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Winkler arena now a drive-thru testing site

By Ashleigh Viveiros

Winkler's Centennial Arena became a drive-thru testing site for COVID-19 last week.

Health care workers were standing by at the arena at 600 Park St. starting last Wednesday to test for the illness caused by the novel coronoavirus.

"This will be the 12th community testing site and our fourth drivethru," said Lanette Siragusa, Shared Health's chief nursing officer, noting more locations throughout Manitoba were in the works.

The Winkler testing site is open daily from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Patients are directed to drive up under the enclosed tent and remain in their vehicles until medical staff approach.

"As a reminder, these are not walkin clinics," Siragusa stressed. "People need to have a referral from Health Links prior to going to these sites."

When you arrive, health care providers will take swabs of your throat and nose. Samples are then sent to the Cadham Provincial Laboratory for COVID-19 testing.

"Remember that only Manitobans with respiratory symptoms who have travelled out of province in the last 14 days or have had contact with a confirmed or suspect COVID-19 case ... need to be tested at this point," SiraWinkler's arena became Manitoba's 12th community testing site last week. Patients require a referral before arriving for testing.

gusa said. "All other Manitobans are asked to stay home if they are ill."

For more information and to access the online screening tool for reached toll-free at 1-888-315-9257.

COVID-19, visit www.manitoba.ca/ covid19.

Health Links-Info Santé can be



By Ashleigh Viveiros

Provincial leaders have taken further steps to slow the spread of CO-VID-19 in Manitoba.

On Monday, Premier Brian Pallister announced that all non-critical businesses are ordered to close their doors between April 1-14.

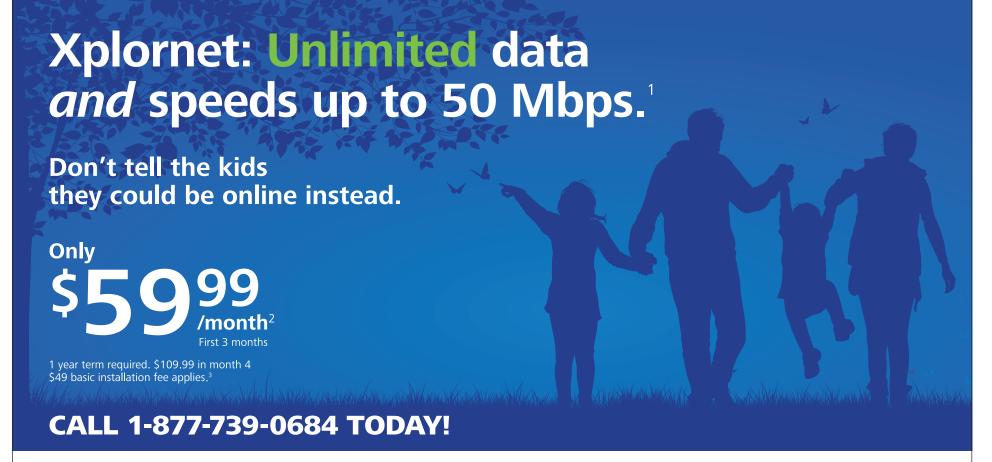
"We take these temporary steps today to protect our most valuable service of all: our health care system, and to protect our most vulnerable,"

"This announcement is not an easy thing to do. But it is the right thing to do," Pallister stressed. "We are going to flatten the COVID curve and as we do we ensure that all of us and our loved ones will have a health care system not only today, not only for

COVID, but for all aspects of health protection and safety tomorrow as

As of Wednesday, any place that serves food is prohibited from doing

Continued on page 4



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Front Steps Project comes to the Pembina Valley

By Ashleigh Viveiros

A local photographer isn't letting the coronavirus stop her from capturing special family moments.

Salina Wall of Salina Marie Photography has joined the #TheFront StepsProject movement, offering families in the Pembina Valley the chance to pose for a portrait in front of their homes in exchange for food bank donations.

It's a way to stay connected as a community while also helping those who have fallen on hard times during the global crisis, says Wall.



"Ever since things got crazy with COVID-19, I've been thinking about how I could use my talents or my skills to help people out," she says.

The Front Steps Project was started by a photographer in Massachusetts and has quickly spread across North America.

When Wall heard about it from a Winnipeg photographer, she knew she had found her way to give back.

"I saw that there were a bunch of photographers doing it in areas of the city but no one doing in the Pembina Valley, so I figured I'd bring it to our area," she says.

Wall spent last weekend making trips out to several households in Morden and Winkler for short, fiveminute photo sessions, all taken at a distance of at least 10 feet from her subjects.

Families were encouraged to dress as they like—be it in their best duds, comfy sweats, PJs, or even costumes.

"You can really do whatever you want," Wall says. "It's meant to bring a little bit of light to a scary time."

Wall will be setting up more portrait sessions in the weeks to come.

"I'll do them for as long as people want them," she says, encouraging people to head to salinamariephotography.com/thefrontstepsproject to request a photo session.

Every participating family is asked to have a donation of non-perishable



SUPPLIED PHOTOS

Local photographer Salina Wall is snapping shots of families on their front steps in exchange for food bank donations.

food, cleaning supplies, or personal hygiene supplies ready for Wall to pick up to be donated to food banks in Winkler or Morden (monetary donations towards the purchase of nonperishables are also accepted). Families will receive a digital file of their photo in an email after their session.

You can check out some of the #The-FrontStepsProject photos on the Salina Marie Photography Facebook and Instagram pages.







HOURS OF OPERATION:

Monday & Tuesday 9:30am to 6pm Wednesday to Friday 9:30am to 8pm Saturday 9:30am to 5pm





The Winkler Morden Morden



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Setnember 2 September 2 Septem

Deception Fest 2020

've decided to start a Scandinavian Death Metal Festival and invite The Wiggles, Raffi, Fred Penner, and LuLu & The Tomcat as the headliners

I mean, why not? Every year socalled blues and jazz festivals do the same thing, right? Finding actual jazz

at a jazz festival is almost as hard as finding the proverbial needle in a haystack.

Every spring, festival season lineups begin to get announced and people begin to get excited for the opportunity to shell



By Peter Cantelon

out some cash to listen to some good old genre-based music. They buy tickets to a jazz or blues festival to listen to incredible jazz or blues performances.

Let me give you some examples: Some of the featured musicians at Ottawa's summer Bluesfest (assuming it's still a go in light of recent global events) include world renown blues legends Blink 182, Boyz2Men, and Alanis Morrisette, to name a few.

Meanwhile, this year's Winnipeg Jazz Festival (still a go at press time, but anything could change between now and June) will feature hardcore jazz legends Faouzia and Ben Harper, whose Wikipedia page sums up his musical style with the following quote: "Harper plays an eclectic mix of blues, folk, soul, reggae, and rock music." Literally almost every musical style except jazz.

It cannot be that hard to find jazz and blues musicians, right?

"Look, it really isn't hard to find the musicians," said every jazz and blues festival spokesperson. "The problem is people don't like jazz and blues music, so we have to book pop and rock musicians. By doing this we create VERY successful jazz and blues festivals."

Ottawa's blues festival is famous for such interesting, little known blues acts. Last year they booked Pussy Riot and Snoop Dog—two acts who, up until then, didn't even know they were, in fact, blues musicians. After they were booked, I am sure they were thrilled with their versatility.

Other blues legends that have turned up at blues festivals include Hanson, Pink, Fetty Wap, Duran Duran, and Billy Idol. Really.

Not to be outdone, the Montreal Jazz Festival has featured such jazz luminaries as Bryan Adams, Ziggy Marley, Robert Plant, and The B'52s.

Running into Hanson at a blues festival is a little like opening a jar of mayonnaise and running into marshmallow spread instead. Sure, you don't mind marshmallow spread when no one is looking, but not when you were expecting a decent BLT.

Heck, maybe, in the anonymity of your own home, you pull all the blinds down and secretly listen to some Hanson on Spotify. Who am I to judge? Just keep them out of a blues festival (or any other festival, frankly).

Thankfully, folk festivals have managed to resist the urge to book David Guetta and deadmou5 and have decided that folk festivals can succeed on the basis of booking folk musicians ... crazy.

When blues and jazz festivals book pop headliners it feels like they're trying to trick people into listening to blues and jazz. Like sneaking Taylor Swift or Katy Perry into the blues lineup the way your mum used to casually approach you as a baby with a spoonful of pudding only to veer off at the last second and dump in some cod liver oil.

Not a great way to build trust.

All columns and letters published on our Get Heard pages are the personal opinions of the submitting writers. They are not objective news articles, nor are they necessarily the viewpoint of the Winkler Morden Voice.

> BUSINESS SHUTDOWNS, FROM PG. 2

so on-site, though takeout and delivery are still allowed as long as proper physical distancing measures are observed.

Bars, hair salons and barbers, massage therapy clinics, garden supply stores, and sporting good stores, among others, will all be closed.

"Grocery stores will remain open, but they must also maintain appropriate social distancing between their customers," said Dr. Brent Roussin, chief provincial public health officer.

"All businesses that are not listed in the schedule of critical services ... must close between April 1 and April 14," he said, noting the closure order does not prevent businesses from operating remotely.

Many businesses made the cut for the list of critical services, including bakeries, hardware stores, banks, pharmacies, gas stations, taxi services, office supply stores, agricultural suppliers, and manufacturers, to name just a few.

The full list of businesses considered critical is available online at engagemb.ca/covid19-csp.

Beyond this step, the most recent public health order also now limits all public gatherings (including places of worship and family events) to no more than 10 people at any indoor or outdoor place or premise. This does not apply to health care or social services facilities.

"The most important way of reducing the spread of this virus is for people to stay home," Roussin stressed. "If you're able to, stay home, wash your hands frequently. This is especially important if you are ill. This is especially important if you're in a high-risk category, such as those over age 65, those with underlying medical conditions, or those [who are] immune compromised. If you

Continued on page 5

City of Winkler pulls back on tax increase

Council seeks to ease financial burden on residents by holding the line on taxes, offering extensions on utility and tax bills

By Lorne Stelmach

The City of Winkler went back to the drawing board to cut almost half of a million dollars from its 2020 budget introduced last week.

Council identified \$483,500 in spending to eliminate from the financial plan in response to the financial impact and stresses that many residents are now facing as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The spending of just over \$17.2 million represents just a one per cent increase over the 2019 budget, and it means the city is holding the line on municipal taxes.

Mayor Martin Harder said council acted to at least in a small way help ease the burden on residents right

"We initially had a very aggressive budget," said Harder, who noted when it was first drafted in January they had been looking at a 3.9 per cent increase in spending.

In light of recent global events, the finance committee met in the days before the introduction of the budget March 24 to bring that spending increase down to zero.

"We took a look at our absolute needs and we kept them in, and we looked at the projects that are ongoing that we cannot cancel, so therefore those stayed in," said Harder.

"We then looked at the want list and said this can wait for a year or this can wait a little bit longer. So therefore we were able to trim a half a million dollars off our budget."

The reductions range from delaying capital purchases such as new vehicles and putting off the new accessible playground to trimming almost a quarter million dollar sidewalk budget to just over \$100,000.

In addition, the expansion of the Clover Creek industrial park will be scaled back for now to just the installation of water and sewer lines.

At the same time as introducing these budget measures, Harder also announced the city will be giving residents 60 day extensions on payment of both their current utility bills as well as property taxes.

"For those who can't, we will not penalize you, and we will not charge any interest for 60 days," he said. "We will not penalize you if you are late on your payment, although we would appreciate if you can pay ... the city needs to operate."

BUDGET BREAKDOWN

The budget will see the municipal mill rate reduced from 13.365 to 12.327. That means the impact on tax bills will generally level out, as 2020 is a reassessment year.

That means a residential property that has seen its value rise from \$210,000 to \$227,300 will have its municipal taxes remain virtually the same at about \$1,371, including the \$110 waste fee.

It will be a similar picture for taxes on a commercial property whose value is rising from \$500,000 to \$542,280. There, municipal taxes will stay very nearly the same at \$4,345.05.

Council provided a further breakdown of how that residential tax bill is spent. It includes \$265 for police, \$196 for transportation, \$190 to recreation, \$181 in transfer to reserves, \$161 for fiscal services, \$145 for general government services, \$46 for economic services, \$36 for planning services, \$33 for the fire department, and \$8 to health and cemetery services.

Percentage-wise, that means 19 per cent of spending is on the police followed next by about 14 per cent each on transportation and recreation and culture, 13 per cent on transfers, 11 per cent on fiscal services, and 10 per cent on administration as the top areas of expenditures.

Municipal taxes represent 66 per cent of the city's revenues at almost \$11.4 million, while other revenue, including federal and provincial grant money, makes up the other 34 per cent at over \$5.8 million. The majority of that other revenue is almost \$2.8 million in provincial and municipal tax sharing.

The financial plan also trumpeted the city's debt management, with construction of the Meridian Exhibition Centre being the main item there with a debt load of over \$15 million.

Otherwise, the borrowing debt from the new library and the arena shop are now off the books, which means the debt balance will drop from \$19.07 million to \$17.7 million by the end of the year.

Harder suggested the city has managed its finances well enough to be in a strong enough position to not only manage a project like the exhibition centre but also weather the storm in a time of crisis.

"We're fortunate enough that we have not been a community that has overspent," he said.

"We're glad with how we have been able to manage it all. These things don't happen overnight; it takes years to get ready for it, and it may take years to be back to where we were, but at least we have the flexibility."

Returning travellers must self-isolate: health officials

From Pg. 4

cannot stay home, you need to practice social distancing, physical distancing at all times.

"I want to remind Manitobans that we are not helpless against this virus," he added. "Now is not the time for fear. Now is a time for knowledge. Now is a time for action. And these orders are furthering that action that we've been taking all along to be proactive and out ahead of this virus."

At Monday's daily press briefing, Roussin announced 24 new cases of COVID-19 in Manitoba, bringing the total of lab-confirmed and probable positive cases to 96.

Four of those patients are currently hospitalized, one in intensive care. Manitoba's first death caused by CO-VID-19 occurred last week. Two people have been reported as recovered.

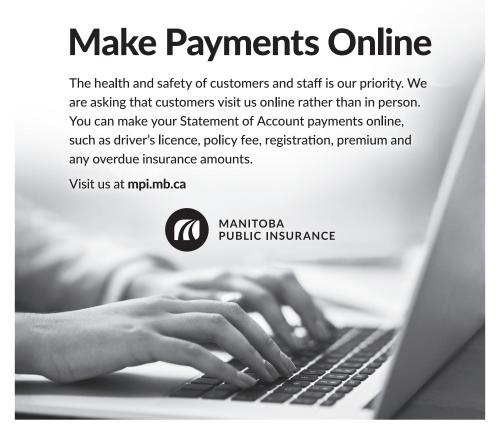
Public health officials continue to

strongly advise all Manitobans, including health-care providers, to cancel or postpone any recreational, tourist, or non-essential international or domestic travel.

In addition, anyone who returns from international or domestic travel must self-isolate and self-monitor for symptoms for 14 days following their return.

The only people exempt from selfisolating are workers involved with the commercial transportation of goods and services, health care workers who travel to work from outside the province, workers who live in a neighbouring jurisdiction and travel to Manitoba for work, and those engaged in normal personal travel in border communities.

Any person concerned about their exposure to or risk of having COV-ID-19 should call Health Links-Info Santé at 1-888-315-9257 to be screened to see if a test is required.



Regional Connections looking for Language Buddy volunteers

By Ashleigh Viveiros

Regional Connections has put out a call for more Language Buddy volunteers heading into the summer months.

The program pairs up newcomers to Canada who are learning English with native speakers who can help them practise their informal English

"Students, they come to class and they learn English but then they go home and they're often speaking their home language," says volunteer and integration coordinator Alesha Hildebrand. "They need casual conversation in English. It's so beneficial to just casually talk to someone.

"We do this every day as English speakers not realizing that it can be difficult and challenging for someone who's trying to learn and think and process all these new words," she adds. "The more often clients meet with their Language Buddy, those conversations become more natural."

That's certainly been the case for Natalya Shepeleva, who moved to Winkler from Kazakhstan two years

Though she'd learned some English before coming to Canada, upon arrival she realized she needed more help to fine-tune her skills.

She began taking classes at Regional Connections and over the last couple of years has been paired up with two different Language Buddies.

Their meetings go far beyond language development.

"We've spent a good amount of time together," Shepeleva says. "We read the newspaper and discuss the local news. She's helped me understand the culture of Canada, some of the traditions I didn't know. It's helped me integrate in society and to be part of the community."

Shepeleva is quick to recommend the program to fellow newcomers and hopes more people will step up to become volunteers.

"It's so helpful and [brings] a lot of pleasure. It's like the meeting of two friends," she says. "I hope more would volunteer [to] help immigrants. It's so helpful for both because for Canadians when you share news, share traditions, it's an exchange of information, cultures. It's an interesting experience for both parties."

"I'VE LOVED IT"

Irina Volkova, a Morden resident who moved here from Russia four years ago, has been meeting with her Language Buddy for nearly two years



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PHOTOS BY ASHLEIGH VIVEIROS/VOICE

Above, from left: Irina Volkova and Jennifer-Laura Heide have become fast friends through Regional Connections' Language Buddy program. Right: Program participant Natalya Shepeleva says the informal meetings with her Language Buddy have greatly improved her English skills.

"I decided that I needed somebody to talk to sometimes, not just the words that I use at my workplace," she says."I just thought I needed a different [kind of] conversation."

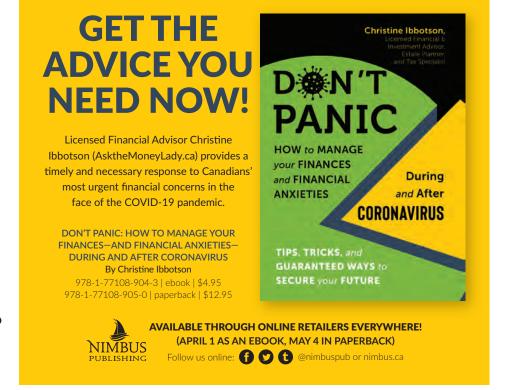
She and volunteer Jennifer-Laura Heide got together once or twice a week at the start and quickly became fast friends.

"We try to get together as much as we can ... when we do, we often talk for hours," says Heide, who initially got involved as a volunteer with Re-



gional Connections' Coffee and Chat get-togethers while she was on maternity leave, but then became a Language Buddy when she returned to work. The program provides a great deal of flexibility in when and where the matches meet, which fit in nicely with her schedule.

Continued on page 8



Playgrounds closed down, green spaces remain open

By Lorne Stelmach

The City of Morden continues to assess and take further measures in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Some of the latest measures last week in keeping with provincial direction included the closure of Morden's playground structures and park facilities, including picnic shelters. (Winkler has done the same for its park areas.)

"Basically, only active green area will remain open," Mayor Brandon Burley said following a meeting of council March 23.

There has been discussion as well about the dog park, but Burley said it was not being closed as of yet, although there is an onus on users to follow all recommendations about social distancing.

"At this point, any park or any location where people could or be expected to touch things that will be able to communicate the virus to others will be closed," he said. "We've also got to look at things like the community gardens. We want to make sure that we can keep those going because I think this year, more than any year, we may have greater demand for garden space, so we're looking at the precautions we can take there, and we think we can practice social distancing, ensure that people bring their own tools there."

Meanwhile, Morden council also approved an update to its emergency plan, as it is required to do each year by the province.

"There were a couple changes made to it in terms of how we respond to weather disasters," said Burley, noting some minor revisions were made in relation to large winter storms in light of the experiences with last October's blizzard.

"And as we learn some things about how we get through this pandemic, we will update it in 2021," he added. "We're learning more as we go."

In other business, council has moved to form a new accessibility committee that will be charged with the task to assess and update the city's accessibility plan.

"It's not a thorough plan by any means ... we're looking at ways that we can improve not only the plan but the implementation of it," suggested Burley.



PHOTO BY LORNE STELMACH/VOICE

Playgrounds in Morden-Winkler are now off-limits due to COVID-19.

The committee will include not only councillors and a city engineer but also three community members at large.

"There's a lot of people who live with either accessibility issues, disabilities," Burley said. "We don't necessarily see the problems that exist with accessibility because we're not encumbered by those difficulties.

"We're looking at people to give us perspective who have lived with accessibility issues, and we think by doing that we can provide a superior outcome," he continued. "Our goal with this committee is to provide a liaison with the residents in our community who live with accessibility issue. We are looking at this as a way to bridge the gap."

Because accessibility is a very broad topic, Burley said they recognize there will be a need to break it down to have a real impact.

"Our year one mandate for this committee will be to review the physical components, like the infrastructure pieces of accessibility in our community, and to review the plan in not only where it is but where it needs to be and then to provide feedback on how we are doing in terms of physical accessibility."

Finally, council also moved to advance \$9,000 of its annual funding commitment to the Pembina Hills

Continued on page 9



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YOUR BROKER CAN HELP.

Winkler, Morden, Stanley providing a united front

By Lorne Stelmach

Local leaders are aiming to present a united front in their efforts against the growing pandemic.

Winkler Mayor Martin Harder, Morden Mayor Brandon Burley, and RM of Stanley Reeve Morris Olafson issued a joint statement last week that stresses the three municipalities will take co-ordinated measures to help slow the spread of COVID-19.

"It's important for everybody to realize that we are working on the same page; we're working from the same set of guidelines," says Harder. "It shows to the people that our communities are working together."

"We think it's a really good opportunity to provide a united front to the public," agrees Burley. "I think it's extremely important for the three municipalities to get together, as there's so much cross-traffic and communication between the three municipalities already, none of us

will be immune if one of us ends up being affected by COVID-19."

"We've been in touch with each other along the way to see how everybody's doing and what the protocols are going to be," adds Olafson. "We're not all on our own island ... and we can't have just one thing shut and the next thing open."

The statement came with the province under a state of emergency and the number of coronavirus cases starting to rise substantially every day. "As three communities so closely tied together, we felt it was important for our residents and businesses to hear from us as one voice," begins the statement, which goes on to note that "all three communities took proactive steps to close city buildings including recreational centres and municipal offices early on in order to do what we could to help with preventative steps."

The three leaders suggest most of the greater community here is taking this seriously, but they also acknowledge that they have become

> aware of instances in which the mandates set out by provincial health officials are not being followed.

> "Please know that these are not suggestions, they are a provincial mandate, and by adhering to them we can reduce both the health and the economic impact of COVID-19 in our country, in our province, and in our own communities."

Municipal leaders urge area residents to check the Province of Manitoba's website (gov.mb.ca/ covid19) for updates and continue to follow the guidelines for

social distancing and self-isolation, especially after you have travelled.

"We understand that these measures are causing significant disruption to our daily lives and are not easy to follow," the statement said. "Please have patience and compassion for one another. While these challenges can bring out the worst in each of us, it can also bring out the best

"We have already seen people helping and volunteering where they can, sharing their resources with those who are in need and making personal sacrifices for the greater good.

"Remember that physical separation doesn't mean that you need to be emotionally distant; there has never been a better time to reach out and call a neighbour, a friend, or a loved one. Find ways to stay connected, even at a distance, keeping in mind those who are particularly vulnerable and alone such as the elderly in this time.

"Please care for one another in this difficult time, help us to be a shining example to other provinces and communities as we do what is best, not what is easiest."

Harder, Burley, and Olafson emphasized that the three communities will continue to work together with provincial officials and one another.

"We're all following the general guidelines given by the Province of Manitoba," said Harder, who acknowledged that concerns and questions will arise if a policy in Winkler varies from what's being done in Morden.

"The cities have more closures than we do with the rec. centres and those types of things," noted Olafson. "But we've made it known to all of our community clubs that their playgrounds should be shut down at this point as well. "My hope is just that everybody takes it easy ... we'll all just have to hunker down longer."

"We need to have a consistent message that there is absolutely no wiggle room for people to do as they please in this situation," stressed Burley.

"I am getting daily input or communication from community members about people—neighbours, friends and family—who are not self-quarantining after coming back, who are not getting tested if they are feeling ill and have been advised to test," he said.

"That, at this point, is foolish and reckless, and it's plain stupid. At this point, there is no excuse for people who are not listening, not obeying restrictions."

> LANGUAGE BUDDIES, FROM PG. 6

Heide and Volkov's conversations run the gamut and have taught each a great deal about the other's culture.

"I really enjoyed after Christmas learning about your Christmas traditions and foods," Heide tells Volkov, sharing as well that hearing about Volkov's hometown in Russia near the ocean "changed my perspective on what I had in my mind of Russia.

"As a volunteer, I've found it really rewarding and I would encourage anyone that has some time to sign up," Heide says. "I've loved it."

The Language Buddy program currently has 15 matches in Winkler, Morden, and Altona. Hildebrand anticipates the demand for volunteers will increase significantly in the months ahead.

"We want to be prepared for that influx of requests coming in," she says.

All they ask from volunteers is a commitment to meet at least once or twice a month for six months. Where and when you meet is up to you and your match.

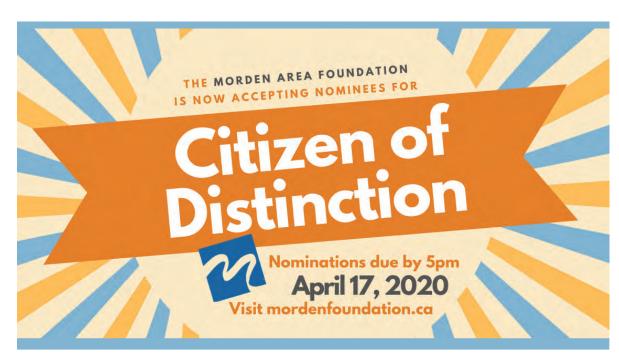
"That's the benefit of the program is the flexibility," says Hildebrand. "All we ask is for conversation, community. Take them to a sports game, go for coffee, take a walk in the park, or get together in your home. Really, where you want to meet is up to you and your match and where you're comfortable.

"It's a great way to introduce yourself to other cultures and vice versa," she says. "Meet your neighbours."

If you'd like to get involved, contact Hildebrand at 204-325-4059 or alesha@regionalconnections.ca.

"AT THIS POINT,
THERE IS NO
EXCUSE FOR
PEOPLE WHO ARE
NOT LISTENING,
NOT OBEYING

RESTRICTIONS."



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SUPPLIED PHOTO

Many Hands chairperson Natasha Doerksen, seen here in with Jaimee Loewen along with Chandra Meisner and daughter Boe, at one of the group's Tuesday night drive-thru meal services.

Local figure skaters honoured

Skate Canada Manitoba announced some of its 2019-20 award recipients last week and three local skaters made the list.

The Morden Figure Skating Club's Lauren Ginter nabbed the STAR-Skate Athlete Award while teammates Jayde Jonasson won the SynchroSkate Athlete Award and Alison Convery will receive a Manitoba Open Bursary.

Recipients were selected from nominations submitted by Skate Canada Manitoba's members throughout the province in skater, coach, and volunteer categories.

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Soup's still on

By Lorne Stelmach

Community meal programs in Winkler and Morden are weathering the COVID-19 storm by finding new ways to reach out to those in need.

In Morden, Many Hands Resource Centre volunteers have been offering a drive-thru meal service Tuesday evenings from 5-6 p.m. at the Morden Alliance Church.

"People don't even need to get out of their vehicle," said Many Hands chairperson Natasha Doerksen.

The service handed out 75 meals of soup, buns, and cookies their first week and 100 last week. Demand outpaced supply both weeks.

"We'll keep doing this as long as its prudent," said Doerksen. "We're just trying to let the community know we're still there, we still want to help out, still care about people who need a little connection.

"It's not the same as a meal where you sit down together, but it's still a great way to keep us out there."

Likewise, Winkler's Central Station has cancelled its Monday night community meals, but volunteers are still hard at work preparing and deliver-

"We still feel that there is a significant need in the community for the families that need it," said executive director Bev Wiebe."It's a service that we can provide with only a couple of volunteers in the kitchen and our delivery drivers."

Café 545 has delivered upwards of 100 meals a week over the last couple of weeks and will continue to do so as long as they are able, Wiebe said.

"So far it's working well and we see it as a real benefit for the community, especially for families who might be more vulnerable or people who are, really, very isolated," she said, noting drivers drop off meals at the door and keep their distance, but a friendly smile can go a long way during these difficult times. "As much as we don't have physical contact or interaction, you still feel cared for."

As always, Central Station gratefully accepts donations to keep the meals free. Contact them for details if you'd like to help.

To arrange a delivery from Café 545 on Monday, call Central Station at 204-325-0257

—with files from Ashleigh Viveiros

Coronavirus cancellations

• Gateway Resources Inc. has cancelled its annual Faces of Gateway banquet, which was scheduled to take place May 7. Ticket holders and prize donors will be contacted for refunds.

• South Central Regional Library's May 7-9 book sale has been postponed. In a social media post last week, SCRL said it is making plans to hold the event in the fall, possibly

teaming up with the Morden Fire Department, who also hold an annual book sale.

• Southern Health announced last week that Camp Bridges, originally scheduled for May 29-31 at Circle Square Ranch in Austin, MB, has been cancelled. The free camp is for children and teens grieving the death of someone significant in their lives.

> MORDEN COUNCIL, FROM PG. 7

The city's yearly commitment has been \$36,000, or \$3,000 per month, but those funds are usually only released with approval of the city budget—something which council hopes to do by May.

The arts council requested the advance to assist with its finances while it remains closed in response to the pandemic.

The mayor said council acknowledges there is additional hardship right now for a number of similar community organizations.

"We're looking to have to do that with quite a few organizations now.

There have been a few coming forward," he said.

"We know that in a year like this, organizations like the arts council or even CFDC [Canadian Fossil Discovery Centre] are looking at declining revenue. There's going to have to be a step up, and we're hoping by the province as well and the federal government ... but we recognize there's going to be an increased onus on the municipal government to step in and support community organizations and groups until they can get on their feet again after CO-VID-19"

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SOCIAL DISTANCING (also called "Physical Distancing") is the best way to reduce the spread of viruses like COVID-19 during an outbreak. It means changes to our day-to-day lives to minimize close contact with others, whether we know them or not. With patience and cooperation, we can do this, and we need to do it NOW.

DO THIS:



Keep at least 2 arms lengths away

We still need to go out in public for things like essential appointments and shopping. Where possible, spending time outside and utilizing green spaces is also important. In all situations, keep at least 2 meters or 6 feet from others as much as possible. This only applies if you don't feel sick. If you feel sick, you must stay home.



Stay home as much as possible

Things you can do at home like reading, watching TV, playing games, sitting on your deck, spring cleaning, yard work, and cooking are all good! Staying home whenever possible makes us all safer right now.



Shop wisely

There are things we need like groceries, fuel and the like. Where possible, use online shopping and home delivery. Please remember that panic buying is not needed. Finally, remember that if you feel sick, do not go out - you must stay home.



Use technology to keep in touch

We all need to keep in touch with our friends and loved ones, especially when keeping physical distance. Phone calls, texting, and video chats are all great options.

DON'T DO THIS:



Non-essential gatherings

We all need to avoid things like parties, weddings, birthdays, play-dates, sleepovers for kids and other nonessential visitors to our homes. Also, avoid all non-essential travel.



Physical greetings

Handshakes and hugs are out. We need to get good at non-physical greetings like waving or nodding. Limiting unnecessary touching makes us all safer right now.



Touching surfaces people touch often

Walking or exercising outside is good, but keep your distance from others and avoid things like hand rails, public play structures and public phones whenever possible.



Contact with people at higher risk of COVID-19

We all have a responsibility to protect those in our community who are most at risk from COVID-19, which includes the elderly and those with other health conditions. We can use non-physical ways to stay in touch, and where possible we can help these people with getting groceries and other essential errands.



YOU MUST:

SELF-ISOLATE for 14 days if you return from travel anywhere outside Manitoba.

STAY HOME if you feel sick, regardless if you've travelled or not.



- · Wash your hands for at least 20 seconds and avoid touching your face
- Cough or sneeze into the bend of your arm
- Disinfect frequently-used surfaces often

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Nominations open for Morden Citizen of Distinction Award



By Lorne Stelmach

The Morden Area Foundation is calling for nominations for the annual Citizen of Distinction Award.

It is important to recognize the outstanding citizens who make contributions to the city, said executive director Lynda Lambert.

"We are just looking for someone who loves the community and has made an impact on the community, whether it is through their volunteering or their employment or a mixture of both," she said.

Nominees must be a current or former resident of Morden and must have exemplified a positive leadership quality that inspires others to care for one another and uplift their fellow citizens.

The nominee's service to the community will have occurred over an extended period of time and not be focused solely on one singular event or activity. Unsuccessful nominees from past years may be re-nominated.

All applications will be reviewed by a selection committee of past recipients.

Nomination forms are available online at mordenfoundation.ca. The deadline to nominate someone is Friday, April 17.

VOICE FILE PHOTO

Sue Nelson (right) won the Citizen of Distinction Award last year. Nominations are now open for this year's award.

"THAT LAST LEG OF

THE JOURNEY IS STILL

THERE FOR THE FEDS

TO DECIDE IT'S A GO."

Province green lights regional wastewater project

By Lorne Stelmach

The regional wastewater treatment project is now just waiting for the federal government to come on board.

The Manitoba government signalled with its 2020 budget last month that it has finally green lit the project.

The acknowledgement is encouraging for local leaders, though much remains uncertain as to whether the federal government will move ahead with making it a done deal.

"We know they have all the details and all the approvals required provincially ... but that last leg of the journey is still there for the feds to decide it's a go," said Winkler Mayor Martin Harder. "Because of all the other things that are going on, I would be surprised if we would be getting a sign of construction this year, but you never know ... it depends when we get the approval."

The wastewater treatment project will include a \$46 million plant for the City of Winkler and the RM of Stanley, with the provincial and federal governments being asked to each pick up a \$15.5 million portion of the cost. Winkler would be taking on a 79 per cent share of the municipal portion while Stanley covers 21 per cent.

Aside from the wastewater treatment plant itself, the RM of Stanley will separately have the cost of connecting villages such as Reinfeld and Schanzenfeld to the system.

The plant is expected to have the capacity to serve up to a population of about 30,000—a figure Winkler and Stanley together are estimated to reach by 2038.

As part of the larger regional project, the City of Morden is also looking at a \$27 million facility to meet its needs.

Although there is much uncertainty now, Burley is hopeful the approval process at the federal level may not need to take long.

"We are in the last step of this process, that being the federal government ... as soon as funding at that level comes down, we're ready to go on this project," he said. "We know that the federal process should take less time than the provincial process ... there were several things that kind of held it up."

Seeing the project proceed will be vital, as the province had put a hold on new development in Morden last June as a result of concerns around wastewater capacity.

"We're still cognizant of the fact that we are looking at least two years before [the plant] is operational, at minimum, so there's still significant impact on us in the short term, which we're working to alleviate with the province," said Burley. "At that point, there's no limit in my lifetime for the amount of expansion that could happen in Morden."

Stanley Reeve Morris Olafson sounded a note of caution, however, in light of the ongoing COVID-19 crisis.

"It's a positive ... [but] nothing's written in stone," he said. "It sounds like it will come, but with this situation that's going on now, maybe it will be put on the back burner.

"The province has at least given it the green light,

but the feds haven't put their stamp on it. The feds have a lot of money going into this thing, so we'll have to wait and see."

Morden-Winkler MLA Cameron Friesen touted the province's ability to make some key investments in infrastructure projects like this despite also focusing on the deficit and getting Manitoba's finances in order.

"This project is in place. We know how important it is for our communities, for us to be able to build the capacity we need because we are growing so quickly," he said. "At this point of time, that project has proceeded from the provincial adjudication process ... it has been ratified, and it now has proceeded to the federal government treasury board for consideration and approval.

"We're pleased to see the project advancing ... we're pleased as a province to be investing in a regional proj-

ect like this," he continued. "We're not there yet, but I think that all constituents will be encouraged to know that the project is advancing."

Friesen acknowledged, however, that there are significant challenges being faced right now in response to COVID-19

that could impact approval of the project.

"It's not excuse making. It's actually more the work that we're undertaking really on a daily basis right now to understand how disruptive this pandemic will be in our own operations," he said. "However, one could also make the point of saying that proceeding with infrastructure projects will be very, very important when we are being told that the economy could, as a consequence of this, slow down so much.

"All of us ... are right now grappling with what it's going to mean to govern and to do business as usual in the context of a global pandemic."

News or sports tip? E-mail news@winklermordenvoice.ca or call 204-325-6888

Agriculture

Producers watching travel bans closely

By Harry Siemens

The agricultural Twitter world was abuzz as the Canada-U.S. border was closed to all non-essential travel late last month in response to the global COVID-19 pandemic.

The ban applied to recreational travel rather than commercial traffic, but producers nonetheless were watching closely as events unfolded.

Nearly \$2.7 billion in commercial trade crosses the border daily, including a great deal of farm crops, equipment, and other necessary products.

When this journalist put the question to the #AGTwitter world, the responses came from right across the country.

Lorne McClinton, a freelance agricultural journalist in Kingston, Ontario, said, "The feds were under political pressure to close the U.S. border but had to calm the political waters without wrecking our economy by disrupting cross-border trade. Stopping only non-essential crossings does this. Critical for it to be a joint decision and to avoid unilateral action."

Scott Perkin, a small grains and cattle producer from Elgin, Manitoba, also stressed that the border did not remain closed for agricultural trade or other commerce. But dropping demand is the more significant concern, he said, as markets hate uncertainty, and unfortunately that is in abundant

Paul Van den Borre from Burgessville, Ontario, said commerce is still to flow, but this probably will add confusion and time to agriculturalrelated border crossings.

Daryl Devos, a southern Manitoba farmer, pointed out that farmers need movement north-south more than ever, as ocean ports will have intermodal problems for months.

Gerry Ritz, former federal agriculture minister, stressed that governments need to put timeliness on the "just in time" deliveries and any hold on best before product.

John Kowalchuk Farms noted that with essential services like trucking across the border still allowed, the border's closure has had a minimal effect on the ag industry so far. That would change drastically if all movement stopped, but that would be the knife in the whole Canadian econo-

Ben Heide of Boissevain, MB pointed out that one big concern would be the supply of parts and supplies from the U.S. once planting season begins from the USA.

"We can plan for everything but the unknown, the solutions to those hurdles will likely require creativity and patience," he said.

Ron Krahn from Rivers, MB said that ag should be in as good a position to carry on as any industry.

"But we are still reliant on logistics: truckers need restaurants and tire shops, etc., which are all in danger of shutting down."

Krahn agreed with Jonathon Driedger, a grain market analyst with LeftField Commodity Research, who said the focus on keeping food on store shelves should put ag trade in an excellent position to remain as uninterrupted as possible.

"We can't rule out seeing that trade disrupted as well, but it should be one we take great lengths to ensure full movement."

Ken Foster at Arborg, MB, said his fear is if farmers get sick, "We don't seed. Take this seriously."

Meanwhile, Shawn Schil stressed agriculture needs to be making a common sense list of wants or proposed changes right now. The coronavirus fallout is exposing the bottlenecks and issues, he said.

"The agriculture system could be a dynamic national and global power if we would quit stepping on its neck, and instead empower it."

Local communities to receive flood prep funding

Stanley, Morden among the 80 municipalities receiving part of \$8M from province

Several local municipalities will benefit from the provincial government's commitment to flood protection this spring.

Municipal Relations Minister Rochelle Squires and Infrastructure Minister Ron Schuler announced last week that Manitoba will be investing nearly \$8 million to more than 80 communities to aid in enhancing flood preparations and protections

"Manitobans always rally together in challenging times and while we are facing unprecedented global circumstances, our government is helping municipalities take important steps to enhance flood protection," Squires said. "Municipalities know best what will work for them, and this program is designed to help ensure protection put in place this year will benefit communities for many years to come."

Under the 2020 Flood Protection Program, the province is offering one-time funding support to municipalities to aid in enhancing municipal capacity for flood preparedness, equipment costs, and building resiliency for future floods.

Initially, the one-time program was capped at \$3 million, but in light of the need for preparation this spring, the funding will more than double for projects in areas all across Manitoba, Squires said.

Local communities benefitting include the City of Morden, which will receive just over \$132,000 and the RMs of Stanley (\$64,000), Thompson (\$45,980), Roland (\$32,100), Rhineland (\$133,000), Morris (\$130,306), Louise (\$34,089), and Dufferin (\$148,942).

The money will be used on such things as pumps, generators, steaming equipment to unclog frozen culverts, utility trailers, equipment for emergency operations centres, sandbags, water-filled flood barriers, traffic barricades, and other like emergency equipment.

Proposals were reviewed by a panel made up of representatives from the Association of Manitoba Municipalities (AMM), Winnipeg Metropolitan Region, and the Manitoba government.

Evaluation of proposals considered factors including flood risk, ability of the proposal to enhance emergency preparedness or resiliency for future flood events, as well as potential regional benefits.

"The Association of Manitoba Municipalities commends the provincial government for more than doubling its initial commitment to support the Spring Flood Preparedness program," said president Ralph Groening. "As municipalities cannot fight floods alone, these additional dollars further help underscore the importance of the provincial-municipal partnership."

The province also announced a new

opportunity for municipalities to set aside funding for disaster mitigation programs in their communities while modernizing the Disaster Financial Assistance (DFA) cost-sharing for-

"We have developed an optional program for municipalities to apply to set aside funds dedicated to disaster mitigation and increase the resilience of Manitobans against future disasters," said Squires. "If approved, municipalities would be able to redirect funds destined for payments under the provincial/municipal DFA cost-sharing formula to disaster mitigation and preparedness measures."

"The existing DFA system is a decade old and needs to be revised," said Schuler. "As the scale and scope of disasters increases, governments need to shift their focus to mitigation in order to limit the impact of future disasters, rather than relying on response and recovery."

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PUBLIC NOTICE



PUBLIC NOTICE is hereby given that the Rural Municipality of Stanley may conduct the following Pesticide Control Programs during 2020:

1) To control noxious weeds on road allowances within the Municipality. The proposed period of application would be from May 1, 2020 to October 31, 2020. The herbicides to be used could include:

- Tordon 22K
- 2-4-D amine 600
- Milestone
- Overdrive
- Truvist

2) To control insect pests including grass-hoppers, mosquitoes, canker worms, etc. The proposed period of application for these programs would be from May 1, 2020 to October 31, 2020. The insecticides to be used could include:

- Malathion
- Durshan

The public may send written submissions or objections within 15 days of the publication of the notice to the department below.

Environmental Approvals Branch Manitoba Sustainable Development 1007 Century Street Winnipeg, Manitoba R3H 0W4

OBITUARY

Eileen (Sis) Schindel (nee Cowan) 1926 – 2020 Eileen Schindel formerly of Windygates. MB passed awa

Eileen Schindel formerly of Windygates, MB passed away peacefully with her daughter and granddaughter by her side at Tabor Home in Morden, MB on Sunday, March 22, 2020 at 93 years of age.

Eileen is survived by daughter, Joan (Tony); son, Rick (Carol); her grandchildren, Josie (Richard) Stewart, granddaughter-in-law, Crystal Mikolasek, her great-grandchildren, Sheralee (Darrell) Forsyth, Colton Stewart (Lisa Deng), Ryan (Danielle) Mikolasek, Kyle (Jenna) Mikolasek, Brittany Mikolasek (Spencer Johnson) and great-great-grandchildren, Jayden and Ty Forsyth, Madelyn and Max Mikolasek and several nieces and nephews. Eileen was predeceased by husband, Ed Schindel; her parents, Andrew and

Natalie Cowan as well as all her siblings, Edgar, Harvey, Myra, Dorothy, Leona and their spouses. She was also predeceased by grandchildren, Sheri, Kim and Doug Mikolasek.

Private graveside service was held for family members at Hillside Cemetery. If friends so desire donations may be made in Eileen's memory to Tabor Home Inc.

Wiebe Funeral Chapel, Morden in care of arrangements wiebefuneralhomes.com



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OBITUARY

Cornelius (Neil) Hiebert 1936 - 2020

On Thursday, March 26, 2020 at 6:00 a.m. at Boundary Trails Health Centre, Neil Hiebert, age 84, went to his eternal rest.

He was predeceased by one son, his parents, one sister and five brothers. He leaves to mourn his wife of 61 years, Dorothy; three daughters Barb (Harv) Unrau, Shelly Jones, Bey (Rick) Wiebe: six grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren, granddaughter, Andrea (Dave) Wiebe, their son, Zander; grandson, Ed (Terra) Friesen, their children, Ethan and Katie; granddaughter, Donna (Ryan) Verbrugge, their children, Angela and Josh; grandsons, Mike Unrau and Patrick Wiebe, and granddaughter, Shannon (Roblyn) Ager, their children, Kiptyn, Paisley, and Easton. He is survived by two sisters and one brother.

Neil was born on March 20, 1936 to Frank and Margaret Hiebert of Reinfeld, MB. He grew up in Reinfeld with seven brothers and three sisters. Neil accepted the Lord Jesus Christ into his heart at a very young age. He was baptized upon the confession of his faith on May 28, 1958 in the Winkler Bergthaler Mennonite Church. Neil was a kind, generous, giving man to anyone. He met the love of his life, Dorothy at the coffee shop where she worked. They were married on August 24, 1958 and started their married life farming in Graysville, Manitoba. They were blessed with four children. After 10 years of farming, the family moved to Winkler. During their time in Winkler, Neil worked on the pipeline, owned Valley Transport Hauling Triple E Trailers, owned a car wash and was first responder for the Winkler Fire and Ambulance. For a time, he worked for Arnold Brothers as a long-distance truck driver, fixed golf carts and lastly, his greatest passion was becoming a pilot and flying spray plane for Arty's Air. He was always willing to help anyone who needed it. As a family, we served with Mennonite Disaster Service. Together with mom, dad helped build homes in Mexico for Harvest Field Ministry. Together, they served with Harvest Field Ministry for eight years. Neil had so many passions. Neil loved his family. Anytime he could spend with them, especially his great-grandchildren, gave him great pleasure. He was the rock of the family and a mentor to all of us. Neil's faith in the Lord was very strong right until he went to his eternal rest. He was asking to go home to the Lord.

Private funeral service was held at 2:00 p.m. on Sunday, March 29, 2020 at the Winkler Bergthaler Mennonite Church with interment at Westridge Memorial Gardens.

As a family, we would like to thank Dr. Lane and the nursing staff at Boundary Trails Health Centre, as well as the many specialists and nurses at the St. Boniface Hospital for the great care they gave to Neil.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made in Neil's memory to The Bunker in Winkler.

Wiebe Funeral Home, Winkler In care of arrangements wiebefuneralhomes.com



OBITUARY



Mary Goertzen (nee Derksen) 1924 - 2020

Mary Goertzen, age 95 passed away on March 26, 2020 at Salem

Mary was born on September 28, 1924 to Isaak and Katharina Derksen and lived in Neuendorf, Russia till the age of one. After immigrating to Canada, she grew up in southern Manitoba; the middle child with eight brothers and five sisters. Mary received Jesus as her personal Saviour at the age of 14 and her trust in a faithful God has sustained her lifelong. Mary was married to Isaac Goertzen for almost 60 years and together they farmed in Reinfeld, working hard and raising their family. They retired to Winkler, and after the death of her husband in 2009, she continued to reside in her own house until the age of 94. She was a gentle woman who

touched the world with beauty.

She was loved and will be dearly missed by her family: John, Linda and Don Hiebert, Marie, Erna and Albert Heide, Edwin, Leonard, Frieda and Rick Wall, Mandy and Mike Slobodian, Jake and Alyssa Knelsen and Jeff as well as 15 grandchildren and 27 great-grandchildren. She will also be missed by two sisters, seven sisters-in-law and three brothers-in-law. She was predeceased by her husband, Isaac, Angela Knelsen, Jody Goertzen and John Goertzen.

The family is thankful for the loving care mom received from staff at Home Care, BTHC, Buhler Villages West and Salem Home. Thank you for those of you who brought joy to mom through your visits. Thank you to Wiebe Funeral Home for arrangements.

Interment at Reinfeld Cemetery.

Wiebe Funeral Home, Winkler In care of arrangements wiebefuneralhomes.com



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OBITUARY

Leonard Jake Janzen 1962 - 2020

Len went to be with his Lord Jesus early Monday morning on March 16th, 2020 at the Brandon Hospital.

Len was born on February 22nd, 1962 to David and Tina Janzen in Altona, Manitoba where he grew up with his three older siblings Ernie, Esther and Marlene in Rosetown, Manitoba. Len accepted Jesus Christ into his heart as his Lord and Saviour on October 17th, 1977. Len later got baptized in water at the age of 21.

Growing up in Rosetown, Len enjoyed helping out on the farm, dirt biking with his cousin Alan and being with his friends and siblings. He loved listening to Toronto Maple Leaf games with his dad on the radio before they got a TV. Len also created and built wishing wells, glider swings and custom orders and then sold

them through the newspaper with the help of his mom! Len loved being an entrepreneur from a very young age and he loved woodworking. At 14, Len moved to Altona with his parents to attend high school at WC Miller Collegiate. This is where Len continued his education in woodworking skills and took the schools building construction program where he built RTM homes for his high school diploma where he graduated with honours. At 17, Len met the love of his life, Pat Thiessen on August 19th, 1979 in Winkler, Manitoba. They were united in marriage on May 23rd, 1981 at the Winkler Bergthaler Mennonite Church. Together they were blessed with two children, Scott and Candace. They lived in Winkler, Manitoba from 1981 until 2018 when they moved to their cabin at Pelican Lake near Killarney, Manitoba. In 1986 at the age of 24, Len and Pat purchased Precision Cabinet Doors in Winkler where they owned and operated the business for 32 years. In 2011, Len and Pat purchased a cabin on Pelican Lake where they loved to go to rest and relax on the weekends with their family and friends. This was there paradise and home away from home where they eventually moved to in 2018! While Len was driving to work on March 16th, 2018 listening to 95.1fm, the radio announcer said, "something good is going to happen today on this John 3:16 day!" Prayers were answered this John 3:16 day as Len and Pat confirmed the sale of the business. Len loved his family dearly, especially by spending good quality time with them at the lake! This is where they made the cabin there own by customizing everything on the property to what they loved. Len loved watching Winnipeg Jets games on TV and being outside in the sun on the pontoon on the lake, on the deck, while working on a project or with his beautiful wife down on the beaches in Mexico over the winter seasons! Len also loved hockey, golf and baseball. He played hockey and baseball in his teenage and young adult years. He began golfing in his early 20s up until this last winter, where he played his last round at the Arizona Golf Resort with Pat! If you were in Winkler during Len's 20s, 30s and 40s you'd most likely see Len at the golf course. He'd meet his friends there almost every weekday morning for coffee at 10 a.m. and golf at least once or twice a week including men's night every Wednesday evening. His favourite year of golfing was in 2008 where he and his son, Scott played together in men's league! Len loved coaching and cheering Candace and Scott on as they played hockey and baseball. He always stood along the boards in the rink encouraging every move they made. Len also loved going to Winkler Flyers games from his 20s until his late 40s when he spent seven years as the team president. Len and Pat also billeted hockey players in their home during this time and loved them as part of the family. Len was a very lovable man with integrity written all over him. His unconditional love for people was obvious to everyone he met. He was the anchor in his family and father and friend to many. His love for Jesus Christ carried him throughout his life, his favourite verse was John 3:16 "For God so loved the world that he went his one and only son that who so ever believes in him shall not perish but have everlasting life." Len is now rejoicing in heaven with those he loved who had journeyed before him including his parents and

Len is survived by his loving wife of 38 years, Pat; his son, Scott and wife, Hayley; his daughter, Candace and her partner, David; his brother, Ernie; sister, Esther and Ernie; sister, Marlene and Gordon and each of their families; Pat's father, Abe as well as Pat's siblings and their families and many many friends!

Thank you everyone who had any kind of role in Len's life. He loved and cherished you very much! God bless each and every one of you!

Flowers are gratefully declined and any donations in memory of Len please forward to: Brandon Women's Adult & Teen Challenge Site 325, Box 24 RR3 Brandon, Manitoba (204) 729-0870 brandon@teenchallenge.com Thank you so much, The Family

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