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Poutine Week is coming

PHOTO BY LORNE STELMACH/VOICE

Explore Morden Winkler's Tyler Hildebrand prepares to dive into some poutine made by Jeff and Val Hildebrand of That Burrito Place, one of several local businesses slated to take part in Poutine Week at the end of the month. For the full story, see Pg. 7.

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Mordenites questioning huge water bill increases

By Lorne Stelmach

The City of Morden is dealing with the fallout from Morden residents receiving significantly higher water bills in the midst of the transition to the new water meter system.

Residents on local social media pages were reporting getting billed in some cases double or triple what they have paid in the past.

There may be a couple possible explanations in some cases, but the city's investigation led them to find former city staff had been putting in estimated readings but recording them as actual, and the city now, with the new smart meters, is getting more accurate readings that resulted in residents having to pay more to catch up to actual usage.

"There's really no words that I have to express my disappointment with what has happened and the impact it could have on families ... now it's on council to determine a fair way forward ... and make sure it doesn't happen again and ensure the processes are correct," Mayor Brandon Burley said in offering an apology and explanation to the community late last week.

Burley explained they began looking at cases where there have been substantial differences in bills. They wanted to consider all possible explanations before looking at whether there is a fault with the smart meter technology now in use.

"We would get there if that's where the trail led us," he said."If there's any suspicion at all we might have a problem, we will review the technology as well and make sure we don't have a problem there, but it would be too early to say that's the problem.

"When you have a new technology ... we want the public to have confidence in it."

Initial discussions with city administration suggested a few reasons why some bills may be higher. Firstly, the new water meters mean people are getting actual readings and not just estimates. Some properties where staff could not get access to read me-



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PHOTOS BY LORNE STELMACH/VOICE Morden residents are reporting big increases on their water bills now that the new water meter system is up and running.

ters were previously being estimated off of historical usage, and now the actual consumption is being caught up on bills. Second, there are a few extra weeks of actual consumption due to the water bills being later to come out this spring.

Burley said they now believe that a majority of the records were correct, although there were a small number of cases where a decimal point was misplaced.

"The installation of the Neptune [water meters] really just exposed a billing problem that had been in process for a number of years, dating back probably four years. A lot of them were just being estimated over time and being reported on bills as actuals," the mayor explained "The new meters will prevent this from happening again because there's no human input anymore on the billing cycle.

"It's a serious problem ... it's an extremely unfortunate outcome of an administration that had been in turmoil, and that is a problem that stems back right back to our past financial management practices and processes," Burley continued. "Nobody in our current administrative group were there when this was occurring.

"So this is a huge problem for the city because it means that the bills that a lot of people have received do in fact represent actual consumption that had not been billed over a period of time," he said. "So while many residents have gotten a break ... others have not ... and the reason that's a problem for us is that we have to ensure fairness in the process. We have to make sure that people who have paid their fair share aren't paying more for those who haven't had to pay.



"It does really tie the hands of council, but we have to find a remedy and a solution to this problem that is fair and equitable for all users," said Burley, who led a special meeting of council Tuesday to address the issue and find a way forward.

Burley stressed council wants to ensure there is full accountability to the community about the mistakes that were made and to find a fair way of dealing with it now.

"Until we have this resolved, I'm asking council as well just for some leniency in terms of bill payments," he noted. "We've got a series of solutions we can look at, but it has to be equitable both to those who have been metered correctly and those who have not been ... it's a very difficult position it has put the city into now.

"Council has to determine what is the most equitable way of moving forward."

Resident Rob Wiebe, who raised concerns in a post on the In the Know Morden Facebook page last week, certainly hopes council does something to clear things up.

"City council should give us an answer to these increases," said Wiebe, whose initial post about a \$50 increase on his water bill has generated hundreds of responses.

Mayor Harder gets the jab

By Ashleigh Viveiros

Winkler Mayor Martin Harder rolled up his sleeve last week to get the CO-VID-19 vaccine at the Morden supersite.

"I've been a proponent of opening up Manitoba for quite some time and I think if this is an opportunity to help speed that along ... I respect our businesses and I want them to be able to operate as best as possible. I respect our churches and want them to be able to get back together again. So I think for me to take the vaccine is an important step," he said.

Harder invited the Voice along to

snap a photo (right) to highlight the ease of the vaccination process, which took about half an hour, including a mandatory 15 minute recovery period.

We checked in with Harder on Monday and, aside from a sore arm for a few days, he suffered no ill effects from the shot.

He urges people able to get vaccinated to do so.

"You can see from provinces around us that this pandemic isn't over yet," Harder said. "The sooner we get through this thing and the more people get vaccinated I think the better off we're going to be."



PHOTO BY ASHLEIGH VIVEIROS/VOICE

Winkler Community Care Program receives provincial funding

By Ashleigh Viveiros

Winkler's Community Care Program (CCP) just got a major funding boost from the provincial government.

Justice Minister and Morden-Winkler MLA Cameron Friesen last week announced \$150,000 in funding for community mobilization hubs in Altona, Swan River, and Winkler.

These programs aim to connect social service workers and community agencies with at-risk youth and families to ensure they are receiving appropriate and timely supports and interventions. Winkler's Community Care Program has been operating out of the Central Station Community

Centre for about three years now.

"Community mobilization hubs provide a proactive and co-ordinated approach to helping people in communities," Friesen said in a statement. "This approach focuses on bringing together the agencies, organizations and supports that otherwise work alone, improving community safety,

ensuring better use of police resources and putting people first.

"Our government is proud to be expanding this innovative program to more communities across Manitoba." There are a total of 12 such programs receiving provincial support across Manitoba.

Continued on page 5



Morden church holds full services despite restrictions

By Lorne Stelmach

A local church opened for a full inperson service Easter Sunday in contravention of public health orders.

A statement posted online by the Christian Church of Morden defended the move, but many others in the community were critical of the church's decision.

"Our decision to open the church is not an act of rebellion or resentment towards our government but an earnest desire to minister to our society during this crisis," the church said in a statement that has since been taken down.

Church representatives could not be

reached for comment, but the statement further explained their decision to not comply with restrictions came after much deliberation, prayer, and scriptural direction and they felt livestream services were no substitute for personal fellowship.

"We are convinced that we are not imposing a greater danger, in our current state, to our fellow men just because we are attending a church service," the church stated. "We also keep reminding our congregation not to attend church services if someone is sick and contagious.

"Churches have been a place of refuge for people in difficult times where they may receive help for spiri-



PHOTO BY LORNE STELMACH/VOICE

The Christian Church of Morden opted to hold full in-person services on Sunday, despite public health orders requiring places of worship to limit capacity to 25 per cent or 100 people, whichever is less.

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tual, emotional, and physical suffering," they continued. "At the moment, we find ourselves in a crisis, and, as a church, we are more than ever required to pray and have open doors for anyone looking for fellowship, help and support."

Morden Police confirmed on Monday that they are looking into the incident.

Local resident Jeff McIntosh, who brought attention to the church's statement in a post on a Morden social media page over the weekend, is frustrated to see such a flagrant dismissal of the restrictions that are in place to slow the spread of COVID-19.

"The Christian Church of Morden publicly stating and intentionally violating the COVID-19 Manitoba health orders is not only self-serving and disrespectful but also jeopardizes the well-being of everyone who lives in this area and disrespects the hard work and sacrifices we have made up to this point," he said.

When you look at the statistics for this area, it is evident we have a good grip on COVID-19, McIntosh noted, but that only happened through sacrifices.

"Although we all may not agree with everything our government has implemented with respect to the health orders, it is through our sacrifices and now the current vaccination process that we are finally seeing some light at the end of the tunnel," he said via email.

All it might take is one significant outbreak to shut this entire area down again, he added, so it's imperative that we as a community do not allow that to happen.

"I think we are finally rounding the bend with respect to COVID-19, but, at the same time, we now have other variants infiltrating our communities, so this is not the time to let our guard down. We have control of COVID-19. Small businesses are relying heavily on us to play our part in maintaining that control ... breaching health orders is detrimental to that progress. We are at a critical tipping point right now and should be focusing on doing whatever we have to do.

"Churches have viable options that allow them to remain connected to those who rely upon them, and there are options that other faith-based organizations in this area use to do their part in minimizing the impact of CO-VID-19."

FINDING WAYS TO CONNECT, PROTECT EACH OTHER

The capacity limits have been chal-

lenging for everyone, but other churches have stressed that the needs of their congregations can continue to be met within the restrictions.

"If there is a will, there often can be a way without putting people at risk," said Rev. Diane Guilford of St. Thomas Anglican Church.

Guilford said they feel fortunate they have been able to have limited in-person worship since Ash Wednesday (Feb. 17).

"Twenty-five per cent of our capacity in the sanctuary is 42. We have decided we can only comfortably distance 25 people with two people only at a location and everyone masked for the whole worship. Our church hall can have 21 people seated," she explained.

"We have been providing worship via Zoom since last fall, and we continue to offer this," Guilford said. "On Easter Sunday, we had 57 people: 29 in the sanctuary, 17 in the church hall with Sunday School and 12 by Zoom.

"It involves more time than normal, but it is a gift to be able to gather to worship our Saviour, Jesus Christ, and be renewed in our faith," Guilford said. "We feel badly for the much larger churches that can not do this as easily. We were pleased to see that some of those churches were offering a few services on a Sunday to accommodate their numbers."

The Pembina Parish meanwhile has two United Church congregations in Morden and in Darlingford who have been meeting virtually all winter. Their limited capacity Easter Sunday gatherings were their first in-person services in five months.

"People respect that everyone's safety is the number one consideration in these times," stressed Brian Saunderson, chair of the church board.

"The parish has established CO-VID safety protocols for church use, including services, and these are followed strictly," he said."These include registering and counting all attendees to ensure we are below the capacity numbers outlined in the public health orders."

It also includes keeping people of different households six feet or more apart, holding off on singing hymns for now, and requiring everyone to wear masks.

Likewise, Morden Alliance Church pastor Stafford Greer said they have been working diligently to honour the health orders, including asking everyone who attends services to pre-register so they can monitor attendance and comply with capacity limits.

"This has meant that we are moving

Stanley looks to borrow \$5.3M for wastewater project

By Lorne Stelmach

The RM of Stanley has its financing plan in place to move ahead with its part in the regional wastewater treatment project.

A hearing at the council meeting last Thursday cleared the way for the municipality to submit its borrowing plan to the province for approval.

It will allow the municipality to borrow around \$5.3 million with the debt to be paid over a 20 year period. It was estimated that based on the latest assessment roll the load will require an estimated levy of 0.667 mills on tax bills.

"Now we're ready to go with this project once it can get announced," said Reeve Morris Olafson, who noted the RM will not proceed with the project until all of the funding is committed. "We're good to go with it. We're of one mind that this is a good thing for the entire municipality and the whole region. "We're basically waiting now for the federal government to announce, so when they get around to it, everything will have fallen into place," he said. "If we don't have a federal election called in the next little while, I see this coming ... it will happen this year, but that's barring a federal election."

The project will see the City of Winkler construct a new wastewater treatment plant that will also serve Stanley for a future population of 28,800.

Stanley will purchase a portion of the capacity as well as construct a new wastewater conveyance system to accommodate future growth within the municipality.

The estimated total cost is over \$49.3 million, which includes \$19.3 million of federal and \$16 million of provincial funding. The City of Winkler will contribute \$10.6 million while Stanley will put nearly \$3.4 million towards the project.

The estimated total cost of the RM's wastewater conveyance system is

Growing the program

From Pg. 3

Friesen's announcement came as great news to Central Station executive director Bev Wiebe.

"Going forward it will make a big difference to our program," she said, explaining the program is otherwise supported by money from the City of Winkler and private donors. The provincial dollars will free up money for other services while also allowing them to potentially expand the CCP. "We'll be able to add more participants and really grow it."

Central Station currently has 16 families involved in the program, which is getting close to the maximum caseload for the CCP's two workers.

The program brings at-risk families to the table alongside a variety of social agencies and service providers in the community to help them build up their support networks and overcome any challenges they may face.

It's about empowering people to implement their plans for a better life, Wiebe explained.

"It really works by focusing on people's strengths and bringing all of their support teams to one table so that you can really focus on working collaboratively with all of the agencies involved," she said. "It's just so much stronger when we're all working together.

"So having somebody from CFS, from the police department, the school division, a social worker, mental health, natural supports ... when you have them at the table together with the participant they're empowered to do the work. They know that there's people that behind them that believe in them and will help them reach their goals."

> WATER BILLS, FROM PG. 2

"I am really glad this post has gotten as many views and comments as it has, so it shows we are not alone. By raising questions, we don't have to put up with a status quo mentality of just paying our bill and not asking as to why it is so high," he continued. "If the actual case is that we all have been paying too little then, yes, these new bills will come as a shock, but by the consensus of the comments it seems like we are all getting gouged. Some way more than others."



SUPPLIED IMAGE

A conceptual drawing of the new regional wastewater plant the City of Winkler and the RM of Stanley are going to build to meet the needs of the region's growing population.

around \$7.4 million, which is to include a federal contribution of \$3 million and a provincial contribution of \$2.4 million. Stanley will provide \$2 million.

The borrowing plan does not include the extension of the wastewater con-

veyance system within the existing communities of Reinfeld and Schanzenfeld, noted the bylaw. A decision on whether to extend the system into those communities will be made at a later date after further consultations.

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letters

WE'RE ALL SINNERS

I am writing in regards to the two letters published in the *Voice* on Thursday, April 1, 2021.

I learned as a young man that everyone has a right to his or her opinion whether it is right or wrong. It is called "freedom of expression."

Mr. Dave Penner and Mr. John Neufeld expressed themselves concerning Dr. Humphries children's booklet [included as a flyer insert with the previous week's paper]. In our country we have "freedom of speech."

An article on Dr. Humphrie's booklet was published by the *Voice* the previous week. This is called "freedom of the press."

I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ for it is, the "Power of God unto Salvation to Everyone that Believes to the Jew first and also the Greek."

I have to admit that the Gospel is an offense. It is offensive because it brings us face to face with an issue that we need to be concerned about and that we need to pay attention to. That issue is sin and sinner. "The wages of sin is death." There are three witnesses against us:

1. Our conscience: It will not accept the thoughts of our mind—there is a God and we know we are accountable.

2. The Scriptures testify that we have all sinned.

3. Our neighbours and friends confirm that we are not as good as we think we are.

The conclusion is that we are all guilty before God. Psalm 1 was written by King David of what he observed and experienced in life. Verse 1 gives us three great blessings. The blessing is if he walks not in the counsel of the ungodly nor stands in the way of sinners nor sits in the seat of the scornful.

Psalm 1:2 The reason for this blessing is that his delight is in the law of the Lord and he meditates day and night. Verse 3: The result is that he shall be like a tree planted by rivers of water. Verse 4: The ungodly are not so—the ungodly are those who do not believe in God or walk in the ways of the Lord. Verse 5: Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgement nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous. Neither the ungodly nor sinners can stand before the judgement seat of Christ, even though they cry, Lord! Lord! Verse 6: The way of the ungodly shall perish. God is not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.

John 3:16 states: God so Loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in HIM should not perish but have everlasting life. Jesus said, "I am the Way, the Truth and the Life. No man cometh unto the father but by Me."

> Pastor Hugh Morrow, Morden

NO NEED TO APOLOGIZE FOR OUR CHRISTIAN HERITAGE

We have always been very appreciative of our country Canada, which was founded on the Judeo Christian principles where we have the freedom of worship as our heart directs.

Canada became the Dominion of Canada at Confederation in 1867 when Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Ontario, and Quebec joined to become this new and great country.

It was New Brunswick's Sir Samuel Leonard Tilley who suggested Dominion of Canada. Tilley was reportedly inspired by the passage in the Bible from Psalm 72:8 referring to God's dominion "He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth."

"Dominion" comes from the Latin dominus, which means mastered or ruled. The term dominion was accepted.

We seriously believe that we never need to apologize for our rich Christian heritage.

Hank & Dora Hildebrand, Winkler

PEOPLE ARE ENTITLED TO THEIR OPINIONS

I read with interest the Voices's publication of the conversation with Dr. Humphries and his booklet *David's Song*. I also read the two letters to the editor in the *Voice* 01 April 2021 and thought I would give you another perspective.

The writers of two letters are certainly entitled to their opinion, however I disagree that the author of *David's Song* is spreading ignorance and intolerance. In reading the booklet I found it to be a biblically based gospel message. It's unfortunate that people took offence and if that is the case, don't berate Dr. Humphries, take it up with God—the Bible is His direction on right believing and living.

I know of not one person who speaks a gospel message in malice. They do so out of love and concern for the person they are speaking to. They want to see you too, in the presence of Jesus for eternity. The gospel message is a hard line and there is no way to soften the results of choosing wrong. There are but two choices and John 3:14-18 gives you the choices and the consequences of whichever choice you make. This is the only decision you will ever make that lasts for eternity.

Our area has become very diverse over the last 20-30 years with the influx of immigrants from many countries and they have brought with them their religions. With many it appears to achieve acceptance from the god they worship you must be good, but how good is good enough and what are the consequences of never achieving acceptance? If you ask them you will probably find that the result is the same as in *David's Song*: rejection and condemnation by that god.

I don't understand why the *Voice* would apologize because someone is offended by an article and an insert in the paper. There have been several articles in the *Voice* that I have found to be totally contrary to my belief and

Continued on page 7

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.



DISTRIBUTION

Are you ready for Poutine Week?

By Lorne Stelmach

Winkler and Morden restaurants are being invited to have a go at creating their own unique poutine and potentially landing bragging rights as the best in the area.

Explore Morden Winkler is promoting April 26 to May 1 as Poutine Week, and organizers believe it could be as big or bigger than the earlier burger and pizza week campaigns.

"The momentum has built and we were ready for the next one," said executive director Tyler Hildebrand."We want as many restaurants as we can get to show us what they've got ... and poutine is a little easier, pizza maybe is a little more difficult. You can put almost anything on poutine, right?"

"I'm excited for it. We were involved in Pizza Week, and it was a phenomenal experience," said Jeff Hildebrand of That Burrito Place, which was one of the first restaurants to sign on for the friendly competition.

Burger Week last fall had 14 restaurants involved and saw King Pinz Pub and Grill in Winkler voted as the favorite for its UnBRIElievable Burger.

Next came Pizza Week, which had 20 restaurants take part at the end of January. It was estimated that around 7,000 pizzas or over \$160,000 worth were sold that week, with Winkler's Valley Bakery getting the popular vote. Its one-off cheese pizza proved so popular they've begun selling them every Friday.

Poutine was soon eyed as the next good choice for a weeklong culinary celebration, as the iconic Québécois dish made of french fries topped with cheese curds and gravy that first appeared in 1950s rural Quebec snack bars can now be found everywhere from fine dining establishments to fast-food chains, so it is a dish that is accessible.

"There's the key ingredients, but from there it's up to you," said Tyler Hildebrand.

"We're asking restaurants to come up with something that isn't on their menu, something maybe they haven't ever done before or something unique ... something that shows off the creativity in our area.

"It's super exciting to see. We saw it with Burger Week and then Pizza Week really built on it. We're looking for big numbers," Hildebrand suggested. "That's what we're looking for again, and it's really getting behind our local restaurants."

The entry created by That Burrito Place came from suggestions by staff members. Their poutine features barbecued ribs with sauteed mushrooms, onions, peppers, and garlic topped with a Dijon barbecue sauce.

"We played around with some varia-

> LETTERS, FROM PG. 6

culture but those people are entitled to their thoughts and opinions. You cannot have democracy by shutting down everyone who disagrees with you. Rather than attempting to silence those you disagree with, engage in some civil dialog that does not include name calling. A newspaper, in particular, should be willing to report truthfully and publish articles without apology.

You may agree to disagree and maybe, in the end, you will just have to grow a thicker skin.

> Kenneth W. Wiebe, Morden

Letter policy

The *Voice* welcomes letters from readers on local and regional issues and concerns.

Please keep your letters short (excessively long letters are unlikely to be published), on-topic, and respectful.

The *Voice* reserves the right to edit, condense, or reject any submission.

Please include your full name, address, and phone number for verification purposes. Your name and city will be published with your letter. We do not print anonymous letters.

Send your letters to us by e-mail at news@winklermordenvoice.ca.



PHOTO BY LORNE STELMACH/VOICE

That Burrito Place is opting for what they're calling a backyard barbecue poutine as its entry for Poutine Week later this month.

tions of it, and we came up what we call a backyard barbecue poutine," said Jeff Hildebrand.

"It's always fun to try new things," he noted. "Poutine is something that we do all the time anyway, but it's a chance to do a special one for that week, so we're excited for it."

He welcomes what he is certain will provide another big boost for local eateries.

"We're anticipating a busy week, so we are going to be ramped up for it," he said. "It's really great to see when people do come in during these weeks. It's amazing the support that we do get, not just us but all the restaurants that get involved, so when these weeks do come up, we're always excited that they do happen so we can see that big boost in sales again."

Restaurants have until April 15 to register to take part in Poutine Week. Head to exploremordenwinkler.com for details.

Many COVID-19 tickets related to gatherings

By Voice staff

The bulk of tickets handed out late last month for public health orders scofflaws were connected to gatherings in private residences or outdoors.

The provincial government's weekly COVID-19 enforcement report released March 30 noted that a total of 49 warnings and 38 tickets were issued for the week of March 22-28.

That included 22 \$1,296 tickets to individuals for various offences, including 15 for gatherings that exceeded current capacity limits.

Also issued were 13 \$298 tickets to individuals for failure to wear a mask in indoor public places, two \$5,000 fines to businesses, and one \$5,150 fine under the federal quarantine act.

Officials note that most Manitobans are doing their part to reduce the spread of COVID-19 and are follow-

> CHURCH GATHERINGS, FROM PG. 4

to multiple services to accommodate as many people as possible, while also investing heavily into our online presence," he said.

"While we are all experiencing CO-VID-fatigue, we trust that the measures that are put in place along with the vaccinations being administered ing the fundamentals. However, education and enforcement remain necessary in some instances.

They remind public that abusive and aggressive behaviour will not be tolerated, and criminal offences will be reported to police and investigated.

Enforcement officials continue to work with businesses to provide guidance, officials say, and the majority of interactions are educational in nature.

Manitobans are urged to continue reporting compliance and enforcement issues by visiting www.manitoba.ca/COVID19 or calling 1-866-626-4862 toll-free and pressing option three on the call menu.

Since enforcement efforts began in April 2020, a total of 3,541 warnings and 1,120 tickets have been issued, resulting in more than \$1.5 million in fines to businesses and individuals.

will allow us to more quickly move back to life that feels familiar," Greer said. "While being separated from our church family has no doubt been difficult for many, we trust that Jesus is still present and is still building His church even when things look different."

Winkler man facing multiple charges after police pursuit

By Voice staff

charges after a short police pursuit over the weekend.

A Winkler driver is facing multiple

On Saturday, April 3, at approxi-

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WINKLER POLICE PHOTO

mately 2:33 a.m., a Winkler Police Service patrol unit observed a vehicle without licence plates turning onto 14th Street South from Pembina Avenue.

Officers attempted to pull the vehicle over, however the driver accelerated southbound on 14th, refusing to stop.

Police pursued the vehicle briefly until it finally pulled over in the 1200 block of Southview Drive.

Officers report the driver, who was found to be heavily intoxicated, exited his vehicle and began approaching the patrol car. He began resisting arrest when officers took him into custody.

Upon securing the suspect, police found a serrated kitchen knife and a meat cleaver in his front waistband.

Further investigation found the man did not have a driver's license, his vehicle was not registered, and he had an open container of alcohol in his vehicle.

The suspect was transported to the Winkler Police Station where he refused to provide a breath sample to officers.

The 21-year-old Winkler male has been charged with flight from a police officer, resisting arrest, impaired operation of a conveyance, possession of a weapon for a dangerous purpose, refusing a breath demand, driving an unregistered vehicle, driving without a valid driver's license, and carrying open liquor in a vehicle.

Police say the three other occupants in the vehicle will not be charged in connection to this incident.

Seniors left in the lurch after support program funding cuts

By Lorne Stelmach

Seniors in local group home living facilities in the area are questioning the loss or reduction of funding provided through a provincial support program.

The Support for Seniors in Group Living program has for years provided funding for workers to come in to various seniors housing complexes in Morden-Winkler and help residents with a range of day-to-day tasks, including grocery shopping, on top of organizing social activities.

That support came to an end at the two Morden Manor complexes as of March 31, while the Legion House buildings saw their funding cut in half for the year ahead.

Morden Manor property manager Cindy Klassen said she understood changes to the program's criteria would, among other things, eliminate support for programming in the complex.

"What they seem to want from this program now is it's almost like a supplement to home care, and activities and things like that are not seen as a supplement to home care," she said, explaining they did not apply as a result because it was her understanding their funding request was likely to be rejected. "At the end of the day, what they told me was that the numbers weren't there and that the criteria had changed."

Marina Brown, chairperson of the Legion House board, noted what has usually been around \$60,000 in support for the facility is now just over \$30,000 and is no longer to be used for

group social activities.

"They cut those programs completely out and [have] gone to just supporting one-on-one ... now our co-ordinator only does work with one person at a time," she said. "That's cut our hours down from almost 40 hours a week for our program down where we're less than 25 hours a week. We used to have three people employed doing this job, and now we're down to two part-time."

Brown questioned the logic behind these changes as well as the timing of them.

"It's a tough year to be doing something like this because everybody needs those social activities," she said. ""Doing group activities has been a huge part of the social and mental

health of our seniors in our two buildings, and Southern Health has pretty much cut those activities out of the realm ... even after we get past the restrictions, we won't have the funding for it.

"It's sad because we have people in our community who really need this kind of funding and support," Brown said. "We're fortunate that our co-ordinator can still do some of it like go and get medications or get the groceries for them ... other places don't have that funding anymore, and it's really hard on seniors in our community.

"We lose out on them still being active, still being able to function ... if they don't have their mental health, they'll soon lose their physical health."

SENIORS LAMENT THE LOSS OF SUPPORT

Dorothy Penner and Theresa Swedick, both residents of Morden Manor, are worried about what the future will hold for those in the building who have long relied on the cancelled services.

Many manor residents do not drive,

which makes getting to the grocery store a challenge. The loss of organized social activities is also a blow, they say, as is the fact that someone is no longer there to keep an eye out for those who need a helping hand.

"Even though they didn't come every day, there was that check to

see if we were all right ... that to me was the most important thing," said Penner. "Even the day-to-day things like trying to reach something from the top shelf, I've had help like that ... and if you don't have any family living nearby, then you are very, very much alone.

"When we do get together [for group activities] ... one neighbour said one day that regardless of how she felt about it, she always felt better once we had all been together," she continued. "There are quite a few of us here who don't have cars. It had been a lifesaver ... you can phone in your grocery order, but it's not the same as when you're connected with this person.

"I just don't think the support for the residents living here is going to be great or the same. We had not really been told why," Penner said. "I definitely feel it should be continued here."

Swedick, who is deaf and so was interviewed via email, has mobility issues and no vehicle, so she very much relied on the program's worker to help her with her shopping, especially over the past year.

"Now that [the] program is cancelled as of March 31, we are wondering how to do grocery shopping," she said. "It is going to affect me a lot as I would need groceries almost every week, like getting milk and other stuff."

Swedick does have family in Winkler who will be able to help her out, but she notes the program gave her more flexibility and independence week to week.

"The RHA should have been more proactive in ensuring a program that was being used by seniors continues," she said.

The Voice reached out to Southern Health-Santé Sud about this situation and received the following statement:

"The Supports to Seniors in Group Living program funding is intended to support tenants with one-to-one assistance for instrumental activities of daily living, such as assistance using the telephone, making appointments, managing transportation and/ or grocery shopping.

'Sponsor organizations were notified in spring 2020 of the grant application process for funding effective April 1, 2021. The application process

"IT'S A TOUGH YEAR TO BE DOING SOMETHING LIKE **THIS** ... "



Alzheimer Soc. of Manitoba looking for board members

By Ashleigh Viveiros

Want to have a hand in leading an organization that impacts families across the province?

Then the Alzheimer Society of Manitoba wants to hear from you.

The agency has put out a call for two new members for its governing board of directors.

"We are looking for diversity," says Brenda Martinussen, past chair and head of the board's nominating committee.

"Diversity in all areas, not just in gender and culture but also in life experience, diversity in education, diversity in professions," she says. "We're looking for people to, in respectful ways, bring their opinions forward and to contribute."

Martinussen notes the board is a policy governance board, not an operational one. The day-to-day running of the society is handled by its CEO.

"Everything that we do is through the CEO," she says, explaining board members' expertise is used to make decisions at the policy level.

"We are a board that really encourages fulsome discussion of the issues," she says, adding they also spend a fair bit of time at their meetings on stakeholder engagement. "We believe that in order for the board to really make the decisions it needs to make, to really set that vision and make sure that vision is being implemented ... we have to know what's going on out there, what are our stakeholders are experiencing, how are they feeling ... and how can the society pivot to make sure that we are meeting their needs?"

That stakeholder engagement means you don't necessarily have to have personally made use of the society's services for patients and families living with dementia and Alzheimer's disease.

"That's not necessary," says Martinussen. "It really is just wanting to help and wanting to contribute."

The board meets six times a year in Winnipeg, but members are able to attend virtually or over the phone, so don't let distance from the city be a barrier to getting involved.

In fact, having rural representation is a priority for the board, Martinussen says.

"Because we are a provincial organization we recognize that you need to have representatives from outside of Winnipeg, you need to have rural representation," she says, stressing they want to ensure they are truly rep-



PHOTO BY LORNE STELMACH/VOICE

Some local seniors will get to enjoy a free meal thanks to members of a local church congregation. Morden Services for Seniors on Monday received a \$300 donation from the Members Church of God International that will support over 30 meals. "We know they are the most vulnerable people, so we decided to help this community," said Maricel Naguit, third from left here with Santos Toledo, far left, Kendall Naguit, and Kimberly Klassen, co-ordinator of Morden Services for Seniors. "it's because of organizations like this and their kind hearts and of course the blessings of God that we as a community can come together to provide service to our seniors," said Klassen.

resentative of the province as a whole. Members are elected for a maximum of two consecutive three-year terms.

If you'd like to get involved, visit

alzheimer.mb.ca for more information or contact the society at alzmb@ alzheimer.mb.ca. The deadline for applications is April 19.

Variants of concern cases continue to rise

By Ashleigh Viveiros

Public health officials reported two additional deaths in people with CO-VID-19 on Monday, bringing the total in Manitoba to 940.

The holiday weekend meant there was no live briefing on Monday, but the government did update its stats to add 135 new cases of the virus over Sunday and Monday, bringing the lab-confirmed number of case to 34,487. The bulk of these new cases were in the Northern health region (43) and Winnipeg (63).

Manitoba began the week with 1,280 active cases of the virus and 32,267 recoveries. There were 141 people in hospital with COVID-19, 29 in the ICU.

The number of the more contagious variants of concern continues to rise: the B117 variant hit 235 cases while B1351 was at 20. There were another 15 cases not yet categorized at press time. The five-day COVID-19 test positivity rate was at 5.1 per cent provincially and 4.3 per cent in Winnipeg.

Breaking down the numbers further, the Southern Health-Santé Sud health region was at 20 active cases, 12 hospitalizations, and three ICU patients at press time. A total of 144 people in the region have died due to the virus.

The numbers were down in the Pembina Valley, with Winkler, Lorne/Louise/Pembina, and Carman showing just one active case each and Morden and Roland/Thompson showing two. The other communities in the region were reporting no active cases at the start of the week.

Meanwhile, Manitoba's vaccination efforts continue, though delays in two deliveries of the Moderna vaccine from the federal government has caused appointments at pop-up clinics across the province to be paused.

The province says a delivery of 28,300 doses expected the week of March 22 did not arrive until April 3. In addition, 28,400 doses expected this week will not arrive until next week.

Approximately 7,200 appointments for the vaccine need to be rescheduled as a result. The affected people will be contacted.

Morden's vaccination supersite at the Access Event Centre is administering the Pfizer vaccine and so is not affected.

As of Monday, individuals aged 64 or older and First Nation people age 44 or older were eligible for vaccination, though that number continues to drop.

For up-to-date vaccine eligibility or to book an appointment, head to https://protectmb.ca or call toll-free 1-844-626-8222.

> PROGRAM CUTS, FROM PG. 8

focused on equitable funding distribution in the region. Sponsor organizations applying for this funding were then assessed on their ability to meet the program deliverables and funded accordingly.

"Funding for the Supports to Seniors in Group Living program is an important program that will be reassessed in the next fiscal year. This re-assessment will ensure that grant funded programs continue to provide the appropriate services to support older adults in the community."



Johanna Wirtz and son Milliom Lucier track down one of the bunnies hidden throughout Morden Park Easter weekend.

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Going on a bunny hunt

By Lorne Stelmach

A treasure hunt with an Easter twist drew families to Morden Park Saturday afternoon.

The Hunt Canada based out of Winnipeg held a bunny hunt which offered some Easter prizes for families who tracked down the cards hidden in various locations around the playground and nearby park area.

"It seemed like it would be a really good day for it," said organizer Jennesa Dyck, who did not have a final count of how many people were participating at press time but was pleased with the response to both the Morden event and one held in Winnipeg. "We have quite an age range, everything from two up to the midteens ... and the Winnipeg one even had a couple adults entered."

People could participate either individually or as a group to search for as many of the approximately 100 bunnies located throughout the park. Speaking in advance of the events, the owner of the Codebreakers Escape Rooms in Winnipeg said her passion for games led her to develop the treasure hunts as a sideline.

"The pandemic has been pretty hard on escape rooms, so we're branching out," said Dyck. "This was set up to be pandemic-friendly. You shouldn't have to be near anyone else. It's hands-free; you don't have to actually touch any of the bunnies. You're just collecting the names and entering it ... each correct name they get earns them points, and then they trade their points for prizes at the end. You just need your smart phone or tablet with you."

Dyck noted the first few treasure hunts they have held have been successful enough that she plans to continue doing more and hopes to expand outside of Manitoba.

For now, you can find digital downloads of themed at-home scavenger hunts at thehuntcanada.ca.

DKSM festival finale concert open to all

By Ashleigh Viveiros

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Douglas Kuhl School of Music's first virtual festival is poised to be a hit.

Over 100 people have signed up for the Cadenza Spring Music Festival taking place April 6-16 via Zoom.

"It's so exciting," says administrator Kayla Drudge, noting they were pleased but surprised at the response. "We just didn't expect that many folks to be interested in another Zoom event at this time of year, but it seems like folks are really looking for an excuse to get music ready for something."

A host of professional musicians and clinicians will be providing feedback to students about their performances as well as tips on a variety of musical

Continued on page 16



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Local artisans needed for new Artisan Market Tour

By Ashleigh Viveiros

With COVID-19 restrictions creating a lot of uncertainty about the fate of large public gatherings in the year ahead, a Winkler artisan has come up with a new way she hopes fellow makers and bakers will be able to sell their wares.

"Given the question of whether artisan markets and festivals can happen this summer, I've been wondering if a different approach is necessary to support local artisans," says LaDawn Insull, who makes jewelry out of wood and semiprecious stones.

Her business took a big hit in 2020 as many of the usual markets were forced to cancel thanks to the pandemic.

Facing a similar situation in 2021 got Insull thinking about potential alternatives—including how garage sales were allowed last summer and might be again this year.

But instead of just holding her own personal sale, Insull has decided to think bigger.

"I'm hoping that some other local artisans might get on board as we put together an Artisan Market Tour similar to garden tours and the like that have happened in the past," she says, explaining she's teamed up with Explore Morden Winkler to promote the tour.

Insull envisions stops all throughout Morden, Winkler, and the RM of Stanley, each laid out on a tour map people will be able to find online and at every stop. She also plans to have Artisan Market Tour signs made up to identify

Artisan Market Tour

each location.

Insull has already reached out to a few other local creators, many of whom have expressed an eagerness to be on board.

Now she's trying to get the word out to more in the hopes of getting things organized ahead of receiving the official green light from the province.

"If we have everything ready to go, we would just need to add a date once garage sales are good to go," she says, noting they're aiming to do this one Saturday in early May. If it goes well, a second tour could be held in the fall.

Insull stresses she's not trying to take anything away from the other art markets and tours that may be going ahead this year.

"It's not about being in competition," she says. "What I'm trying to do is provide opportunities. For me, it's about giving our local community a chance to support local artisans."

The cost to participating artisans will be \$25—enough to cover the cost of the signs and brochures. Participants will need to provide their own garage or tent as well as an item for the event's prize draw.

Beyond that, the only requirement is that you've created everything on sale at your stop.

"They have to make or bake whatever they're going to be selling," Insull stresses.

Insull isn't looking to make money off organizing this event.

"The way I'm getting paid is whatever I sell off of my table," she says. "For me, this really is about creating opportunity. That's something we're missing these days.

"I think this could be a great thing not just for me as an artisan but to be able to support other local artisans and to be able to get our community to rally behind them. I think it's a winwin-win."

If you'd like more information on getting involved with the Artisan Market Tour, find them on Facebook or Instagram or head to www.artisanmarkettour.weebly.com for registration details. With COVID-19 putting a big question mark over the 2021 market season, LaDawn Insull is organizing an Artisan Market Tour that will allow local creators to sell their goods while following public health restrictions.



SUBMIT-TED PHOTO



Fueling Manitoba's Economy

Enabling young people to have a future in the communities where they grew up is essential to rural development and the pork sector is one of few sources of new job creation.

New employment and growth provided by increased investment in the sector takes on many forms and provides for a wide variety of opportunity. From veterinarians, to electricians, food production workers, and transport drivers, 14,000 Manitobans depend on the pork sector for their livelihood. Over half of these employees are connected to processing, transportation, and related service businesses.

Towns and cities across Manitoba have experienced a renaissance with the presence of new immigrants increasing demand on services and local businesses, spurring new activity and creating more jobs for both immigrants and locals.

Hog farmers continue to be important and significant contributors to their communities, and new jobs and development ensures a legacy of growth for decades to come.

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come spring. Here are four things that should be at the top of your to-do list at the start of the season.

- 1. Schedule an oil change. Oil collects impurities as it lubricates and cools the engine. This is a good thing, but it also means that it becomes less effective over time. This is why regular oil changes are essential to maintaining a healthy engine.
- 2. Get your battery tested. Low temperatures during winter force your battery to work hard. Come spring, it may be on its last legs. To avoid the inconvenience of having your car fail to start, get your battery checked and, if necessary, replaced.
- 3. Check tire pressure. Fluctuations in temperature cause changes in tire pressure, so it's important to check it as the weather starts to change. See the tire pressure recommendations in your vehicle's manual.

Typically, your vehicle needs a bit of TLC 4. Wash and wax your vehicle. Road salt used during winter corrodes your vehicle's metal components. Thoroughly wash your vehicle, paying special attention to the underside where salt, dirt and debris tend to become lodged. Spring is the perfect time for

a waxing too - this not only protects the finish of your vehicle but also makes subsequent washing easier.

These are some of the essential things to attend to in spring but note that the list could be added to. Your car's fluids, windshield, belts and hoses, among other things, may require attention. Do a thorough inspection of your vehicle this spring or have your local garage perform this service.

Tips for choosing an auto body shop

- Need to repair a dent on your car? Then it's important to find a 4. Look for certification. Auto body shops should have certificagood auto body shop. Here are five things you should do before deciding where to bring your vehicle.
- 1. Ask around. The most reliable referrals tend to come from 5. Ask about the warranty. Compare the kinds of warranties diffefriends and family members. Ask people whose opinion you trust about their go-to auto body shop.
- 2. Do your research. If you can't get any leads by word-of-mouth, see what people are saying online about the auto body shops in vour area.
- 3. Get estimates. It's a good idea to get estimates from multiple auto body shops. However, when weighing who to give the work to, make sure you don't sacrifice quality for a better price point.
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Photographer on the hunt for the perfect shot

By Ashleigh Viveiros

A local photographer's mission to capture the beauty of nature is on display now at the Winkler Arts and Culture Centre.

The Park St. gallery hosts Walter Dueck's In My Backyard exhibition until May 1.

It features over 30 photographs from the Morden artist, who very much enjoys the hunt for the perfect shot.

"Southern Manitoba has so much to offer," Dueck says of the theme of the show."People often think wildlife is way out there in the distance someplace, but it's very local. There's a lot of things to see and to take photographs of right here at home."

Dueck says his photographic adventures take him "wherever the road leads, wherever curiosity leads."

He enjoys shooting landscapes, but finds wildlife photography to be an even greater thrill.

"I enjoy waiting for that animal to do just the right thing and try and get a picture of it," Dueck says. "I can be very, very patient when it comes to photographing wildlife."

That patience pays off in candid shots of foxes, porcupines, and all manner of birds in their natural habitats.

His best"catch" thus far, Dueck says, is a series of photos he got of some fox pups.

"They're so creative in their expressions and they're so curious, especially when they get to know you a little bit. Then they have this childlike curiosity that's so much fun to photograph."

A few of those images are on display at the WAC, along with many of Dueck's other adventures.

He's been capturing the world around him with his camera since he first traded in his antique car to get the money to buy a 35mm camera and a pair of lenses three decades ago.

His gear has improved in the years since, and his passion for the art of photography has only grown.

"I went out and bought a camera and I just never stopped," Dueck says. "It's an addiction, really. You might think you've got the perfect shot ... but then the next time you go out and you think, you know, there must be one a little better. It never ends, that search for that elusive perfect shot."



In My Backyard is Dueck's first gallery showing. He hopes people walk way from his work with a greater appreciation for the great outdoors.

"The big thing is to let nature speak for itself. Nature has so much to offer but we're so busy in the world that we miss so much,"Dueck says. "You need to take time to look at the little details. There's so much to notice and observe when you slow down and really smell the roses."

day this Saturday, April 10.



If you'd like to chat with Dueck about his photos, he'll be at the Winkler gallery all



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Shining a spotlight on local fire departments

New museum display features vintage firefighting gear, equipment

By Ashleigh Viveiros

A new exhibit at the Winkler Heritage Museum is shining a spotlight on the work of our region's firefighters.

Museum curator Joanne Bergen has pulled together artifacts from several local departments for the display, which is located in the storefront window across the hall from the museum's Southland Mall location.

"I was visiting with a buddy of mine, Terry Toews, deputy fire chief with the Gretna department, and I said to him,'You know, I would love to do some kind of fire display but I don't have a single fire department item,'" she recalled.

Toews stepped up by loaning the museum a vintage turnout coat and several hoses from his own collection. He also put Bergen in touch with former Altona fire chief Bob Stoesz, who added several old helmets, an axe, fire extinguisher, and a firefighter's badge to the mix.

"You ask Terry for a favour and he takes it as far as he can go to help you out as much as he can," says Bergen.

Rounding out the collection are several pieces from retired Winkler fire chief Abe Suderman (including a few departmental pins, a buckle, and his old name tag), and active Winkler firefighter Chris Kalansky, who donated his dress blues, a pair of turnout boots, and a WFD blanket, among other items, to the museum. Winkler Fire also donated a breathing apparatus from its own collection at the fire hall.

Bergen is hoping to get in touch with the Plum Coulee fire department as well to cover all four of the West Reserve Mennonite communities.

"But we've got three of the four now,



so that's not bad," she said, adding she'd also love to see more gear donated by past and current firefighters so they could keep up a permanent display.

"We're working very hard to become more a part of the community and to have even more community stuff in the museum," Bergen said, noting they're always looking for new artifacts to add to their collection representing everyone who made the Winkler area what it is today.

"We want all of Winkler represent-



PHOTO BY ASHLEIGH VIVEIROS/VOICE

The Winkler Heritage Museum's Joanne Bergen with a new display on exhibit at the Southland Mall featuring artifacts from three local fire departments.

ed, not just the Mennonite history," she stresses. "We do get a lot of assumptions that we're just a Mennonite museum or just a Mennonite society, and we're not. Winkler wasn't built by just Mennonites."

Also on the museum's wish list are more volunteerss, both for shifts at the museum and behind-thescenes board work. Stop by the museum if you'd like to get involved.

The firefighting display will be up for the foreseeable future and is viewable even when the museum is closed. The Winkler Heritage Museum is currently open 12-4 p.m. Tuesday to Friday and 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturdays.



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Going above and beyond at Addison's Auto Service

Ryan Addison knew from early on that someday he would be running his own automotive service shop.

The fact that it finally happened here in Morden with Addison's Auto Service is no great surprise to him.

"Morden is not too small-—it's big enough. I've just always liked Morden," said Addison, who operates his business from 21-186 Cochlan Drive in the incubator mall and is proud to be giving back to his adopted community by volunteering with the local fire department. "The plan was always to move to Morden because my dad's side of the family lived here, and I've just never been much of a city guy."

Addison is a red seal certified technician with 20 years experience who provides a full range of services, including oil changes, engine repair, suspension work, and even some custom aftermarket products.

He started out briefly at Canadian Tire over two decades ago before going to college for automotive service training.

"I really wanted to get into this field," Addison recalled. "I ended up working mostly for Fountain Tire in Winnipeg for about seven years ... then it was Fraser's Auto Service at Grand Pointe. That's where I spent most of my time. I really liked it because I got more experience there."

He couldn't really see himself doing anything else career-wise.

"It's just something I've always liked, fixing cars, and when you're done, you feel good about it. You help somebody out," said Addison, adding that the idea of starting his own business has been a dream of his for some time. A spot in the incubator mall made it possible. "This space became available at the perfect time. In the beginning it was more space than I needed, but now it's almost perfect."

He prides himself on keeping one eye on the future, constantly looking for ways to adapt and better serve his customers.

"I wanted to be a better shop, to open a shop that will really help you. It's not just about the money," he said. "In this business,

MORDEN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE



mordenchamber.com

Ryan Addison is proud to be operating his own automotive service shop out of Morden's incubator mall.

you need to change, you need to learn, you need to update things."

To that end, Addison lists electrical vehicles as a special area of expertise and interest.

"There's going to be more and more of that with vehicles," he said, noting that he early on took training related to hybrid vehicles. "Hybrids were just starting to come out then, and there was going to be more in that direction."

He's on his own right now at the shop, but Addison plans to bring on more staff in the future and says he's always open to opportunities for further growth.

"I have big plans, but they're like 20-year plans ... I had a chance to move to Winkler, but I want to keep my business here in Morden," he said. "I may branch out into something else in the future, depending on how things go. We'll see where it goes." You can find more information online at www.

addisonsauto.ca or call 204-918-3029.





Save the Date! Morden Chamber of Commerce AGM and State of the City Address will be held virtually on April 15th! mordenchamber.com

Dietician urges you to consider mindful eating

By Lorne Stelmach

Maintaining proper nutrition is an important but perhaps overlooked aspect of living amidst the challenges posed by COVID-19.



SUPPLIED PHOTO Dietician Aimee Cadieux says the pandemic has had both good and bad influences on people's eating habits.

Registered dietitians such as Aimee Cadieux based out of the Menzies Medical Centre in Morden are encouraging people this spring to be more mindful of how their eating habits have been impacted in the past year.

"I think mental health obviously has taken the biggest hit by far ... but over the last year, for sure, we've seen both improvements and worsening in nutritional health," said Cadieux.

"Some people are taking extra time to cook more at home and try new recipes and eat together as a family. So that's been great, especially for families that normally are on the go every evening with sporting events and other things," she said.

"On the other hand, I see a lot of people struggle with losing that sense of routine, especially people who are working from home and are not used to it ... or high school kids as well," said Cadieux."Losing that sense of routine also increases the anxiety ... with the COVID restrictions there's more isolation. The lack of routine for sure can lead to more snacking and grazing and eating as a form of comfort or entertainment or even just in response

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Impacts of noxious odours and water contamination.

to emotion like feeling overwhelmed or lonely.

"So we've seen the whole range across the board in terms of the impact."

Last month's nutrition month campaign theme revolved around the idea that healthy eating looks different for everyone.

Things like your culture, food traditions, personal circumstances, and nutritional needs can all contribute to what healthy looks like for you, but the challenges of the past year have brought on many new pandemic routines both good and bad.

"It's not like we could have prepared for it," said Cadieux. "We've all responded a little differently and after a while it's like, okay, I guess we're going to be in this for awhile, so it's time to adapt to new habits. I think it's been tough for a lot of people.

"I think the big thing is to try to create a new routine," she continued. "Routines can certainly give you a sense of stability at certain times and help reduce the stress and anxiety.

"Especially with food, I recommend people stick to a routine meal schedule as much as possible, like eating at the same time of day. That can help prevent the grazing as you walk through the kitchen," she suggested. "You even might like to get into the habit of grocery shopping on a certain day of the

> CONCERT, FROM PG. 10

genres and topics throughout the next week.

The festival will then wrap up with a free online Finale Concert on Friday, April 16 at 7:30 p.m.

Drudge stresses the show is open to evervone.

"We'd love to have as many community members involved as possible,"

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week so that it's one less decision to make then with meal planning."

Cadieux also encourages people to pause before they just reach for something to eat without thinking about the choice.

"The other thing is—because there's so much emotional eating right nowto try to practice mindful eating habits, which means checking in with your hunger level before you're eating a meal or snack.

"Sometimes it's good to just pause for a few minutes and think about it for awhile, or keeping a food journal can be helpful so you can actually see what's happening," Cadieux said. "You don't have to give up chips, but if you're home 24 hours a day and they are in the cupboard, it tests your willpower."

She also suggested people pay attention to how consuming different things makes them feel.

"For some people, it's trying to find other healthy distractions, which has been hard during COVID. It could be going for a walk, calling a friend, reading or taking an online course and keeping your mind busy."

You can find more helpful advice online at www.dietitians.ca or www. nutritionmonth2021.ca, including an activity and ideas guide as well as a selection of recipes.

The evening will be emceed by Jayme

Giesbrecht and feature a varied set of

performances from musicians such as

Kelli Trottier (fiddle), Rob Bickley (jazz

bassist), Christopher Bagan (baroque

harpsichord), Loren Hiebert (gospel

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piano), Janna Larsen and Rochelle



she says.

Drudge (piano duo), and Leanne Zacharias and Jimmie Kilpatrick. The performers have pre-recorded their selections but Drudge says they hope to have a few in attendance online to chat with audi-

> ence members. To enjoy the show, head to douglaskuhlschoolofmusic.com that evening for a Zoom link. Preregistration is not required.

SCRL's Miami branch is shaking things up this week

By Becca Myskiw

The Miami branch of South Central Regional Library is going to look a lot different next week.

After contemplating renovations for the past few years, branch administrator Cherie Debreuil said the pandemic pushed them to finally do it.

The Miami library currently shares an entrance with the rural municipality office, which has much stricter rules than them. So that entrance is unavailable for library use right now under restrictions and people have had to come in the emergency exit door at the back.

Debreuil said that door is solid, so people often get bumped with it when walking out in. And once you walk through the door, you can't tell if the library is even open, she said, as it leads straight into a dark corner and shelves that block the desk.

"If we would've known it would've been a year like this, we would've done it a lot sooner," she said.

Those problems are part of what pushed the library to do renovations,



PHOTO BY BECCA MYSKIW/VOICEpThe Miami library is closed this week for renovations.a

but they aren't the only ones—the junior reading section also comes with its own flaws.

Currently, that section has flat wall

shelving with wire shelves. Debreuil said they aren't sturdy enough for the area, and they see more than enough proof of that when a child climbs and knocks the whole section over.

So, this week the library is closed for renovations. When it opens again on Tuesday, April 13, it will be like the place did a flip. Debreuil said they'll be stripping every book off the shelves so new, standard-approved metal shelving can go in. They'll then be doing major cleaning and add a fresh coat of the same colour paint to the walls.

The town's official colour is now red, Debreuil noted, so they'll be adding a lot of red accents to the library.

With the new shelves also comes a fundraiser. People can"buy a shelf" for \$100 or a bank of shelves for \$500. The bought shelves will then get a plaque with the donor's name on them.

Debreuil said if people want to donate but don't want their name on a plaque, they are also accepting general donations. To donate, go to https:// scrl.mb.libraries.coop and click the "donate now" button.

People can also stay up-to-date with the library on Facebook and YouTube where they post daily videos.

Local restaurateurs ask for kindness, understanding

By Lorne Stelmach

Ongoing COVID-19 restrictions continue to take their toll on businesses, but local restaurants are especially feeling the pinch.

Morden-Winkler restaurant owners say they're pleased to see some restrictions ease in recent weeks, including now being allowed 50 per cent capacity in their dining rooms, but note that having to enforce the rules comes with its own unique challenges.

They are hoping customers will continue to be supportive and understanding for however long the various limits remain in place.

"We love the community and we love what we do, but it's been hard. It's hard to accommodate everybody, hard to make everybody happy," said Monique Tofflinger of Ralph's German Restaurant in Winkler. "We're just making food, we're not making rules ... but we have to do all this extra work that the government has put on us."

"I understand—people are getting tired of all this," said Morden Chicken Chef's Chris Krushel, noting, however, that he's not keen on just opening the floodgates and then being forced back into another lockdown."It's better if we're all just following the rules." Both acknowledged there has been a small percentage of customers who add to the challenge by not wanting to wear masks or wanting to come in with a larger group or with people from outside their households—all things that are still restricted under the public health orders in effect until

at least mid-April. "When we were closed, we received great community support, and we were very happy that people were ordering takeout," Tofflinger said. "There were just a few people who would come in without a mask, so we would remind them.

"I feel like lots of people don't know that these rules don't come from us ... they come to us on a daily basis," she said. "It's not only the pressure of how is tomorrow going to be, are we going to be able to

make it ... now there's this additional pressure put on our staff every day.

"It's just such a hard situation for everybody," continued Tofflinger, noting that there shouldn't be a need for businesses to have signs reminding people to please be kind."We are supposed to be Friendly Manitoba.

"We've been a little busier now," she said, reflecting on the last round of public health order changes. "We are a small community, and we have had great support ... so we're hopeful. We're always hopeful ... we want to be open for business."

Krushel as well has seen a bit of a boost in business of late, but it has been

limited. "I wanted to bring back some of my servers who have been off this whole time ... but on a daily basis, we

this whole time ... but on a daily basis, we might get two tables over lunch, maybe two in the evening," he said. "As a business person, it's hard to have someone just standing around all day for serving four people.

"I think it is because

of the rules and the regulations, and maybe there's also been that shift in people's dining habits to takeout, which is good. That has kept us going."

He said they've also had a few challenging customers intent on taking out their frustration with the rules on the staff who are enforcing them.

"Either we've lost customers because we're enforcing the laws or they don't want to be bothered to have to go through the whole process," he said, adding there is a degree of frustration as well if there are other places that are being more lax in their CO-VID protocols.

"And some of the Facebook comments are ridiculous ... for following the rules, we basically get trashed by some people. It gets some people so angry," he said. "I do understand ... you want to be able to go out to eat with other people. The rules, as a rule, are a turnoff for some customers ... and having to enforce those rules puts us in a hard place.

"People who come here often know already the routine, but you get other people coming in not wearing a mask, and they don't want to sign their [contact] information. We have to explain to them these rules have been put on us.

"Remember that we have to go the extra mile every day. We've got to do all the sanitizing. We've been following it strictly from day one," said Krushel.

"Understand that we are not the ones making these rules. We are just trying to get by and do the best we can to serve you," said Tofflinger.

"WE ARE NOT THE ONES MAKING THESE RULES. WE ARE JUST TRYING TO GET BY AND DO THE BEST WE CAN TO SERVE YOU."

Miami women meeting to support each other in vulnerable times

By Becca Myskiw

Women of Miami have been meeting weekly to support each other thanks to a grant they applied for through the RM of Thompson.

It's a self-help/support group for the women of the community who need it. The grant came from the Emergency Community Support Fund and covers the cost of presenters and partial cost of the community hall.

Public Health nurse April Hildebrand is the group coordinator. She said they originally planned to do the support group sooner but held off due to strict COVID-19 restrictions.

Because they waited, the 15 women are now able to meet in person each week. There were originally 38 women signed up, but due to the current restrictions Hildebrand had to limit participation to the first on the waiting list. For the first hour of each meeting, a presenter comes in to talk on topics like connection, support, and wellbeing. The group then spend another hour or so discussing what they heard and connecting with each other.

"It's a program that's needed anywhere," said Hildebrand."But for sure in Miami because it's a smaller community. There are less resources... so it's definitely nice for people to be able to do it in their own community." She hopes the group gives women connections they didn't have before that they can use when in a time of need.

"The goal is to enable through presentation and discussion and working together to increase mental health flourishing," Hildebrand said."So that were not just sort of surviving but so we're actually focusing on self-care and flourishing our mental health."

Hildebrand said the group is needed



SUBMITTED PHOTO

This Miami women's support group has been meeting every week to build relationships and support each other.

now more than ever as COVID-19 has had a lasting impact on women especially and their mental health. Many, she said, have lost jobs and are busier with their children. The female popu-

lation is vulnerable everywhere, and she's glad Miami can offer some support to them.

The eight-week session wraps up next week.

Spring thaw nearly complete, flood risk is low

By Ashleigh Viveiros

Spring is finally here (recent frosty temperatures and flurries not withstanding) and Manitoba looks to be in good shape when it comes to the flood outlook.

Infrastructure Minister Ron Schuler last week released the province's March soil moisture report, which shows the annual spring run-off is nearly complete in the southern basins and the risk of flooding remains low.

"Having seen normal to below normal precipitation in our entire basin since November 2020, the hydrological forecast this year will be on the border of a non-event," Schuler said at a press conference March 30.

Our province sits at the bottom of what used to be prehistoric Lake Agassiz and so drains water from Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta, North Dakota, Minnesota, Montana, Ontario, and a small part of South Dakota each spring.

"We look at our entire basin when we make projections," Schuler explained, noting water levels are down across the board this year. "For instance, southern Manitoba and southern Saskatchewan are down 20 per cent of normal precipitation of the past 40 years.

"Some areas in southwestern Manitoba are at a record low precipitation level. Satellite images and model simulations show most of the snow in southern and central basins have already melted."

As northern Manitoba is still waiting for its spring run-off to start, there is a low to moderate risk of high water activity within the Saskatchewan and Churchill river basins.

The Red River, meanwhile, has reached peak levels within the Red River Valley from Emerson up to and including the city of Winnipeg and is well within the riverbank. Due to low levels of precipitation this winter, flows on the Assiniboine River are expected to also be very low and well within the riverbank.

Near to below normal levels of precipitation are being predicted for April, May, and June.

"Currently we have no drought concerns," Schuler noted. "A good rainfall, maybe even a late snowstorm will mitigate a lot of that. Those would not impact what we're talking about today insofar as any kind of flooding. Those would just make sure that the fields are wet enough to get crops in.

"So far things look okay," he said, noting officials will be keeping a close eye on conditions to see if drought measures will be needed."At this moment we do not have a concern, but the forecasting is looking like we're going to have a fairly dry summer."

Local water projects get provincial funding

Including Morden, Rhineland, PVWC

By Ashleigh Viveiros

Several local communities are getting a piece of the \$50 million the provincial government announced for water and wastewater projects last week.

Municipal Relations Minister Derek Johnson and Conservation and Climate Minister Sarah Guillemard announced funding for over 40 projects by way of the Manitoba Restart Program.

Among the disbursements is \$300,000 to the City of Morden for water supply upgrades, \$810,000 to the RM of Morris for reservoir work, \$325,000 to the RM of Rhineland for the Plum Coulee lift station, and nearly \$1.6 million to the Pembina Valley Water Co-op for water treatment plant expansion and its Stephenfield water intake project.

"Our government has committed to investing in significant capital works that support the ongoing supply of clean water and wastewater treatment in our municipalities," said Johnson. "An investment like this will help create jobs for Manitobans and improve the safety and quality of our life for communities today and generations to come."

The funded projects include upgrades to water treatment plants, sewage treatment lagoons, and lift stations, as well as water distribution and collection systems.

Five of the projects will upgrade the

water and wastewater systems in the Asessippi, Grand Beach, Paint Lake, and Whiteshell provincial parks.

"These projects support the department mandate to lead the implementation of the Made-in-Manitoba Climate and Green Plan nature pillar by making new capital investments in campgrounds, water treatment facilities, and recreation facilities," said Minister Guillemard. "A total of \$8.95 million has been strategically directed to these improvements in some of Manitoba's most visited provincial parks."

That includes water treatment plant upgrades in Asessippi and Grand Beach, force main upgrades in Grand Beach, and lift and lagoon station upgrades in the Paint Lake and Whiteshell parks, respectively.



Pembina Valley Disc Golf season about to begin

By Lorne Stelmach

The COVID-19 restrictions of the past year have been a blessing in disguise for disc golf enthusiasts, as it's an activity that can easily fit within the rules and be done safely.

As a result, the Pembina Valley Disc Golf league has seen increased interest in the sport.

"The pandemic actually kind of helped in this case,"

suggested organizer Eric Giesbrecht. "It was one of the few sports, maybe along with tennis and eventually golf, that you can kind of play solo, or at least socially distanced.

"I think it got a lot more people into the sport. We've seen more people playing now year after year, but now especially

last year I'd never seen as many people play. Tournaments are filling up within 12 hours of registration opening. It's a pretty good draw."

Disc golf is played much like traditional golf but with flying discs like Frisbees rather than balls and clubs. Players aim to get the disc into the target, usually an elevated metal basket, in the fewest shots possible. So disc golf shares the same joys and frustrations of traditional golf—whether it's sinking a long putt or hitting a tree halfway down the fairway—but there are also a number of advantages to it.

"The main draw for a lot of people is that it's easy to get into," said Giesbrecht. "It's so accessible, and as you get more courses, it's even more accessible.

"It's very cheap to get into as well. You need just one to two discs ... if you buy a starter pack of three discs, it might cost you \$40 or \$50 and that's all you need.

"No course in Manitoba has any fees" Giesbrecht added. "You just go play.

"It's affordable, it's easy to get into ... and the learning curve

to get to enjoy it isn't hard," he continued. "You don't have to be "IT'S AFFORDABLE, a certain age or athletic ability to play. I've IT'S EASY TO GET seen kids as young as five years old play. I've INTO ... AND THE seen people in their LEARNING CURVE seventies play. It's a wide range of people TO GET TO ENJOY who are able to play."

Giesbrecht got into the sport in 2013, around the time the first course was built in

Winkler's Parkland. A course at Stanley Park popped up soon afterwards and today the region also has a course in Emerado Park.

The two courses in Winkler are nine basket courses while Stanley Park has a full 18, so that is where a majority of the organized play happens.

"It has a lot more traffic for the most part. A lot more people travel from outside the area to go play that one. Almost every weekend in spring and summer there's people from Winnipeg coming down and playing here," said Giesbrecht.

He has seen the sport become a good draw here and anticipates their numbers may increase again this year.



Giesbrecht noted one local store had ordered in about 130 discs for sale and were looking to order more to meet demand.

"I would like to think I know most people in the area who play, but I'm at the point now where I don't think I actually do anymore. Obviously, we have our kind of hard core group who may go multiple times a week,' he said.

"It's definitely growing for sure. Our league grew from a consistent six or seven people every week to about 12 people a week, and I would expect it to grow to maybe 15 to 20, that would be my guess, for this year." A few of the players had an informal warm-up round last week and kicked off their league play this week at Emerado. It then goes Wednesdays starting April 14 at Stanley Park.

"We'll be getting ramped up for our tournament, which will be in May at Stanley Park as well," noted Giesbrecht.

The league cost is \$40 per person, but people are invited to try it out first before registering with a one-time fee of \$5 if you want to have your score recorded in league standings.

You can contact Giesbrecht by email at ericdavidgiesbrecht@gmail.com for more information.





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Winkler Flyers hires new marketing manager



By Voice staff

The Winkler Flyers have found their new marketing guru.

The junior hockey club announced last week that Tyler Hildebrand has been hired as their new full-time director of marketing and game day operations.

Hildebrand comes to the job after many years with Golden West Broadcasting and, more recently, a stint as Explore Morden Winkler's executive director.

FLYERS PHOTO

Tyler Hildebrand joins the Winkler Flyers as the team's director of marketing and game day operations. "We are happy to have Tyler join our organization," said Flyers general Jeff Jeanson in announcing the hire."Tyler will bring energy, passion and fresh ideas to the sales and marketing aspect of junior hockey in Winkler."

Hildebrand's duties will include all marketing, promotion, and corporate partnerships throughout the Pembina Valley, as well as game day operations.

"I'm excited for the opportunity to showcase our community through hockey," said Hildebrand. "I love the idea of being involved in a community-oriented hockey team that collaborates with local organizations that are making a difference in lives every day."

Local biz secure naming rights for Morden facilities

By Lorne Stelmach

Users of the various amenities at the Access Event Centre will see mostly familiar names once they are able to make use of them all again—with one new addition.

The facility's naming right agreements have been renewed for another 10 years, with just one part of the facility being renamed: the former Kinsmen Room becomes Crocus Corner as Crocus Realty picks up the sponsorship for the meeting space in the Co-op Arena.

"I have been spending a ton of time at the rink in the past few years and seeing how many people are also happily giving so much time, whether it be watching, coaching or volunteering," said Curtis Sheldon on behalf of Crocus Real Estate in Morden.

"It was important to us at Crocus to carry on the tradition the Kinsmen had started. They were forever giving back to the community, and we just want to reiterate that is the main goal and focus for us as well," he said. "When the opportunity to rename the Kinsmen room was available, we were happy to commit to doing our little part to help out the community going forward. We love the people and passion of Morden and look forward to the many happy faces taking advantage of this space."

Meanwhile, renewing their naming rights for another decade were Access Credit Union for the Access Event Centre, Morden Co-op for the east arena, Huron Window Corporation for the west arena, Vern's Carpets for the play centre, and Morden Chiropractic Centre for the main meeting room.

"The Access Event Centre has been a cornerstone in the community of Morden for many years," said Adam Monteith, chief marketing officer for Access Credit Union."We are very excited to have the building highlighted with our new brand representing the same values of excellence, innovation, and community support."

Beyond the event centre, Decor Cabinets maintains the naming rights for the community spray park at Morden Park and BSI Insurance's name remains on the skate park.

Clare Agnew, director of community

services for the City of Morden, noted all revenue from naming rights is invested back into community projects and facilities or held in reserves for future use.

"I am thrilled the businesses were all willing to join on for another agreement term," she said. "They are very community-minded businesses and are always willing to be involved. Knowing they see value in the naming right program creates a great partnership opportunity. We are pleased to have local business support. Not only does it assist with facility and park amenities upgrades, but it also helps provide a sense of community."



VOICE FILE PHOTO The City of Morden has signed 10-year naming right agreements for the Access Event Centre, the skate park, and the spray park.

Province freezes pharmacare deductions for second year

By Voice staff

The provincial government has frozen the Manitoba Pharmacare Program deductible rates for the second year in a row.

Health Minister Heather Stefanson made the announcement last week.

"Our government has implemented a number of measures to help Manitoba families while we deal with the pandemic as a province," she said, explaining the rates, which normally increase annually, will remain at the 2019-20 levels.

The drug benefit program is meant to assist Manitobans of all ages whose income is seriously affected by high prescription drug costs.

Each year, program participants are required to pay a portion of the cost of the eligible prescription drugs they need covered, which is considered the annual pharmacare deductible and is based on adjusted family income.

Although deductible rates will not change this year, the 2021-22 deductibles are based on a family's 2019 income, whereas the 2020-21 deductible was based on 2018 income, so a family's rate might change if their income did in that time.

For more details on the program, head to www.gov.mb.ca/health/ pharmacare.

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For further information contact Franz Hoeppner Wiens Law Office at 204-325-4615.

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