

# Empire-Advance

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JANUARY 16, 2026 | EMPIRE: VOL 121 NO 22 / ADVANCE: VOL 140 NO 24 | PUBLISHING FRIDAYS

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f i l n x

## Quilter's journey entertains at Arts Mosaic



PHOTO BY ANNE DAVISON

Eyes and ears are on Christine Waddell as she presents, The Journey's Never Done.

By Anne Davison  
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

Laced together with keen wit, Christine Waddell presented her fabric art quilting journey at a reception in Arts Mosaic on Jan. 8, themed 'The Journey's Never Done'

Wife, mother, grandmother and great grandmother, not least of all, newspaper publisher with her husband Ken, Christine belongs to a Neepawa-Minnedosa quilt guild.

She has touched down in renowned quilting shops from Missouri to Alberta and raves about Bobby Heaman's (Custom Creations) daughter, Megan Harper and her computerized, longarm quilting - a Virden treasure.

Hobbyist quilters are known to frequent quilt shops wherever they travel in North America, as evidenced through Waddell's quilting stories; and true to form, four friends from the Tangled Threads Quilt Guild of Neepawa attended Christine's reception on Thursday.

Station manager Alix Portrebka welcomed the gathering

to Arts Mosaic Station where over 16 came to enjoy the 'quilt turning' where one-at-a-time, with the help of Alix, each quilt was lifted from the stack.

In her animated presentation, Christine explained that from a child of four, growing up in Virden area, she began shoe lacing cardboard squares together. With 4-H and other influences her quilt journey has proved 'never done' and a lifelong hobby, one that would sustain her as she recovered from cancer treatments over a year ago.

In her pragmatic way, Christine said, "I'm going to show you some of the mistakes," and said with tongue in cheek, "because some people never make them, but it's part of the journey."

### Learning

Christine says, "A good place to start in quilting is with a quilting lesson." Every quilt is an opportunity to learn something new. "You learn on every one. None are perfect. Sometimes you make a project and it isn't what you expect. So, what do I do with it?"

Learn more about the quilt journey on page 2...

**VIRIDEN OIL CAPITALS**

**HOME GAME**  
**FRIDAY, JANUARY 23**  
**VS. NORTHERN MANITOBA**  
**BLIZZARD**  
**PUCK DROPS AT 7:30PM**

*Inside...*



**AG DAYS ARE COMING**  
**P10-11**



**GOLDEN BEARS' HIGH SCHOOL HOCKEY**  
**P12**



# Station gallery features Christine Waddell's quilts



PHOTO BY ANNE DAVISON

The patchwork multi fabric masterpiece in the background: "That's all fabric that came from Hamilton, Missouri. It's a whole set of fabric..." Waddell's quilt from the Missouri Star Quilt Company and she says, "the story behind it is absolutely fascinating." Hamilton, MO is dubbed Quilt Town where quilting addicts can experience "16 themed fabric shops" and a calendar of at least five quilt-related events in 2026.

*continued from page 1*

She modelled some results - projects adapted to become something completely different - a hat and a unique open sweater with quilt patches she wore that day as well as a sewing tool bag.

Traditional quilt patterns are well known among the initiated and Christine showed Friendship Star, and Hunter Star features.

Creativity, innovation and unstoppable vision are the hallmark of Waddell's exciting work. She adapted and combined patterns, beginning a project in February 2023 using scraps and lessons learned from working with graph-based designs.

Showing the project, she says, "I stole the pattern," – a steal such as a musician playing a popular song by ear to entertain a home crowd. She explained that from a graph picture, using scraps of material on hand,

## The heart of art beats strong in Westman



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Artists of the area celebrate talent in the Westman Juried Art Show circa 2023

**By Anne Davison**  
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

Chris Moore for Arts West Council has announced the 2026 juried art show. He says, "We welcome entries from all amateur and emerging artists - youth and adults! Please encourage your fellow artists to participate."

Artist should watch their inboxes for information, including the link to enter. An art project requires imagination and inspiration. That's why its important to get started thinking and planning in order to be ready with one or two entries.

All artists receive professional adjudication. Some

pieces will be selected to show throughout Westman in 2026. The optional theme category is 'connections.'

The event is stimulating for the arts community and fun for community in general. At the juried show, pieces from local people, maybe neighbours whom you didn't realize were dabbling or spending all their spare time with a paint brush, suddenly bloom onto the stage of the gallery show.

Artists 11 years and over, can find a class, with guidelines for painting size, etc. on the brochure.

Arts West Council and the Killarney Turtle Mountain Arts Council hosts this show which will unfurl in Killarney United Church Hall on April 26. Entries are due April 16.

"I created the Slice of Pi Exploding Heart pattern."

As a new quilt is turned up Waddell exclaims, "Oh, here's another favorite. They're like your children. They're all different, but they're your favorite," she confides to the understanding audience.

Waddell reflects upon fabric finds and treasured experiences that her quilting hobby has afforded them. "We don't travel a lot, but we got to know a woman who owned a quilt shop in Alberta, and we just hit it off...Corinne Hewitt in Hanna, Alberta."

Hewitt, a novelist, put her quilt shop up for sale; Waddell had seen something she wanted from the shop including patterns. And she bought fabric called Jacob's Table that was based on one of the characters in Hewitt's book series.

The Virden show is just a sample of Christine Waddell's many quilts. They are hand done in a free motion machine quilting style. From small art pieces to large bed quilts, her work will be on display at Arts Mosaic's Station gallery for the month of January. Details of each quilt is recorded on a card ... a few are for sale.

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## New to Virden

The Virden Empire Advance is pleased to announce that in partnership with Rob Waddell (Shoestringpicker on Instagram) we have opened an Art Gallery at the Virden Empire Advance building at 305 Nelson Street in Virden.

Come in Monday to Friday 9-4 to see our offering of beautifully framed reasonably priced pieces including oils, water colours and prints. We plan to add more stock and possibly some art and curiosities!

**For more information call Ken Waddell at 204-476-6214**



## In my opinion

### Worried about Virden water? Make the next right decision

By Anne Davison  
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

While the Town of Virden grapples with arsenic level in the water at about 2.5 times drinking water standards, just how worried should town residents be about consuming the water?

Is it a testing issue, or a real health concern?

In the short term – a year or several – for most people the level of arsenic in Virden water is unlikely to be a health threat.

It's one among other sources of arsenic that most of us consume, unknowingly. Rice, cruciferous vegetables (broccoli and Brussel sprouts take up minerals more than most vegetables), dark meat (ex. salmon, tuna or sword fish) beer and wine are among those. Alcohol and arsenic can potentiate each other's toxic effects.

Virden will find a solution to reduce the arsenic. Perhaps mistakes have been made in the past, such as not getting in on the RM of Wallace municipal water service back 15 or so years ago. Good old hindsight!

However, I believe that Virden will do the next right thing. Citizens can keep their eye on that and ask for information. Pay attention.

To provide perspective, inorganic (mineral) arsenic is naturally occurring and can be found across Canada and world-wide. In places, sparkling clear water actually carries up to 80 times the 'safe' level.

CBC did a story on Moreton's Harbour where one family's well test came back at 80 times the safe limit. They'd been drinking it for 15 years. It was a horrible discovery and although they didn't feel deathly ill, the mother of the family reported exhaustion that she couldn't pin down.

But that's not here. Virden's supply is about 2.5 times the limit. It's not really high. The medical/scientific prediction is that over a lifetime (70 years) of use this level of arsenic could

be carcinogenic.

Virden's return to a former aquifer – their only immediate choice – now provides water that's been consumed here for decades.

Over 15 years ago, with an increased ability to test for arsenic down to 0.01ppm, Virden had trouble removing the stubborn mineral to meet that standard.

Was the population noticeably more ill than other their neighbours? I don't know, but one Virden person told me that his mother, in her 90s at the time, drank the water all her life.

Well, there's a multitude of factors that affect an individual's health. Worry is one of them.

Pregnant mothers and families with infants are advised to use bottled water.

For those who want to set worry aside, there are water filters that can remove arsenic, along with other contaminants.

That would be me. I have used a special water filter system most of my life.

Canada.ca gives general health information: "Buy an in-home water treatment device that can reduce the level of arsenic."

It's an investment up front, but how many bottles and jugs of water would it save, not to mention trips to get the stuff?

Canadian information from B.C. [www.healthlink-bc.ca/](http://www.healthlink-bc.ca/) explains that treatments to remove arsenic include reverse osmosis filters, distillation and some specialized media filters.

Chlorination and mechanical filters do not remove arsenic from water. Water filter jugs you can pick up at the store will NOT remove arsenic. Research it.

iSpring (Amazon) makes an under the sink reverse osmosis system that also re-mineralizes the water. This American product has NSF accreditation. (Re-mineralization is very important.)

Certification assures that a device works as the manufacturer or distributor claims.

## Restitution brings financial relief to Prairie Gateway Tourism

By Anne Davison  
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

The Town of Virden and the RM of Wallace-Woodworth enjoy joint membership with Prairie Gateway Tourism (PGT) and the organization has done a good job in promoting the area, publishing a tourism guide each year. This year the organization can breathe a sigh of relief. Funding from Wallace-Woodworth and Virden was able to be reduced from about \$16,000 to \$10,000 when the person responsible for defrauding PGT paid back the money.

From a Brandon Sun story by Skye Anderson on Oct. 21, 2025:

"A Deloraine woman who stole more than \$53,000 from two community-based organizations was sentenced to just under two years of house arrest.

"Liza Park, 45, pleaded guilty to two counts of fraud over \$5,000 after she embezzled more than \$35,000 from Deloraine Minor Ball Association and more than \$18,000 from Prairie Gateway Tourism.

"In September 2023, the Town of Virden's chief administrative officer reported an ongoing fraud at Prairie Gateway Tourism.

"Police were able to access spreadsheets that revealed roughly \$16,000 of possible fraudulent transactions, the court heard."

Liza Park was initially hired by the Town of Virden as economic development officer where she was innovative and productive in her role.

Virden CAO, Rhonda Stewart provided details, saying, "Liza was brought on as our Economic Development Manager early 2018 and resigned the summer of 2022. She went to RMED, Rural Manitoba Economic Development Corporation when she resigned (from Virden) in the summer of 2022."

While Stewart declines to take full credit for the discovery of the Prairie Gateway losses, she explained how the fraud was found:

"At that time Prairie Gateway Tourism had their own bank account and own set of books. I believe it was suggested that we check the accounts due to issues in another community involving Ms. Park, so a staff person from the RM and myself did, with us both questioning some of the payments, which eventually led to the RCMP investigation."

Deloraine Minor Ball funds disappearing was a red flag.

Stewart notes this had nothing to do with the Town accounts. "At no time while Ms. Park worked for the Town of Virden, did she have any access to Town of Virden accounts or finances."

Prairie Gateway has been and is run by a board. "The finances are once again [run] through the Town, as agreed to by the Town of Virden, RM of Wallace-Woodworth and the members of Prairie Gateway Tourism," says Stewart.

Details were brought to the RM of Wallace-Woodworth council meeting of Dec. 18, by Councillor Val Caldwell, a representative on PGT.

The current Prairie Gateway Tourism balance was reported at \$6,798.31, with

a \$1,500 Youth Canada grant still outstanding and approximately \$1,000 in expected upcoming expenses. The board is also receiving a restitution amount of \$18,324.57. Due to this restitution, the board discussed reducing the municipal levy from \$16,222 to \$10,000 for the coming year, with Wallace-Woodworth's requested contribution now set at \$10,000.

Coun. Caldwell also explained a renewal of the organizational structure. She said that things were moving in the right direction. "Lots of good things happening with that board, I think now the restitution is sorted."

At the RM meeting she also explained, "We reviewed our terms of reference...so from now on the chair will rotate back and forth between Town of Virden and Wallace Woodworth. So the new chair as of January will be Chelsey and I will be the vice chair and then it will rotate in a year from now." Chelsey McInnes is a member at large.

Both the Town and RM provide a yearly levy to PGT so both municipal entities have this year's fee reduced.

With the organization back on track, planning is underway for the 2026 visitor guide and other upcoming initiatives.

CAO Stewart acknowledges the value of this repayment. "Yes, it is nice to have recovered the funds to help with future projects of the organization in promoting our communities."

There has been a short vacancy in economic development in Virden and Erica Darvill has been promoted to the position of EDM with the Town. Both she and Wallace-Woodworth EDO will work with Prairie Gateway Tourism to promote this area of Westman.

**Greg NESBITT**  
MLA for Riding Mountain



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Tundra  
By Chad Carpenter



Joel Runyon, who operates a web site called IMPOSSIBLE has offered up a version of a very old Asian parable. I have included it below as an example of how to have some measure of peace with circumstances and the uncertainties of life.

“Once upon a time, there was an old farmer who had worked his crops for many years.

One day his horse ran away. Upon hearing the news, his neighbours came to visit. “Such bad luck,” they said sympathetically, “you must be so sad.”

“We’ll see,” the farmer replied.

The next morning the horse returned, bringing with it two other wild horses.

“How wonderful,” the neighbours exclaimed! “Not only did your horse return, but you received two more. What great fortune you have!”

“We’ll see,” answered the farmer.

The following day, his son tried to ride one of the untamed horses, was thrown, and broke his leg. The neighbours again came to offer their sympathy on his misfortune. “Now your son cannot help you with your farming,” they said. “What terrible luck you have!”

“We’ll see,” replied the old farmer.

The following week, military officials came to the village to conscript young men into the army. Seeing that the son’s leg was broken, they passed him by. The neighbours congratulated the farmer on how well things had turned out. “Such great news. You must be so happy!”

The man smiled to himself and said once again.

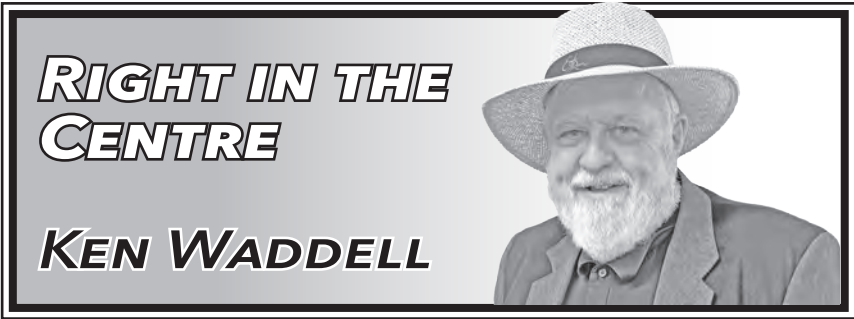
“We’ll see,”

This story is often bantered back and forth between my son and I as it speaks to the need to avoid panicking when facing decisions both big and small.

My father had a similar approach to life. He faced some hard times with bereavement and with what we would call poverty today.

He would quote Wilkins Micaw-

We’ll see



“I have adopted a summation of those family traits and that is the Four Fs- Faith, Family, Friends and Finances and be sure to keep them in that order.”

ber, a fictional character and David Copperfield’s landlord in Charles Dickens’ 1850 novel David Copperfield. Micawber was known for his optimistic outlook and the phrase “something will turn up”.

By the time I came along in 1948, my Dad and Mum had gained a bit of financial security so I didn’t directly experience the depths of their hardships. Before I was born, my parents had each lost a sibling and both their parents, they had to give up their little “Dirty Thirties” farm, worked their way through World War II and then started farming all over again. Their lives had many “We’ll see” and “Something will turn up” moments.

Let’s just say that since my father’s birth in 1907 until this present day, our family has its share of problems, but we have never been overcome with long terms of despair. For sure, there have been tough times but pessimism and despair have been kept at a distance.

While Dad gets credit for bringing

the Dickens quote into our family story, Mum gets credit for another quote she brought into the family story. “When the wolf comes to the door, love creeps out the window.” It’s a proverb from the 1500s. Both my parents, but especially my mother, worked hard to make sure that even when the wolf was walking up to our door, love was not allowed to escape out the window. Yes, there were tough times, but beating back the tough times and learning from them became a family trait.

I have adopted a summation of those family traits and that is the Four Fs- Faith, Family, Friends and Finances and be sure to keep them in that order.

There’s terrible turmoil in our world today, at all levels, but follow the advice of the ages and always be ready to say, “We’ll see!”

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



What is in your library?

There was a random quote that caught my attention; so much so that I jotted it down on a paper serviette found in the car’s console; ‘the titles in your library reveal a great deal about who you are.’

With that in mind, I checked out which books have survived the moves and the culls. What they tell me is that I am rather boring and nostalgic. Well loved is, ‘The Covered Wagon- Emerson Hough’ has an inside cover inscription “ To Grandma with love from Evelyn. October 1924” That makes it over a century old, and the price pencilled in is .35...That one is a hard cover treasure, ‘The Virginian - Owen Wister’ is a paperback published in 1969 and certainly shows signs of being well read. The hero to his opponent ‘When you call me that, smile.’ - well, that quote comes to mind frequently. Tattered and torn and taped, half coverless is ‘Rilla of Ingleside - L.M Montgomery’, the only book I have ever purloined from a school library. Little wonder it is so worn, my youngest daughter is named Rilla. I find comfort and solace in a good re-read. Bits of poetry on the shelf as well - ‘Robert Frost - The Road Not Taken’ is a collection of many of his words and works and I enjoy them all. His prose is poetry, John O’Donohue’s ‘Eternal Echoes’ speaks clearly to my heart and spirit. For lighter reading there is ‘Something Old, Something New’ a treasury of Lynn Johnston’s cartoons. They are more a graphic novel than cartoon. A boxed set of ‘The World of Charlie Brown’ has seen better days! It is so well loved, seeing any one frame allows me to see the story.

There is a collection of local history books, reference books for flora, fauna and wildlife. That would be evidence of my love for the out of doors, along with several how to garden books!

The largest collection pertains to spirituality. Books about the saints, the women of the Bible, devotional books, study books, reference books. Some were accumulated through my studies, many are gifts, and some have been purchased. That row in my little library would declare that I am a seeker, a searcher, and one who wishes to delve deeper into my faith journey.

It’s what is not in my library that is also noteworthy. There are no suspense, action packed, fantasy, nor science fiction books. I have not read the Tolkien series, nor any of C.S. Lewis books, nor any of the Harry Potter series. I don’t do well with suspense or tales of man’s inhumanity to man. Reality is that when I start reading a book, if I think I may like it, I check out the last chapter. If I like the ending, I read the book. I have used that method for a lifetime and find it works well for me. I don’t need trigger books; books that will cause me to review and relive difficult portions of my life. I don’t need to be rigid with suspense or horror. That’s not fun for me.

Yep, stable, boring, seeking, nostalgic and devout. Pretty accurate.

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- Mens Non-Typical
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- Youth Mule
- Ladies
- Ugly
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1. #26 Aidon Iverson - 168 2/8 2. Wyatt Kennedy - 151 1/8
1. #5 Torren Smith - 152 4/8 2. #20 Reese Lelond - 147 4/8
1. #21 Tompson Clartlon - 128 6/8
1. Cruz Dushnisky - 100
1. Lisa Raven - 141 5/8 2. Ashlee Gurr - 140 4/8
1. Hailey Gardham - 60 2/8

Thank you to everyone who attended, donated auction and raffle items, and volunteered to make our event a success once again. All proceeds from this event help support improvements and initiatives of Hooper's Lake Recreational and Camping area. See you next year!

Town Office: 204-748-2440

Virden 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

Caboose Restoration Fundraiser

CP Station Prints

All aboard! Now you can own a piece of Virden's history while fueling fundraising efforts for **restoration for the Caboose at the Historic CP Station.**

Unframed prints by renowned Canadian artist William Hobbs are available for only \$30 each at the Town Office - while quantities last.

Want to support the restoration event more? Donations are welcome - tax receipts will be provided.

Don't miss your chance, before these prints leave the station for good.

Employment Opportunity

General Labourer I

(full-time/part-time)

The Town of Virden has openings for one full-time or two part-time **General Labourer I** positions to work primarily in the Parks and Recreation Department at Tundra Oil and Gas Place.

This position requires an individual that is in good health and capable of carrying out the physical requirements of the job. Shifts are primarily scheduled for evening and weekends so would be ideal for a student. A valid Class 5 Manitoba driver's license is necessary.

A detailed job description, with wage rate is available at the Town Office.

This position will be open until filled.

Please forward resumes, complete with covering letter to:

Faye Pope, Office Manager  
Box 310  
Virden, Manitoba, R0M 2C0  
Phone: (204) 748-2440  
Email: office.manager@virden.ca

Dog and Cat Licenses

2026 animal licenses are available for purchase at the Town Office.

License your pet today – if your pet is lost, a valid license will help us to make sure that it is returned safely to you.



Tax Prepayment Discounts

The Town of Virden offers tax prepayment discounts as outlined below to taxpayers wishing to pay an installment or installments on their 2026 property taxes. Those wishing to prepay may pay an amount or a series of amounts that in total does not exceed the amount of their 2025 property taxes. The discount rate is equivalent to an effective annual interest rate of 3%.

Month of Payment	Discount Rate	Savings on \$1000.00
January	2.25%	\$ 22.50
February	2.00%	\$ 20.00
March	1.75%	\$ 17.50
April	1.50%	\$ 15.00
May	1.25%	\$ 12.50
June	1.00%	\$ 10.00
July	0.75%	\$ 7.50

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

Next Council Meeting

January 20 and February 19  
Council Meetings start at 7:00 PM

2026 Garbage and Recycle Schedules

Available online at [www.virden.ca/p/garbage-recycle](http://www.virden.ca/p/garbage-recycle) or at the Town Office

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# HELEN DRYSDALE

## OUT OF HELEN’S KITCHEN

Last week in the carrot salad recipe I missed that the carrots needed to be grated. Sorry about the inconvenience.

The earliest evidence of soup comes from the Stone Age, where people boiled ingredients in animal hides or clay pots over fire. Over time soup has been a staple food in many cultures offering nourishment and versatility. It has been served to kings in grand banquet halls and in peasant homes alike. Many families rely on soup as an affordable and filling option. When the weather starts to get chilly I find myself craving something warm and comforting. My slow-cooker is the unsung hero of many bowls of effortless soup. I just toss everything in the slow cooker, set it, and let it simmer all day while I am busy with other tasks like quilting.

### Mushroom, barley and lentil soup

This hearty, meatless soup is full of flavorful veggies, barley, lentils and warming spices, making it the ideal supper for cold winter nights. If you are not a fan of curry, cumin and ginger leave it out and substitute with 2 tsp. Italian dried herbs and 2 bay leaves.

- 1 Tbsp. oil
- 1 onion diced
- 2-3 cloves of garlic, minced
- 500 g of sliced cremini mushrooms
- 1-540 mL canned diced tomatoes with juice
- 6 cups beef, chicken or vegetable broth
- 1 large potato, cubed
- 2 ribs celery chopped
- 1 carrot, peeled and sliced
- 1/2 cup pearl barley
- 1/2 cup green lentils
- 1 Tbsp. minced ginger root
- 1 tsp. curry
- 1 tsp. cumin
- 1 tsp. salt
- 1/2 tsp. pepper
- 3 Tbsp. chopped fresh parsley or 1 Tbsp. dry



Heat oil in a frying pan and cook onion and garlic, 3-4 minutes. Add to the crock pot. Add remaining 1 Tbsp. oil to the frying pan and cook the mushrooms for about five minutes. Combine all ingredients in a slow cooker. Cook on low 6-7 hours or on high 3-4 hours until barley is tender. Enjoy.

### Seafood chowder

This seafood chowder recipe is packed with whitefish, shrimp, and crabmeat, all simmered together for a creamy bowl of seafood goodness! I use evaporated milk for my chowders as regular milk can separate or curdle during long slow cooking. Evaporated milk stays smooth and creamy for hours. You can use low-sodium broth for a healthier option.

- 4 strips bacon, sliced into 1 inch pieces
- 1 onion, diced
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 6 cups chicken broth
- 2 stalks celery, diced
- 2 large potatoes, diced
- 2 large carrots, diced
- 1 cup frozen corn kernels
- 1/2 tsp. black pepper
- 1/2 tsp. salt
- 1/2 tsp. red pepper flakes, or to taste
- 1 lb. whitefish like cod, tilapia or haddock, cut into chunks
- 1/2 lb. uncooked small to medium shrimp, peeled and deveined
- 1/2 lb. fresh crab meat or 120 g can crabmeat
- 1 354 mL can evaporated milk
- 2 Tbsp. cornstarch



Cook and stir bacon in a skillet over medium heat until browned, 5 to 8 minutes. Drain excess grease. Add onion and garlic to frying pan; cook and stir until onion is slightly soft, about 3-4 minutes. Transfer all to a slow cooker. Add chicken stock to slow cooker. Stir in celery, potatoes, carrots, and corn; season with black pepper, salt and red pepper flakes. Cover slow cooker. Cook on high for 3 hours. Stir the fish, shrimp, and crab into slow cooker; cook on high 30–45 min until fish is opaque. Mix the cornstarch to the evaporated milk and while stirring gently slowly pour this mixture into crock pot cook about 10 minutes before soup is ready. Serve with fresh bread.

# How to get more flavour when slow cooking



PHOTO BY METRO CREATIVE

**Submitted**  
BY METRO CREATIVE

Slow cooking is a popular way to prepare hearty meals. Slowly cooked stews can make for the perfect meal on cold winter days. In addition to helping craft meals that stick to your ribs, slow cookers fill a home with enticing aromas all day long, and that can make everyone hungrier and more eager to try the finished product by dinnertime.

Slow cooking aromas wafting through the air heighten anticipation, and cooks can exceed expectations by employing a few strategies to increase flavour.

• Let fat do the flavouring. Fatty cuts of meat fare best in slow cookers, as the excess fat ensures the meat won't dry out. The thought of flavouring with fat may not appeal to everyone, and those who prefer lean cuts will likely have to shorten the cooking time and add more liquid than the recipe calls for to ensure the meat doesn't dry out before it makes it to the dinner table.

• Brown the meat. Slow cooking experts tout the importance of browning meat prior to placing it in the slow cooker. According to AllRecipes.com, searing meat with a little oil in a hot skillet will help the meat develop more complex flavours. Ground meats also should always be browned before slow

cooking, as this prevents the meat from clumping up and can ensure the finished product is not excessively greasy.

• Avoid overfilling the cooker. Foods cook differently when the cooker is too full. In such instances, the dish may end up tasting more like steamed food than simmered food. That's especially so when too much liquid has been placed in the cooker. In such instances, steam hits the lid of the cooker and creates condensation, which then drips back into the pot. That can make everything inside more soggy and less tender. The owner's manual of the slow cooker may recommend how much to fill it, but it's generally best to fill the cooker somewhere between halfway and two-thirds of its capacity.

• Cut ingredients evenly. Uniformity of flavour is a goal when slow cooking, as slow cooked meals tend to be served when hosting a crowd and cooks will want everyone's meal to boast the same amount of flavour. One way to ensure that is to make sure ingredients are cut evenly. Evenly cut carrots and potatoes will finish cooking at the same time, ensuring everyone's meal will benefit from the same flavour profile.

Slow cooking is simple, but veteran slow cookers know that a few simple tricks can make meals that much more flavourful.

## Miniota News

**Submitted**  
BY LINDA CLARK

Congratulations to the Miniota School students and staff on a wonderful Christmas concert musical which was presented at two shows on Jan. 7. Wonderful reviews for their hard work and talent!

A warm welcome to Doyle and Carissa Fenty and their children who have moved to the family farm here at Miniota.

Congratulations to

Travis and Chloe Sheane on the birth of their son Hayes on Aug. 3 at the Health Sciences Centre in Winnipeg. Little Hayes began very tiny and they are very happy to be home with their son. Welcome Hayes!

The Miniota U9 held a one-day tournament on Jan. 10 with teams coming from Elkhorn, Hamiota and Virden.

I enjoyed a ride in a heated covered old type school sleigh van on Jan. 10 for the Jim Lane Memorial Sleigh Ride sponsored by the Birtle Ag Society. A great turnout of 19 sleighs and nine individuals on their horses

for the ride through the Birdtail Valley—so beautiful with the fresh snow. Riding in this heated van brought back memories of rides to school with Dad in our old heated school van on days that the roads were closed to cars—no 'snow days' when you had a team of horses. A wonderful afternoon of fellowship as we all stopped to enjoy a wiener roast. Congratulations to Wayne Brown who won the prize for the oldest participant. Wayne told me he has attended nearly, if not all, of these events.

"To be rich in friends is to be poor in nothing."  
- Brendan Behan

# MJHL SEASON UPDATE

## MJHL HOCKEY DEREK HOLTOM

The trade deadline was quite robust this year, as teams added and subtracted to better themselves for this year and for down the road. In fact, this is the busiest trade deadline in years in the MJHL – surprising given how players now have a virtual veto over trades if they don't want to report.

The Swan Valley Stampeders were extremely busy, making several blockbuster deals. Perhaps none were bigger than shipping forwards Ethan MacTavish and Riley Fequet to the Winkler Flyers for forwards Noah Stott, Aidan Grant and a player development fee (PDF). MacTavish and Fequet combined for 52 points for the Stampeders this year, and both scored in their Winkler debuts Friday night.

Grant had four goals and two assists for the Flyers this year, while Stott had two goals and three assists in just 12 games.

They also acquired defenseman Alex Scheck from the Estevan Bruins of the SJHL for a player development fee. Scheck, a 19-year-old from Grand Prairie, Alta., had one goal and two assists in 19 games with the Bruins.

The Stampeders needed a veteran blueliner as they had previously shipped Gavin Bartha to the Yorkton Terriers of the SJHL forward Dylan Ruff and defenseman Zach Hertz.

Bartha had six goals and 14 assists in 29 games for the Stamps this year. The Kelowna, B.C., native was also an alternate captain for the Stamps this year.

Bartha joins a Terriers team who are much more competitive and likely playoff bound, as opposed the Stampeders who face an uphill battle. He said he's looking forward to the new challenge.

"Time in Swan was great, and I'm excited for the opportunities that come here in Yorkton," he said.

Ruff, an 18-year-old from Sylvain Lake, Alta., had one goal and two assists in 12 games for the Terriers this year, while Hertz, a 19-year-old from Billings, Mon., had three goals and three assists in 21 games.

The Stampeders also acquired defenseman Wylie Smith from the Warman Wolverines of the SJHL for a PDF. The 19-year-old Breton, Alta., product had a goal and two helpers with Warman this year.

The Stamps were not done there. They also shipped forward Bennett Muller to the Estevan Bruins of the SJHL for a PDF. The 20-year-old Delta, B.C. native had eight goals and nine assists in 28 games this year for the Stamps.

In other moves, the Neepawa Titans acquired forward Kane Kennedy from Warman of the SJHL for a PDF.

The Portage Terriers acquired goaltender Ryan Velan

from Cornwall of the CCHL for a PDF. This is actually a re-acquisition as Velan started the season with the Terriers, going 7-2-0 with a 2.10 GAA and as .925 save percentage.

The Northern Manitoba Blizzard have shipped forward Marlen Edwards to the first-place Niverville Nighthawks for forward Renat Nagneez, defenseman Seth Quayle, and a PDF. Edwards, who hails from Winnipeg, had been playing with the Minot Minotauros of the NAHL this year, where he had three goals and four assists in 26 games. Last season Edwards was a driver of the Blizzard in their championship run, scoring 44 points in 51 regular season games and another 15 points in the playoffs.

Nagneez, a native of the Ukraine, only appeared in five games with the Nighthawks this year, scoring once and adding two assists, while Quayle, an 18-year-old from Regina, had one helper in 14 games this year.

The Selkirk Steelers shipped defenseman Ridley Ringor to the Winnipeg Monarchs for forward Julian Fedora in a deal involving two 17-year-olds.

The Winnipeg Blues shipped forward Matthew O'Sullivan to the Dauphin Kings for goaltender Justin Perreault and a PDF. O'Sullivan, 19, had 18 goals and 14 assists in 30 games for the Blues this year. Perreault has a 6-5-0-2 record for the Kings this year with a 2.65 GAA and a .910 save percentage.

And the Waywayseecappo Wolverines acquired Dylan Hebert from the Warman Wolverines of the SJHL for a PDF. The 20-year-old Bonnyville, Alta., played only four games in Warman this year, and only three with his hometown Bonnyville Pontiacs this year.

The Virden Oil Capitals shipped forward Noel Englot to the Melfort Mustangs of the SJHL for defenseman Austin Osiowy. Englot had 17 points in 29 games for the Oil Capitals this year, while four goals and 11 assists between the Mustangs and Kindersley Klippers.

The division-leading Dauphin Kings acquired goaltender Devin Peck from Flin Flon of the SJHL for a PDF. Peck was 13-6-1 with a 2.43 GAA and .911 save percentage with the Bombers this year.

Not done there the Kings added goaltender Hunter Bauer from the Steinbach Pistons for a PDF. Bauer posted a 7-1-0 record this year with a 1.55 GAA and a .944 save percentage.

The Kings also shipped defenseman Matt Thomas to Leamington of the OJHL for a PDF.

Dauphin also forwards Kingston Gunn, Cameon Jansa and a PDF to the

Winnipeg Blues for forward Wyatt Dyck, an alternate captain with the Blues with six goals and six assists in 28 games this year.

The Portage Terriers shipped forward Dylan Westmann to the Northern Manitoba Blizzard for forward Hunter Dingman. Westmann only appeared in five games with the Terriers scoring no points. Dingman had 10 goals with the Blizzard this year, as well as three helpers.

The Winnipeg Blues acquired forward Shea Cornely from the Soo of the NOJHL, while the Winnipeg Monarchs sent forward Kade Stringer for the Winkler Flyers for a PDF.

The Virden Capitals round out the trades with a trio of moves – starting with sending defenseman Maddox Shindle to Melville of the SJHL for a PDF. Shindle had two goals and three assists in 28 games this year.

The Oil Capitals also sent defenseman Rhylan Baxter to the Winkler Flyers for fellow blueliner Olivier Schroeder. Baxter had nine goals and 17 points this year, while Schroeder had a goal and three helpers, indicating the Flyers are going all in this year.

Finally Virden shipped defenseman Beckham Garchinski to the Niverville Nighthawks for a PDF. The rookie only appeared in nine games this year, scoring once and adding one helper.

The first MJHL Liquor and Lotteries winners of 2026 are headlined by Steinbach Pistons defenseman Rory Gilmour. In two games, Gilmour scored twice and adding three assists for a five-point wee.

Next up is Neepawa Titans netminder Zach Burleigh. He won his only start, posting a 3.00 GAA and a sparkling .944 save percentage as he stopped 51 saves to help the Titans down the division-leading Dauphin Kings.

The final winner is defenseman Nathan Schaefer from the Virden Oil Capitals. In two games, Schaefer scored once and added four assists for a five-point week.

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## Journey For Sight 2026 Saturday, January 24

The Virden Lions Club to welcome Lions Journey for Sight Snowmobile riders at Tim Hortons on Saturday January 24, 2026.

Come out to the Virden Lions club Hall at 230 Nelson Street, Virden, Manitoba, on Saturday, January 24th, 2026 and donate to this most worthy cause. Local Lions members will be there to receive your donations from 9:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

All proceeds go to the Lions eye Bank of Manitoba and Northwestern Ontario. Objectives: procurement and evaluation of eye tissue to be used for corneal transplants.

Come on out and have coffee and donuts while you make your donation. Income tax receipts will be issued for donations of \$20 and above.

Used eyeglasses will also be accepted when you come with your donation on January 24th.

Come one come all! See you Saturday, the 24th, at the Lions Hall!!

----- We Serve -----





# Snowmobilers encouraged to ride responsibly on Manitoba trails



Sticking to the trails and following the signs will make riding safe for all.

PHOTO BY METRO CREATIVE

By Michelle Lissel

MANITOBA RCMP MEDIA RELATIONS UNIT

Snowmobilers are being reminded to take the necessary precautions to stay safe while out on the trails this winter. This includes wearing helmets and other safety equipment, controlling their speed, driving sober and sticking to signed and groomed trails.

Manitoba RCMP, Manitoba Public Insurance (MPI) and Snowmobilers of Manitoba (Snoman) are issuing the reminder ahead of International Snowmobile Safety Week, which begins on Saturday.

"Winter is a wonderful time of year for snowmobilers to hit the trails and enjoy the season, but we strongly urge everyone to ride safely," said RCMP Staff Sgt. Matt Lavallee, who teaches snowmobile safety courses to RCMP members. "Snowmobilers need to ride in a responsible manner so that everyone returns home at the end of the ride."

Lavallee noted that all riders, under law, must wear an approved snowmobile helmet when on their machine and that all riders under the age of 14 must be under adult supervision. He said RCMP officers are on the trails throughout the province and will enforce laws as necessary.

Twenty-eight snowmobile-related deaths have occurred over the past six years, including four in 2025. Speed was a contributing factor in many of those 28 deaths, as was alcohol impairment, improper or no helmet use, driver inexperience and careless driving.

"January and February have the highest fatality rates among snowmobilers in Manitoba, so it is very important to continue to have conversations to educate riders about snowmobile safety," said Maria Campos, vice-president and chief customer and product officer for MPI. "We work hard to reduce fatalities by standing together with our partners, like the RCMP and Snoman, to highlight the things riders can do to protect themselves, such as slowing down, wearing a helmet, and riding sober. Snowmobiling is great fun and a fantastic way

to enjoy Manitoban winters, so let's keep it fun by staying safe."

There are a number of things riders can do to mitigate the risk and stay safe before they even hit the trail, such as:

- Checking your snowmobile before leaving for any mechanical issues, including brakes, lights, fuel levels and engine performance;
  - Bringing along a fully charged cell phone, first-aid kit and essential repair tools, such as a spare belt, pull chord and spark plugs;
  - Planning routes ahead of time and sharing travel details with someone at home; and
  - Wearing warm, layered clothing, insulated gloves, a windproof jacket, snowpants and a snowmobile helmet that's been properly fitted.
- Once out on the trails, riders should:
- Maintain a safe speed, stay alert, and be courteous to other riders;
  - Dress appropriately for conditions and safety, including wearing a helmet at all times;
  - Watch for hidden obstructions like rocks, fences, culverts, guywires and abrupt terrain changes beneath the snow;
  - Cross highways and roads safely and in compliance with local laws; and
  - Drive sober.

"The safety of riders is of utmost importance to our organization," said Joe Thievin, a vice-president with Snoman. "Riders need to drive to their level of ability and not consume alcohol or drugs before or while out on the trails and take all the necessary precautions to ensure their safety and that of other riders so they can ride again."

MPI collects a \$25 non-refundable annual fee on all off-road vehicle registrations on behalf of the Government of Manitoba to support trail maintenance and development, off-road vehicle safety education and training programs, and rehabilitation of public lands impacted by off-road vehicle use.

Purchasing a Snopass to ride on 13,000 kilometres of designated provincial trails helps Manitoba invest in grooming and maintaining trails, which contribute to snowmobile safety.

## Council reviews water repairs, emergency alerts

### Jan. 6 Town of Virden council meeting

By Dale Davison  
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

#### Water line repairs

Council discussed an expense related to a water main break on 8th Street. Coun. Travis Penner expressed concern and said, "If we have done a second repair there, I'm just wondering if that area needs to be reviewed and something redone there; because they have been expensive repairs."

CAO Rhonda Stewart said that there were repairs last year all within the same general section offline. Council agreed that the area may be worth reviewing further.

#### Recycling funding

Council reviewed a letter from Multi-Material Stewardship Manitoba outlining the municipality's recycling funding for 2026. Mayor Tina Williams explained that under the current funding formula, the municipality will receive a total of \$110,725.88, paid out in four equal quarterly installments. This funding level is based on the reported recycling of 230 tonnes of material, at a rate of roughly \$500 per tonne.

CAO Stewart confirmed shipping recyclable materials to Saskatchewan does not affect funding levels provided reporting requirements are met. Stewart noted that the municipality's recycling grant has increased from \$103,721 the previous year.

#### Emergency Management training

Council reviewed information about upcoming training opportunities announced by the Manitoba Association of Municipal Emergency Coordinators (MAMEC). One session, scheduled for Jan. 16, is a full-day virtual workshop on community grief and loss. Coun. Marc Savy suggested forwarding the information to the fire chief, noting that the fire department already has representatives involved with the regional emergency group and may benefit from the content.

#### Alert Manitoba

Assistant Chief Administrative Officer (CAAO) Jared Jaffray provided a detailed overview of the Alert Mani-

toba (Alert MB) program, an emergency alerting system administered through Manitoba Emergency Management Organization (EMO) and the National Public Alerting System. The system allows participating municipalities to issue emergency alerts that can interrupt radio broadcasts and send notifications to cell phones, like existing public alert systems. There is no cost to participate in Alert MB. Municipal Emergency Coordinators (MECs) would be primary users, with required training and annual refresher courses. While many communications still involve EMO, there are situations requiring immediate action. A motion was made to confirm that council is supportive of having staff members authorized to act within the MEC framework when necessary. Jaffray noted that the CAO could send alerts directly, which is important in time-sensitive situations where a MEC may be unavailable or out of town. The resolution was approved.

#### Committee Reports

Coun. Bruce Dunning reported that he attended a museum meeting on Jan. 5, where a new museum manager was hired and has accepted the position.

CAAO Jaffray reported that the Town of Virden was successful in its Toonie Transportation grant application. This will allow the program to continue for another year. Jaffray stated they were awaiting feedback from the age-friendly committee, which will review the program and provide a presentation once the cheque is issued. Council agreed that the program should continue as long as participation remains strong.

CAO Stewart reported that the RFP for the new fire hall is in preparation, with an upcoming committee meeting planned to finalize details. The facility will be a design-build where design and construction services are contracted by a single contractor. This allows for a single point of responsibility to reduce risks and overall cost. Stewart said, "Hopefully they can keep it in budget, and we get what we need."



# Many hands at work

**Submitted**  
By KRISTA PEDERSON

I have fond memories of quilting frames, set up over my grandma's dining room table, or in a spare room. The patches were always recognizable: They were cut from extra cloth from a new dress, or the salvageable part of an old pair of work overalls. In the 60s and 70s, there was an abundance of cloth from pantsuits, once they were worn out, or the print had gone out of style.

I don't remember many fancy quilts growing up, but they were very practical. The pieces would've been all cut by hand and the wool was carded to line them.

There was always an extra needle and thread for any of us who wanted to join in. That is where I experienced poked fingers and the pride of straight line of stitching.

My grandma was a part of the group in the 1950s who got together to spend an afternoon at the church. Putting their hands to work, making quilts or smaller projects. All to donate, were needed.

And now, 70 years later, a group of ladies still meet at the Kola EMC church. They work on quilts or smaller projects such as knitting or crocheting. All of the work is donated. Some goes to Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) to disperse to the

needy as needed. They also make sure to welcome the new babies into the community with a hand stitched baby quilt.

They also support Kenossee Lake Bible Camp, which has curtains and aprons, donated by the ladies.

In addition to being a practical time to get projects done, it's also a supportive time. Many of the ladies have known each other since childhood, and they always include a time of singing, sharing, and praying for each other... and of course, coffee and a snack!

Maybe sewing's not your thing, but support and belonging is something we all need. Reach out to find something that you can be involved with. This is the perfect time!

As you reflect on what's important to you, find a place to add your hands to the work.



The Kola Ladies Fellowship working on a quilt to donate to MCC.

SUBMITTED PHOTO

## Santa at the Brierwood Creek Café and Grill



SUBMITTED PHOTO

A huge thank-you to our new owners of Brierwood Creek Cafe and Grill for hosting a Santa Event. The staff decorated the restaurant with Christmas decor making a beautiful seasonal atmosphere for a visit from Santa Claus. Christmas cookies and hot chocolate were available to all, while everyone waited for a visit from the Jolly Old Fellow! Approximately 20 young children got to sit on Santa's knee and give him their requests for his visit on Christmas Eve. Thanks, Santa, for taking time out of your busy schedule to come and visit us in Kenton at our valued restaurant and thanks to Torrie Carter for being Santa's helper, you're the best Elf!

### 2026 Special Issue Calendar

Event	Due Date	Run Date
Valentines Day	February 6, 2026	February 13, 2026
Easter	March 27, 2026	April 2, 2026
Mothers Day	May 1, 2026	May 8, 2026
Fathers Day	June 12, 2026	June 19, 2026
Canada Day	June 19, 2025	June 26, 2026
Grad VEA	June 19, 2026	July 3, 2026
Virden Rodeo	July 24, 2026	July 31, 2026
Oil Caps	September 25, 2026	October 2, 2026
Thanksgiving	October 2, 2026	October 9, 2026
Firefighters	October 16, 2026	October 23, 2026
Remembrance Day	October 30, 2026	November 6, 2026
Christmas	December 4, 2026	December 18, 2026

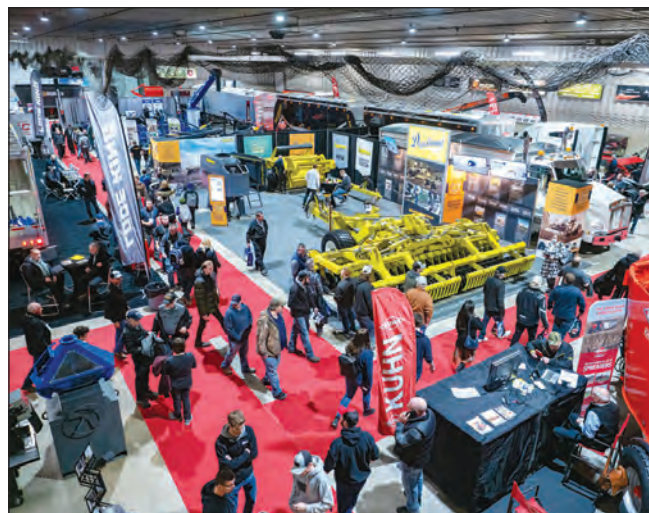
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**The Keystone Centre - Brandon, MB. - January 20, 21 & 22, 2026**

# Canada's largest Ag show nears



ARCHIVED PHOTOS

Now in its 49th year of operation, Manitoba Ag Days has become a staple on the prairie agricultural calendar. This year's edition runs from Jan. 20 to the 22, and the theme is "Produced on the Prairies."

**By Joshua Jackson**  
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

It's that time of year again, when farmers and agriculture enthusiasts will be gathering in Brandon for Canada's largest indoor farm show, the Manitoba Ag Days.

The annual three-day exposition of agriculture production expertise, technology, and equipment attracts exhibitors and visitors from across Canada and the United States.

Now in its 49th year of operation, Manitoba Ag Days has become a staple on the prairie agricultural calendar, serving as a meeting place for producers, researchers, and industry leaders looking to connect, learn, and prepare for the upcoming growing season.

The event takes place

from Jan. 20-22. This year's theme is "Produced on the Prairies," which aims to highlight people, products, and opportunities that are made right here in the prairies. The theme reflects the strength and innovation found within prairie agriculture, showcasing locally developed solutions that help producers adapt to changing market conditions, environmental challenges, and evolving technology.

This year's Ag Days features a whopping 580 exhibitors spread across the Keystone Centre, including 27 exhibitors taking part in the Innovation Showcase, highlighting products and services across a wide range of applications, which helps contenders and producers bridge from innovative ideas to on-farm adoption.

This year's Ag Days speaking program features over 60 speakers, with topics ranging from disease pressure, global markets, and animal care.

The program also includes several panel discussions with topics like how to prioritize when making on-farm decisions and how cooperation improves choice for farmers.

Speakers include industry experts, economists, veterinarians, and producers, offering practical insights designed to help farmers navigate the increasingly complex agricultural land-

scape and make informed decisions for their operations.

Ag Days kicks off on Jan 20, with a Made in Manitoba Breakfast at the Provincial Exhibition of Manitoba Dome Building, which raises money for Ag In The Classroom- Manitoba.

Early bird tickets are \$15 per day, and three-day passes are also available for \$40. Tickets will be available during the show for \$20 per day and can be purchased online or in the Keystone Centre. Youth 17 and under do not require a ticket.

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**Manitoba Ag Days**



The Keystone Centre - Brandon, MB. - January 20, 21 & 22, 2026



# Neepawa student nets scholarship



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Pictured is Carson (left), along with Scholarship winner receiving the Bob Gordon Memorial Award from Bruce Gordon, for the Top Beef Judge of the Weekend.

## Submitted

BY YOUTH BEEF ROUNDUP

Congratulations to Carson Baker of Neepawa for winning the \$1,500. Scholarship presented by Manitoba Youth Beef Roundup.

Baker was the recipient of the 2025 Manitoba Youth Beef Roundup Scholarship. Carson grew up at Neepawa and is in his second year at Lakeland College taking a Diploma in Agribusiness. Carson has attended and participated at Round Up for 11 years. He is active in his community but something he is very proud of is, the high school hockey team held Cancer Care fundraising games that raised over \$ 5,000 in two seasons, which he was on the hockey team at that time. The money raised was donated to various cancer care units around Manitoba, with the majority staying in Neepawa. After college Carson plans to be involved in the agriculture industry while continuing to have his own herd of cattle. Congratulations Carson!

The Manitoba Beef Roundup invites you to join them to join at the Roundup in Neepawa from July 31 to Aug. 2, 2026.

Open to Junior Livestock Members who are interested in an educational weekend with competitions and cattle shows. Watch our Facebook for updates or [www.mbyouth-beefroundup.weebly.com](http://www.mbyouth-beefroundup.weebly.com)



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# SPORTS

## GOLDEN BEARS' GOALTENDERS SHINE, HAY LEADS RENEGADES' SCORING CHARGE

By Robin Wark  
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

The Virden Collegiate Institute hockey team's coaches have great appreciation for the young men guarding the Golden Bears' crease this season.

The father-and-son coaching duo of Doug Roach and Logan Roach are both former goaltenders. They believe in what current VCI netminders Brodie Cameron and Owen Charles can do.

"Having both Owen and Brodie in the net gives us a chance at winning every game," said head coach Doug Roach. "Either one is capable of stealing a game - and both have done so a couple times each this year. As Grade 12s, their maturity in the crease shows in their play and filters out to the rest of the team."

As of Jan. 11, Charles had played in 10 Westman High School Hockey League games this season. He had a 4-4-0-2 record, a 3.77 goals against average and a .907 save percentage. Cameron had a 7-2-0-0 record in nine games. His GAA was 4.00 and his save percentage was .911.

Doug Roach helped the Estevan Bruins win a Saskatchewan Junior Hockey League championship. He went on to play for the Brandon University men's hockey team. His son, Logan, was also a talented goaltender. His career included playing for VCI and the senior Virden Oil Kings.

"Logan has been an assistant for many years now - dealing mainly with the forwards," his father said. "As we are both goaltenders, we appreciate the efforts of our goalies. We are usually on the same page about the team and their play."

As of Jan. 11, the Golden Bears sat third in the Westman High School Hockey League standings with an 11-6-0 record and 24 points.

"What I've enjoyed most about this year's team is seeing the implementation of what we worked on at practice and what we have discussed in the dressing room show up on the ice," Doug Roach said. "I've also liked watching the goalies make many great saves."

At the other end of the ice, Dexen Routledge has been a standout for the Golden Bears. The forward was fourth in the league in points with 45 in 16 games, as of Jan. 11. Routledge was fifth in goals with 23.

"Dexen has a great work ethic that leads to his success," Doug Roach said. "He is a strong skater, equally hard on the puck, great at moving the puck and can see the ice and plays developing. His linemates definitely factor in by assisting him and putting in his passes."

### Renegades Are Determined

Reston/Melita/Hartney/Souris Renegades hockey team is coming together. As of Jan. 11, the squad had a 5-10-0-2 record in the league. Head coach Josh Williams said he has been impressed by his team's grit, determination and resilience.

"Being from four different schools, they have spent more time as opponents than teammates," the coach



said. "It's akin to warriors from near and far beginning an epic adventure, not sure what to think of each other, only to become brothers bonded through battle by the end."

As of Jan. 11, the Renegades' Dayton Hay led the team with 21 goals in 16 games. The Melita product also paced his team with 28 points.

Of Hay's goal scoring prowess, Williams said, "He is one of the hardest workers on the ice, wants the puck in every situation, has incredible hands and wants to score on every shot. He is willing to do whatever is necessary and take whatever punishment to get an opportunity."

## OIL KINGS DOMINATE, SWEEP WEEKEND

By Robin Wark  
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

The Virden Oil Kings rolled to a pair of victories last weekend.

The Oil Kings romped past the Wawanesa Jets 14-2 on the road. At home, goalie Duncan Paddock and the Virden squad shut out the Neepawa Farmers 5-0. As of Jan. 11, the Oil Kings were tied for fourth in the Tiger Hills Hockey League standings. They had a 10-4-0-0 record. Their 20 points tied them with the Minnedosa Bombers (10-3-0-0).

The Oil Kings hosted the Deloraine Royals on Jan. 15, after the Empire-Advance deadline. The team plays in Deloraine on Jan. 16.

### Oil Kings 14, Jets 2

On Jan. 9 in Wawanesa, the Oil Kings opened the contest with three straight goals. They led 4-1 at the first intermission. With five goals in the second session, the visitors from Virden were up 9-1 at the next break. Early in the third period, Wawanesa scored to make it 9-2. The Oil Kings then scored five straight goals.

"Everyone in the lineup was able to play with confidence, which led to more O-zone time," Virden forward Colin Cook said. "Playing in their end over ours always makes the game more fun, and, when everyone is playing like that up and down the lineup, it always leads to more offensive chances that we were able to capitalize on."

Brad Bowles lit the lamp five times. He had three assists for a total of eight points on the night. As of Jan. 11, Bowles led the THHL in points with 50. That was 18 more than Luke DeCorby, the former Virden Oil Capitals junior player, who had 32 for the Rivers Jets. Bowles was tied for the league lead in goals with

teammate Tanner Koroscil at 17. He had a league-high 33 assists, which were 14 more than ex-Oil Cap Lucas Oliver's 19 for the Melita Bisons.

Cook collected five points against the Jets. He had a goal and four assists. Shawn Bowles and Elisha Bambridge each scored two goals and had two assists for four points. Shawn Bowles had a power-play goal and Bambridge was able to score shorthanded once. Also scoring for Virden were Sage Price, Layne Toder, Shane Price, and Dillin Stonehouse. Paddock stopped 21 shots.

The Oil Kings fired 54 shots at the Jets' net. Sawyer Wiebe made 40 saves. Scoring for Wawanesa were Neilan Slater and Rylan Brown.

### Oil Kings 5, Farmers 0

Paddock turned away all 20 shots the Farmers sent at him on Jan. 10. The Oil Kings killed off all three of Neepawa's power plays.

"Duncan was great once again behind us," Virden defenceman Nolan Wallace said on Jan. 11. "He's been playing solid for us every game, always giving us a chance to win. He continues to make timely saves when we need them and last night was no different. It was maybe a bit more quiet on his end than usual, but



PHOTO BY DALE DAVISON

Late in the third period the Farmers had a two-man advantage, but Virden goalie Duncan Paddock shut the door to preserve the shutout.

still they had some good chances that he came up with some better saves, earning a well deserved shutout."

Virden led 3-0 after the first period thanks to goals by Stonehouse, Toder, and Wallace. Wallace said:

"I think those three goals in the last half of the first period were just us being rewarded for what we did at the start of the game. I thought everyone was involved early and playing the right way, and us getting those three goals was just a continuance of that."

The Oil Kings added two more in the second period, with Koroscil and Shawn Bowles scoring. Neepawa goalie Nathan Braun made 42 saves.



# SPORTS

## ULMER MAKES IMPACT IN THE COMMUNITY

By Robin Wark  
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

Virden Oil Capitals rookie forward Tyson Ulmer has embraced a role not only on the team but also in the community.

The 18-year-old had played in 21 games for the Oil Caps, as of Jan. 11. He was named to the RBC - Manitoba Junior Hockey League Community Ambassador Team. One player from each of the MJHL's 13 teams is selected for the honour in recognition of them giving back to the communities where they play.

"I enjoy seeing the joy and smiles on people's faces when I'm participating in community events in Virden," said Ulmer, who billets with Matt and Genn Hipwell. "It's really fun to be a part of such great experiences across different parts of the community, and to share that joy with others is incredibly rewarding."

He was recognized at the Oil Capitals' Jan. 8 home contest versus Waywayseecappo. In an interview last week, Virden head coach and general manager Tyson Ramsey said:

"Tyson is a very respectful, hardworking and intelligent young man. He is one of the first to step up to volunteer and enjoys getting out and meeting people in our community. He is an excellent role model for younger kids and we are lucky to have him represent our program on and off the ice."

Since coming to Virden, Ulmer has participated in a wide variety of community activities. While all have been enjoyable, he said "my favourites are probably

playing intramural soccer at schools, helping out at CanSkate, and playing various card and board games at seniors homes."

This season, Ulmer had four points, as of Jan. 11. The 5-foot-11, 175-pounder had scored one goal and added three assists. He missed time in October due to injury.

"Tyson is a student of the game," Ramsey said. "He works hard on and off the ice to develop all parts of his game and he gets better every day. He can play all forward positions up and down the lineup and, since returning from his injury, he has been an important part of our penalty kill. He brings energy and work ethic to our group every day and we are fortunate to have him on our roster. We are excited for what the second half of the season will look like for Tyson."

Ulmer is from Grand Forks, N.D. - which is home to the University of North Dakota. Both of his parents competed in athletics for that institution. His mother, Erin, played volleyball. Jason, Ulmer's father, won two NCAA Division I national championships in hockey at UND. He went on to a long pro career both in North America and overseas and later coached at his alma mater.

"Whether it was encouraging me to try as many sports as I wanted to growing up, showing up for me every game day, or supporting me in periods of both success and failure, my parents have always been by my side and helped me develop into the athlete and person I am today, using their own athletic experiences to help guide mine," Ulmer said.



PHOTO BY VIRDEN OIL CAPS

Rookie Tyson Ulmer

## SPORTS NOTES: OIL CAPS ADD VETERAN BLUE LINERS AT TRADE DEADLINE

By Robin Wark  
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

At the national junior hockey trade deadline, the Virden Oil Capitals were wheeling and dealing to bring in two veteran defencemen.

The local Manitoba Junior Hockey League team added 20-year-old blue liners Austin Osiowy and Oliver Schroeder from the Melfort Mustangs and Winkler Flyers, respectively. The Oil Caps parted ways with four players, including last season's team MVP Noel Englot.

"Both Austin and Oliver provide a number of things to our group," Virden head coach Tyson Ramsey said. "They are both 20-year-old veterans so come with a wealth of junior experience. They defend hard with good sticks and will be an important part of our five-on-five play, but will have a role on our special teams as well. They are both exceptional human beings and great teammates and we are lucky to have them here with us for the remainder of the season and into the playoffs."

The Oil Caps sent 2006-born defenceman Rhylan Baxter to the Flyers in exchange for Schroeder. Hailing from Hudson, Wis., the towering 6-foot-8, 215-pound Schroeder had a goal and three assists in 28 games this season for Winkler. He also competed in a couple of contests for the Watertown (S.D.) Shamrocks of the North American Hockey League. Baxter played in parts of three seasons for the Oil Caps. The Winnipegger recorded nine goals and 17 points in 28 games for Virden in 2025-2026.

Englot headed to Melfort in a swap for Osiowy. The 6-foot-1, 180-pound defenceman from Calgary collected a goal and four assists in 11 games for the Saskatchewan Junior Hockey League's Mustangs. In 23



games earlier this campaign for the SJHL's Kindersley Klippers, Osiowy had three goals and 11 points.

A Candiag, Sask. product, Englot was in his third season with the Oil Caps. Through 29 games this season, he scored nine goals and accumulated 17 points. He was an assistant captain. In 2024-2025, Englot led the Oil Caps with 20 goals, 24 assists, and 44 points in 58 games.

The Oil Caps sent 2006-born defenceman Maddox Shindle to the SJHL's Melville Millionaires for a player development fee. The Portage la Prairie product was in his second season in Virden. He had two goals and five points in 23 games this season.

Beckham Garchinski, a 2007-born defenceman, was moved to the Niverville Nighthawks for a player development fee. The rookie had a goal and an assist in nine games this season.

Former Oil Capitals forward Maxx Hamelin was dealt before the trade deadline by the Winnipeg Monarchs to the Northern Ontario Junior Hockey League's Timmins Rock. Hamelin played part of last



season in Virden.

### Skating Nationals

Marty Haubrich, who formerly trained with Skate Virden, earned a bronze medal in junior pairs at the Canadian National Skating Championships in Gatineau, Que. A former Dubuc, Sask. resident who now trains in Ontario, Haubrich succeeded with his partner Rebecca Laiu.

In senior ladies, Breken Brezden battled through injury to place 12th. She is from Dauphin and trained with Skate Virden. She now trains in Ontario.

### Locals Head to Provincial Curling

At the Brandon Men's Berth Bonspiel, the Kelly Marnoch rink hailing from Carberry earned a spot in the Bunge Championship, which is the Manitoba Men's Provincial Curling Championship. The Marnoch rink includes Bart Witherspoon as well as Virden's Jay Kinnaid and Brooks Freeman. Marnoch lost in the finals to Brandon's Steve Irwin, 3-1. However, Irwin already had a provincial berth. Marnoch beat Brandon's Cale Dunbar in a semifinal 4-3.



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# CLASSIFIEDS

## Obituary

### IN LOVING MEMORY BETTY HAYHURST



Betty Elizabeth Hayhurst (nee Cousins) of Virden, Manitoba beloved wife of the late Gordon Hayhurst and loving mother of Dana Marie, Teresa, Katrina, Shauna and Julie, kicked up her heels and headed to the eternal dance hall, Tuesday, December 28, 2025 at 87 years of age.

Betty was born in '38 and her early years were on the farm near Elkhorn, where she and her siblings rode to Mossiel School on horse-pulled cutter. These were busy times but they still made Saturday night trips into Elkhorn to socialize. Following school, Mom began work in the Elkhorn bank. After Mom caught Dad's eye at a local dance, she accepted his offer to walk her back to the home of Aunt Jenny and Uncle Ben Poston, where she was billeting. The courtship had begun. They married in St Mark's Anglican, October '57, and embarked upon their new life on a farm outside of Cromer.

Mom balanced motherhood, (7 babies in the course of 12 years), housework, sewing & mending clothes, gardening, and reading her favourite Louis L'Amour books - she loved the vivid landscape descriptions! She spent many hours creating Fortrel quilts with her mom, more quilts and denim projects for family members with daughter, Dana Marie, as well as mini-quilts for Cromer stick-horse rodeo raffle! Mom loved flora and fauna. She was one who stopped to 'smell the roses'... and the tiger lilies, pussy willows, peonies, glads, daisies and pansies. Once they moved to town, she took up drawing again and learned how to draw and paint those flowers and much more. She made some pretty cute and creative cards for Dad early on, and then returned to crafting and learning other artistic techniques and ceramics. Her fauna interest often played out with a set of binoculars, handy for either Mom or Dad to pick out deer, raccoon, or other wildlife in the distance.

Curling wasn't Mom's thing, but when a curling trophy was created in Mark Cousins' name, and later on, awarded to her husband's team, she was delighted. Neat to have the two most important men in her life, linked to the same trophy. And Dance! From Cromer Clippers Square Dance Club to round dancing - Mom and Dad spent many miles on wheels and heels, dancing as "Pharr" south as Texas! Home or away, they had an open-door, open-arm policy... where they quietly, but wholeheartedly would greet new dance mates, family or friends. The smiles were automatic and the hugs were non-negotiable. Although recently, Mom's mind and body betrayed her, her witty and kind soul stayed with her. When lost for words, the melody and lyrics of "You are my Sunshine" came forth... and she shared it with staff and family. The two of them dancing together, to the latest song she remembered, with their loving smiles... is a perfect picture to hold close!

For more than a decade, Teresa, Keith and family, have been on-call for Dad and Mom. Not everyone has family back home, willing and able to get involved in the well-being of their parents, so we are grateful for their time and heartache invested.

Mom is survived by her daughters: Dana Marie (Wes Baker), Teresa (Keith Lobel), Katrina (Dan Hotel), Shauna (Gord Lidgett) and Julie (Randy Bourque). She is also survived by grandchildren Ryan Menzul, Laura Heaman, Amanda (Bryce) Galbraith, Jolynn (Ryan) Chopp, Alastor Coubrough, Adam and Jason Bourque, and great grandchildren, Sayli, Zane, Jacoby and Gracie; sister Mildred Canart, sister-in-law Susie; Dad's extended family; Ken & Darlene Wilson, Dorothy Holmgren.

Mom was predeceased by her loving husband, Gordon; infant children Nelson and Paula; her parents Mark & Polly Cousins, and siblings (in-laws); Doug (Irene), (Dan) Canart & Bill (Ruth), as well as Gordon's parents Fred and Myrtle Hayhurst; Dad's siblings (spouses): Aunt Bernice (raised as a sister)(Vaughn) Read, Jean (Buck) Madison/Wardman, Howard (Margaret), Nell (Bill) Breadner, Bill 'Neil' (Fern), Freda Mae 'Pie' Wilson.

A Celebration of Life for Gordon and Betty will be held at a later date with interment Virden Cemetery. For those who so desire, memorial tributes may be made to Canadian Cancer Society, Alzheimer Society or Virden and District Health Auxiliary Remembrance Fund in memory of Betty.



## Obituary

### IN LOVING MEMORY CARLIN DAVID POLLOCK MARCH 30, 1986 – JANUARY 1, 2025



With heavy hearts, we remember and honour the life of Carlin David Pollock, who passed away on January 1, 2025, at the age of 38. His ashes were lovingly returned to the earth during a private family service on August 9, 2025, in a place where the family shared many wonderful childhood memories.

Carlin grew up in the Virden area, where he enjoyed an active, community-centered childhood. He took part in youth swimming lessons, worked as a summer lifeguard, and was a proud member of 4-H Beef and Fat Stock, where he also participated in youth public speaking. Hockey was a constant in his life - playing minor hockey throughout his youth and later enjoying recreational hockey as an adult.

A graduate of Virden Collegiate Institute, Carlin lived an adventurous working life. He took on a variety of jobs, including custom combining and working on oil rigs, always willing to try something new and live life on his own terms. Those who knew him will remember his independent spirit, his quiet determination, and the way he could bring unexpected lightness and humour into a moment.

In his later teenage years, Carlin began living with serious mental health challenges. The road he walked was not an easy one, and supports were not always readily available to him. These struggles became part of his journey, but they never defined the whole of who he was. Carlin was more than the hardships he faced - he was a person who loved, laughed, hoped, and mattered deeply. His passing was accidental and related to fentanyl.

Though Carlin's life was marked by hardship, it was also filled with moments of joy, laughter, and connection. His story reminds us of the very real and often misunderstood nature of mental health and addiction, and of the importance of compassion, empathy, and continued care for those who are struggling.

In lieu of flowers, the family encourages acts of kindness and compassion, and support for those facing mental health and addiction challenges, in honour of Carlin's memory.

"Those we love don't go away; they walk beside us every day.

Unseen, unheard, but always near; still loved, still missed, and very dear."

May Carlin now be at peace, free from the pain he carried so long.

He will be remembered.

He will be missed.

He will be held in our hearts.

Carlin will be deeply missed by his parents, Dwight and Glenda Pollock; his sisters Jasmine Pounder (husband Mark, children Chris, Hayley, Nico, and Colt), Kristi-Lyn Buckley (husband Sean, children Joy-Anna, Jacob, Jack and June), Brandi Crowe (husband Branden.) His memory lives on in the hearts of his family, friends, and all who knew him.

## In Memory

### In memory

Barbara Louise  
McLenehan-Jones  
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Olive Louise McLenehan  
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## Thank-you

## Coming Events

The family of Paulette Lewis wish to extend our heartfelt gratitude for the kindness, support and compassion shown to us during this challenging time.

We are deeply grateful to the McAuley Community for organizing the lunch following her Celebration of Life. The care you put into everything, along with simply being there, created such a warm and welcoming atmosphere in the little town that will forever be home to me.

Linda Clark, your thoughtful and heartfelt words honored Mom's life in such a meaningful way, we thank you.

Our sincere appreciation to Ellisha at Carscadden's for your professional care and guidance.

We are deeply thankful to Hutch's Ambulance and the Moosomin RCMP for your care and support. Your professionalism and kindness during a difficult moment will not be forgotten.

Thank you to family, friends, colleagues, and community members who honored Mom's memory with cards, visits, food, tributes, flowers, and donations. Your generosity has been a source of strength and comfort, we are profoundly grateful.

—Suzanne, Shawn, and Spencer



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### IN LOVING MEMORY HAZEL HELEN SIMPSON

Hazel passed away peacefully on December 28, 2025 in the Westman Care Home at the age of 96.

Hazel was a life long resident of Virden and area. Born on September 19, 1929 to John and Lilly Grieve she and her sisters Elsie and Mae grew up on a farm west of Virden. She married Frank Finch in 1953 and they had three children...Valerie, Reg and Dale. Frank died in an auto crash in 1962. As a single parent for many years she always made sure her children went on vacations to visit family in Saskatchewan and were able to be involved in activities they were interested in. Hazel married Lyle Simpson in 1968 and she and her children moved to the farm in Hargrave. She quickly settled into farming life and she and Lyle worked hard on a mixed farm with a huge garden. Special times for their grandsons were to have a holiday at the farm. Hazel and Lyle loved going to dances, curling and gave many volunteer hours to committees and organizations both in Hargrave and Virden. After retiring from farming they moved to Virden. Lyle passed away in 2011.

After the onset of dementia Hazel spent her final years in The Sherwood and Westman where she was well taken care of by kind and caring staff at both facilities.

She will be missed by her children Valerie (Lyal), Reg (Debbie) and Dale (Cathy), grandsons Tyler, Jeff(Caitlin) and Justin (Jamie) as well as great grandchildren Remington, Sunny, Ben, Audrey, Ronan, Rosalee and Jasmine. She will also be missed by many nieces and nephews.

At her request no funeral will be held. Donations in her memory can be made to The Alzheimer Society of Manitoba or the Westman. "A life well lived leaves beautiful memories!"

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or by email to [cao@twoborders.ca](mailto:cao@twoborders.ca)  
or [info@twoborders.ca](mailto:info@twoborders.ca).  
Only those applicants chosen for interviews will be contacted.



CLASSIFIEDS

Obituary

IN LOVING MEMORY  
MARIE "PAULETTE" LEWIS  
JULY 21, 1946 TO OCTOBER 11, 2025



It is with deep sorrow that we announce the passing of Paulette at her home in Moosomin Saskatchewan on October 11, 2025, beloved mother of Suzanne (Shawn) Chapman and loving grandmother to Spencer.

Paulette was born July 21, 1946, in Ponteix, Saskatchewan. She was the youngest of twelve children born Marceau and Louise Bourlon and grew up as the cherished baby sister of a large and loving family.

In 1966, Paulette married the love of her life, Dennis, and together they built a full and hardworking life on the farm north of McAuley, raising their two children, Gary and Suzanne. Paulette embraced farm life with strength and humour, from harvest meals to cattle roundups, and later balanced those responsibilities with her work at the Moosomin hospital. There, she earned her Red Seal certification and became a respected cook known for her dedication, crisp white uniforms, and jovial camaraderie with coworkers.

After selling the farm, Paulette and Dennis moved to McAuley, where they both continued working until retirement. In 2013, they began a new chapter of their lives at Kin Place, joining the Moosomin community. Even after Dennis' passing later that year, Paulette remained active and engaged — volunteering at the nursing home with many visits to patients in the hospital, helping with Kin Place events, and tending to the gardens and flowers with the same pride she poured into their home and farm in McAuley. Her care, commitment, and sense of community remained constant throughout her life, always cherishing time spent with family and friends.

She was a proud sister, aunt, mother, and grandmother. The arrival of Spencer, her grandson brought immense joy, and she embraced her role as "Grandma" with pride and love. She was endlessly curious and supportive of everything he did.

Paulette will be remembered for her unwavering devotion to family, her resilience, her steady and reassuring presence. As a gifted cook and meticulous homemaker, she leaves behind a legacy of love that will be deeply missed and forever cherished.

Paulette was predeceased by her husband, Dennis Lewis, son Gary Lewis, her parents, Marceau and Louise Bourlon, sisters Marie-Paule Bourlon, Henriette (Amedee) Monette, Fernande (Armand) Carignan, Madeleine (Leo) Prive, and Lorraine Bourlon, brothers Roger Bourlon, Richard Bourlon, Marcel 1 Bourlon, Noel Bourlon, Marcel Bourlon, and Denis (Vera) Bourlon, in-laws George and Bertha Lewis, sister-in-law Gladys (Garth) Gerrand, and brother-in-law Huntley Lewis.

In addition to her immediate family, Paulette is lovingly remembered by sisters-in-law Paulette Bourlon, Liliane Bourlon, Yolande Bourlon, Henriette Bourlon, Joan Lewis, and Phyllis (Orville) Harper, as well as numerous nephews, nieces, extended family members and a circle of friends and communities.

A Celebration of Life was held at McAuley Rink on Monday, October 27th, 2025, with interment at the McAuley Cemetery.

Coming Events

VIRDEN NEW HORIZONS  
Notice of  
Annual General Meeting  
270 Nelson St W  
Monday, January 26th 2026  
at 1 pm.

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Help Wanted



EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

Senior Election Official (SEO)

The Municipality of Two Borders is accepting applications for the position of Senior Election Official (SEO)

The next municipal election is October 2026.

Position Overview:

The SEO is appointed by the municipal council and is responsible for the general direction and supervision of the municipal election process. This includes ensuring compliance with all relevant legislation, managing election logistics, and maintaining the integrity of the electoral process.

Key Responsibilities:

- Interpret and apply The Municipal Act and relevant election regulations.
- Prepare and maintain the list of voters.
- Provide public notice of nominations and elections.
- Receive and verify nomination papers.
- Appoint and train election officials.
- Establish and equip voting places.
- Oversee advance voting and election day operations.
- Ensure proper vote counting and reporting of results.
- Conduct by-elections if required.

Qualifications:

- Strong organizational and communication skills.
- Ability to work independently and exercise sound judgement.
- Familiarity with municipal governance and election procedures.
- Must be non-partisan and maintain confidentiality.
- Previous experience in election administration is an asset.

Terms & Compensation:

- Appointment begins upon passing a council by-law.
- Hours vary, with peak activity in the months leading up to and during the election (typically Sept-Oct).
- Compensation dependent on skills and experience.

Application Process:

Interested individuals should submit a resume outlining relevant education and experience by February 27, 2026, to:

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



EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

The Municipality of Two Borders would like to invite applications for:

3 Seasonal Full Time Mower Operators

**Qualifications:** Ability to operate a tractor and a commercial ditch mower, perform minor repairs to equipment, operate two-way radios and other communication equipment. Ability to conduct pre-operational checks on equipment, clean and lubricate equipment. Ability to take direction from the Foreman and to work alone.

**Pre-requisite:** Valid driver's licence.

**Hourly wage:** Wage Negotiable, approximately 50 hours per week.

Anticipated start date is approximately June 2, 2026.

Applications will be accepted until January 30, 2026, or until suitable candidates are found. We appreciate your interest in this position, however, only those applicants chosen for an interview will be contacted.

To obtain more information and a complete job description contact the CAO Grace Carr at 204-522-3263 or inquire by email at [info@twoborders.ca](mailto:info@twoborders.ca) or [cao@twoborders.ca](mailto:cao@twoborders.ca).

Visit our website  
[www.empireadvance.ca](http://www.empireadvance.ca)

For Sale

MORTGAGE SALE

The land and building known as 117 Second Street, Reston, Manitoba, as described in Certificate of Title No. 2335921/2 will be sold by public auction by a Licensed Auctioneer on February 4th, 2026, at 10:30 a.m.

The auction sale will be held by way of video or teleconference.

There will be no in-person attendees at the auction.

In order to participate you must pre-register at least 24 hours prior to the auction by contacting Keith Senden at either (204) 954-6421 or [auctions@fillmoreiriley.com](mailto:auctions@fillmoreiriley.com).

The Vendor is informed that the property consists of a one storey dwelling approximately 936 square feet with full partially finished basement and single detached garage on a lot with frontage of approximately 50 feet.

Realty taxes (excluding any accruing water charges) are paid to December 31, 2024.

Prior Charges: Nil.

TERMS OF SALE

A deposit of \$5,000.00 by way of certified cheque or bank draft payable to Fillmore Riley LLP, or cash (the cash component of the deposit not to exceed \$7,500.00), and the balance according to conditions which will be available electronically by contacting the individual below prior to the auction. The property will be sold subject to a Reserve Bid of \$55,000.00 plus such other additional and incidental costs which may be incurred by the Vendor from the 7th day of January, 2026 to the date of auction and which costs will be announced prior to the commencement of the sale.

The auction sale will be conducted pursuant to an Order for Sale issued by the District Registrar. Certain parties may be prohibited from purchasing the property, including but not limited to, parties who by virtue of their employment or relationship to a person involved in the sale process would have special knowledge of the circumstances pertaining to the sale. For more information and a list of prohibited purchasers please visit: [www.teranetmanitoba.ca](http://www.teranetmanitoba.ca)

Should the successful bidder have attended by teleconference and/or video conference, the bidder will have 24 hours to execute the Auction Sale Conditions and to provide them together with the deposit to our office as set out below.

Further information may be obtained from:

FILLMORE RILEY LLP  
Barristers and Solicitors  
1700 - 360 Main Street  
Winnipeg, MB R3C 3Z3

File No. 400784-4098/KAS/bb (lem)  
Attention: Keith Senden  
Phone: 204-954-6421  
[auctions@fillmoreiriley.com](mailto:auctions@fillmoreiriley.com)

Announcement



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Help Wanted



EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

Seasonal Full Time  
Municipal Sprayer Operator

The Municipality of Two Borders is seeking a flexible, enthusiastic individual to fill the position of Weed Supervisor, responsible for overseeing the municipality's weed control program from April to October.

Qualifications :

- Valid Class 5 driver's licence.
- Acquire and maintain all necessary pesticide use permits and applicators licenses.
- Ability to manage administrative duties associated with this position.

The following qualifications would be considered an asset:

- Ability to work independently and as part of a team.
- Prior experience with spray equipment operation and maintenance

Wages are negotiable depending on qualifications and/or experience.

Applications will be reviewed starting January 30, 2026; however, this posting will remain open until a suitable candidate is located.

To Apply:

Please forward your resume to  
Grace Carr, CAO  
Municipality of Two Borders  
PO Box 429, Melita, Manitoba, R0M 1L0  
or by email to [cao@twoborders.ca](mailto:cao@twoborders.ca).

Only those applicants chosen for interviews will be contacted.



# CLASSIFIEDS

## Public Hearing

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

Prairie View Municipality, under the authority of The Planning Act, will hold a PUBLIC HEARING at the below listed location, date, and time during which the Council will receive written or verbal representation from any persons who wish to make them in respect to the following application matter:

**PRAIRIE VIEW MUNICIPALITY BY-LAW NO. 2025-08 being an AMENDMENT to the PRAIRIE VIEW MUNICIPALITY ZONING BY-LAW NO. 2018-15, as amended.**

**DATE & TIME:** February 10, 2026, 9:00 am (0900 h)

**HEARING LOCATION:** Prairie View Municipality Council Chambers located at 678 Main Street, Birtle, MB

**PROPOSAL:** To amend parts, sections, subsections, and bulk standard tables of the existing Zoning By-law 2018-15. Rezoning of Crandall and Birtle properties.

**SECTIONS AFFECTED:** Parts 2, 3, 4, and 6, plus

**Table 3.2** - Use & Site Requirements: "AG" Agricultural General Zone

**Table 3.3** - Use & Site Requirements: "GD" General Development Zone

**Table 3.4** - Use & Site Requirements: "RR" Rural Residential Zone

**Table 3.8** - Use & Site Requirements: "CC" Commercial Central Zone

**Table 3.9** - Use & Site Requirements: "CH" Commercial Highway Zone

**Table 3.10** - Use & Site Requirements: "MG" Industrial General Zone

**Table 3.11** - Use & Site Requirements: "I" Institutional Zone

**Table 4.1** - Animal Unit Conversion Factors

**Map 2:** As shown in Schedule "A2"

- Birtle rolls 1350 & 1360 east of HWY 83, south of Queen Street be rezoned from dual zones of "CH"

Commercial Highway Zone and "AG" Agricultural General Zone to be all "AG" Agricultural General Zone.

- Birtle roll 52580 be rezoned from dual zones of "RS" Residential Serviced Zone and "OR" Open Space / Recreational Zone to be all "RS" Residential Serviced Zone.

**Map 8:** As shown in Schedule "A1"

- The entire "GD" General Development Zone in Crandall between NW -35-13-25W and NW-36-13-25W be rezoned from "GD" General Development Zone to "RR" Rural Residential Zone.

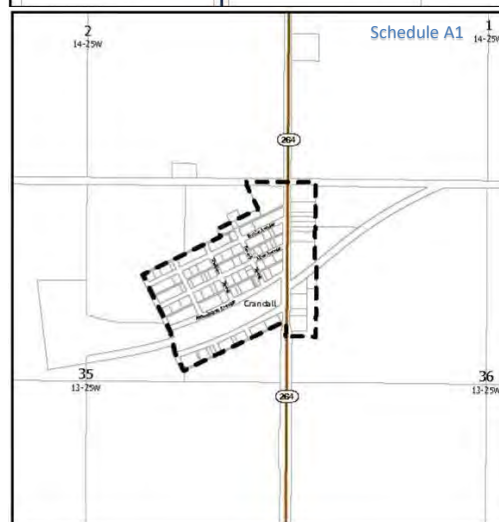
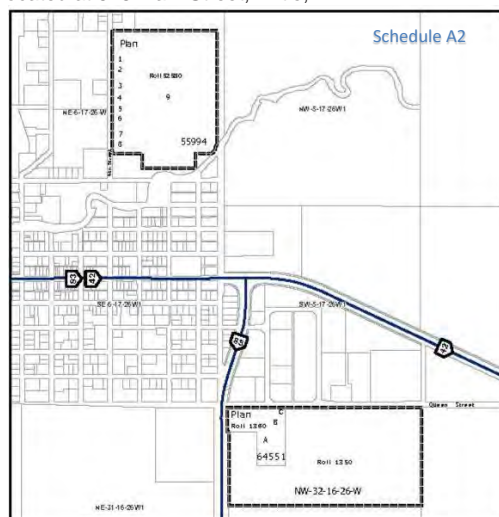
The current Zoning By-Law and a copy of the amendment proposal and maps will be available for review and download on [www.midwestplanning.ca](http://www.midwestplanning.ca).

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

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

If you have any questions, please call at 1-888-919-1740 or email [devofficer@midwestplanning.ca](mailto:devofficer@midwestplanning.ca)

Lisa Hamilton, DEVELOPMENT OFFICER,  
MID-WEST PLANNING DISTRICT



## Help Wanted



### EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

#### BUILDING, PLANNING AND MUNICIPAL BY-LAW INSPECTOR

The R.M. of Wallace-Woodworth is seeking a qualified individual for the position of **Building, Planning & Municipal By-Law Inspector**. This role is responsible for ensuring compliance with Manitoba's building codes, planning regulations, and all municipal by-laws (including zoning, property standards, nuisance) while administering development agreements and planning documentation for Trans Canada West Planning District on behalf of the Municipality.

##### Duties and Responsibilities

- Conduct building, plumbing, mechanical, zoning, and property standards inspections
- Review and issue building, plumbing, occupancy, and development permits
- Ensure permits and documents are uploaded to the Manitoba Municipal Reporting Online (MMO) system
- Enforce all municipal by-laws – property standards, signage, nuisance, noise, etc.
- Investigate complaints and issue warnings, orders, and violations as required
- Administer and monitor development agreements and planning documentation
- Assist with conditional use, variance, and subdivision applications
- Maintain accurate digital and paper records, inspection notes, and reports
- Provide information and guidance to residents, developers, and contractors
- Coordinate with RCMP, Peace Officers or Provincial agencies for joint enforcement
- Perform other duties as assigned by the CAO or Council

##### Skills and Qualifications

- Experience in building inspection, by-law enforcement, or municipal planning as asset
- Ability to read building plans and interpret zoning regulations
- Strong communication and customer service skills
- Manitoba Class 5 driver's license (clean abstract)
- Inspector certification (Parts 3 & 9) or trade background an asset

The R.M. Wallace-Woodworth offers a competitive salary based upon the applicant's experience and qualifications. A complete job description is available upon request. The successful candidate can expect a salary reflective of their experience and qualifications.

#### ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT/RECEPTIONIST

**Job Description:** The R.M. of Wallace-Woodworth is seeking a motivated and professional individual for the full-time position of **Administrative Assistant/Receptionist** at the Virden Municipal Office. The Administrative Assistant/Receptionist reports to the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) and is responsible for providing frontline customer service and administrative support to the CAO and municipal departments.

##### Duties and Responsibilities

- Provide front-counter reception and customer service to residents, contractors, and visitors
- Answer and direct phone calls, emails, and general inquiries
- Receive, process, and receipt payments in accordance with municipal policies
- Assist with utility billing, changes of ownership, and related records
- Handle incoming and outgoing mail, deliveries, and document filing
- Provide administrative support to municipal departments including Utilities and Transportation
- Cross-training to provide coverage at other municipal offices (Kenton and Elkhorn) as required
- Active role in the Municipal Safety Program
- Uphold a strict level of confidentiality
- All other duties as assigned

##### Skills and Qualifications

- Strong customer service, communication, and organizational skills
- Attention to detail and ability to manage multiple priorities
- Previous office or reception experience preferred
- High school graduate at minimum; post-secondary administrative training considered an asset
- Demonstrated proficiency with computer applications including Microsoft Office (Word, Excel, Outlook)
- Ability to work independently and as part of a small team
- Valid Class 5 Driver's Licence

A complete job description is available upon request. The successful candidate can expect a salary reflective of their experience and qualifications. The position will be eligible for a full benefits package after 6 months, including employer-paid Blue Cross insurance and a matched pension.

#### LANDFILL SITE ATTENDANT – KENTON

The R.M. of Wallace-Woodworth is seeking a motivated individual for the position of **Landfill Site Attendant** for the Kenton Nuisance Grounds location. The Landfill Site Attendant assists the Transportation Superintendent in operating the waste disposal grounds in compliance with the Waste Disposal Ground Operating Permit for the site, municipal policies, and Workplace Health and Safety regulations.

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

##### Description and Qualifications

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

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.

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





## SPORTS

## OIL CAPS EARN THREE OF FOUR POINTS

By Robin Wark  
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

The Virden Oil Capitals earned three of a possible four standings points at home last week.

The Oil Caps fell 4-3 in overtime to the Waywayseecappo Wolverines. A few days later, Braxton Burdeny and the Virden squad shut out the Portage Terriers 5-0.

As of Jan. 12, the Oil Capitals had a 19-10-2-0 record. They were second in the Manitoba Junior Hockey League's MGEU West Division behind the Dauphin Kings.

The Oil Capitals hosted

the Kings on Jan. 13 after the Empire-Advance deadline. They hit the road to play the Winnipeg Blues on Jan. 17 and the Selkirk Steelers on Jan. 18.

#### Oil Caps 5, Terriers 0

Burdeny thrilled the 716 fans in Virden on Jan. 11 as he stopped all 29 shots he faced. It was his third shutout of the season. He was the First Star.

"We defended well and Braxton was the leader in that," Virden head coach Tyson Ramsey said. "I thought we did a good job of taking away time and space from their

most dangerous guys and, when we made a mistake, Braxton was in good position to make important saves. Our special teams were also very good. We killed off a five-on-three and our power play took advantage of an undisciplined Terrier team."

Virden led 1-0 after the first period thanks to a Dysen Drake marker. In the second frame, London Hoilett lit the lamp for his 18th goal of the season. In the final minute of the period, Colten Worthington made it 3-0 for Virden. Nathan Schaefer and Virden's own Bryce Bryant scored for

the Oil Capitals. Schaefer had a goal and two assists to earn the Second Star. Worthington, the Third Star, also scored a goal and recorded two assists. Both players had power-play markers. Ryan Velan made 34 saves for Portage.

#### Wolverines 4, Oil Caps 3 OT

With 7:53 gone in the third period on Jan. 8, Liam Goertzen scored for the Oil Caps to knot the game at 3-3. That forced overtime and earned the Oil Capitals at least a point in the standings. The Wolverines' Max Collyer scored 2:19 into overtime to give the visitors the win.

Virden scored the game's first two goals

with Hoilett and Carson Wright doing the honours. Hoilett's marker came with the man advantage. The Wolverines' Aidan Herring scored with just over two minutes left in the opening frame to make the score 2-1.

On a second-period power play, Waywayseecappo's Blake Farthing knotted the game at 2-2. With just over two minutes gone in the third period, Ben Roulette gave the Wolverines a 3-2 lead. Goertzen answered and the contest went to OT.

Wright had a goal and an assist and was the Second Star. Herring and Roulette were the First and Third Stars, respectively. Virden goalie

Micky Gross stopped 23 of the 27 shots he faced. His Wolverines counterpart, Jase Wareham, recorded 34 saves.

#### Lewko Returns

Oil Caps rookie forward Cohen Lewko gained valuable experience by playing eight games with the Western Hockey League's Saskatoon Blades before returning to Virden.

Lewko first joined the Blades on Dec. 12 and played his final call-up game on Jan. 3. He scored his first WHL goal on Dec. 28 against Regina. His first game back with the Oil Capitals came Jan. 8. Lewko suited up for the Blades in two games in 2024-2025.

## REF MEMORIES

REF TO  
WRITER

GERRY  
NOLAN



Starting last weekend and continuing on during the month of January, the Brandon Tournament of Champions takes place in some of the rural communities in our area. Hamiota which was once played in Oak River, Elkhorn, Souris, and Minnedosa then the winners of these tournaments go to Brandon to compete for championships of their age category.

January was always a busy month officiating hockey as there seemed to always be a shortage of officials. There was lots of minor hockey as well as MAHA Provincial playoffs in senior hockey would begin.

January meant cold weather as well. If you thought it was cold outside, some of the rinks were colder inside I believe. Usually, an official would work at least 2 games in a row which meant your

skates especially would get cold and wet from sweating, thus by the end of the day the feet were rather cold.

I quit wearing socks in my skates in 1980 as my feet were warmer than by wearing socks. The only problem was if you worked multiple games your skates were wet. At these tournaments depending on the schedule, my skates would be wet. I was forced to put on socks which I hated! I liked the feel of skating without socks. When I had to put socks on, I wore a pair of baseball socks. They were lightweight and thin.

I mentioned the towns earlier that I officiated in for the tournament of champions. I was also fortunate enough to work games in Brandon at their Tournament of Champions as well. I did not need long underwear in the Keystone. I found it hot there. I

could also stay barefoot all day.

There were so many friendly people in these towns and would love talking hockey, which was right up my alley. All of our rural communities put on a terrific weekend. It takes a lot of volunteers to put in some time to be able to put on a successful event like these big tournaments.

I would encourage everyone who has some free time to volunteer to work at some of these events. I know you will have fun!

What could a person do if they volunteer? Well, it takes people to run the ticket booth, sell 50/50 tickets, work a time clock or the game sheet. How about a shift in the kitchen? This alone takes a number of people and then there is the whole downstairs, cleaning dressing rooms, etc etc.

As a referee for so many years, we were treated like royalty in all these towns, people made sure we had food, coffee or just anything we needed. Thank you for giving me great memories of the terrific times I spent on the ice during the coldest month of the year! I was fortunate to meet so many great people.

## Woodworth Legion Bonspiel



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Ice makers Don Carter and Brent Houston, kept the curling going for the full bonspiel.

By Gerry Nolan  
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

Woodworth Legion held their annual bonspiel on January 10 at the Kenton Curling Palace. Pictured are the two men who spend many hours getting the ice in the rink, then grooming it so it is ready to play on. Thanks, men, for your work every season.

Twelve rinks competed against one another in this cash bonspiel. Francis

Wilson provided soup and sandwiches in the Legion club room during the day. The Woodworth Legion Ladies provided a roast beef supper in the evening. Thank you to Francis Wilson and the Legion ladies for providing and serving the hungry curlers.

Teams were from Hargrave, Virden, Oak River, Oak Lake, Hamiota and Kenton.

The winning team was the rink of skip

Johnny Finnie and his rink of Robert Stevenson, Vaughn Wilson and Allan Smith. They collected first prize money.

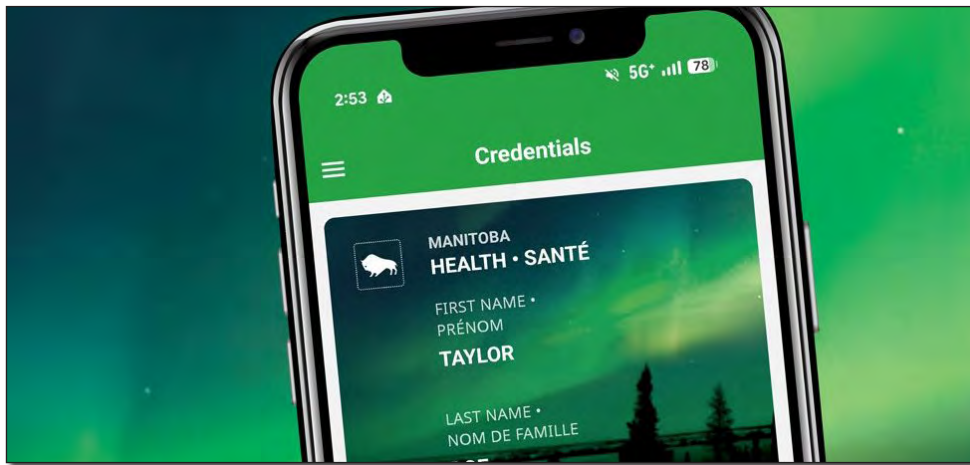
Finishing in second place and also receiving a cash prize was the rink skipped by Todd Hunter and his rink of Debbie Hunter, Jessica Hunter and Donald Caldwell.

All the curlers enjoyed the day and all the fun that goes along with bonspiels!



# Manitoba Government launches digital health card

New digital health card makes health care more accessible and convenient:



SUBMITTED PHOTO

## Submitted

BY MB GOVERNMENT

Manitobans can now apply for and access a digital health card on their mobile devices, Premier Wab Kinew, Health, Seniors and Long-Term Care Minister Uzoma Asagwara, and Innovation and New Technology Minister Mike Moroz announced today.

"Digital health cards put Manitobans in control of their own infor-

mation, make it easier to access care, and support a safer, more responsive health system," said Kinew. "Over the past year, we've moved from paper health cards to plastic and now to a digital option. It is a practical step that reflects our focus on patient safety, accessibility and putting people first as we make health care better for families."

Alongside the digital health card, Manitobans can also use MediNav,

the online appointment-booking system launched in 2025, to find and book care at participating clinics provincewide. Together, these tools allow Manitobans to carry their health card and book appointments from their mobile device, making access to care simpler and more convenient.

"We eliminated the backlog of health card wait times and now we're making the process even faster," said Asagwara.

"For Manitobans who are already registered, the digital health card will be available right away. No waiting, no delays. This is about making health care more accessible and responsive for families across the province."

The digital health card allows Manitobans to securely carry health card information on their mobile device and present it when receiving care, reducing the need to carry a physical card. Manitobans can choose to request a plastic card, a digital card or both when they sign up, and those

with existing paper or plastic cards can request a digital card at any time, the ministers noted.

This modernization supports upcoming patient safety legislation, which will create a safer, more efficient patient experience, and give Manitobans greater confidence and autonomy in navigating the health system, the premier noted.

"The MB Wallet app makes health care more mobile. It is convenient, secure and easy to use," said Moroz. "By offering this service, Manitoba is putting families at the

forefront of modern, accessible health care."

The MB Wallet is available free of charge through the Apple App Store and Google Play. Once downloaded, the app allows offline access to stored digital credentials. To protect privacy, users remain in control of when to use their credentials and what information they choose to share.

For more information or to apply for a digital health card, visit <https://gov.mb.ca/health/mhsip/digitalhealthcard.html>.

## HOCKEY MEMORIES

REF TO  
WRITER

GERRY  
NOLAN



Bobcats won the league in 1969.

The Neepawa Natives won the league championship in 1971 and 1973. There was no winner declared in 1972. Again, if someone knows why or the trophy just was not recorded, give me a shout.

In 1974, 1975, 1976, 1977, 1978 and 1979 the Deloraine Royals dominated the South West hockey league winning the Art Ross Trophy six years in a row. They were an awesome team for a lot of years.

In 1980, the Ste. Rose Royals were the champions and in 1981 the Elkhorn Canadians left the North Central Hockey League and joined the South West Hockey League and were crowned league champions.

In 1982, the Deloraine Royals recaptured the league championship and in 1983, the Ste. Rose Royals were the champions.

In 1984 and 1985, the Brandon Spectrum Sportsmen were league champions. In 1986, the Cartwright Clippers won their first league championship defeating the Brandon Sportsmen, but in 1987 the Sportsmen won the trophy back.

In 1988, 1989, 1990, 1991 and 1992 the Cartwright Clippers dominated the league winning five championships in a row. The Boissevain Border Kings ended the Clippers streak by winning the crown in 1993.

In 1994 the Elkhorn Canadians were the league champions followed by the Boissevain Border Kings who won the league in 1995, 1996, 1997, 1998, 1999 and 2000. The Souris Elks then took their turn winning the league in 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004 and 2005. Boissevain won the league in 2006.

The Souris Elks won the league in 2007 and 2008, and Boissevain claimed the trophy in 2009, which also saw the league fold as they were down to a handful of teams.

This great league that had provided so many memories of some great players and teams folded. What a shame to see another of the great senior leagues fold. Leagues combined so that players could keep playing the game they love, but oh the memories of the South West Hockey League live on and on!

The South West Hockey League was a senior hockey league that saw many good teams and some great players compete against one another. Most of the teams used local talent but there were teams who paid players to come join their team.

Most of these players had previously played with the Brandon Wheat Kings or the Brandon University Bobcats. There were also educators who moved into the surrounding towns that would join the local team, making the competition great. This was great hockey, very entertaining, and each town had a following of spectators to cheer their favourite team on to victory.

I was very fortunate to officiate in this league for a number of seasons. I worked in games from 1977-1996. I worked the league finals as a referee from 1984-1995 and was a linesman for 5 years prior to 1984.

I thought I would share a little history about the league, sharing the league champions, in case you forgot. Here we go.

The South West hockey began play in 1956, and the Pierson Bruins won the Art Ross Trophy emblematic of being league champions. In 1957 the Souris Elks won the Art Ross Trophy as league champions.

In 1958, 1959, 1960 and 1961, the Pierson Bruins won the league 4 seasons in a row as league champs!

In 1962 and 1963 the Waskada-Goodlands team won the championship, with Pierson Bruins regaining the Art Ross Trophy back in 1964, then the Waskada Comets took the trophy back in 1965.

I do not know why, but in the seasons of 1966, 1967, 1968 and 1970 there was no league champion. If someone knows I would appreciate any feedback as to what happened in those seasons. The Brandon



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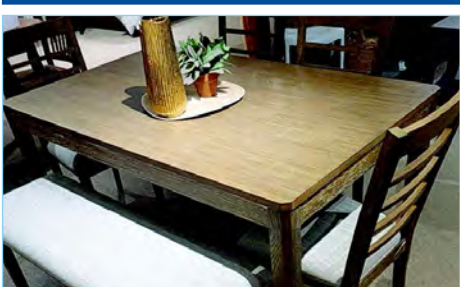
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