the complainant was obtained. Members located and seized the cellphone for further investigation. Members located a 37-year-old male who was arrested and charged with Child Sexual Abuse and Exploitation Material – makes, prints or publishes, Child Sexual Abuse and Exploitation Material – Possession and Possession of unmarked tobacco. The male was remanded into custody and RCMP continues to investigate.

On June 3, 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 73km/hr in a 50km/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 June 6, RCMP conducted a traffic stop in the RM of Wallace-Woodworth for sobriety check. Upon arrival, the driver of the vehicle was identified, and a breath sample was completed on an ASD which resulted in FAIL. The driver was advised he was under arrest for Impaired Operation and was transported to Virden RCMP detachment. The driver completed further breath samples which resulted in 130mg% and 120mg%. The driver was re-arrested and charged with Operation while Impaired, Operation while Impaired over 80mg%, Operation while prohibited and drive a motor vehicle contrary to requirements of ignition-interlock. Once sober, the driver was released on condition to appear in court later.

## Westman RCMP Service Report for June 7 to 13

During this week, Westman RCMP received a total of 64 calls for service. Some of these calls for service include 17 traffic offences, 9 False Alarms, 3 Assaults, 1 Wellbeing Checks, 11 Assistance to General Public/Other Agencies, 4-911 Calls,

1 Break and Enter and 1 Mischief. On June 7, during a routine patrol in the RM of Pipestone, RCMP observed a vehicle travelling at a high rate of speed. Radar confirmed the driving speed of 120km/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 \$312.

On June 7, during a routine patrol in the RM of Sifton, RCMP observed a vehicle travelling at a high rate of speed. Radar confirmed the driving speed of 120km/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 \$312.

On June 8, RCMP executed a firearms search warrant at a residence in Sioux Valley Dakota Nation. Members arrested all the occupants and completed a search which resulted in the seizure of two manufactured homemade firearms and ammunitions. Members located two youths including a 17-year-old who was arrested and charged with Unauthorized possession of a firearm x2, Possession of weapon for dangerous purposes, Careless use of a firearm x3, Weapons trafficking, Possession of restricted firearm. The youth was remanded into custody. RCMP continues to investigate.

On June 9, RCMP received a call from a female who reported a male had broken into her residence in Sioux Valley Dakota Nation. Further information received was the male accused was intoxicated and had assaulted the female homeowner. Members attended the residence and obtained a statement from the homeowner. Members located and arrested a 37-year-old male who was charged with Being Unlawfully in Dwelling, Assault and Fail to comply with Release Order x2. RCMP continues to investigate.

On June 13, RCMP received a call from a male caller who reported his ex-partner had broken into the residence and had stolen items at a residence in Oak Lake. Members attended and spoke with the complainant and obtained a statement. Members located and arrested a 37-year-old female who was charged with Break and Enter and Theft under \$5000. The female was released with conditions to appear in court later.

## HELEN DRYSDALE OUT OF HELEN'S KITCHEN

Today's recipes come from Saint Dominic's Roman Catholic Church from the year 2000. The cookbook was called "Treasured Recipes of the Millennium."

### Cinnamon apple rice pudding -Richard Gutoski

3 Tbsp. butter  
1 cup short grain rice  
2 cups unsweetened apple juice  
1/2 tsp. each salt and nutmeg  
1 large apple, peeled, cored and chopped  
1/3 cup raisins  
1 tsp. cinnamon  
300mL can Eagle Brand sweetened condensed milk,  
Melt butter; cook and stir apples for 2 minutes. Add rice; stir for 1 minute. Stir in raisins and one-half cup apple juice. Stir about 1 minute. Add remaining juice, cinnamon, salt and nutmeg; bring to a boil. Cover and simmer 15-20 mins or until rice is tender. Stir in Eagle brand milk; heat through, stirring often. Serve warm. Garnish as desired. Serves 8.

### Lemon coconut squares - Margaret Smith

1 cup flour  
1/2 cup margarine  
2 eggs  
1/2 tsp. baking powder  
1/4 cup icing sugar  
3/4 cup coconut  
3/4 cup white sugar  
2 Tbsp. lemon juice  
Mix flour, icing sugar and margarine. Press evenly into an 8X8 inch pan. Bake at 350°F for 15-20 minutes. Sprinkle with coconut. Beat remaining ingredients together; pour over top. Bake for 20 to 25 minutes. Cool and mark into squares. When cooled completely, cut and remove from pans.

### Lemon Luscious – Frances Zimmerman

**Base:**  
1 cup flour  
1 cup chopped pecans  
**First filling:**  
8 oz. pkg. cream cheese  
1 large container Cool Whip  
**Topping:**  
2 large pkg. lemon instant pudding  
3 cups milk  
Base: Mix flour and butter until creamy. Add pecans. Spread in a 9X13 inch pan. Bake at 350°F for 10 mins; cool.  
First filling: Mix cream cheese and sugar; fold in 1/2 the Cool Whip. Spread on base.  
Second filling: Mix instant pudding with milk; beat until thick. Spread on the first layer.  
Topping: Spread with remaining Cool Whip

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# Virden Pioneer Home Museum open



Meet the summer staff Claire, Corr and Krysian.

SUBMITTED PHOTO

## Submitted VIRDEN PIONEER HOME MUSEUM

It has come to that time of the year when we are officially open for the season. We are open until August 29, Tuesday through Saturday 9-6 pm.

We have three summer staff this year. Claire, Corr, Krysian.

Krysian and Claire graduate this year; Corr is attending Grade 10 this fall at Virden Collegiate Institute. The staff are looking forward to welcoming visitors, sharing stories from Virden's past, and helping bring local history to life. They have been busy working on social media videos, learning the routine, and getting the museum in tip top shape.

There are a few events we have coming up this summer. We are doing random rock painting/glitter tattoo days and various themed events during the summer. We

have started doing the Family Reunion tours, and these have been a hit. Family Reunion tours are for any number of people, whether it's one or 25. Contact the museum beforehand and we will do our digging and bring out what information we can find as well as photos and artifacts pertaining to your family and tailor the tour to your ancestors. Many founding families of Virden still live within the area, do come back often for tours. We have done a lot of behind the scenes work to prepare the museum for these events. Stay tuned, we do have other things in the planning stages.

One very exciting event coming up is The Winnipeg Paranormal Group is coming. We are set for August 22 with two time slots. Tickets are not available yet but will be posted on our social media when they are. Maybe we can solve the many decades lore, is the museum really haunted?

# Sinclair SoapBox Derby



SUBMITTED PHOTO

This heat of the Sinclair Soapbox Derby on June 12 was especially competitive on a cool windy night. Fun was had by all and the laughter echoed through the crowd as 27 youth exhibited their building and racing skills. The fireworks setup at the end of the evening completed another great community event.

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- MAKE A REFERRAL - 1 ENTRY
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- PARTS PURCHASE OVER \$1,000 - 1 ENTRY
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NO PURCHASE IS NECESSARY TO ENTER OR WIN.

THE DRAW WILL TAKE PLACE ON SEPTEMBER 4, 2026.

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Give us a call: 204.748.3811



# Tribute to Tourism 2026 highlighted the importance of our region's continued success

By Nancy Jo Moller  
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

The Tribute to Tourism awards are hosted annually by Tourism Westman in Southwest Manitoba to celebrate exceptional individuals, businesses, organizations, and communities that have made significant contributions to the local tourism and hospitality industry. The Tribute to Tourism 2026 Awards Gala was held on June 11 at Backyard on Aberdeen in Brandon, MB. The night recognized our local winners and congratulated them on their continued success. While the gala acknowledged nine award areas, four of the winners are located or raised in this area.

## Deer Meadow Farmacy receives recognition for their innovative operational style

Small Business of the Year recognized a tourism business, facility event or attraction with less than 20 employees that provides exceptional visitor experiences that result in a high level of customer satisfaction through the experiences or services provided.

Deer Meadow Farmacy has created a unique Agri tourism experience in Southwest Manitoba by combining regenerative farming, sustainable food production and hands-on visitor education in an authentic rural setting near Oak Lake. Operated by Sean and Kristi Lyn Buckley and family, the farm invites visitors to connect directly with local food systems through farm tours, educational experiences, seasonal events and ethically raised products that reflect a strong commitment to environmental stewardship and community wellness. Healthy offerings that may increase

the quality of your life can be found not only on their farm but also displayed at Oak Lake Beach Farmers Market which is held every Saturday until fall.

Through exceptional customer service, innovative zero waste farming practices and immersive experiences such as Enchanted Farm Tour & Supper, Deer Meadow Farmacy has become a respected destination that strengthens Southwest Manitoba's tourism appeal while promoting sustainable living and local agriculture. The Buckleys have created a biologically active oasis consisting of thousands of plant and animal species. This allows for a healthy, holistic, ecosystem that creates flavorful, nutrition dense food. They have discovered by taking care of their farm's soil, which is a precious asset, that the nutrition value of their produce increases.

The Buckleys have found a balance between modern living and renewable farm practices that truly reflect that they practice their beliefs every day in every way.

## Prairie Gateway Tourism received award for promotion efforts and development

Partnership recognized alliances that demonstrate a co-operative approach to tourism development and promotion.

Prairie Gateway Tourism, Virden has built a strong regional partnership between the Town of Virden and the RM of Wallace-Woodworth to promote tourism, support local businesses and showcase the unique experiences found throughout the Prairie Gateway region. Through collaborative initiatives such as Burger Week, digital tourism guides, community events, social media campaigns, and partnerships with local organizations and attractions, the organization has increased awareness of the region while encouraging visitors to explore the restaurants,

businesses, outdoor experiences, and cultural events year-round. By combining creative marketing, regional co-operation and community focused programming, s Prairie Gateway Tourism continues to strengthen tourism development and economic activity across Southwest Manitoba.

Prairie Gateway Tourism was formed in 2019 with the mission to stimulate and encourage the development of local tourism. Guided by a board who is responsible for identifying strategic priorities and ensuring alignment between them and local partners. It represents the interests of the Rural Municipality of Wallace-Woodworth and the Town of Virden promoting the area in Travel Manitoba and local website and Facebook pages. The Board members, employees and volunteers all know that as tourism grows so do local businesses which increases the economic health of the area. Their efforts to pro-



Section 6 Brewing Co. Co-owners Sid and Laryssa Stevenson accepting Marketing Excellence award at Tribute to Tourism 2026 Gala.



Sean Buckley and his daughter accepted this valued award with appreciation of the recognition of their hard work involved in making Deer Meadow Farmacy a continued success.

mote the local area are visible throughout the region as they continue to welcome travellers to our diverse community.

## Section 6 Brewing Co. recognized for quenching the thirst of travellers

Marketing Excellence was presented to a business, organization, event or attraction that has developed an effective traditional, digital or social media marketing campaign that increases tourism to Southwest Manitoba, Section 6 Brewing Co. is located in Brandon has successfully built a distinct and recognizable brand that reflects the character, culture and hospitality of the Westman region. The brewery's interior was crafted using reclaimed barn wood and bricks from the demolished International Harvester Building. Owned by Sid and Laryssa Stevenson and Benjamin Loewen, this company has taken large strides in growing the brand. Sid gained



Taylor Wegener accepted the award on behalf of Prairie Gateway Tourism as she spoke on the importance of partnering in the community.



Steve Dryden accepting the award on behalf of Virden Indoor Rodeo & Wild West Daze.

agricultural knowledge while growing up near Kenton and uses his background as an inspiration for can designs which are a window to their product. Sid's wife Laryssa also has a strong agricultural background developed in the LaSalle area. The third co-owner Ben Loewen had spent almost five years perfecting his brewing techniques while remembering information gained as a farm boy from Carberry. The name Section 6 refers to the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, which guarantees the rights of citizens to enter, remain in and leave Canada. It also refers to the strong farming background of the owners and their experience working sections of land. Another indication that the name was appropriate was that Brandon as a city was founded on six sections of land. While passionate about the community, they have kept their products local, relaxed and rooted in quality. Through prairie inspired branding, approachable craft beer offerings and thoughtfully designed taproom experience. The brewery has created a welcoming destination that resonates with both locals and visitors alike. The brewery

has become known for not only high-quality products but also known for the ability to create an atmosphere that encourages connection, community gathering and authentic local experiences. By combining strong visual identity, authentic storytelling and organic social media growth and active participation in regional events and collaborations, Section 6 has strengthened Brandon's tourism appeal while showcasing the creativity and entrepreneurial spirit of southwest Manitoba.

## Virden Indoor Rodeo & Wild West Daze recognized for bringing entertainment and bucks to the community

Event of the Year with Budget over \$10,000 recognizes a hallmark festival or event that creates a substantial economic impact within the local community, attracts visitors from outside the region/province/country, generates regional/national media attention and positively promotes Southwest Manitoba.

While 5 of 6 nominees are located in our readership area, the winner was Virden Indoor Rodeo & Wild West Daze who celebrated their 35-year anniversary in 2025. Established as one of Manitoba's premier rodeo events, drawing competitors and spectators from across Canada and internally while delivering significant tourism, cultural and economic impact to the region. Recognized multiple times as 'Rodeo of the Year' by

both the Manitoba Rodeo Cowboys Association and also by the Canadian Cowboys Association the event combines elite competition and family friendly programming, community celebrations and strong volunteer involvement. Through continuous innovation, infrastructure investments, strategic marketing and deep community partnerships the rodeo has grown into a defining tradition for Virden that celebrates western heritage while generating substantial regional visitation and economic activity each year. Steve Dryden accepted the award on behalf of the organization and spoke on how "tourism is more than travel but a sharing of our heritage".

Travellers and residents flock into town for the rodeo both as competitors and spectators. Four days in August are filled with a variety of events exhibiting what the Virden area has to offer. Breakfasts, family events, business showcases, parade and world class rodeo welcome young and old

to join in the fun. It is an opportunity to reconnect with not only western heritage and old friends while enjoying modern conveniences but also making new friends and seeing what all the excitement is about.

2nd ANNUAL

# FATHER'S DAY

Flowers to pay tribute

REMEMBER & HONOUR YOUR DAD OR HUSBAND'S MEMORY.

SUNDAY, JUNE 21, 2026  
1 P.M. - 3 P.M.  
VIRDEN CEMETERY

COMPLIMENTARY CARNATIONS WILL BE AVAILABLE AT THE GATE. \*WHILE SUPPLIES LAST

Families in communities surrounding Virden & Reston are welcome to pre-order & pickup a flower at Carscadden Funeral Chapel.

Families in Elkhorst and area are welcome to pre-order and pick up a flower at Samantha's Boutique.

On Father's Day, we pause to honor the men whose love shaped generations and whose memories continue to comfort us.

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MANITOBA School Boards Association

2026

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11-11:30 AM BIKE PARADE MEET AT THE KENTON HALL

10:30-12:30 PM KENTON LIONS CLUB CAR RALLY REGISTRATION IN FRONT OF KENTON HALL

12-3 PM WOODWORTH MILLENIUM MUSEUM OPEN

2PM- CLOSE WOODWORTH LEGION PATIO OPEN

MULTI-COURT OPEN ALL DAY

3:30 PM FAMILY ACTIVITIES & MUSIC BUBBLES VARIETY SHOW SNOW CONES

FACE PAINTING 5 AND UNDER BOUNCY CASTLE

4:30 PM GRAND OPENING OF PLAYGROUND AND THEN THE KCE KITCHEN

5-7 PM HARDING AG SOCIETY ROAST BEEF SUPPER

7-10 PM MUSIC IN THE PARK ALONG FOR THE RIDE

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# Konektis receives standing ovations at national festival

By Anne Davison  
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

Western Manitoba audiences know the magical of Konektis Choir, yet it's impressive to hear of their success at the national festival, Podium 2026, held May 14-17 in Victoria, B.C.

Virden conductor, Michelle Chzyk said of this special weekend for conductors and choirs, "Our Victoria trip to Podium Conference was a tremendous success in every way."

Based out of Brandon, Konektis came together 10 years ago. Chzyk drew two additional conductors, Clint McLachlan and Marla Fontaine, and pianist Justine Burke to support a host of some 65 singers from Westman communities.

Since the early '90s, Chzyk has attended Podium, held every two years in Canada's major cities. There, the conductors' conference offers professional development with national and international experts.

Performing choirs are chosen to attend the festival through a rigorous application process and out of 59 choirs, Konektis was one of the 12 choirs selected.

Chzyk said Konektis performances took place in several Victoria venues.

"On the Saturday we sang at a downtown church in a public concert for a very enthusiastic crowd. We enjoyed this so much - great acoustics and a warm feel in this venue," she said.

"We then hiked across the city to sing with our absolute heroes, the Vancouver Youth Choir and director Carrie Tennant. This choir is, in my opinion, the very best in Canada (certainly the most exciting!) and they were just back from winning first prize at a prestigious International Festival in Ireland. Nothing boosted us more than the response they gave to our music. We became fast friends. We closed with singing together and everyone spontaneously burst into hugs and conversation - what a thrill!"

On Sunday, Konektis sang for a hall filled with world renown choral conductors and composers and it was, again, exhilarating.

"The response we received from these audiences and the organizers was overwhelming. Our goal had been to present something fresh and creative. And that, we did.

"We burst onto the stage and conductor Marla Fontaine said, 'Greetings from Friendly Manitoba' and we all waved.

"After this the set flowed beautifully from the first audible breath of 'I am the Air' to nature sounds leading into the 12-part 'At the River' that brought the house down.



Konektis performs 'Softest Rains'.

SUBMITTED PHOTO

"Conductor Clint McLachlan stepped forward to say, 'In the words of Robert Louis Stevenson, Great is the Sun.'"

"This number led into the dramatic 'Father Thunder'. For this one we had worked with the stage manager for the lights to flicker and on the last stomp, we hit a full blackout to thunderous applause."

Chzyk has directed years of musical theatre and now, Konektis brings visual excitement to the music.

So it was that "in the glow of two lanterns, Konektis voices moved from darkness to light" as they sang the 5th-century Latin hymn Lucis Creator Optime, (O Blest Creator of the Light).

"Our closing number 'Softest Rains' spoke to the valleys of life and built to an enthusiastic hurricane," said Chzyk. "The crowd watched in awe as the movements grew out of the music and we ended by pulling bright blue scarves out of our dresses and suits. The standing ovation was instantaneous."

An audience member agreed on a Konektis Facebook post: "Such an incredible performance at UVic! My wife and I attended, never having heard you before, and you blew our socks off."

### Choir 'konektions'

For Oak Lake's Cody Thiessen, the choir has opened new doors. He said, "It's pretty amazing to be a part of such a wonderful group of people. It was a beautiful experience to share with my friends, I loved the ocean,

the city and the food. Our whole choir got to perform for Vancouver Youth Choir (VYC) and a bunch of well recognized Canadian choral conductors/choirs."

Virden's Todd Plaisier has been with the choir since 2017 and he said of this national conference, "The choir is filled with some very accomplished singers and produces some amazing music. We have known and enjoyed this ourselves and the Westman area audiences have shown great support through the years. Being able to showcase that to the rest of the nation was definitely a highlight...."

Ageologist by trade, he said the Podium trip "[brought] together people from all walks of life with a shared goal of making beautiful music and sharing our combined voice is something special."

His son Tristan will be joining the choir, "which will bring a new level of appreciation and wonder to the whole experience."

Konektis Choir inspired even the young.

One member of the audience posted on Facebook about the effect their music had on her daughter: "I was in the front row on Sunday for the performance at the Phillip T. Young Recital Hall and I've never seen anything like it. I think you blew my kiddo's mind - her jaw was literally hanging open for your entire set. As you came on stage she whispered 'they're all so beautiful!' And then you started singing. She says she wants to be in a choir like this when she is an adult."

# Doc Hodge will not be forgotten

By Anne Davison  
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

Dr. Andy Hodge blazed a trail for veterinary practice in Hamiota. While the Hodge house was demolished last week, Dr. Hodge's lasting legacy is recorded in the Manitoba Agricultural Hall of Fame and in the Manitoba Historical Society Memorable Manitobans.

From the Ag Hall of Fame and Historical Society:

Dr. F. Andrew (Andy) Hodge (B.S.A., D.V.M.) was born in Teulon, Manitoba, Oct. 7, 1922 where he took his early education. In 1942, he graduated from the University of Manitoba with a Bachelor of Science degree in Agriculture and was awarded the "gold medal."

Hodge joined the RCAF and proudly served his country for the next three years,

both at home and in Kogala, Ceylon (Sri Lanka).

At the end of the war in 1945 he pursued his chosen career at Ontario Veterinary College, receiving a Doctorate of Veterinary Medicine, degree and a second gold medal. He was the only double gold winner to have practised in Manitoba.

In 1946, Andy married Marion Slobodianek, who would become his lifelong partner and together they raised their family of three: Greg, Pam and Mary Lou. Marion moved to Winnipeg to live with daughter Mary Lou following the loss of Andy from illness in 1985. Marion passed in her 90th year, in 2011.

Doc Hodge began his career in Winnipeg but in 1949 he moved to Hamiota.

He had a distinguished professional record of ser-

vice, noted as a brilliant diagnostician. He served on the council of the Manitoba Veterinary Medical Association (MVMA) and was particularly busy as its president in the 1950s because of the outbreak of foot-and-mouth disease. From 1977 to 1981, Dr. Hodge's practical knowledge and excellent advice made him a valuable member of the MVMA.

Instrumental in establishing the Hamiota and District Veterinary Clinic, the opening of this new facility was a proud moment for Dr. Hodge. Not only did it mark the beginning of a new type of animal medical practice, but it also marked the culmination of difficult negotiations with the five surrounding municipal organizations and the Veterinary Service Board.

In 1985, the MVMA rec-

ognized Dr. Hodge's many contributions with a life membership.

Andy was a community person: a charter member of Hamiota Lions Club, a school board trustee, avid curler, hockey coach and most of all a friend.

During his life, he gave most generously of his time and his abilities to his country, his profession and to his community.

Hamiota has been home to two strong contributors to veterinary practice. Dr. Allan Preston followed Dr. Hodge and took up practice in the Hamiota veterinary clinic. He was inducted into the Agricultural Hall of Fame in 2024. Following a busy practice, Dr. Preston served as chief provincial veterinarian and later as assistant deputy minister in the agriculture department. Dr. Preston and wife Sharon retired to Hamiota from their cattle farm a few years ago.



PHOTO BY AHOF

Dr. R. Andrew Hodge, an inductee into Agricultural Hall of Fame.



# Municipality to submit Community Impact Statement

By Dale Davison  
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

## RM of Wallace-Woodworth council meeting, June 9

Council received a report on the severe weather event that struck Kenton on June 6. CAO Iris Vercaigne explained that the immediate response involved the Woodworth Fire Department, which quickly cleared fallen trees that were blocking streets and creating safety hazards. Municipal staff continued cleanup efforts on Sunday and into the following days. During the initial power outage, the Kenton water treatment plant remained operational because its backup generator started automatically.

However, during the night the generator experienced a mechanical failure and stopped operating between midnight and 3 a.m. Staff were able to restore power later Sunday when they located a temporary replacement generator. Because the water treatment plant was offline during the outage, a boil water advisory was issued.

Councillors expressed appreciation for the rapid response from firefighters, Hydro crews, municipal employees, contractors, and community members.

## Community impact

The Manitoba Emergency Management Organization has a Community Impact Assessment (CIA) form that allows municipalities to report damage from significant weather events and improve the province's understanding of local impacts. While submitting the form does not guarantee a Disaster Financial Assistance (DFA) program will be established, administration recommended completing an assessment because of the widespread damage experienced by residents and businesses in Kenton and the surrounding area.

As reported in the June 5 edition of the Empire-Advance, recent flooding in the Assiniboine valley has caused financial hardship to valley farmers from St. Lazare to Brandon. CAO Vercaigne said, "We received a call from the province asking if we were going to submit a Community Impact Assessment in relation to the Shellmouth dam operation. One of the neighboring municipalities already submitted their CIA, and given the problems that our producers have been experiencing, and the province themselves asking if we are going to submit one, we'd like to recommend submitting one."

## Road allowance requests

Robert Thiessen requested authorization concerning an undeveloped road allowance on Road 55 between Roads 138 and 139. The original proposal stated that any trees and brush removed must be buried off the road allowance, but Coun. Lyle Kinnaird stated, "Well, the condition that they bury them directly seems unreasonable to me. They need to sit for a couple of years and burn it and then bury it." Coun. Barb Stambuski suggested, "How about just dispose of it off the right-of-way?" Reeve Clayton Canart noted that once the material is removed from the right-of-way and placed on private property it is the applicant's responsibility unless it creates issues by trapping snow. Council approved the motion as amended.

Clifford Whittle also made a request regarding an undeveloped road allowance on Road 160 West north of Road 60. The proposal contained conditions like the previous application, including utility locates, brush removal, notification requirements, and an undeveloped road construction agreement. The agreement limits clearing to a maximum width of 50 feet along the roadway and

specifies that the project is approved only to provide access to Whittle's property and not to expand adjacent cultivated farmland. This motion was also approved as amended.

## Road rehabilitation

Council received a bid for a half-mile road rehabilitation project on Road 58 between Roads 154 and 155. The contract was awarded to Tuthill Construction in the amount of \$174,900.

Reeve Canart said, "My only comment is to make sure that there is very good, clear and strong communication between the businesses, the RM and the contractor, and make sure that access remains available." Coun. Kinnaird added, "And there's no stones in the clay."

## Half-ton truck tender

Council discussed proposals received for supplying a 2026 half-ton truck and whether they can justify selecting a bid other than the lowest-priced alternative.

Several councillors express concern that choosing a higher-priced bid could be difficult to justify unless the tender process clearly allows the consideration of factors other than price. While there

is support for purchasing locally, members emphasize the need to follow a fair and consistent purchasing process.

Administration will provide council with the full RFP and all submissions for review. Council agreed to table the matter and request additional information before making a final decision.

## Paving and seal coating

CAO Vercaigne presented an update on the municipality's paving and seal coating program. Manitoba Transportation and Infrastructure (MTI) confirmed it would pave the two Kenton locations that had originally been identified.

Council discussed coordinating with MTI's paving contractor while crews were already working in Kenton. Vercaigne explained that the municipality hoped to "piggyback" on whichever contractor MTI selected for Kenton, allowing additional municipal patching work to be completed more efficiently.

## 4-H donation request

Valley Riders 4-H Club requested financial support from the municipality's special events allocation. Council

reviewed past contributions to other 4-H organizations and records showed donations of \$200 and \$250 had been provided to other 4-H-related organizations in previous years. After discussion, council agreed to provide a \$250 donation.

## Variation order

Wallace-Woodworth Development Officer Naveen Chaudhary attended a public hearing to consider a variation order application concerning property owned by Kola Feed Mill Limited. The application sought a variation from the minimum site area requirement in the RM of Wallace-Woodworth Zoning By-law. The request was to reduce the required minimum site area from two acres to 0.38 acres. According to the application, the purpose of the variance was to bring an existing business support service operation into conformity with the zoning by-law and permit construction of a new building.

After the public hearing closed council reviewed the application and confirmed that no objections had been received. Council approved the variance.

## NOTICE

### MISSING ROYALTY OWNER

#### The Oil and Gas Act, C.C.S.M., CHAP. 034 (Section 214)

Tundra Oil & Gas Limited has made an application under Section 214 of The Oil and Gas Act for an order of the Minister of Manitoba Business, Mining, Trade, and Job Creation authorizing, on behalf of the royalty owner, for drilling and production in the following spacing units:

#### N½ of Section 27, Township 09, Range 29 WPM Railway Plan 219 BLTO

The mineral rights in portion of N½ of Section 27-09-29 WPM is held by other private owners and had granted lease to Tundra Oil & Gas Limited excluding the Railway Plan 219 BLTO portion.

Tundra Oil & Gas Limited has been unable to ascertain the royalty owner in the N ½ 27-9-29 WPM Railway Plan 219 BLTO. As a result, Tundra Oil & Gas Limited has applied to the Minister under Section 214 of The Oil and Gas Act for an order authorizing drilling and production on behalf of the royalty owner.

The Minister may issue an order authorizing drilling and production on behalf of the Missing Royalty Owner after publishing this notice of the application, provided the Minister is satisfied that the royalty owner cannot be ascertained or found.

If you have any information or questions, please contact Mildred Valentino prior to **July 16, 2026**, as follows:

Mildred Valentino  
Tenure Specialist  
Manitoba Business, Mining, Trade, and Job Creation  
360-1395 Ellice Avenue, Winnipeg, MB R3G 3P2  
Phone: 204-247-0257  
Email: Mildred.Valentino@gov.mb.ca

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== CLASSIFIEDS ==

Tender

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

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

\*home quarter

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

**Conditions:**

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

Inquiries can be directed by email to [ebolton@osman-law.ca](mailto:ebolton@osman-law.ca)

Forward bids to:  
**Osman & Company Law Office – Land Tender**  
Attn: Erin Bolton  
1103 Broadway Avenue  
Drawer 280  
Moosomin, SK S0G 3N0

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Help Wanted



EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES  
ACCOUNTS PAYABLE CLERK

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

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

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

CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER

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

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

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

COMMUNITY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT  
AND RECREATION MANAGER

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

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

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

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

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



# CLASSIFIEDS

## Help Wanted

### R.M. of Oakview HELP WANTED FULL TIME PUBLIC WORKS UTILITY OPERATOR



#### Job Description:

Working under the supervision of the Public Works Supervisor of the R.M. of Oakview, the primary duties will include assisting with the safe and effective operation of all water and wastewater operations; and other duties as described by the R.M. of Oakview.

#### Applicants Must:

- Have the ability to work independently with minimum supervision
- Possess a valid Class 5 Driver's License
- Have the ability to operate and maintain a variety of municipal equipment
- Have the ability to work in Rapid City, Oak River or Cardale
- Possess or the ability to obtain a Level 1 classification Manitoba Water Certificate

Please submit a resume, a cover letter that includes a copy of a Driver's Abstract to the R.M. of Oakview municipal offices at Rapid City or Oak River by Monday, July 6, 2026 at 12:00 noon. Resumes may be reviewed as soon as June 29, 2026.

A detailed list of duties can be found at [www.rmofOakview.ca](http://www.rmofOakview.ca) or by contacting the following:

|                                                                     |                                                                           |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Head Office                                                         | Satellite Office                                                          |
| 10 Cochrane Street                                                  | 435 - 3rd Ave                                                             |
| Box 179                                                             | Box 130                                                                   |
| Oak River, MB R0K 1T0                                               | Rapid City, MB R0K 1W0                                                    |
| Phone: 204-566-2146                                                 | Phone: 204-826-2515                                                       |
| Fax: 204-566-2126                                                   | Fax: 204-826-2274                                                         |
| Email: <a href="mailto:info@rmofOakview.ca">info@rmofOakview.ca</a> | Email: <a href="mailto:adminrc@rmofOakview.ca">adminrc@rmofOakview.ca</a> |

Thank you to all applicants for their interest in this position, however, only those selected for interviews will be contacted.

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## Notice



## NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

### DEVELOPMENT PLAN – TRANS CANADA WEST PLANNING DISTRICT

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

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

#### DATE, TIME, AND LOCATION:

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

#### FOR INFORMATION, PLEASE

#### CONTACT:

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

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

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# Virden Wado Kai Karate Club



Sensei Chantal Morais (black belt), Sempei Joseph Pappel (brown belt)

**Submitted**  
By KRISTA PEDERSON

The Virden Wado Kai Karate Club held their last class of the session last Monday, June 8.

Friends and family were invited to participate. Some students got to show off their new belts from the previous weeks grading. Congratulations to all participated. Working out can be a lot of fun!



Yellow belt: Tammy

Wado Kai Karate is available in Virden, Melita/Peirson, Hamiota and St. Lazare. When the club begins again in the fall, come and check it out! All ages are welcome.



White belt: Ruby

SUBMITTED PHOTOS

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# SPORTS

## ROOKIE SEASON PREPARES ANDREW FOR SPECIAL OPPORTUNITY

By Robin Wark  
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

While Tanner Andrew enjoyed his first professional hockey season, he knows his second campaign will be special.

The sons of Brock and Andrea Andrew, Tanner and Hunter, have both signed with France's Cholet Dogs. The last time the siblings were teammates was with the Virden Oil Capitals in 2019-20 before their paths led them to become conference rivals in the university ranks. Located in western France, Cholet competes in FFHG Division 1, the country's second-highest men's hockey league.

"I think we are just looking forward to playing together again like we did when we were younger and for the Oil Caps," Tanner said. "It's just an amazing experience and something we both knew we wanted to do again after we did it in junior. It will probably be the best year of hockey, just getting to play at that level in France with him."

Next season will be Hunter's first pro campaign after completing his NCAA career with Canisius University, while Tanner played last winter for the ECHL's Norfolk (Va.) Admirals and Wheeling (W.Va.) Nailers. The eldest Andrew brother also appeared in nine games with the Admirals in 2024-25 after his season with the Rochester Institute of Technology concluded.

"It's just a different brand of hockey," Tanner said of the pro ranks. "More physical and instead of playing guys that are 19-24, you got guys that are 34 and have full families and little ones running around the rink, which was something very new to me but always very cool to experience."



PHOTO BY ZACK RAWSON

Tanner Andrew competed for the ECHL's Wheeling Nailers last winter.

His rookie season included both successes and challenges. After playing in two games for the Admirals, Tanner was released. He was picked up by the Nailers and quickly became a valued player. What allowed him to adjust quickly to a new team and contribute?

"I think just trusting in my ability and Pap (head coach Ryan Papaioannou) giving me the opportunity

to play my game and excel the way I knew that I always could," Tanner said. "I was never really given a chance in Norfolk, but as soon as I got to Wheeling, Pap gave me the chance to contribute and play my own game, which was extremely gratifying."

The Nailers are affiliated with the National Hockey League's Pittsburgh Penguins. The ECHL is two steps away from the NHL.

Andrew, a 5-foot-9, 170-pound forward, scored five goals and recorded 14 points in 45 regular-season games for Wheeling. He added a goal and an assist in seven playoff contests.

An April 22 online article from Wheeling's The Intelligencer newspaper stated: "Tanner Andrew was the team's ultimate utility player, as he played every role he was asked, including dropping back to help on defence."

A highlight of the season was, of course, when the forward scored his first professional goal. He first lit the lamp on Nov. 22 in a road game against the Reading Royals in Reading, Pa.

"I don't remember a lot to be honest," Tanner said. "I kind of blacked out, but it was an extremely revealing and surreal moment. Just to see how happy all the boys were for me was super cool and rewarding."

Tanner helped the Nailers finish first in the ECHL's North Division and advance to the conference final for the first time since 2016.

"I really enjoyed my first season," Tanner said. "It was a really special group of guys that became like brothers very quickly. I made lifelong friends from this past season and it's something I will remember for the rest of my life."

## SPORTS NOTES: LOCAL HIGH SCHOOL TEAMS SHINE ON THE DIAMOND

By Robin Wark  
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

The Reston/Souris/Elkhorn/Melita baseball co-op had a successful season.

The squad compiled a 6-1 regular-season record in the Prairie West Baseball League. Its lone loss came against zone champions Boissevain. The team finished second in the South Division. Competing in the league's final four, the co-op fell to Birtle 7-3 in the semifinals in Virden last week.

In the zone playoffs, prior to the league final four, the team dropped a close 5-4 semifinal decision to Virden.

"I was most impressed about players filling roles that they likely didn't have in mind," coach John Patmore said. "We had to get creative with lots of different pitching options and had a few players back this year for the first time playing ball in a few years. Our offence was especially strong."

Reston's Patmore coached alongside Brock Anderson of Souris, and Dallas Williamson and Branden Ripley, both of Reston.

### VCI Baseball

The Virden Collegiate Institute baseball team also had a strong showing. It was 3-4 in the Prairie West High School Baseball League regular season and competed well at zone playoffs. In a league consolation crossover, the team put the emphasis on fun and utilized its younger student-athletes in a loss to Russell.

"The pitching and defence was solid all year, we led the league in runs against... We just had trouble getting the big hit when it mattered late in the game," coach Curtis Plett said.

He said the team had a strong core of Grade 12s who led by example on and off the field. They were Reed McGrath, Beckham Clarke, Brodie Cameron, Owen Charles and Luka Mahmutovic. Plett also appreciated Leif Wilson, "who once again took on a large chunk of the coaching duties."

McGrath received the team's Perry Kalynuk award, which is named after the late coach and sports organ-

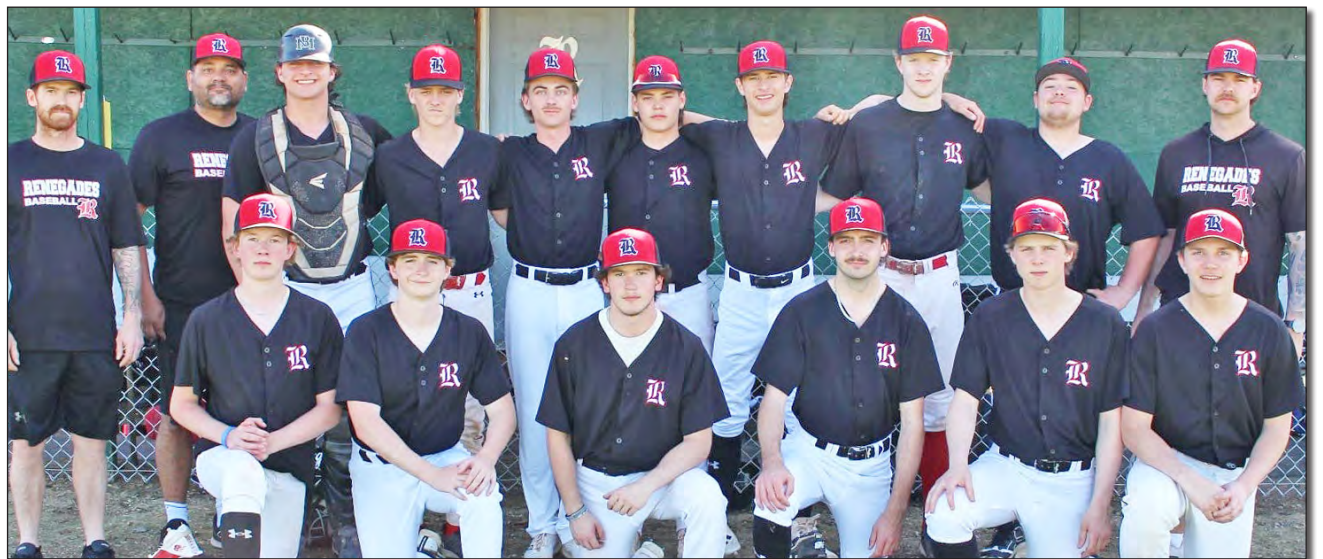


PHOTO BY MICHELLE HAMEL

The Reston/Souris/Elkhorn/Melita baseball team enjoyed its season.

izer. He was also tabbed as the Golden Bears' Top Pitcher. Charles was named the team's Most Valuable Player and Top Defensive Player.

Rhyse Gabrielle was recognized as VCI's Most Improved Player. Liam Banga and Brayden Rowan were named Top Offensive Players.

### REMP Softball

It was a development season for the Reston-Elkhorn-Melita-Pierson high school softball team. Head coach Rochelle Stephenson said, "We were improving by the end of the season defensively and the girls were hitting well." She enjoyed "the girls' willingness to keep playing ball, improve, and play as a team, and their love of the game."

### Provincial Track and Field

Elkhorn School's Connor Allerton earned a spot in the finals of the Boys Junior Varsity Long Jump at the Dairy Farmers of Manitoba Provincial Track & Field Championship. He finished 11th in the event, which was held June 12-14 in Winnipeg. Allerton also

competed in the Junior Varsity events for the Boys 100 Meter Dash and 200 Meter Dash.

Events with other area student-athletes included: Boys 1500 Meter Run Varsity - Reed Plaisier, Virden Collegiate; Boys 400 Meter Dash Varsity - Jackson Stothers, Virden Collegiate; Girls Triple Jump Junior Varsity - Bryleigh Barnes, Elkhorn School; Blair Magatioux, Elkhorn School; Boys Long Jump Varsity - Isaiah Barrate, Virden Collegiate; Girls Shot Put 4kg Varsity - Abbie Flannery, Elkhorn School; Boys Triple Jump Varsity - Isaiah Barrate, Virden Collegiate; Dixon Tough, Virden Collegiate; Boys 200 Meter Dash Varsity - Jackson Stothers, Girls Long Jump Junior Varsity - Blair Magatioux, Elkhorn School; Boys Javelin Throw 700g Junior Varsity - Sam Revoy, Virden Collegiate; and Finn Canart, Elkhorn School.

VCI had a Junior Varsity Boys 4x100 Meter Relay team compete. Elkhorn was represented by a Junior Varsity Girls 4x100 Meter Relay squad.



## SPORTS

## VIRDEN OILERS BREAK THROUGH WITH FIRST WIN IN BUSY WEEK

By Robin Wark  
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

Oilers.

The team played three games over a three-day span, capping it with its first victory of the season, a 6-4 win over the Wawanesa Brewers on Sunday. The South West Baseball League team fell 8-5 to the Rivers Comets on Friday. In their first game on Sunday, Virden lost 9-6 to Boissevain. The Oilers were also scheduled to play in Souris on June 11 before that game was postponed.

"What makes a stretch like this especially enjoyable is the group of players we have," said the Oilers' Mat Strain a couple of days before the four-game stretch was to start. "We have a great group of guys and a very fun group to be around, both on and off the field. Everyone is willing to do their part, and that makes busy weeks like this much easier to manage.

"While four games in four days can be demanding, it's also one of the best parts of the season. You get into a rhythm, spend a lot of time with your teammates, and have several opportunities to compete in a short period of time. These are the kinds of weeks players look forward to, and we're excited for the challenge ahead."

Strain explained that the team has a full roster, "which helps spread the workload around. If someone can't make a game or two, we have others who can step in, and if someone gets tired, it allows us to rotate players and make sure nobody gets too worn down over the course of the week."

The SWBL's Sunday doubleheaders against two different teams add to both the busyness and the fun.

"It gives family and friends a better opportunity to come out to catch a game during these Sunday doubleheaders," Oilers veteran Keifer Johnston said. "And, with our turnover to a younger team, it's been nice to see new faces out at the diamond.

"It can also let guys get into a rhythm if they can get a few more at-bats in a day."

Rockets veteran Branden Ripley indicated that depth is important for those doubleheaders. He said, "Fortunately

While bad weather postponed one game, it was still a busy week for the Virden

for us, we have a little more commitment and numbers this year so that always helps out the arms."

SWBL President Aaron Tycoles, a Reston product, said the doubleheaders have been held for likely 15-20 years now. He said, "It is partially trying to fit the games in in a short time frame, but it is more so because of the travel distance from certain points... For example, Boissevain to Virden or Hamiota. We give the teams the option when they give the schedule dates at the start of the year. If they would like a road doubleheader they must be willing to host a home one if needed."

#### Virden Oilers

On June 14, the Oilers never trailed en route to a 6-4 win over the Brewers. Virden led 6-3 heading into the sixth inning. Pitcher Reed McGrath struck out three and allowed three earned runs on 10 hits in a complete game performance. Brayden Rowan had two hits for the Oilers. Tyson Draper swiped three bases and Toby Troughton swiped two.

"Reed McGrath pitched a great game," Virden player-organizer Jeff Peel said. "He had a good mix of pitches and worked quickly. Also, we were finally able to get timely hitting, which really helped. Our defence played well and limited our mistakes to a minimum. If you can throw strikes, keep the errors to a minimum, and get timely hitting, you can win in this league. Easier said than done but I think things are trending in the right direction."

Earlier that day, Nathan Rowan struck out six in a 9-6 loss to Boissevain. On June 12, the Oilers lost to Rivers



PHOTO BY MARLA WILSON

"What makes a stretch like this especially enjoyable is the group of players we have," said the Oilers' Mat Strain.

8-5. Peel struck out six while also driving in three runs.

Virden faces a busy stretch with three games in four days. The Oilers host the Oak River Dodgers on June 18, visit the Hamiota Red Sox on June 19, and return home to play the Brandon Young Guns on June 21.

#### Reston Rockets

In their lone contest last week, the Rockets beat the Hamiota Red Sox 6-1 to improve their record to 4-5-0. Going the distance on the mound, John Patmore struck out 10 and allowed 11 hits. Billy Patmore had two home runs and drove in three runs. John Patmore hit one home run. Jamie Williamson stole two bases.

The Reston Rockets were scheduled to host the Deloraine Royals on June 16 and the Souris Cardinals on June 18 in games played after the Empire-Advance deadline. The Rockets will then wrap up the week at home against the Brandon Young Guns on June 20.

## EXPOS RETURN TO THE DIAMOND FOR SPECIAL FATHER'S DAY GAME

By Robin Wark  
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

Father's Day will be something special for Elkhorn baseball fans.

A group of area players are coming together as the Elkhorn Expos to take on the 45-plus Moosomin Blue Jays on June 21 at 4 p.m. at Tutthill Field in a contest being billed as "older than senior baseball." Kirkella's Trevor Frattinger plays for the Blue Jays and the squad was looking for some exhibition contests. The Father's Day tilt will be the first leg of a home-and-home series with the second being played July 5 in Moosomin.

"I think the main thing is bringing the community together, like Elkhorn always does best, especially for a Father's Day event like this," said Mike Stevenson, a player-organizer for the Expos. "The roster we've put together has a great mix of personalities, so it's shaping up to be a really enjoyable day. When Trevor asked if we could field a team, I knew it wouldn't be a problem."

The Expos' roster includes a number of players who suited up for Elkhorn when it fielded a South West Baseball League team in the senior ranks. Some are still active in the SWBL. For example, Stevenson and Tyler Wood are currently contributing for the Hamiota Red Sox. Others have taken to the diamond less recently. Stevenson said, "A few of the guys likely haven't played competitive ball in 20-25 years, so it

should be a fun mix of experience and just getting back out there."

For the last 15 years, Travis McColl's time at the diamond has been focused on coaching his sons and other area youth, which gave him the opportunity to stay involved. He is looking forward to playing for the Expos.

"I think it's gonna be a lot of fun, a group of guys who haven't played together as a team and who just want to get back to playing the game," he said. "Well, the skill level might not be the same as what it once was, it might be something that we decide to do in the future as well. I think it's great that Mikey Stevenson was able to get the team put together on relatively short notice."

The contest also provides McColl with the opportunity to be teammates with his brother Brodie. He said it is "pretty exciting because we've never played on the same team."

On Father's Day, the Elkhorn Travel Club will operate the canteen at the game. Proceeds will support their travels.

It is Frattinger's second season with the Blue Jays. Moosomin product Ryan Potter, who was long involved with the Virden Oil Capitals hockey team, is a player and coach.

Each year the Blue Jays compete in a Saskatchewan 45-plus tournament. In 2026, Hudson Bay hosts the

event on the weekend of July 17. Frattinger said most of the players usually only play in the one tournament each year, although he does play some fastball.

"We felt as a team we needed to practice a little more than last year and a couple exhibition games would really help getting us limbered up for a busy weekend of ball in July. So with Elkhorn being so close, I contacted Mike Stevenson to see if he could round up some players. I think I stated as old as possible," Frattinger joked.

He said he is looking forward to "just playing ball in a fun, but I'm sure somewhat competitive atmosphere. I think the teams will be pretty evenly matched and it will be a great time."

"It's a pretty fun opportunity to get some former ball players from the area out to play a couple games without a whole bunch of commitment," Frattinger said. "Who knows, maybe it'll be the start of an annual event and maybe even grow some opportunities for the 45-plus leagues?"

The Blue Jays' projected roster includes Nick Krutkewich, Brodie McColl, Clayton Canart, Devrin Stonehouse, Greg Allison, Jason Bowles, Jordan Mitchell, Ken Wegner, Kevin Reimer, Mike Cousins, Mike Volk, Moe Brennand, Robyn McKean, Steven Malcolm, Steven Tutthill, Travis McColl, Tyler Mitchell, Tyler Wood, Tyson Martens and Mike Stevenson.