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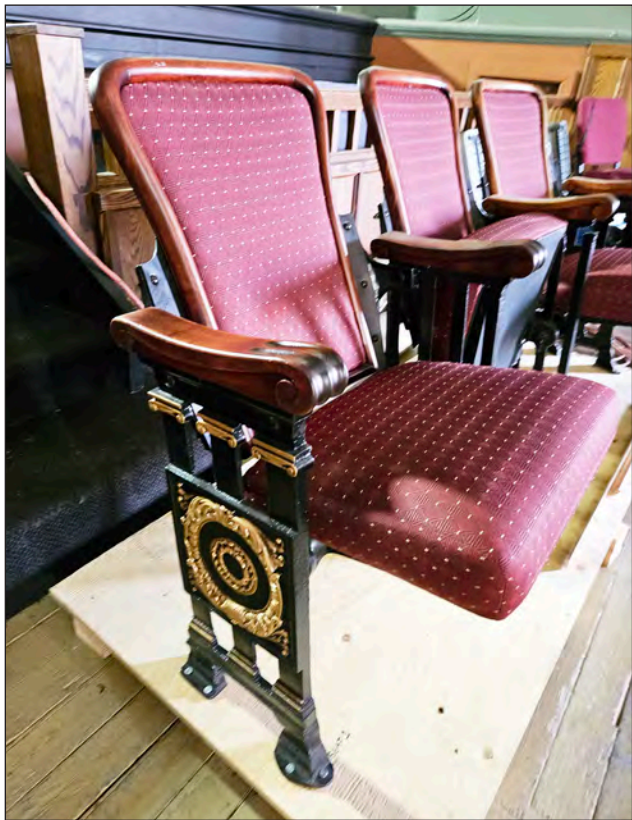
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Empire-Advance

## AUD THEATRE IN THROES OF RENOVATION



Three examples of the new seats show their style, however the proof is in the sitting, and truly they are comfortable.



PHOTOS BY ANNE DAVISON

Viewed from the stage, the Aud Theatre stripped of its seats and carpet runners in early August.

By Anne Davison  
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

Virden Aud Theatre is not exactly naked, but stripped of its rows of seating and carpet runners, the Aud certainly looked ... odd ... to say the least. It's under renovations that will provide new comfort for Aud Theatre goers.

As of early July, the original seats were removed from the main floor and from the front balcony.

The royal red carpet (which matches the seat cushions and curtains of the loge) was rolled up and put away. It's in good condition and Chair of the Aud Theatre Board, Jean Anne Overand, said the carpet could possibly be reused.

The goal of this summer's renovation is to provide sturdy and slightly larger seating while retaining the early 20th Century period appearance to satisfy the Heritage Manitoba requirements.

Overand says, "Top Stitch Upholstery in Winnipeg is restoring and retro-fitting the seats."

The floor and sound booth, are being renovated at this time as well.

TL Penner Construction, the general contractor for the theatre's upgrades, had staff sanding the floor, re-

moving old glue, fixing holes and blemishes in the fir flooring and prepping it for a finishing coat of paint. The dust from sanding was being captured and sent through an air scrubber to be exhausted outside.

An original plan for the floor included an application of epoxy coating, but experts in that field felt it wasn't the right product for the aged floor.

The sound booth, under construction by Leon Friessen, is now in a more central area at the back of the theatre. It's a better position for the sound and lighting technicians to engage with the action on stage, explains Aud board member Rick Kristjanson, who provided the Empire-Advance with a tour of the work.

Slightly larger seats mean there will be slightly fewer of them on the main floor. Meanwhile, some of the older seats that are in good shape will replace seats in what is known as the first balcony. The upper level of the balcony, referred to as the gallery in days gone by, may also have some seats replaced with the best of the main floor former seats.

The board expects this project to be completed in early October, ready for the winter season.

It's been 24 years since the Aud's seats were re-

paired and reupholstered. And although it's a costly project, it was time. So, while this project was in its

infancy, fundraising began for the \$100,000 price tag.

In the spring of 2024, the Aud Theatre Board Restoration Committee received a cheque from Tundra Oil & Gas Ltd. which Overand acknowledged as a great boost for the project. A Heritage Manitoba grant, as well as support through the Virden Lions Club and from the Town of Virden has also helped the project along.

However, the Aud Theatre Board members will be on the fundraising trail again this fall in order to meet their budget. Overand says, "In September there will be more fundraising and an opportunity for the community to take a financial part in refurbishing their theatre."

## Inside...



**OIL CAPS  
FALL CAMP  
BEGINS**  
*P12*



**KENTON  
KIDS  
ART CLASS**  
*P5*



# Dakota history alive in downtown Virden



PHOTO BY ANNE DAVISON

By Anne Davison  
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

Virden's downtown business section on Seventh Ave has added visual interest with yet another full wall mural. The most recent mural on the side of the Royal Bank building brings to life the prairie history of the Dakota Nation.

Creative Kenton artists, Mary Lowe and her daughter Erica Lowe, completed this colourful work in consultation with Lola Thunderchild who has been an educator at Goulter School and recently served as chief at Canupawakpa Dakota First Nation.

Following initial consultations, Mary and Erica began planning and painting on June 25. The highly textured wall held its own challenges and required

preparation. Extreme summer temperatures meant early day painting and afternoons off, to sometimes return when the day cooled. Rainy days followed, but the mural was completed on July 31.

Mary says she enjoyed depicting the travois culture. "It was really fun doing it. We got a lot of information from Lola Thunderchild."

The man, the paint horse and travois are eye-catching on the left side of the picture and as the story unfolds, Mary points out that there are fun images such as boys chasing prairie chickens near a teepee and kids trying to snare a gopher as another gopher is watching them. You will see a day in the life - a representation of women in food preparation (bottom centre) pounding food and cutting up squash (above centre).

You see animals of the North American Plains. Saskatchewan lily and other vegetation are particular features the artists were asked to include.

Virden Economic Development Officer Candace Murray says, "The mural is the first of its kind to depict local Dakota history and pay tribute to the relationship between Canupawakpa Dakota Nation and the Town of Virden. The paint required to create mural was graciously donated by Home Hardware Virden and this local business played an important role in making the mural project possible."

This art piece was part of the Manitoba 150 grants from the Province of Manitoba that the Town of Virden matched dollars with. Virden Boost Steering Committee did the preliminary work for the mural project.

And while it adds colour and interest to downtown, the mural depicting the Dakota's past is also intended to initiate conversations in this time of truth and reconciliation as it highlights various animals, important ancestors and traditional activities that were foundational to the Dakota way of life.

This marks the third recent downtown mural and the second one painted by the Lowes. The action-packed scene at 143, Nelson St. W. on the side of MJ's Coffee Bar & Bistro is Mary and Erica's work as well.

Although additional mural projects are not in the works as yet, Murray says, "The murals throughout the community add such a strong sense of color and vibrancy that we hope to embark on other mural projects in the future."

Now, the Kenton artists are working on their next commission, depicting Ukrainian history in the town of Rivers.

# Habitat house nearly complete

By Anne Davison  
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

A team of volunteers has done the hard physical work of building Virden's fifth Habitat for Humanity home at 615 Nelson St. West, however, there's still paperwork hoops to jump through before the family can actually move in.

Habitat for Humanity is a not-for-profit organization which addresses housing needs for low income families and helps the community by building an attractive new home that provides a working family with kids a home of their own.

Habitat acquired the land in Virden in 2023 but it was May 13, 2024 the tools of building went to work. Since then, Virden's latest Habitat for Humanity home has really taken shape over the summer. It's amazing what Karen McKinnon, Chairperson of the Virden Chapter, and the team of Dave Jordan, Bryan Hayward and Robert Heath, have accomplished.

While she admits it's been hard work, McKinnon says, "It's been great!"

The plumbing and electrical was contracted to professionals. And, she says there have been other volunteers step up to help along the way.

The siding is on, the front deck is built, and the rear deck is in progress. The interior is nearly finished. Flooring and light fixtures are next. McKinnon applauds the painters who donated their time on the home's interior.



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Here's the team and the home they've built at 615 Nelson St. West: (l-r) Dave Jordan, Bryan Hayward, build organizer Karen McKinnon and Robert Heath.

Now, she hopes that by the end of September the details will be worked out, and the applicant family and their children will be able to move in.

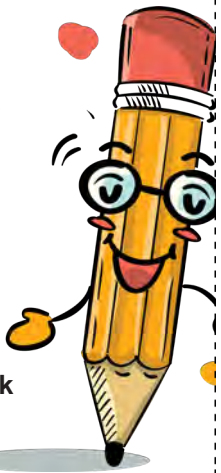
Along with the physical work of the build, fundraising has been ongoing. This spring Habitat raised money through Donors' Choice and the Wallace Woodworth Fire Department made a donation from their Turkey Bingo event, to cite a few examples.

McKinnon says this build still needs financial donations. To find out more or to make a donation phone Karen McKinnon or go to: [www.habitat.mb.ca/chapters/virden/](http://www.habitat.mb.ca/chapters/virden/) or find Virden Habitat for Humanity on Facebook.

## SUMMER TUTORING

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# Manitoba PCs leader race is on

By Anne Davison  
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

The Progressive Conservative Party of Manitoba has set in motion the process to elect a new leader in the spring of 2025. Nomination forms became available at the end of June and as of July 2 the Party office was open to start accepting nominations.

The party's Leadership Election Committee is overseeing the nomination process, chaired by Brad Zander.

"This leadership race is an exciting time of renewal for our Party, and an important opportunity for members to engage in the democratic process and have their voices heard," said Zander.

Taking a leadership role is a big step and applications have not exactly been pouring in, but deadline of Oct. 15 is still some six weeks away.

Zander says, "To date, two individuals have requested application packages. One has publicly declared that they have requested and received an application package, being Obby Khan. It is the policy of the committee to not disclose the identity of individuals who have requested applications until that individual has publicly declared their intention." As of Aug. 22, he says, "We have not had a completed application returned to us."

There's no maximum ceiling on the number of applications the party will consider and potential candidates need not be sitting Members of the Legislative Assembly.

The Leadership Election Committee includes representation by members of the party from urban and rural Manitoba.

Clayton Canart, represents the rural Westman area on the committee of seven. Canart is part of the busi-

ness community of Elkhorn, and also reeve of the RM of Wallace-Woodworth.

Within the last decade, Brian Pallister, acclaimed as leader in 2012, was voted premier of Manitoba with a landslide majority in 2016 and voted premier again in 2019.

However, during COVID-19's grip, in the fall of 2021 Pallister stepped down. Kelvin Goertzen became interim party leader on Aug. 31, 2021 and served until Nov. 2.

The PC party held a party leadership race electing Heather Stefanson, the province's former health minister. She defeated a former Member of Parliament, Shelly Glover by a margin of fewer than 400 votes. Stefanson became Manitoba's first female premier.

In the 2023 Manitoba general election Stefanson and the PC government was defeated and became the official opposition for the 43rd Manitoba Legislature. Heather Stefanson resigned as party leader.

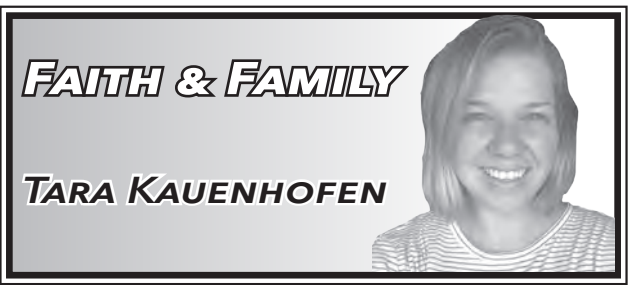
M LA for Lac du Bonnet, Wayne Ewasko, was named interim leader of the Progressive Conservative Party on Jan. 18, 2024.

The deadline for potential leadership candidates to submit their nomination forms is Tuesday, Oct. 15, 2024.

Manitoba residents who purchase or renew a Progressive Conservative Party membership by Feb. 28, 2025, will be entitled to cast a ballot for the Party's next leader.

Party membership is open to Manitobans aged 14 and older who support the Progressive Conservative Party and want to help shape the future of the Party and the Province.

For more information go to: [www.pcmnitoba.com/leadership2025](http://www.pcmnitoba.com/leadership2025)



## Stop the scroll

One day this past week I found myself 'doom scrolling'.

You know the kind... Where you lay on the couch and mindlessly flip through other people's lives.

As I was scrolling, I started to notice the perfect playroom, the aesthetic kitchens, the women who had a baby but didn't look like they had. I noticed vacations that looked far more exciting and fancier than mine. I felt that familiar sinking in my stomach, the embarrassment creeping in as I looked around my less than perfect, not even close to aesthetically pleasing living room. The ripped and stained couch, the crumbs under foot from the latest snack, and, to be frank, in a body that at 8 months postpartum STILL does not feel like my own.

I sat straight up in my seat realizing, Not again! I had fallen prey to the sneaky comparison game that so easily comes with social media. Where at the click of a button we can access hundreds of thousands of people's highlight reels, their clipped and cropped and perfectly curated videos. Thirty to sixty seconds of their life where every dirty dish, stretch mark, fighting child and pit stain is carefully cropped away.

Now I am as guilty as the next person for letting comparison steal my joy, for feeling like I need to 'keep up with the Joneses' as it were, but I've learned to recognize the signs in myself and have found ways to combat this joy stealer in my own life.

When I pulled myself out of the comparison that night it got me thinking. What if we looked at it from a different angle. Every time we compare ourselves to someone else we are telling God he made a mistake.

He, the creator of the universe and everything in it, was wrong to make us the way he did.

Every time we compare our children to someone else's, we are saying he made our children wrong, every time we compare our home to someone else's we are saying he didn't bless us enough or the right way.

What changed things for me was looking to the word of God where it says the truth will set you free. He doesn't make mistakes, he doesn't bless us wrong, he has good and perfect timing.

So my stained and ripped couch became... I have children who are healthy and play heartily and eat well and because of those blessings spills and rips happen.

The crumbs on the floor become a reminder that we have food in our fridge and the boy's have snacks in hand.

The messy playroom, also covered in laundry, reminds me we have clothes to wear and a washer and dryer.

When we flip the script, halt the comparison and go to the source of truth we can see the blessings around us. We can find joy and peace in our circumstances. We can see that we are, in fact, living in an answered prayer.

*Tara Kauenhofen is a wife and mother of four boys.*



One of Tara's many blessings.

## Corrections

Page 10 the name of Aklen Abey is mis-spelled as Abbey. We apologize for this error. The title should read: Sports Notes: Abey, Pitz help West 1 to silver; and within: Kenton's Aklen Abey and Virden's Easton Pitz have shiny souvenirs from the 2024 Manitoba Summer Games.... Abey, a pitcher, started West 1's opening contest.



Following the Sunday Virden Indoor Rodeo, the Valleyview Co-op High Point Saddle is presented by Valleyview Co-op Board President Nicole Smith to Blake Zeiffle of Consort, Alta.

In error, we named Jessica Brown as trophy saddle presenter, but it was in fact Nicole Smith representing Valleyview Co-op, the sponsor of the award. We apologize for this error.

# Woodworth Senior Services report for August

## Submitted

By KAREN ANDERSON, RESOURCE COORDINATOR

Well, there was no gradual change in the weather from the cool wet months of May and June to the summer temperatures of July where the weather was very hot and humid with some days of poor air quality due to the arrival of smoke from the forest fires west and north of here.

"Happy Graduation" to the class of 2024 graduates in our area.

The Lenore Beef club members held their club show on July 1st as well as the Interclub competition on July 2 at the Virden Ag grounds, followed by a sale later in the day.

It was a very hot week for the annual "Milk Run" of local fairs in the area. It starts in the third week of July, beginning in Oak River on Monday, then continues to Strathclair, Shoal Lake, Hamiota, Harding and finishes on Saturday at Oak Lake. Each fair has their own unique events and activities but all highlight their agricultural heritage. It is a credit to all the volunteers involved in all the fairs in the area that the tradition continues so that

the local residents and visitors can enjoy the summer agricultural fairs across the region.

The regular foot care clinics were held at the WSS office in Kenton with Tanis Boyd, June 5 with seven clients and on July 24 with nine clients. The next clinic will be around six weeks from this last one.

Thinking of all the residents who are in the hospital and also to those who recently had surgery. There have been several requests for our health aid equipment and we have received some donations to add to our stock.

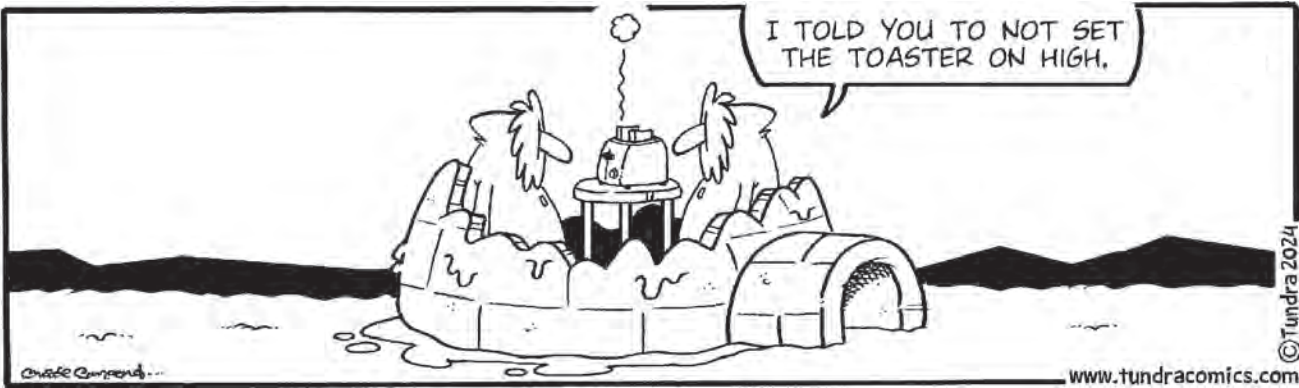
We also have a handicap parking permit that can be borrowed temporarily.

Sincere sympathy to Ken Williams of Hamiota/Oak Lake and his family on the recent passing of his wife, Karen (Butler) Williams on July 24, at 68 years. Karen is mother of Kaylen Williams-Henry and Karla (Dustin) Blackwell; grandma of Cianna and Alyvia. Sympathy is also extended to her sister, Heather (George) McGhee family; and to other relatives and friends.

A closing thought - Soak up summer now and start to plan for the fall.



Tundra  
By Chad Carpenter



Canada needs an overhaul

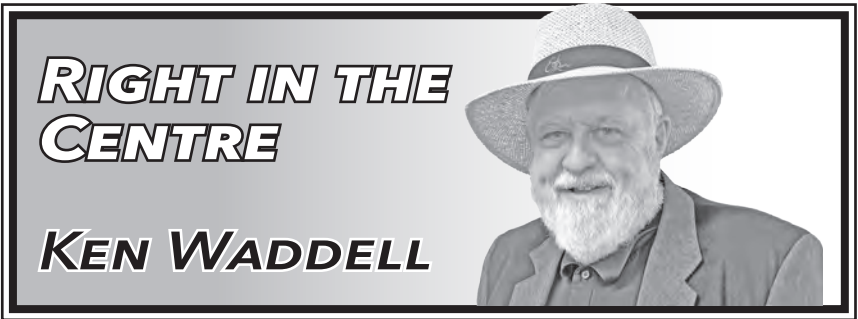
Canada has been dragged through yet another threatened railway strike. As usual, the unions picked grain harvesting season to pull the pin. With millions of tonnes of grain needing to be taken to storage and to export to terminals and to processing plants, the railway unions have always known that August is strike month. The postal workers always aim for Christmas for their regularly scheduled strikes and other unions are tuned to hit the most sensitive times for strikes.

I don't think railway workers should have the right to strike, neither should postal workers. It's not as if today's workers are working in sweat house conditions or breaking their backs and clogging their lungs chopping coal out of the ground.

Very few industries need unions to get better working conditions and higher wages. If people don't like their wages or working conditions, then change jobs. It's not as if we have an overabundance of workers in Canada. Most industries are begging for employees and that's even with some very high immigration rates.

Railways and postal work are essential services and should not be plagued with strikes. The unions are so well organized in Canada that they can make any trivial excuse for turning a grievance into a "life-threatening" crisis. I think that for the most part, that is nonsense.

But, the cause of strikes doesn't always fall to the workers. To put in bluntly, some employers are nasty people and I don't hesitate to say so. Some companies demand that employees basically sleep with their phones and answer texts, calls or emails at any hour of the day or night. That is simply not right and Australia is working on making it illegal. Good for them.



To put it bluntly,  
some employers are nasty people  
and I don't hesitate to say so

The bigger problem is that board directors, Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) and other exec positions are paid way too much. The head of Boeing aircraft says he is paid \$43 million a year. That is obscene and the directors and shareholders of that company allowing that are obscene and quite frankly stupid. They are playing us all for fools.

Government workers should not be allowed to strike but by the same token, many government execs are highly overpaid.

Workers should change jobs if they don't like where they are. I may be wrong but if a person leaves a company, they may lose benefits and pensions. Pensions should be portable and I have always said that private pension plans should be portable or would be better off in a pool with the Canada Pension Plan. That way a person could switch jobs when the stress gets too much or when better wages bid for their services,

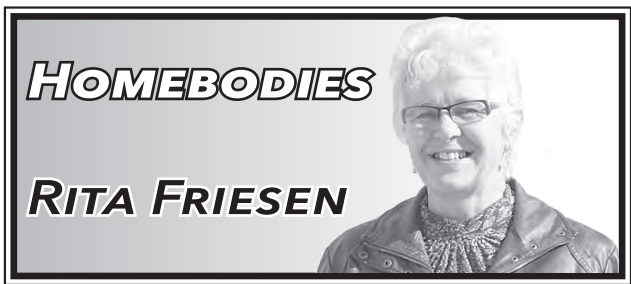
I can only think of a few industries where unions are actually needed. Underground mining, especially those with bad safety records, or

high risk work that is dangerous by it's very nature. I think the meat packing industry needs a union to protect workers.

I welcome feedback, but I can't see any other instances where unions are needed. I could likely use some more information on this topic but I think when railway unions go out on strike, auto industry workers, teachers, health care workers and many others, they need to look in the mirror and ask if life is really that bad.

If we cleaned up corporate greed and did away with the whole idea of confrontational wage negotiation, Canada might run a lot smoother. Most of us go to work every day, do our jobs and carry on thankful for what God and Canada have done for us. It seems we need an attitude adjustment in terms of what we think being hard done by is. Compared to 50 years ago, we have it pretty good and trust me, I know, I was working 50 years ago and I still am.

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.



Single senior  
perks?

Cultivating a positive attitude is one of my goals. There are so many things for which I am genuinely grateful- health, family, friends, faith- so grateful that I can take these gifts for granted. In this category are also other aspects of my reality- enough and enough to share, safety in home and country, choices of what to eat and what to wear- and those are the easy wins. So today I went deeper.

I have renewed by relationship with porridge! It was the every morning but Sunday breakfast of all of my years living at home. Dad would get up and put on the porridge- if I had wanted to make my own breakfast I suppose I could have, but really? Now I add a dollop of yogurt, some nuts and berries and it's really not bad. For lunch I scrambled a couple of eggs and microwaved them with added bacon bits and cheese, and for my evening meal I desired biscuits, and after a bit of research and remembering what my daughter-in-law taught me about baking, supper was six fresh biscuits, dripping with butter. I am thankful that I was responsible for making meals for anyone else today, and I am thankful that I am accountable to no one for what my days intake looks like!

The front door carpet is in real need of being vacuumed. It is close to the point that I need to lift my feet in crossing it rather than scraping dust, dirt and gravel off my shoes. I see the need to clean every time I leave or enter my home. It will get done- just before I have anyone other than myself see it! I am grateful that the laundry can stay a: in the washer, b: on the close horse or clothes line, c: in the laundry basket or d: unfolded and unkempt on the bed in the spare room. I'm the only one who sees it and the only one who needs it!

There are days I have a three-part day. After breakfast I walk the dog and putter around the yard. After lunch I walk the dog and putter around the yard or have coffee with a friend. After the evening meal I walk the dog and sit with my feet up. As we walk we find folks to chat with, views to admire and bikers and skate boarders to dodge....Arie knows at which yards we pause to talk about gardens and life, and if the resident isn't outside she stops and looks at me questioningly. I assure her that next time they might be out. She also knows who will spare her a drink of water or takes the time to pet her and those houses are golden!

I am truly grateful for those who check in on me with text messages, face times or phone calls, remembering to in turn check in on others.

There is a freedom in living alone- eating when and what I want. Mostly doing what I want. I keep telling myself to cultivate a grateful heart. It's working- mostly.

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# Kenton kids paint workshop



Jaina and Annika Clarke, Braxton Routledge, Bryden and Reid Gardham, Stella and Rhett Hunter, Bowen and Freya Thornett all had a great time painting on Monday, August 26.



Allison Gardham had a fantastic time teaching nine little ones how to paint.

PHOTOS BY CELIA NOLAN



Nine wonderful minds with different ideas about camping put their ideas on canvas.

By Jessica Coulter  
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

On Monday, August 26, Woodworth Legion Ladies held an afternoon of fun for kids in Kenton and surrounding area. Allison Gardham was the instructor, teaching the kids how to paint a picture of how they camp. Each of the nine children had a very different idea about camping. Which turned out nine different paintings. Woodworth Legion Ladies Mary Ann Stevenson and Celia Nolan were the team that helped for the day and made all the arrangements.

# Viriden RCMP investigation leads to seizure of drugs

Submitted  
By WESTMAN RCMP

On Aug.15, as part of an ongoing drug investigation, Viriden RCMP along with the West District Crime Reduction Enforcement Support Team (CREST), conducted a traffic stop on a vehicle in Viriden.

Shortly thereafter a search warrant was executed at a related residence in Viriden. Officers seized approximately 53 grams of methamphetamine, 14 grams of psilocybin, 3 grams of cocaine, numerous prescription pills, unstamped cigarettes and drug paraphernalia.

Trisha Coulter, 35 and Corrie Lee Blaine, 51, both from Viriden, were charged with possession for the purpose of trafficking methamphetamine and cocaine, and possession of a controlled substance.

Jolene Judd, 34, from Viriden, was charged with possession for the purpose of trafficking methamphetamine and cocaine and possession of a controlled substance. She also had an outstanding warrant of arrest.

Viriden RCMP continue to investigate.

## Viriden RCMP respond to fatal two-vehicle collision

On August 26, 2024, at approximately 8:35 am, Viriden RCMP received a report of a two-vehicle collision on Highway 83, located approximately three kilometres south of Provincial Road 345.

The investigation has determined that a vehicle, travelling southbound on Highway 83, veered over the center line and collided head-on with a northbound semi-trailer.

The 61-year-old driver of the southbound vehicle, from Melita, was pronounced deceased on scene. The 47-year-old male driver of the semi-trailer, from Meadowbrook Village, was treated and released for minor physical injuries.

Viriden RCMP, along with a Forensic Collision Reconstructionist, continue to investigate.

# News from Miniota

Submitted  
By LINDA CLARK

Well summer has simply flown by, and it is time for a new school year. The Miniota School will welcome twelve kindergarten students this fall. The kindergarten class for 2024-2025 are: Cooper Brown, Piper Brown, Jacob Cymbalisty, Layker Gardham, Shay Gardham, Amy Gurr, Samantha Hill, Brae McKean, James Oliver, Jemma Sheane, Kyler Thomson and Jayden Williston. Also, a warm welcome to Katrina Sicinski as an EA at the school. Wishing all the students attending elementary, high school and university, staff and parents a wonderful year filled with learning and fun!

"I am most radiant and full of energy when the leaves are falling and there is a ghost of change in the air." - Anna Madsen

# Veteran grave site markers project

Submitted  
By VAUGHN WILSON

Woodworth Legion Branch #118 in Kenton has embarked upon a project to provide branch member families of deceased Veterans the opportunity to honour them with Veteran grave site markers. Whether a marker is chosen to be placed at a grave site or in the garden it is a modest and uncomplicated way to indicate the service of a Veteran. The metal silver plate has a red poppy in the middle bordered by maple leaves on two sides, is 3-1/4" by 4", comes mounted on an 11-1/2" metal spike and is Canadian made.

The Veteran markers may be seen and ordered from Woodworth Legion #118 for a donation of one's choice or a suggested donation of \$25.00 – 204 838 2307 (leave message) or to kentonlegion118@gmail.com. The veteran markers will also be available at the annual Legion Remembrance Day Service to see and order.



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# Albert Drotar Classic Car Show and Shine



1954 Chev Truck owned by Ray Poole, President of the Oak Lake Cottage Association.



1938 Ford Truck owned by the White Brothers of Oak Lake.

PHOTOS BY JESSICA COULTER

By Jessica Coulter  
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

Held at the Provincial Park Oak Lake Beach the Oak Lake Cottage Association (OLCA) hosted the fourth annual Albert Drotar Classic Car Show and Shine on August 25. In addition to the Car Show, there was a pie auction, a rainbow auction and a grand prize auction.

Seventy-one beautiful classic and sport vehicles came out to show off their style. All car owners names went into a draw to win two \$50 gift certificates.

All items in the pie auction, rainbow auction and the grand prize item were donated to the event by local businesses and members of the Oak Lake Cottage Association.

To entertain the guests of the event singer/songwriter Lyndon Bournon, originally from Bramshill, England, now living in Manitoba, sang oldies for the whole afternoon before and after the auction.

There were 58 pies/desserts entered in the auction. Association member Bob Thompson was the auctioneer for the pies. The most popular pies were Saskatoon and Sour Cream and Raisin. Some of these pies went for over \$100 each.

The OLCA are a member of the Manitoba Association of Cottage Owners (MACO). The MACO is an umbrella association of cottage, beach, ratepayers' groups and individuals in Manitoba. It is an incorporated, non-profit association run by volunteers. Its goal is to promote and advance the common interest of ratepayers in cottaging areas in Manitoba.

The fourteen members of the Association worked very hard to put this event together.

In years past, the funds raised were for floating fountains. This year the funds from the event will be going towards the plans of a year-round community centre as more and more people are staying at Oak Lake Beach year-round.

## Air Training site



**Submitted**  
By KATE CRAIG.

Virden is a town with a long history, dating back to 1882. One of the notable, but often forgotten, pieces of our history is the RCAF air training site located at the current Virden airport. Its official title was No. 19 Elementary Flying Training School. This station officially opened on June 19, 1941, although the first group of civilian personnel arrived to get the area ready on April 16, 1941. When this group arrived, they found the campsite afloat, since snow melt had flowed down from higher ground, with the Scallion Creek not being powerful enough to carry it all away. Within a month, some order came from the mess made by the snow melt. On May 16th, the first group of pupils and R.C.A.F. supervisory personnel arrived. That group then had to march from the train station down to the location of the flight training school, at the location of the current Virden airport. That same day, six Tiger Moth airplanes arrived from Winnipeg, allowing training to begin.

During June, a contractor completed pouring the cement floor of a swimming pool being built at the site, giving the trainees and instructors something fun to occupy their time when they weren't flying or doing other training. Also, they

started playing softball against people from Virden. Their first game was won 19-6. Virden then won a game against the station, 3-2.

The training school was officially declared open on June 19, by the Lieutenant Governor of Manitoba, R.F. McWilliams KC. It rained heavily that morning, with around one and a half inches of rain falling. Luckily the program stayed on schedule, with an audience of roughly around 3,000 people gathered. A flying demonstration was given along with a group doing formation flying. At the end of the month, the first cross-country flight occurred, with a group flying to Prince Albert and then back.

The air training site continued, with various classes graduating to continue on to pilot selection programs. The last elementary course finished in July 1944, leading to the end of the Virden Air Training facility in November 1944. The site's capabilities were hindered by and frequently threatened by the spring snow melt and the harsh Manitoba winters, but there were hardly ever any delays in training, going as far as to move training to Hartney for a couple of days in April 1943, due to floods. The site operated successfully for the few years it was open, training many students how to be a pilot. It's an often forgotten part of Virden's history, as none of the buildings used on the site remain.

### NOTICE

## Under The Oil and Gas Act

### Melita Resources Ltd

### Application for a Battery Operating Permit

### Melita 16-32-02-29 WPM

.....

Melita Resources Ltd. has made an application under The Oil and Gas Act for approval to construct and operate a battery located at 16-32-002-29 (WPM) in the Rural Municipality of Two Borders. The proposed battery, to be located in the Pierson field.

If you have any questions or require any further information regarding the application, you may contact the Company or the Petroleum Branch at:

Melita Resources Ltd. C/O Brad Caldwell PO Box 457 Melita, Manitoba R0M 1L0 204.522.3284	Economic Development, Investment, Trade and Natural Resources Minerals, Petroleum and Geoscience 590 Wellington St. E PO Box 1359 Virden Manitoba R0M 2C0 204.748.4260
--	--

A copy of the application can be obtained from the applicant, viewed at the Petroleum Branch's Virden office or viewed online at:  
[manitoba.ca/iem/petroleum/applications/index.html](http://manitoba.ca/iem/petroleum/applications/index.html).

If the Petroleum Branch receives no bona fide written submissions objecting to the application by September 20, 2024, the Director of the Petroleum Branch may issue a battery operating permit.

**Manitoba**



# Caboose tells a story



PHOTOS BY ANNE DAVISON

Tour guide Daelyn Fefchak holds one of the huge wrenches used by the crew on freight trains.



Here's a look inside the caboose parked at Virden's Historic CP Station.

By Anne Davison  
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

A piece of railroad history is the parked caboose at the CP Historic Train Station on Sixth Avenue in Virden. Judging by the paperwork within, it appears to have been used in the 1980s. In February, 1988, the Canadian Transport Commission gave permission to Canadian railways to replace the caboose with the new end-of-train units. The conductor moved into the locomotive cab with the engineer and front-end brakeman. By the fall of 1988, CNR and CPR began the removal of the caboose from active duty. This caboose has paperwork up until 1990. Arts Mosaic's attendant for the summer, Daelyn Fefchak gave us a tour of Virden's caboose. She also climbed up to the top bunks of the caboose known as the cupola, and took pictures out the windows. The conductor would have a great view of the countryside while rolling down the tracks. A caboose was a home away from home for the train's crew. They were formerly required in switching

and shunting, keeping a lookout for load shifting, damage to equipment and cargo, and overheating axles. A printed "waybill" followed every freight car from its origin to destination, and the conductor kept the paperwork in the caboose. In the early days the caboose also carried a brakeman and a flagman. Before automatic air brakes, the engineer signaled the caboose with his whistle when he wanted to slow down or stop. The brakeman then would climb out and make his way forward, twisting the brake wheels atop the cars. Another brakeman riding the

engine would work his way toward the rear. Once the train was stopped, the flagman would descend from the caboose and walk back to a safe distance with lanterns, flags and other warning devices to stop any approaching trains. During the train's run, the trainmen would sit up in the cupola and watch for smoke or other signs of trouble from overheated wheel journals (called hotboxes).

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Keystone Wealth | Aviso Wealth

**BACK-TO-SCHOOL BUDGETING: TIPS**

As summer ends and a new school year begins, parents face the challenge of back-to-school expenses. From supplies and clothing to extracurricular activities, these costs can add up. With careful planning and smart shopping strategies, parents can manage these expenses effectively. Here are practical tips to help you save money on back-to-school:

**1. Create a back-to-school budget**  
with categories like supplies, clothing, and activities. Set realistic amounts to avoid overspending and make informed purchases.

**2. Take Inventory of what you have**  
Before shopping, check what school supplies and clothing you already have to avoid duplicates and save money.

**3. Plan back-to-school shopping**  
around sales and tax-free days to get discounts on supplies and clothing. Watch for flyers, online ads, and store promotions for the best deals.

**4. Use Coupons & Cashback Offers**  
Utilize coupons and cashback offers from apps like Honey, and Flipp to save on back-to-school shopping. Combine with sales and loyalty programs for maximum savings.

**5. Shop Second-Hand & Thrift Stores**  
Consider pooling resources with other parents to buy school supplies in bulk and share costs.

**6. Shop Second-Hand & Thrift Stores**  
Many thrift stores offer special discounts on certain days. Shopping second-hand not only saves money but also promotes sustainability by reusing items.

**7. Plan for Extracurricular Activities**  
Plan for extracurricular activities by prioritizing your child's passions and value. Consider community or school programs for cost-effective options.

**8. Teach Kids About Budgeting**  
Get kids involved in budgeting to teach financial responsibility. Include them in decision-making, comparing prices, finding deals, and understanding trade-offs to develop good financial habits.

Back-to-school expenses can be significant, but with careful planning and strategic shopping, Canadian parents can save money without sacrificing quality. By creating a budget, taking inventory, shopping smartly, and involving your children in the process, you can manage these expenses effectively and set a positive example for financial responsibility. Happy back-to-school

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VOLUME 1, ISSUE 5 / 2024 26 AUGUST, 2024



# The 48th Annual Manitoba Welsh Pony and Cob Show



PHOTO BY JESSICA COULTER

Champion Riding Class: First place, in the middle, went to Mar Don Dime ridden by Taylor Allen, owned by Marg Allen. Reserve, left, went to Rhiannon’s Chantilly Lace ridden by Makayla Allen, owned by Marg Allen. Third place, right, was Alvesta Noelle ridden by Lacy Souter, owned by Marcia Carter. Judge Sheila Renner and Ringmaster Lionel Allen can be seen in the background.

**Submitted**

BY JULIE GIBSON, EVENT ORGANIZER

The rain was not going to stop the show on this past August weekend. The Manitoba Welsh Pony and Cob Association held their 48th Annual Show at the Virden Agricultural Grounds on August 24 and 25, 2024.

Sheila Renner from British Columbia came out to be the judge for the weekend. The Ringmaster Lionel Allen was from Anola, MB. The announcer was Julie Gibson from Virden. Photographer Saharra Hewitt from Carlyle, SK came out for the weekend to be the photographer for the event.

Some of the class highlights are as follows:

Junior Champion Sec A - Coyote Run Haydn owned by Maria Carter; Reserve Champion Sec A - Crystal

Springs Sterling Spirit owned by Donna Jack.

Junior Champion Sec B - Mar Jon Copper owned by Marg Allen; Junior Champion Sec B - R H Crown Princess owned by Kristen Gordeyko.

Champion Stallion Sec A - Crystal Springs Valiant Spirit owned by Carissa Forsberg; Reserve Stallion Sec A - Crystal Springs Sterling Spirit owned by Donna Jack.

Champion Stallion Sec B - JMR Narcissus owned by Marg Allen.

Champion Mare Sec A - Crystal Springs Awesome Lady owned by Donna Jack.

Champion Mare Sec B - Alvesta Noelle owned by Marcia Carter; Reserve Mare Sec B - Frontier Pixie Dust owned by Everett More.

Champion Mare Sec C/D - Halcyonia Dreams of Gold owned by Marcia Carter; Reserve Mare Sec

C/D - Foothills Nicki owned by Joanne Armstrong. Champion Gelding Sec A - Coyote Run Haydn owned by Marcia Carter; Reserve Gelding Sec A - Silverpine Daniel owned by Kristen Gordeyko.

Champion Gelding Sec B - Drogheda Succeeding Flare owned by Kristen Gordeyko; Reserve Gelding Sec B - Frontier Dusty Boots owned by Everett More.

Grand Champion Section A - Crystal Springs Valiant Spirit owned by Carissa Forsberg; Reserve Grand Champion Section A - Coyote Run Haydn owned by Marcia Carter.

Grand Champion Section B - JMR Narcissus owned by Marg Allen; Reserve Grand Champion Section B - Alvesta Noelle owned by Marcia Carter.

Grand Champion Section C/D - Halcyonia Dreams of Gold owned by Marcia Carter; Reserve Grand Champion Section C/D - Foothills Nicki owned by Joanne Armstrong

Champion Partbred Welsh - Dancing Dawn Aspen owned by Natasha Steinke;

Champion Riding - Mar Jon Dime owned by Marg Allen ridden by Taylor Allen; Reserve Riding - Rhiannon’s Chantilly Lace owned by Marg Allen ridden by Makayla Allen.

Champion Driving - Crystal Springs Valiant Comet owned by Carissa Forsberg; Reserve Driving - Frontier Dusty Boots owned by Everett More.

Supreme Champion - Crystal Springs Valiant Comet owned by Carissa Forsberg; Reserve Supreme Champion - JMR Narcissus.

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# CLASSIFIEDS

## Birthday

**Celebrating a Milestone**  
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Over 90 members of the Margaret Taylor family gathered to celebrate their matriarch's 95th on August 3rd in Miniota. Laughter, singing, food, games and hugs were shared as family members reconnected and told stories of their common bond. Each face in this picture represents a thread of the legacy Mom has created – a legacy built on love, resilience and the joy of togetherness.

**Happy Milestone Birthday!**




Photo by Sharla George Photography

## For Sale

**37.5 ft Jayco Designer 5th Wheel Camper**

located on a seasonal lot at Lakeview Park and Campground in Shoal Lake, Manitoba.

Camper has 4 slide-outs, king size bed, full frig and freezer, double sink in island, 2 air conditioners, furnace, couch, 2 side chairs, tv and tv unit, table and 4 chairs, stove with oven, microwave, 5500-watt generator, lots of storage.

Enclosed gazebo on 14 ft. x 14 ft deck with work area, table and chairs, frig and storage unit.

Also attached open 14 ft x 14 ft deck. Lot has separate storage shed, fire pit, turf all around campsite.

Lot rent for 2024 season paid in full

Campground is located in Shoal Lake, Manitoba which offers, swimming area, playground, splash park coming in the spring, fishing, and boating. There are public washrooms with free showers. The park also offers free wi-fi.

The park is walking distance to downtown.

Asking \$35,000.00  
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Sat. August 31  
9:00-1:00 Condo  
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## Notice

**NOTICE TO CREDITORS**

IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF LINDA CAROL ARMITAGE, late of the Town of Virden, in the Province of Manitoba, deceased;

ALL claims against the above estate, duly verified by Statutory Declaration, must be filed with the undersigned at their office, 243 Raglan Street W., Box 520, Virden, MB, R0M 2C0, on or before the 11th day of October, 2024.

DATED at Virden, Manitoba, this 27th day of August, 2024

**ANIQUE TIMMERMAN –  
MCNEILL HARASYMCHUK  
MCCONNELL SOLICITOR  
FOR THE EXECUTOR**

## Notice of Death

*Charles Clare Hicks*

The Hicks family is deeply saddened to announce the passing of their father and grandfather Charles Clare Hicks. A Celebration of Life will be held for family and friends to remember a life well-lived.

September 14th at 11 a.m  
Lauder Community Hall  
Lauder, Manitoba

## Coming Events

Maryfield St. Andrew's United Church

**5th Annual Salad Smorg**

Saturday, September 7, 2024  
11am to 1pm CST  
Maryfield Harmony Centre

For more information  
contact Danny Roberts 306-646-7659

**MANITOBA BEEF & FORAGE CONFERENCE**

**8 AM – 5 PM**  
**October 30th, 2024**  
William Glesby Centre,  
Portage la Prairie, MB

Hear from industry experts and local producers about a variety of topics related to beef cattle production!

Organized by MB Agriculture in partnership with MB Beef & Forage Initiatives, and MB Beef Producers.

**For more info call:**  
**204-761-3300**  
Or visit: [manitoba.ca/agriculture/livestock/beef-conference.html](http://manitoba.ca/agriculture/livestock/beef-conference.html)

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**Estate & Moving**  
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# Police welcome homegrown constable

## Town of Virden council meeting, Aug. 20

By Dale Davison  
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

During the monthly report to council, Virden RCMP Detachment Commander Sgt. Helen Goodman introduced Cst. Alec Anderson, an addition to the detachment who grew up in Virden. Anderson spent the last five years with the Brandon Police Service and recently transitioned to the RCMP. Virden is his first RCMP posting, and he will be here for at least three years.

Virden RCMP investigated a vehicle theft in Deleau and discovered that it was one of a series of thefts between Regina and Virden. The car thief was eventually arrested in Winnipeg. Goodman said, "Most of the time they'll steal a vehicle, and they'll go as far as they can with it. Well, this guy seemed to be enjoying stopping and picking up vehicles and then dumping them off, leaving them running and getting the next one." Of the eight most recent car thefts in the area all vehicles were unlocked with the keys inside.

Goodman presented the Town with a cheque for \$27,000 to purchase an electronic speed sign with money from the provincial Criminal Property Forfeiture Fund (CPF Fund). Cash and proceeds from the sale of forfeited property are used to promote safer communities by investing in specialized equipment and by providing funding to law enforcement agencies for community initiatives. Council will consult with the RCMP to choose the most effective location once the sign is acquired.

The Crime Severity Index (CSI) tracks changes in the severity of police-reported crime by accounting for both the amount of crime reported by police in each jurisdiction and the relative seriousness of these crimes. At a previous meeting council requested Virden RCMP to determine the CSI for the town to compare it with other communities of a similar size. Cst. Anderson will prepare a report for council that makes these comparisons.

Virden RCMP executed a warrant just before the rodeo and arrested three adult females on drug charges. The arrest helped to reduce illegal activity and Anderson said, "We really didn't have any complaints from the rodeo. We had two impaired driving investigations, and one bar fight. All in all, it was a very quiet weekend."

### SHOP LOCAL

Council discussed establishing a policy to encourage the local purchase of goods and services for the Town. Although department managers are responsible for purchasing these

items at the lowest possible cost, they will be encouraged to consider transportation and delivery cost when making these decisions.

### AMM

Town of Virden is preparing a resolution for the Association of Manitoba Municipalities (AMM) fall convention to lobby the government to change the requirements for certifying the ice facility operators at TOGP. Currently the certification for operating refrigeration ice plants includes qualifications like welding and other things that are not relevant for managing arena ice.

### OTHER BUSINESS

The Town will implement an administrative charge of 10% plus additional costs for equipment rentals, and any additional costs for providing use of space to third parties in Town facilities.

MNPLLP, accounting, business consulting and tax services was re-appointed as the financial auditors for 2024.

The tax sale for 2024 of one property was cancelled due to extenuating circumstances.

### AIRPORT

Plans for the airport upgrades require some modifications. Width requirements for the runway were found to be between 2 and 3 feet wider than current plans so these changes will come with a price tag of about \$55,000. Council approved this spending.

A separate resolution was proposed to create turnaround pads at each end of the runway at an approximate cost of \$46,770. Coun. Bruce Dunning said, "With that expansion you can actually turn around the (Boeing) 737-200 (aircraft). You can land it on that runway, you can turn it around, and you can fly it out of that runway."

Coun. Travis Penners suggested that further discussion would be needed to ensure that this extra cost would be covered once all funding sources, including the provincial government had been verified. The resolution was tabled.

### PIDA

The Public Interest Disclosure (Whistleblower Protection) Act (PIDA) enables the disclosure and investigation of wrongdoing in public bodies and protects employees who make disclosures from reprisal. PIDA applies to employees of government departments, Crown corporations, and other government agencies, authorities and boards. The motion to opt in to the act was approved by council.

# Universal birth control coverage starting Oct. 1

Submitted  
BY MANITOBA GOVERNMENT

Manitobans will see cost savings with the introduction of no-cost coverage of prescription birth control, beginning Tuesday, Oct. 1, Health, Seniors and Long-Term Care Minister Uzoma Asagwara announced today.

"Prescription birth control is a right, not a luxury," said Asagwara. "Money should never be a barrier to accessing reproductive health care. Starting Oct. 1, Manitobans will be able to get some of the most common and effective birth control without having to worry about the cost. This will save people hundreds of dollars and it will ensure you are fully in control of your body and your choices."

In Budget 2024, the Manitoba government announced a plan to make prescription birth control free for all Manitobans. The Manitoba Pharmacare Program will cover the full cost of about 60 commonly used birth-control methods including the pill, intrauterine devices, hormone injections and others.

People can get a prescription from their doctor or a nurse practitioner at their regular appointment, walk-in clinics or in a hospital.

"Today's announcement will ensure that all Manitobans in need will have access to reliable contraception and secures their ability to make a reproductive life plan," said Dr. Jacqueline Gougeon, family physician. "It further empowers women to make decisions around their education and careers that are based solely on their own hopes and dreams and not around unintended pregnancies. This decision represents renewed choice and opportunity for so many of my patients, and removes a tremendous barrier to adequate health care and gender equity."

The program will save Manitobans hundreds of dollars a year on birth control costs, the minister noted, adding that someone who pays \$25 a month for oral hormonal pills, the new free plan could save them as much as \$10,000 over their lifetime.

To obtain free coverage, eligible Manitobans who do not already have coverage from another federal or provincial program can present their prescription and their Manitoba Health Card at a pharmacy for a birth control product.

# VIRDEN



CENTRE OF IT ALL

Tundra Oil & Gas Place: 204-748-2736

Facility Bookings: 204-748-2440

Emergency After Hours: 204-851-5540

Town Office: 204-748-2440

Waste Disposal Grounds: 204-748-6033

Animal Control: 204-851-1810

## September Long Weekend Hours

Virden Town Office – closed Monday, Sept. 3  
Tundra Oil and Gas Place – closed Monday, Sept. 3  
Virden Landfill – closed Aug. 31 to Sept. 3

## Check your mailbox! 2024 Property Tax Notices have been sent out.

If you haven't received yours, please contact the Town Office at 204-748-2440.

2024 Property Taxes are due by October 31, 2024.

## School Zone Reminder



Reduced speed limits in school zones are **in effect** as of September 1.  
Please remember to travel safely in and around school zones.

## Upcoming Council Meetings: September 4 & 17

Please Note:  
Town of Virden Council meetings begin at 7:00 PM

## Virden Spray Park

Open daily 10:00 AM-8:00 PM



## Dutch Elm Disease Program

Monitoring and surveys are underway by MB Forestry & Peatlands Branch.

Inspectors will be viewing private and public properties.

For more information, please call 204-748-2440, or the Tree Line at 204-945-7866.



# SPORTS

## GOLD RUSH WIN LEAGUE CHAMPIONSHIP

By Robin Wark  
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

The Virden Senior Ladies Gold Rush fastpitch team capped a successful season with a league championship.

On the weekend, the team won both of its contests at the year-end tournament to claim the Westman Ladies Fastball League title. The Gold Rush capped a 4-1 win over Hamiota in the finals with a double play.

"Best way to end," said Britt Lawson Corbett, the Gold Rush's media executive. "We've had strong teams for so many years, been on the edge of this so many times, it felt so amazing for it to come together for us."

On the Thursday before the league tournament, the Gold Rush had a crucial road game against Moosomin. The two teams had the same record. The winner would emerge from the contest as the top seed from the league's West division. Adding to the excitement around the game was the fact it was played under the lights in Moosomin.

"Playing under the lights is such an amazing experience, and Moosomin has wonderful facilities and runs a two-man ump system and has amazing fan support," Lawson Corbett said. "Playing them is always fun, and under the lights is such a special treat."

Virden won, 15-5. Its 6-2 record meant it finished first in its division and earned a first round bye in the tournament.



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Lawson Corbett said this was a huge advantage. In its first game, the Gold Rush beat Moosomin, 8-2.

"With a win in our first game, we took the short path to the finals," Lawson Corbett said. "On a day that was super hot, this was a huge advantage. This reduced number of innings, allowed our pitchers to be super fresh and super strong in every outing."

This past season, Lawson Corbett ran the league. It added a team in Hamiota. This addition meant the loop had nine teams: Moosomin, Virden, Hamiota, Hartney, Deloraine, Brandon, Wawanese, Carberry, and Killarney. The league was split into two divisions. Lawson Corbett noted the Westman Ladies Fastball League would like to add another team to round things out.

## RAMPTON THROWS WELL AGAINST COUNTRY'S BEST



PHOTO BY DARRYL GERSHMAN

Paige Rampton on the mound in the recent provincials where she was named Most Outstanding Player.

By Robin Wark  
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

Virden's Paige Rampton had an unforgettable experience at Softball Canada's U15 AAA championship.

The young softball star pitched well at the event. It was held Aug. 14-18 in Chateauguay & Île-Perrot, Que.

"When you get to nationals, it's an unforgettable experience. It's good to see how you can compete against the best softball players in Canada. We battled hard in every game, and our record didn't really show how close we were to the top teams. I am extremely grateful to have had the chance to play with this team at this event," said Rampton, who enjoyed her team's sightseeing in Old Montreal one night.

Her Westman Magic went 3-5 and lost in the bottom bracket of the playoffs. Rampton threw just less than 30 innings over eight games.

"Paige had an outstanding week and was excellent on the mound for us again at nationals," Magic head coach Jill Twordik said.

Rampton had a strong performance in the Tier 2 quarterfinals. Over seven innings, she allowed eight hits and struck out two. In the 11-2 win over the Fraser Valley Fusion, both runs were unearned. Twordik said Rampton threw 89 pitches-58 were strikes-to 30 batters.

Rampton also threw well against the formidable Abbotsford Outlaws. The B.C. team was the defending champions and repeated in Quebec. In a complete game performance, Rampton allowed 13 hits. None of the runs scored against the Magic in the 9-7 loss were earned.

The Magic earned their berth in the national tournament by winning the provincial tournament. Rampton was named the tournament's Most Outstanding Player.

"It was an absolute pleasure to coach Paige this year," Twordik said. "She continued to elevate her play as the season went on, she was stoic on the mound no matter the situation, and she will continue to build on this with our U17 program."

## BOND LOVES OLDS COLLEGE RODEO EXPERIENCE



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Rudy Bond is working hard at Olds College.

By Robin Wark  
RIVERS BANNER

Kenton's Rudy Bond greatly enjoyed her first season of rodeo with the Olds College team.

"I absolutely loved college rodeo," the daughter of Tyler and Pam Bond said. "It is an experience of a lifetime and I'm forever grateful for my phenomenal horses that I am lucky enough to swing a leg over."

Bond will be back competing for her Alberta-based school this upcoming season in pole bending and barrel racing. Rodeo coach Tanner Girletz described her as "a quiet, hardworking, young lady."

"What impresses me about Rudy is her ability to not sweat the small stuff and how she conducts herself

around rodeos," Girletz said. "She is quiet, but leaves an imprint to others around her with how she carries herself."

The coach said that Bond's strength in both of her events is "her ability to ride her horse."

"She is a very good rider with correct small moves to make her horse work to the best of his ability," Girletz said. "Not many mistakes were made by Rudy in our last season."

Bond's horse was injured for much of last season, the coach said. Girletz said, "She made it count when he was sound and ready to go and made her other horse work to the best of its ability when the other horse was down."

Bond found college rodeo to be similar but different from the high school competitions she was accustomed to.

"The biggest difference was being there and doing everything without my parents," she said. "It took lots of getting used to but by the spring it was pretty easy going."

Bond appreciates the support her parents have provided during her rodeo career. She called them "my biggest supporters."

"None of this would be possible without them by my side," Bond said. "It was hard being away from home and not being able to be physically with them when I needed help college rodeoing but they were only a phone away. They are the reason I am where I am today. They push me to do my best and encourage me to keep going. They came to both home rodeos and Taber rodeo last November."

She is studying agriculture management. Bond said, "I choose to stay on the livestock side of things, so I am hoping to pursue some sort of career in that aspect of things."



# SPORTS

## NEW LOOK OIL CAPS TAKE TO ICE FOR FALL CAMP

By Robin Wark  
EMPIRE-ADVANCE

The Virden Oil Capitals are ready to hit the ice.

The Manitoba Junior Hockey League team hosts its annual Comfort Inn & Suites Fall Training Camp Aug. 30-Sept. 1. Oil Capitals head coach and general manager Tyson Ramsey expects about 50 players ranging in age from 16 to 20 to attend the camp to battle for positions.

"I'm very excited to get back on the ice with my teammates," captain Ethan Guthrie said. "Our team will look a lot different this year and I'm excited to meet the new guys. I think that all the boys have worked hard over the summer and are ready to bring it for training camp and the start of the season."

Last season the Oil Capitals topped the MJHL MGEU West Division standings with a 40-12-3-3 record. They fell in the second round of the playoffs to Winkler, 4-2.

The team saw such stalwarts as Joey and David Bielik, Roux Bazin, Trevor Hunt and Nolan Wallace as well as Virden products Braeden Lewis, Grady Lane and Eric Reid age out from that successful team. However, it returns a strong group led by Guthrie. As well, the team's top two scorers from last season - Josh Lehto (60 points in 57 games) and Nolan Chastko (55 points in 53 games) - can return. Among the other possible returning players are Virden products Bryce Bryant, a forward, and Ty Plaisier, a defenceman.

"It's always important for our returning players to lead the way in all aspects," Ramsey said. "We have worked hard to build our culture here over the last number of years and our returning players have been a big part of that. Our expectations for them will go up individually and as a group and they should have higher expectations for themselves as well. They will be great role models for our new and younger players."

Veteran Oil Caps like Brett Sabel has been working out at the B Athletics Coaching and Nutrition, the gym where he has gone since he was young, and practicing his skills on and off ice.

"I am looking forward to coming back physically and mentally ready to go," Sabel said. "I am excited for this year and I can't wait to meet and lead the new teammates for this season."

Guthrie also has been training a lot. He said, "Whether that is skating or working out in the gym, running or doing track. I have been very focused on maintaining a healthy lifestyle this summer."

One spot where the Oil Capitals will have new faces is in net. Reid aged out after guarding the crease for three seasons. Owen LaRocque is still rehabilitating from an injury, while Liam Bechthold has opted to head to university, Ramsey reported. The team recently acquired Gavin Renwick, who was 13-5 with the Portage Terriers last season. Ramsey said a number of other net-minders will be battling at camp for a spot.

Last week the Oil Capitals announced the signing of some young talented players, including hometown defenceman Hudson Davidson. He was autoprotected by the team in 2023. Davidson recorded 14 points in 34 games last season for the U18 AAA Yellowhead Chiefs. He also saw action in two contests for the Oil Caps.

Forward Colten Worthington helped the Brandon U18 AAA Wheat Kings to a Manitoba U18 AAA Hockey League championship last season. The team placed second in the national Telus Cup championship. Worthington racked up 62 points in 40 games last winter. He also played three games for the Western Hockey League's Saskatoon Blades.

Also signed to play up front is former 2022 Oil Caps draft pick Campbell Epp. The Winnipegger had 13 points in 46 games last season for the Provo (Utah) Predators of the National Collegiate Development Conference.

Fellow forward Acoyen Fehr from Morden posted 44 points in as many games last season for the U17 AAA Pembina Valley Hawks. He was listed by the Oil Caps in 2023.



### REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS OAK LAKE DISTRICT ARENA CARETAKER

The Oak Lake District Arena is currently accepting proposals for the position of head caretaker for the 2024-2025 season. The successful candidate will be responsible for making and maintaining ice throughout the year, maintenance of the arena, skate sharpening, and cleaning duties as described. \*Please see attached the general scope of duties. \* The successful candidate will be responsible for hiring, training, supervising and compensating additional staff, if deemed necessary. The position will tentatively begin October 1st, 2024, and end May 15th, 2025. The proposal submitted will be based on a monthly payment agreement. Start and end time is to be determined by the board and will be pro-rated accordingly.

#### General Requirements:

- The successful candidate must possess a valid drivers license.
- The wage will be based upon experience, qualifications and previous job performance if applicable.
- The successful candidate/staff will be required to stay on site during the opening of all arena events and be available for skate sharpening or other requirements within the arena as they arise. Staff will be required to be 18+, or under the supervision of the successful candidate if age is less than 18 years of age.
- The successful candidate will be available to open doors and prepare for upcoming events in a timely manner. One hour prior to hockey games and 30 minutes prior to any other arena events.
- Be required to keep the arena in a tidy and orderly manner in accordance with the arena boards standards. Including but not limited to garbage maintenance, mopping of floors, cleaning of dressing/referee rooms, waiting area, and spectator stands, wiping of glass, vacuuming and sweeping specified areas, and mechanical room.
- Maintain the ice surface as directed by members of the arena board. Specific requirements will be given to the successful candidate once chosen.
- Be able to perform general mechanical maintenance on the Zamboni, furnace and ice surface as directed by members of the arena board. Including but not limited to oil and filter changes.
- Be able to maintain and keep an updated maintenance log for all maintenance performed either by the successful candidate, their staff or outside maintenance companies.
- Ensure all aspects of the arena, including entryway, ice surface, player boxes and dressing rooms, spectator stands, waiting area and hallways/walkways are maintained in good order and in safe condition.
- Advise any or all arena board members of any deficiencies required regarding equipment or supplies, to upkeep the arena in accordance with the above, in a timely manner.
- Be available to attend meetings at the request of the arena board executives. May be up to 1x per month, or less.

\*\*Any questions regarding the request for proposal can be directed to rec@rmofsifton.com and will be directed to an arena board member\*\*

Sealed submission will be accepted until September 6th, 2024 @ 9:00am

Please mail/email proposals to:  
Oak Lake District Arena Caretaker Proposal  
Box 391 Oak Lake, MB R0M 1P0  
Email: rec@rmofsifton.com

\*\*The Oak Lake District Arena Board reserves the right to award the proposal at their sole discretion. The highest proposal will not necessarily be accepted and will be chosen as to be in the best interest of the arena. \*\*

\*\*The chosen candidate will be subject to a RCMP Child Intervention Background Check\*\*

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