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Fun in the sun

Brother-sister duo Fenwick and Briar Peterson of Morden took advantage of a beautifully sunny day last week to engage in a bit of friendly sled racing.
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Minnewasta clubhouse burns down again, just days after ribbon cutting

By Lorne Stelmach

History repeated itself this past weekend with a fire that heavily damaged the new Minnewasta Golf and Country Club clubhouse and restaurant.

A New Year's Eve gala had just celebrated the official reopening of the facility, which was built after a massive blaze three years ago destroyed the previous historic building.

General manager and head professional Greg Hesom said it was a feeling of utter disbelief when word got to him about the fire, which started in the early morning hours Sunday.

"I wouldn't say I'm exactly over the shock of it just yet," he said when reached late Monday afternoon.

"It was a very busy two days," he said, noting there was a lot of time spent with firefighters and investigators and then also with making initial contact with the insurance company. "I hadn't really had a lot of time to sit down and really let it all sink in yet."

It is impossible to have an accurate assessment at this point, but there is certainly hope that it may not be a complete loss like last time.

Continued on page 3



PHOTO SUBMITTED BY DAVID GOERZ

Fire broke out at the Minnewasta Golf and Country Club's new clubhouse over the weekend. The facility had opened for business just a few months ago, three years after fire destroyed the old clubhouse.



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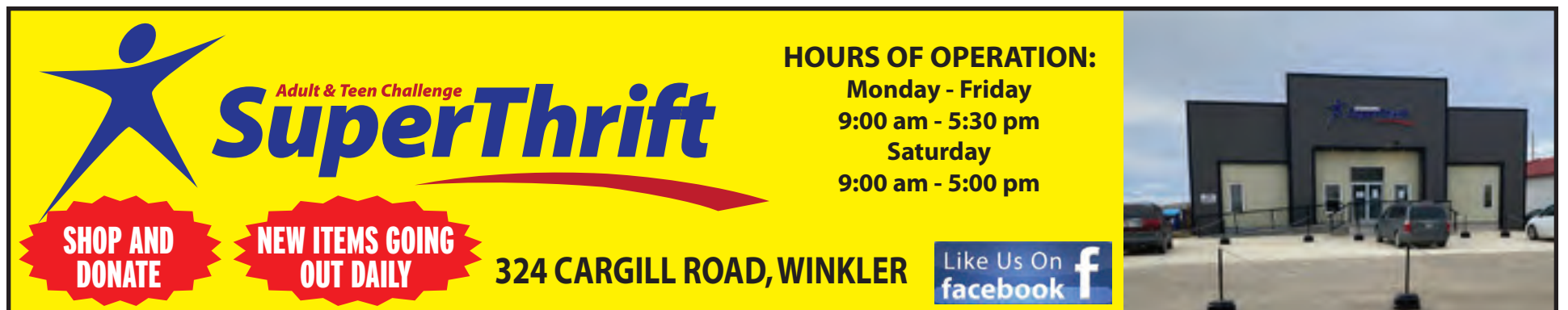
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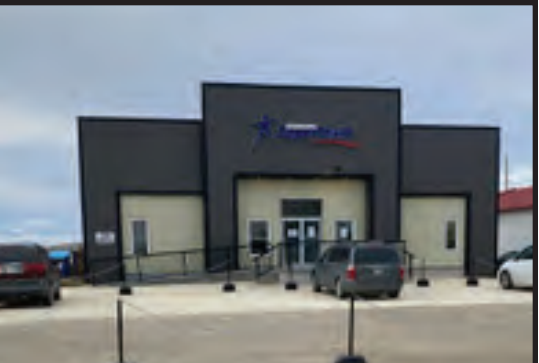



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> CLUBHOUSE FIRE, FROM PG. 2

"The fire department did a great job," Hesom said. "The pro shop and the simulator room are still standing. Obviously, there was a lot of water in there and some damage ... but it's really hard to know. It's going to be a wait and see ..."

And all that is known at this point is that the fire started in the kitchen area.

"That's really all we know and anything else would be just speculation and guessing," said Hesom.

The emergency call came in around 2:20 a.m., and the volunteer fire crew was there within five to 10 minutes, shared Morden Fire Chief Andy Thiessen, who said they did an initial interior attack to get a handle on the inside of the building.

"But the fire had gotten into the ceiling area," he said. "So we worked at that for at least eight hours or more to get into that confined space in the ceiling.

"The fire seemed to have started in the kitchen area somewhere. It's under investigation now where exactly that took place, but we were hoping to get a little more information from the cameras and other stuff."

Morden Fire made use of their mutual aid agreements with other departments to battle the blaze, with Winkler's firefighters being called to the scene early on.

"I needed their ladder and manpower," said Thiessen, who added they then called in Plum Coulee volunteers as well around four or five a.m. "It was for the manpower as well because our guys were just getting frozen. We still had a lot of work to do, so we called them all in for help. They showed up and did us a real blessing for sure."

It was a very challenging situation all around.

"The weather was one thing; darkness was another ... especially the cold. Water and cold don't get along very well," said Thiessen. "It was a real challenge. "The guys did extraordinarily well. I have to give them kudos for not giving up. They kept on going at it."

He noted it was a bit of a struggle at first to put your personal thoughts



PHOTO BY RICK HIEBERT/VOICE

A good portion of the clubhouse was destroyed after fire apparently broke out in the kitchen area.

and feelings aside.

"I came down the hill, and I could see smoke and flame coming from the ceiling, and I thought, 'You've got to be kidding me.' The initial 30 seconds was heartbreak, but then you've got to just get to work and try to stop it as best as you can."

It is heartbreaking for the whole community, the chief noted.

"So many use it for raising funds," he said, while expressing hope it might not be a complete loss. "It looks awful, but it's maybe not quite as bad as you might think ... and I think everyone will bounce back. We're a resilient bunch."

Hesom as well has been thankful for the support from the community.

"The community support already has been just absolutely amazing," he said.

"We're really hoping we're not going to have to really go back to the community [for funds to rebuild]," he added. "They've given a lot ... obviously its support is much appreciated. We'll have to wait and see what happens with the insurance, but hopefully it pretty much covers the loss of the building."

Hesom noted an update went out to their membership Monday, and the process now will obviously take some time.

"We'll plan and try to be ready for when we get the go-ahead, but it's going to be a waiting game. It will take a while.

"We have to be cautious with our optimism," he added. "Unfortunately, we know how to operate without a clubhouse. We had done it for the last three seasons ... so we will have to move back into the old pro shop, and we still have the snack shack ... we will have to rebook a tent and do

business as we had for the last three seasons."

Mayor Nancy Penner agreed that this situation is devastating for the entire community.

"It hits at so many levels," she said, noting it was exciting to have a new restaurant option in Santa Lucia as well as a venue that supports so many vital fundraisers, not to forget the em-

ployment opportunities the facility provides.

"It hits the community at so many different levels," she said. "It's so heartbreaking.

"We have a strong community, and I know the support will rise up," Penner said. "People will come together ... it just shows the community spirit that we have here."

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getinformed

Altona Elks donation fuels family resource centre programming

By Lori Penner

The Altona Elks rounded out 2024 with a significant donation to the Altona and Area Family Resource Centre (AAFRC).

Local lodge members proudly presented the \$5,000 generated from the final round of last year's Chase the Ace fundraiser.

Guy Mullen expressed the Elks' delight in supporting an organization that positively impacts the community.

"They do so much for this community. Every time they help a family, it helps the future of the entire area," he said. "The family does better, the children do better, and they can move forward at a better pace into a better world."

The Altona Elks have been running the Chase the Ace fundraiser for years.

"It's been one of our biggest fundraisers from day one," Mullen noted.

Previous rounds have yielded donations as high as \$10,000 for local efforts like the library relocation and the Kiddie Sunshine Centre expansion. Since 2022, the Altona Elks Lodge has invested over \$41,000 back into the



SUPPLIED PHOTO

From left: AAFRC board chair Dana Bergman, Altona Elks member Guy Mullen holding baby Eddie Allum, AAFRC coordinator Nina Edbom-Kehler, Altona Elks president Lloyd Schroeder, Susie Fisher and her daughter Margot as the service club presented the resource centre with a \$5,000 donation last month.

community.

AAFRC coordinator Nina Edbom-Kehler expressed her gratitude for the donation.

"Any donations are greatly appreciated, no matter how big or small. The Elks have always been one of

our biggest supporters," she said. "I love that this donation isn't tagged for anything. People need people. And a lot of the grants that we apply for have to do with acquiring things. We have enough things. We need people. So, the Chase the Ace money can go

towards wages."

Edbom-Kehler has already envisioned a new program called Mini-Chefs in the Kitchen to help address food insecurity.

"I overhear parents talking about how tough it is to purchase groceries because everything is so expensive, and how kids are often so picky in their eating. This program would bring kids into the kitchen, where they can help with the preparation and then take ownership of it," she explained.

"Our current facilitators have gotten together and discussed how many families are dealing with food insecurity. We thought about putting parents and their kids in the kitchen to learn about how meals are made. A lot of conversation goes on around the dinner table, and there could be conversations between parents about local sales and different ways to prepare food. We're still working on the details, but we want to bring that to some of our families."

The AAFRC has set aside \$28,000 for its programming budget this year, Edbom-Kehler shared, and the donation from the Altona Elks will significantly contribute to these efforts.

Starbucks to open in new Winkler strip mall

Late summer or early fall opening expected



SUPPLIED PHOTO

This six-unit strip mall under construction on Hwy. 14 beside the new Wendy's restaurant will soon be home to Winkler's first Starbucks location.

By Ashleigh Viveiros

The new strip mall going up on Hwy. 14 beside Wendy's has its first tenant.

Choice Realty announced Sunday that Starbucks Coffee will be opening up a location there later this year.

"We've been working on it for a few years now," Choice Realty owner/broker Dave Kasdorf said. "It took them a while to find the right location and to make the right kind of connection, but we've finally got to the point where we can announce it."

In addition to indoor seating space and likely an outdoor patio area, the restaurant will also offer a drive-thru option for its patrons.

It was the growth of the region that drew the international coffee company to Winkler, Kasdorf shared.

"They look for growth, which the

Pembina Valley has, so we know we are able to provide confidence to them that the area is growing and continues to grow," he said. "The Pembina Valley is definitely on the radar for a lot of companies and franchises ... they're always looking to go to areas that are growing."

The strip mall will have five other units in it, four of which are still available for lease. A fifth tenant has been secured but not yet announced.

Construction is well underway and it's anticipated the Starbucks could open in late summer or early fall.

It's a high-traffic area, Kasdorf noted.

"It's going to be a great location for any type of retail or business that wants to have the visibility," he said, urging entrepreneurs to get in touch with Choice Realty for leasing details.

Refugees hope for a brighter future in their new homes

By Ashleigh Viveiros

Regional Connections hosted its second annual Resettlement Assistance Program (RAP) year-end party last month, bringing together newcomers from all over the world in celebration of not just the holiday season but also the hope that exists for a brighter future.

RAP welcomed 123 refugees in 2024, shared coordinator Russelle Collantes. The Dec. 20 gathering, held at The Bunker in Winkler, was a chance to reflect on how far all these families have come.

"Despite challenges, here you are, standing strong and ready to start your journey," he told the assembled guests, which included RAP clients, staff, and community partners.

"We are here because of each other. The friendship, the mentorship, the connection, the support," Collantes stressed. "We are here because we believe in the strong foundation of the community."

Many of these families will go on to put down roots in the Pembina Valley communities that have welcomed them, shared Tina Barkman, settlement program director.

"It's about two-thirds that stay in our community," she said. "The other third, they eventually go and join family in other parts of the country."

RAP provides participants with a helping hand as they work to get on their feet in an unfamiliar country.

"Everything from picking them up from the airport, providing them with temporary housing, taking them grocery shopping for the first time, teaching them where to get different



SUPPLIED PHOTOS

Regional Connections' Resettlement Assistance Program (RAP) held a year-end celebration last month with some of the 123 refugees who moved to the Winkler-Morden-Altona area in 2024.

resources, helping them find permanent housing, introducing them to schools," Barkman explained.

Thanks to government funding, RAP families receive financial support for one year, giving them time to learn English and secure employment.

"We connect them with the different resources in the community," Barkman said. "Help them learn English, employability skills, life skills—everything."

"I always marvel at their resilience," she added, noting the families in this program are fleeing war in their home countries or have spent years in refugee camps abroad before finally

making their way to Canada. "In order to get here, it's been a long, arduous journey, and it's been very hard for them ... some of them have been through so much."

For Bikalira Furaha, who arrived in Canada this fall, this country represents a chance at a new life for her and her two children.

She's spent the past two decades in a sort of limbo after fleeing the war in her native country, the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

"When I left Congo, there was war between two countries: Congo and Rwanda," she shared. "There was a time that soldiers used to come in the

in South Africa ever since.

"We are privileged to come here," she said, noting there are few supports in South Africa for displaced people. "It's by the grace of God that I am here, because at a young age, Canada was my dream country. And now God made it possible."

She says she's found Canada to be a very welcoming place, with people eager to help her family settle in.

"There's peace here," she said, adding that it's such a far cry from what they've experienced elsewhere. "There is real peace here. People are loving."

After decades of doing whatever she could to put food on the table for her kids, Furaha says she is now working hard to find a job that will finally provide her family some longterm stability and give her the chance to give back to the community that has welcomed them with open arms.

"I'm very thankful for everything that they are doing to help us," she said.



ABOVE PHOTO BY ASHLEIGH VIVEIROS/VOICE

Left: The party include a hearty supper and plenty of fellowship. Above: Bikalira Furaha came to Canada for a safer home for her two kids.

houses, in the night. I had the bad luck to be visited." She survived the assault she suffered at the hands of those soldiers, and even saw one of them brought to justice. But, fearing retribution from his family and friends, she had to leave the country. Furaha has lived as a refugee

"THERE IS REAL PEACE HERE. PEOPLE ARE LOVING ... I'M VERY THANKFUL FOR EVERYTHING THAT THEY ARE DOING TO HELP US."

The **Voice**

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It's a new year



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OUR SISTER PUBLICATIONS



It is the year 2025 and by all accounts we should have flying cars, robot slaves, colonies on Mars and the Moon, clean nuclear fusion, and a Stanley Cup-winning Toronto Maple Leafs.

Instead, we have increased global conflict, weird fascist sectarian nationalism, growing climate catastrophe, and a Leafs franchise that hasn't won a cup since the middle of the last century.

Where did we go so wrong? How did we get here, and can we finally answer that question without blaming previous generations and accept some of the responsibility ourselves?

Yes, it is a new year, but all the garbage of previous years continues to pile up, intruding on our desire to create resolutions and focus on the new toys we got over the holidays.

Ah, the holiday season. This is a season with many different meanings depending on who you are, but there are many themes shared in common. Since we cannot solve the global issues pounding at our doors in the space of a humble column, let's focus on some manageable things a little closer to home. Things that seem small but matter most of all in the end.

Christmas is a time that reminds us of all we have and all we have been given. All the people, all the love, the benefits of home and happiness ... for some.

For others, it can be a reminder of all

they have lost or all they do not have: children, family, marriages, jobs, faith, friends, home, love and happiness.

I am grateful for all I have. I have amazing children who have journeyed through some very difficult times with me. I have a phenomenal wife who has done the same and in-laws who have welcomed me into their family with more love and compassion than I sometimes feel I deserve.

My sisters and brothers remain a source of strength, albeit a distant one. Even the ghost of my mum, who left far too soon, haunts my mind cheerfully like a loving Jiminy Cricket seeking to guide me from the many idiocies I would willing fall into if not for her voice, which remains like a powerful and wise echo.

I try to dwell on these things when I am sad, which happens often, and they are foundational for rebuilding my happiness.

On the flipside, when I have the emotional energy, I mourn for those who have lost (or never had) the things I have.

I realize all the good things in a life

can be lost like dry tinder to an unexpected wildfire. It is a sad reality that the spark of a word spoken in anger can destroy the once strong structure of a relationship that has been built over many years. Sometimes it is not so dramatic. Sometimes these things are eroded like a cliffside by the ever-present waters of an ocean.

One day you just notice that the great and dependable landscape you had come to love is simply no longer there and there's nothing you can do to rebuild it.

This is a season where, yes, we count our new blessings. But it should also be a season to remember the gifts of Christmases past we have been given and to not take them for

granted.

Protect your blessings. Hold them tight for as long as you have them and know that some are not so fortunate.

Consider the gifts that surround you. Do what you can to nurture them that they may strengthen and grow. May this season be a time of gratitude for you. May the new year be a time to recapture that which you feel you have lost.

"MAY THIS SEASON BE A TIME OF GRATITUDE FOR YOU."



By Peter Cantelon

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Please keep your letters short (excessively long letters are less likely 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.

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• DON'T MIND THE MESS

The big yellow bowl

My big yellow bowl was a wedding gift, about a million years ago. Other than a small album of poorly developed photos and a dress I'll never, ever, fit into again, it's probably the only physical thing I still have left from that special day.

Props to the Tupperware company, because decades later, other than a slightly discoloured lid and a small



By Lori Penner

melt mark from a brief encounter with a hot pan, that plastic bowl is still a functional part of my kitchen arsenal.

"Did Lori bring her big yellow bowl?" is a common question at family gatherings, not because of its vibrant colour, but because of its much-anticipated contents.

When that bowl shows up, they all know they're getting my famous tasty taco salad. I guess you could add "magical" to that list of adjectives, because it usually disappears within minutes.

This could be a huge ego booster, if there was anything even vaguely unique about my recipe. But the thing is, it's exactly like any other taco salad recipe in any church recipe book you'll find.

I've freely shared it dozens of times, without omitting or adding a single ingredient, and many recipients will respond later, saying, "I don't know what I did wrong, but my salad just

doesn't taste like yours."

They followed the recipe, word for word. It was just as expensive to make—cheese and ground beef are high ticket items these days. They used the same tortilla chips, the same homemade dressing.

I've come to the conclusion that the big yellow bowl is what made it perfect. Why? Because it's part of the memories attached to that salad.

Most of us can remember a certain container or casserole dish our mothers brought to gatherings or church potlucks. We gravitated to them, because we knew the contents were familiar and wouldn't deliver any weird ingredients or unpleasant surprises.

Among all the other Corningware dishes on the table, we knew the one with the little strawberry print on the side belonged to our mom, and it usually contained scalloped potatoes or hashbrown casserole. Nothing all that adventurous to the palate, but it was predictable and satisfying, and we wouldn't get the stink eye when the maker saw how much we left over.

This Christmas, my big yellow bowl

made its regular rounds. I stocked up early on taco seasoning and tortilla chips, scouting for sales on the hamburger and cheese.

Because we're creatures of habit, familiar things become beloved things. It's why we hang onto items that lost their appeal to anyone else decades ago. There are memories attached to them, and their dated colour and style only add to their charm.

We remember more than the contents. On a subconscious level, we remember the moments attached to them. The loved ones who were still with us the last time we enjoyed that dish. That special someone we brought to meet the family for the first time. The new baby we were carrying. The feeling of togetherness we felt while we heaped our plate, surrounded by the people who raised us, understood us, and loved us anyway.

So yes. It's just a big yellow bowl. But I know it's something I'll probably have to list in my will, explaining that they'll just have to take turns with it after I'm gone.

I'll tuck the recipe inside it, just in case.

• GUEST COMMENTARY

Working together to create an addictions-free future

Over the last few weeks, I have had the opportunity to meet and speak with community residents, front-line health-care staff, advocates and business owners about the Manitoba government's plans to locate a drug injection site in Point Douglas.

They were candid in sharing their concerns, but most importantly they all shared a common interest and willingness in helping their fellow Manitobans in a meaningful way.

I spoke with one individual who works on the front lines of our addictions system, who stressed how dire the treatment landscape has become in our province. They described their heartbreak of having to turn both adults and youth away at the door because there is a lack of available detox



By Carrie Hiebert, MLA

and treatment beds. If an individual is lucky enough to be able to access detox, they are then limited in moving into long-term recovery when no treatment beds are available. This gap in services has cost lives.

I have spoken with mothers who are grieving the loss of their children because of these barriers. This is a tragic reality for many families gathering for the holidays, desperate for hope and recovery for the people they love, but who are receiving little to no support from their government.

The unfortunate truth is that since coming into office, the NDP government has not increased capacity or opened new pathways to treatment for Manitobans struggling with addictions. Our province is at a crossroads in determining how to best allocate our finite resources to combat the opioid epidemic. If we look to other jurisdictions, models exist that prioritize long-term recovery and holistic health services over the creation of supervised drug injection sites. The current government has been more focused on investing in these sites and keeping individuals suspended in addiction, rather than investing in more detox and treatment beds, and the medical staff we need to support them.

We also know the drug supply has become increasingly more toxic and

fatal. In our recent fall sitting of the Legislature, I had the opportunity as the Official Opposition Critic for Housing, Addictions, and Homelessness to bring forward a resolution calling on the government to expand access, training, and supply of Narcan nasal spray to pharmacies across the province, and to include coverage for this life-saving medicine in the Take-Home Naloxone Distribution Program. Instead of supporting this important initiative, the NDP government refused, and blocked the motion from passing. Manitoba has some of the worst access to Narcan in the country. In Ontario, residents are able to visit their local pharmacy and pick up a Narcan Nasal Spray Kit at no cost. This saves lives. We can, and should, do the same in Manitoba.

Manitoba's financial resources are limited, and it is critical now more than ever that our tax dollars are being spent responsibly and in a manner that yields the best possible outcome for people and their families. By diverting a large portion of the addictions budget towards supervised injection sites, there is serious risk of neglecting other vital services that have been proven to be more effective in promoting and achieving long-term recovery, and giving those who are struggling with addiction control back over their lives. I have

called on the government repeatedly to prioritize investments in comprehensive mental and addictions health programs including medical detox beds, treatment beds, affordable supportive recovery housing, vocational programs, and community-based support organizations. Manitobans have yet to see meaningful action and investments in these areas.

Across the country, we have seen record high numbers of overdose deaths, and here in Manitoba we are on that path too. We know the needs of individuals and their loved ones who are struggling with addiction are complex. The province has an opportunity to adopt a holistic approach that encompasses prevention, intervention, treatment, and recovery. By following the example of other jurisdictions, and investing in programs and services that are proven effective, Manitoba can create a sustainable model that saves lives and gives families hope we can pull our province out of the addictions crisis together.

If we want to create a future free from addiction, we must work together to break down the barriers to treatment, and prioritize the well-being and lasting recovery of those suffering the most in our communities.

Carrie Hiebert is the MLA for Morden-Winkler

Morden Cheer delivers 384 hampers over the holidays



SUBMITTED PHOTOS

The Morden Thunder hockey team helped out with Morden Christmas Cheer Board deliveries last month. Right: Volunteers wrapped hundreds of toys in just a few hours.

By Lorne Stelmach

The Morden Christmas Cheer Board saw another holiday season of increased need in the community.

The final tally was 384 hampers, which was an increase from 364 the previous year, but even more telling perhaps is some of the details behind that number.

It included 101 more kids' presents than a year earlier, and it was estimated that the effort overall was helping out over 1,100 people in the community.

An additional challenge was that the hampers included a 15 per cent increase in grocery gift cards to help combat the rise in grocery costs.

"We gave more money in the grocery gift cards because food is so much

more expensive," said Morden Cheer representative Ali Wiens. "It was expected. We were planning for it, but it was a big increase in the number of hampers and as well in the amount of children's toys that were needed.

"It was a very big impact ... it's unfortunate that there is the need, but we are really fortunate that we have the volunteers and all the people who donate to help us be able to supply this to all the people who need the extra help."

For a number of years now, the cheer board has done gift cards for the food, although they do still collect non-perishable food and divide that among the hampers, which also include new unwrapped toys and books for the children.

Wiens noted there is a lot that goes



into the effort to make this all come together over a brief period of time, including having 526 gifts wrapped in about three hours.

There are many volunteers who helped behind the scenes such as members of the Morden Thunder hockey team, who helped load vehicles on delivery day, and there are a handful of volunteer drivers who have been coming out for over 20 years, including some multi-generational family groups.

"The three days getting ready for hamper delivery were very busy ... there were over 90 volunteers who helped over the three days," Wiens noted. "It all went off very successfully."

The cheer board were welcoming financial support going into the end of

the year, as donations had been lagging.

"We were a little behind compared to other years," said Wiens. "We were wondering if it was perhaps a bit because of the mail strike."

She extended a huge thank you to the community for another successful year, including to the many individuals, businesses and organizations who run fundraisers for the cheer board.

"We're just so grateful for all of the support. We couldn't do this without all of the people doing all of these things for us," said Wiens. "It makes us feel great every year ... we see that we're doing something really important for our community, and we feel very supported by the community."

Donations can be made online at mordenchristmascheer.com.

Portage-Lisgar MP reacts to PM's resignation

By Lorne Stelmach

The announcement Monday that Justin Trudeau would be stepping down as both Liberal leader and prime minister was certainly welcomed by Conservative Branden Leslie.

The Portage-Lisgar MP just laments the change is not happening any sooner, with Trudeau announcing Parliament would be prorogued until March 24.

"Obviously, the good news is that Trudeau's time of, I would say, recklessly destroying Canada is coming to an end soon but not exactly immediately," he said. "And that's the bad news is that he is cynically putting his Liberal Party's interests above the interests of our country.

The timing means that it really changes nothing in the very immediate future, Leslie noted.

"The executive gets to stay in power ... continuing to function without any parliamentary scrutiny for the next two and a half months," he said.

"He's quitting because he knows he can't win. All the polls say he can't win, and his Liberal caucus colleagues have frankly abandoned him as well as the NDP colleagues that have been propping him up," Leslie said. "They frankly have bought time to try to save their political hides."

In Trudeau's announcement, he noted he is a fighter and that "every bone in my body has always told me to fight because I care deeply about Canadians. I care deeply about this

country. And I will always be motivated by what is in the best interest of Canadians.

"And the fact is, despite best efforts to work through it, Parliament has been paralysed for months after what has been the longest session of a minority parliament in Canadian history.

"I intend to resign as party leader, as prime minister, after the party selects its next leader through a robust, nationwide, competitive process," he concluded.

"This country deserves a real choice in the next election, and it has become clear to me that if I'm having to fight internal battles, I cannot be the best option in that election."

Leslie emphasized how much an

election is needed, given the myriad concerns facing the country—everything from economic recession to massive crime and the threat of the U.S. proposed tariffs, among many other concerns.

"Obviously the polls are very encouraging right now that have us up significantly," he said, noting however that Conservative leader Pierre Poilievre's message to party members has been that "polls go up, polls go down. Work hard in your ridings to make sure that people are aware of what we are going to be putting in the window whenever the election does come around."

getinformed

Morden chamber announces award winners, nominees

By Lorne Stelmach

The Morden Chamber of Commerce is honouring a number of local individuals and businesses with its upcoming annual awards.

The chamber recently announced this year's recipients as well as the three finalists in the running for the Business Excellence Award.

Up for that honour are Krahn Friesen Neufeld CPAs, Pharmasave, and Eagleye. The winner will be announced at the Jan. 30 gala evening.

Meanwhile, the Entrepreneur of the Year Award is going jointly to Bevan and Sandra Wiebe, while the Lifetime Achievement Award will be presented to Morden Nurseries and Garden Centre

In addition, there are three Community Builder awards. In the business category, the honour goes to Gardenland Co-op, while the non-profit is Regional Connections and the individual recipient is Shannon Samatte-Folkett.

Sandra Wiebe said they were honoured to receive the Entrepreneur Award.

"Morden has been our home for the past 40 years, and we love Morden," she said, going on then to highlight some of their particular passions.

"We have made an attempt to restore the character of downtown Stephen Street by restoring and renovating historical buildings and building a historical looking

building," she said. "We have helped new business find places to start their businesses in Morden."

Wiebe has operated Gables Realty since 2011. They moved to a larger location in the circa-1926 barn at 565 Stephen Street in 2022.

"Gables Realty has been very active helping new immigrants during exploration visits and assisting to find accommodation for rentals as a service to the community," she noted. "And the second and third floors of the barn has an Airbnb which has hosted people from all around the world."

"It's been a labour of love," added Bevan. "The building projects downtown have been restoration projects to keep the history of Morden alive for generations to come."

In 2021, he took on a huge restoration project at 333 Stephen Street and then opened Stephen Street General, where he sells not just antiques but also vintage stuff, plants, giftware, puzzles and much more.

"I have tried to make it an interesting place to visit with various structural elements as well as a vintage canoe hanging from the ceiling and old signs including one counter and sign that are original to the building.

"In addition, I have various Morden memorabilia and old Morden photos on display. You may even get a history lesson from me."

Having recently celebrated its 60th

anniversary, Morden Nurseries and Garden Centre is certainly a fitting recipient of the Lifetime Achievement nod.

"It's nice ... it's a nice honour for the family," said owner Monique Rampton.

She highlighted how it has continued to be family-owned and operated. Her daughter Leah has is currently running the garden centre alongside her, so it is into the third generation now.

"It goes back to my dad's vision of buying the property and running the nursery ... and seeing a need for it in the area," said Rampton. "We've been there for so long, it's nice to be able to still be there ... growing for the whole area ... and having all of these things available here for the area is important," she said. "Providing that over the long term and just being a source of information and knowledge for people is important to us."

Community Builder Award recipient Shannon Samatte-Folkett, who is executive director of the Boundary Trails Health Centre Foundation, said it is humbling to be recognized in this way.

"I don't usually like attention on me. I'd rather the focus be on the foundation and the work we're doing to support health care in our community," she said. "While I feel a little shy about personal recognition, I'm grateful. I see this as a reflection of the incredible people around me—the

staff, volunteers and everyone who supports the foundation's efforts. It's not just about me. It's really about all of us working together to make a difference, and I'm just proud to be part of it.

"I believe that if you care about your community or a cause, you show it by getting involved," said Samatte-Folkett. "For me, it's about seeing the real impact, whether it's raising funds for new equipment, creating programs for staff wellness or simply bringing people together to support a common cause.

"I'm passionate about my work, and I love the challenge of finding new ways to support the community," she said. "Knowing the work we do helps to make life better for others keeps me going, and I find so much joy in building connections and making things happen behind the scenes."

Evan Toews, general manager of Gardenland Co-op, noted for them it is simply the fact that if their communities grow and are successful, it in turn helps the Co-op continue to grow and be successful.

"We're thrilled and honoured to be recognized in the community ... and for something like community building, which is what our co-op is all about," he said. "Being owned by the

Continued on page 10

"I BELIEVE THAT IF YOU CARE ABOUT YOUR COMMUNITY OR A CAUSE, YOU SHOW IT BY GETTING INVOLVED."

"MORDEN HAS BEEN OUR HOME FOR THE PAST 40 YEARS, AND WE LOVE MORDEN."



Congrats to our winners

We got the chance to present the winners of our Christmas writing contest with their prizes over the holidays. Winkler's Lewis Friesen, Gr. 2, won the K-4 division with his story The Winter Kingdom, while Morden's Hayleigh Sherrington-Voth, Gr. 6, clinched first place in the Gr. 5-8 category with her story The Magic Ornaments. Both winners received a gift card to the local movie theatre. Enjoy the show, guys!

PHOTOS BY ASHLEIGH VIVEIROS/VOICE

WFRC rings in 2025 in style



SUBMITTED PHOTOS

The Winkler Family Resource Centre's annual Family New Year's Eve Party gave parents and kids the chance to say goodbye to 2024 and hello to 2025 a few hours before midnight Dec. 31. From left: The early evening countdown included a balloon ball drop; young Mathea writes up some 2025 resolutions; Dylan Peter provided the soundtrack for the evening.

> CHAMBER AWARDS, FROM PG. 9

community and giving back to our community ... our ultimate goal is just seeing all the communities we serve succeed."

A representative of Regional Connections could not be reached for comment at press time.

Chamber executive director Clare

Agnew said in an earlier interview that the business community here has a vitality and success that needs to be both recognized and promoted.

"I look forward to celebrating the business community every year," she said. "One of our key functions is

to share our story and to encourage business investment in the area. It's a key and exciting function of the Morden Chamber of Commerce to have the opportunity to highlight, recognize and acknowledge the leaders in our business community."



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Morden unveils new seal, website

By Lorne Stelmach

The City of Morden started the new year with a new website and a new seal that will serve as the official crest.

Almost two years in the making, the new official seal was developed through extensive consultations with local community groups, cultural organizations, and historical experts, noted Mayor Nancy Penner at the unveiling.

"We just felt we had a stylized logo for the city ... but we felt we needed to have an official seal that gave structure to the city," she said. "It will be used only in very formal circumstances. It will be on our letterhead. It'll be on our business cards. It will be specially used for official occasions.

"We're very proud of all the symbolism ... especially the Indigenous component that went into it," Penner added. "We were very pleased to have this developed in-house. We worked hard ... Danny Rocha, our marketing and communications co-ordinator, developed the seal in consultation with a number of people."

The design is meant to reflect Morden's heritage, growth, and vision for the future. It also incorporates meaningful Indigenous symbolism, honouring the land's original inhabitants and reaffirming the city's commitment to reconciliation and mutual respect.

The seal incorporates a medicine wheel design with symbols of water and the Metis Infinity flag along with four quadrants that feature the provincial escutcheon with a bison, Bruce the mosasaur, corn and apple symbols, and the historic clock tower building downtown.

Swan Lake First Nation elder Dave Scott, who was consulted for the inclusion of Indigenous elements included, welcomed the idea of the city having Indigenous symbols within the seal.

"It is acknowledging the Ojibwa teachings around obiiimahdiizee [human beings first] and that there is a



The City of Morden's new official seal.

commitment to further our relationship going forward. This is a meaningful step in our shared journey of recognition, respect and reconciliation."

"The unveiling of Morden's new official seal is a proud moment for our city," noted Penner. "It honours our rich history while symbolizing a forward-looking, united community.

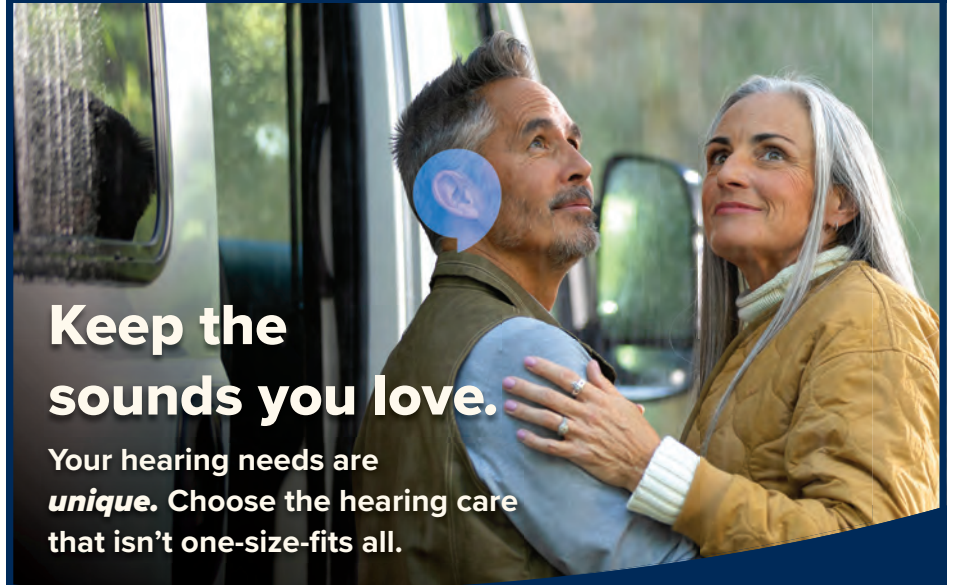
"We are equally excited to launch our redesigned city website, which will improve access to municipal services and showcase all that Morden has to offer."

Penner said the redesigned website features improved navigation, enhanced accessibility and a more modern look to better serve residents and visitors. The city's new web presence also has a new URL: morden.ca.

"We're very pleased with how it turned out," the mayor shared. "We're pleased with the content that is there. It has so much content in there, the public will be very pleased with the information that they can get from our new website.

"There's some fabulous features in there ... like if you want to know what your property taxes are going to be like, you can put in the value of your home and it'll tell you your property taxes ... so the content is second to none."

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Year ahead is poised to be just as busy as the last: Winkler mayor

By Ashleigh Viveiros

The City of Winkler embarked on more major capital projects in 2024 than it has in years, and while juggling so many things at once comes with no shortage of stress, their eventual completion will make for a stronger community that's ready for future growth, says Mayor Henry Siemens.

"It feels like we're trying to do everything, everywhere, all at once," he said in a year-end interview. "We're working on our wastewater treatment, we're working on our water treatment, we're working on the Winkler Centennial Arena renovations. There are so many things that all seem to be moving, and they kind of all happened at the same time."

All three of those multi-million dollar projects are currently on budget and on schedule; a year from right now they should all be operational, or very nearly so.

And yet tweaks are still being done, Siemens noted, most notably at the arena. Demolition there has wrapped up and the renovations are now set to begin.

"We're just about to design the final plans in terms of what that looks like," Siemens said. "We were able to make a few small changes, enhancements, to it to create its own entrance on the south side of the building."

The plan originally was for the south entrance to be closed off and the link from the Meridian Exhibition Centre to serve as the new entryway.

"But this is our main arena," Siemens said. "It deserves to have its own entrance. It deserves to have that presence that when you pull up you know you're at the main arena. So we're happy we're able to do that."

While getting the shovel in the ground on these projects was a highlight of the year, they are by no means the only ones, the mayor stressed.

"We also finished Icon Drive, pushing that through to Highway 14," he said, noting that paves the way for future development in that industrial area. "It's one more access into our industrial park."

Across town, the P.W. Enns Centennial Concert Hall, which is entering its 19th year of operations, got a major upgrade to its sound system, one Siemens says should serve the facility

well for years to come.

"We've made incremental upgrades as we've gone along, but we've never done one significant piece before. We'd kind of replaced pieces as they aged out, and then all of a sudden you end up with a hodge podge of different things. It worked, but it didn't work as well as we wanted it to. So this upgrade has created a significant improvement to what's there, and it gives us more life again in that facility."

The City also made its final payment last year on the Pembina Ave. fire hall, which was built 15 years ago.

"That is a \$384,000-a-year payment," Siemens noted. "It's money that can be redirected to other things to help keep the budget as reasonable as possible, and the ask of our residents as reasonable as possible."

The completion of Winkler's new strategic plan, though perhaps less flashy than these other projects, is nonetheless something Siemens pinpoints as another high point of 2024.

"As council, this is one of the guiding documents that we have that helps us determine where we want the community to grow," he said, noting it's a targeted plan that provides "clear direction to us when we get to our budgeting season."

Along those same lines, council's detailed asset management plan and its new multi-year bud-

get plan are both ensuring municipal leaders are able to more accurately and sustainably plan for the future when it comes to the maintenance or replacement of public equipment and facilities.

"We want to have an idea of, assuming that end of life is here [for a city-owned asset], are we planning for it and prepared for it when we get there?" Siemens explained. "It also looks at helping us plan out what our future thoughts are in terms of how we do finance it?"

"And then, longer term, we create a much more fiscally sustainable community."

One last highlight of 2024 came as the year was nearing its end: the launch of Winkler's first public transit system.

The on-demand system has been up and running for several weeks now, and already it has a number of regular users.

"From day one, we've had really



PHOTO BY ASHLEIGH VIVEIROS/VOICE

Winkler Mayor Henry Siemens is looking forward to the year ahead, which will see the city make progress on several major projects, including renovations at the Winkler Centennial Arena and the new wastewater treatment facility.

good uptake on it. And we've learned some things already," Siemens said. "We've been able to tweak it already. Our drivers are learning how a system like this works, and our community is learning how it works."

Information gleaned from this three-year pilot project will help council figure out what the next step in public transit is for the community.

"We're going to find out where people need rides from and where they need rides to so that when this is done, we're going to have the information that will help us make decisions," Siemens said, noting that might include discussions with the City of Morden about working together to expand the system there. Currently, the system only operates within Winkler and to Boundary Trails Health Centre.

Along those same lines, Siemens noted that regional partnership will continue to be a focus this year and in the years ahead.

He points to things like the committee that was recently formed to explore whether a regional airport makes more sense than Morden and Winkler expanding their own facilities.

Also ongoing is work on a bike path between Morden and Winkler, through Stanley, along Highway 14 and Highway 3. Siemens is optimistic that project—which has more moving parts than one might think, given the number of crossings through government land and public roadways that all require approval—is getting closer to becoming a reality.

"I believed last year we were close, and I believe again that we're close this year," he said. "I would really be excited to see that happen, because it's another one of those regional things that we can do more closely connect

our communities ... all three of us—Winkler, Morden, Stanley—has committed to this project.

"When we finally have the last remaining obstacles removed, I suspect it'll move fairly quickly after that."

Another feasibility study underway is looking into whether Morden might be able to hook into the new Winkler/Stanley wastewater treatment plant when it goes online to help them get through the next few years until they can get their own wastewater project off the ground.

"We are best when we're all growing together at a healthy rate," Siemens said. "Certainly there is competition and should be competition between Morden and Winkler and Stanley ... we push ourselves when we are competing. But we also need to make sure that we're all growing at the same time."

"When our treatment plant comes online we'll have capacity for 25,000 people, but we don't need all of that capacity [right away], so if there's a way for us to share some of that capacity with Morden for a period of time ... that would be a great thing."

These are just a few of the things in the works for the years ahead, Siemens noted, pointing to other major initiatives, like fundraising for a dedicated pickleball facility or the work local developers are doing in addressing the need for more affordable housing in the community ("It's gratifying to see the number of units that are being built right now ... that are going to put a significant amount of inventory on the market," he said).

Siemens also wanted to shine a spotlight on the work of community groups like Central Station Commu-

Continued on page 13

"We have all the makings of a great city"

By Lorne Stelmach

The challenges that come with being one of the fastest growing communities in the province are welcome ones for Mayor Nancy Penner.

There are significant issues to be dealt with here, but Penner is hopeful and optimistic about what may lay ahead for Morden.

"Morden is such a vibrant, beautiful growing community," she said in a recent year-end interview. "We have all the makings of a great city if we can just get our infrastructure figured out, and we are so close to getting it resolved."

"If we can get the co-operation we need to move this all forward, then look out because everything else is there to move Morden forward."

Penner reflected on the past year, which was her first as mayor, though she has served six years on city council.

"I really realize a lot has happened in this past year," she said. "There is a lot that council has been directly involved with and a lot that has directly impacted the city."

She cited the new École Discovery Trails school as a key development and one where the city was glad to be involved in donating a section of land for the track and soccer field.

"We do recognize the immense benefit it provides to both the youth in our community and the wider community," she said, noting how it will be a major amenity that will be a draw to Morden.

"It will be a big boost to the community," she said, adding how it will even help draw more growth and development to that northwest corner of Morden.

"That northwest area of the city is the growth area for residential," said Penner, noting further how land in that part of town is also reserved for a future second high school.

Penner also highlighted the impor-

tance of the addition of a new day care there, and given the growth in that area, she noted the city successfully lobbied to extend the slower speed zones.

Another key development was getting the regional landfill on board to process the city's compost, but she also highlighted the importance of residents being aware of what should and shouldn't go into the trash, recycling, and compost bins.

"We don't want loads being contaminated because we're not putting the right product in the right bin."

Penner highlighted a range of infrastructure upgrades in the city, such as a variety of sidewalk improvements and pathway projects.

There are many things that are not glamorous or even noticeable but very vital, she observed, citing such sewer and water upgrades as the new lift station by Decor Cabinets.

"Those are very expensive infrastructure costs ... the average taxpayer doesn't necessarily see the benefit."

"We're also expanding our industrial park, so we're putting in the roads right now and the sewer and water, so when a lot is sold, that new entity can come in and just set up shop. The infrastructure is all there and ready to go."

There of course then are capital lot levies which recoup some of that cost, Penner noted, citing the idea of how "growth will pay for growth."

It is a big challenge to keep up with those infrastructure needs in a growing community without putting too much of a burden on taxpayers.

"We have to be so diligent with how those tax dollars are spent," Penner said, adding they also often hope for provincial and federal funding for major projects, but that is not always possible.

"We often have high hopes a project will go," she said. "We come up with 50 per cent of the funding, and the other 50 per cent of the funding

is based on grants ... and it's disappointing when grant applications are denied because the programs are over-subscribed."

Morden's further development is restricted, she acknowledged, until wastewater treatment is addressed. There are options being considered, including the possible purchase of a section of land in the RM of Roland.

"We have already completed the geo-technical investigations on that piece of property. We're still waiting for the results to come back. Once we know that and, if we are moving forward on that piece of land, we will have public consultations," Penner said, adding the project would still also need environmental and other planning approval before moving forward.

Meanwhile, the city is also exploring the potential for Morden to at least temporarily hook up to the Winkler and RM of Stanley wastewater treatment plant now under construction.

"The community can be assured we are continually moving ahead on this project," said Penner.

She noted these challenges also do mean there are substantial rate increases for water and sewer service.

"There will be significant rate increases going forward, and it's all related to the need to upgrade both water and wastewater facilities for the city."

Penner went on to celebrate recreational developments, such as the new trail near the lake.

"And we had a busy year at the Access Event Centre," she added, citing the example of hosting a successful Scotties provincial ladies curling championship as well as various provincial hockey tournament and skating competitions. There were also additions to the basketball court and skate park.

"Youth and recreation is key ... we're trying to make more opportunities available," said Penner. "And for a



SUPPLIED PHOTO

Morden Mayor Nancy Penner says council is working hard on addressing the challenges the city is facing, including the need for a new wastewater treatment facility.

prairie town, Morden is so fortunate to have the lake."

Looking ahead, Penner celebrated the coming redesign and improvements for the First and Thornhill Street intersection.

"That looks like it's a go," she said. The intersection is under the jurisdiction of the Province of Manitoba. "Everybody knows the bottleneck that happens there and safety issues that intersection poses to our community ... there was a promise that the build will happen in 2025, so we've got our fingers crossed."

The city is also still working further extending reduced speed limits on that eastern entrance to Morden.

Finally, Penner noted they have also found a new home for the community garden north on First Street.

"We have 40 acres ... that will be the future home of soccer fields and a recreation area ... and the new community garden will be up there."

Penner concluded by noting council has held a strategic planning session that identified key priority areas.

"We will release those plans early in the new year ... then we will have an open house in January."

> SIEMENS, FROM PG. 12

nity Centre, the Winkler and District Food Cupboard, and Central Community Homes, among many others.

While segments of the community flourish and grow, not everyone is enjoying the spoils of that growth, he pointed out.

"When we look at all of our inflationary pressures ... a rising tide doesn't lift all boats quite equally,"

he said. "There are really good community service organizations that are helping to make things a little bit more fair."

The work of these and other like agencies providing social supports to those who most need them are ensuring "we grow the community in a healthy way," Siemens said, adding that "the generosity of our commu-

nity to support all of the needs that are there, it continues to amaze me ... we have people who always step up and make it happen."

"Another one of those things that makes Winkler special is that all of these different groups who see what's happening and what's needed, that they're there working together to be able to provide that."

Siemens said he looks to the future of this community with optimism.

"I really am very, very hopeful and extremely optimistic about Winkler's future, about Southern Manitoba's future, as we find more and more ways to work together to do the things that our residents want and need."

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RM Stanley working to keep up with growing infrastructure needs

By Lorne Stelmach

The challenges for the RM of Stanley in the past year and the year ahead are the same: the pressure of keeping up with the infrastructure needs in a rapidly growing area.

There are the larger scale projects like wastewater treatment, but there is also all of the smaller scale work needed in a municipality like Stanley.

"That is the biggest thing. Infrastructure costs have risen considerably," Reeve Ike Friesen said recently. "We can't do it alone ... we try to do it regionally with Morden and Winkler if possible to share the costs."

At the same time, there is also the need to keep tax increases within reason.

"We don't want to necessarily put the burden on taxpayers," Friesen stressed. "It's trying to get outside dollars to help us out with it. I think

the more we try to work together on these projects, we can hopefully get a little more attention from the next levels of government to this region."

Friesen touched on a number of highlights from the past year starting with the impact of two very heavy rain events and the resulting flooding.

"It tied up some resources and time for much of the year. It kept our crews busy repairing damage," he said. "It's something we of course can't predict."

Friesen then noted the importance of the corridor water reservoir that was built near Boundary Trails Health Centre.

"It's in full operation and ready to supply water for many years ahead now," he said.

The highway corridor area is also being prioritized for some other improvements.

"We started on the corridor road upgrade program with pavement on Road 27 south at Elias Woodworking," said Friesen. "That's something that we're doing now is working on roads adjacent to the highway."

Another priority continues to

be trees and shelterbelts; there were nearly 300 trees planted in various parks in the municipality last year.

"We still have good uptake for the field shelterbelt program that Stanley and Pembina Valley Watershed District sponsor," Friesen noted. "We have 16 miles that have been planted in the last three years."

There has also been a range of other ongoing work, such as 16 new water connections, over 22,000 hours of work on equipment, and about 85,000 tonnes of road gravel applied. In total, the RM has about 3,500 culverts and crossings and 19 bridges to maintain across the municipality.

Friesen noted there was 500 metres of new culverts done in the past year. Some had been damaged due to the spring flooding while others were simply due for replacement.

"We do keep a record of where culverts need to be placed. We have an inspection program that we rate them on when they need to be replaced."

The reeve went on to note Stanley council has worked on and approved a new bylaw enforcement bylaw.

"This new bylaw is to be used to better enforce any illegal heavy aggregate hauling, and that will start in January," he explained.

Also in the works is an assessment of their capital lot levy.

"We hired consultants to analyze and review the capital lot levy to help



SUPPLIED PHOTO

Stanley Reeve Ike Friesen notes regional partnerships are key to many projects in the works in the area.

better support the cost of development in the RM. That's something council will look at and approve in the beginning of the new year."

The municipality is also working together with the cities of Winkler and Morden on having a regional airport study done.

"This study will help us determine if it is a need or something to work on together as a region."

Friesen is anticipating they will finally get provincial approval for the pathway project between Winkler and Morden in the months ahead.

"In conversations with them, it's very close ... so this could then go to tender in the early part of the year ... that's exciting for us."

The RM had also hoped for funding for pathways in Chortitz and Blumenfeld, but those grants were not approved.

"That's something we will look for an opportunity again if there's a grant that would qualify," Friesen said.

And of course, the municipality looks forward to the completion of the water treatment project it has partnered with Winkler on. It is now also possible that Morden may be able to at least temporarily hook up to the facility, until they can get their own project off the ground.

"We hope to go to tender shortly on our portion of the corridor and village projects," Friesen said. "We will have public consultation happening soon."

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sports & recreation

Morden's Team Sugden wins U18 men's title

By Voice staff

Morden's own Team Sugden and Gimli's Team McPherson clinched the titles at the Asham U18 Men's and Women's Provincial Curling Championships held at the Morden Curling Club Jan. 1-5.

Team Sugden—made up of Nash Sugden, Tyler Fehr, Tanner Treichel, and Ryan Thiessen—went undefeated in four days of games, ultimately downing Logan Zacharias from the Heather Curling Club 6-4 in the championship final to earn a seat at the Canadian U18 Curling Championships in Saskatoon next month.

Tied 3-3 after six ends, Sugden had a shot at a game-winning four on the seventh. He rubbed a guard to give up a steal to trail by one coming home, but didn't have to throw his final stone as Zacharias slid deep in the 12 foot circle with his final stone, facing three.

Team Sugden's coach, Gord Titchkosky, received the 2025 Provincial

Coaching Award on the men's side. The women's award went to Team Brown's Cory Barkley.

The fellow hometown team led by Lane Fehr and including Colton Graham, Tyson Griffin, and Mitch Walske had a rougher week, losing their first two games before bouncing back with an 8-6 win against Team Newcombe, only to fall to Team Sugden 3-8 in their final match of the tournament.

On the women's side, Caitlyn McPherson, Julie Magnusson, Robyn Buchel, and Jorja Buhr defeated Team Buchalter out of West St. Paul 9-5 in the final to win it all.

Representing our region was Team Krahn out of Carman, made up of Keira Krahn, Bethany Allan, Hannah Smith, and Ella Robins.

The foursome won five games straight before coming up short against Team Buchalter (5-6) and McPherson (6-7), ultimately losing 6-7 once again to the championship team in the semi-final.



PHOTOS BY RICK HIEBERT/VOICE
Coach Gord Titchkosky, Ryan Thiessen, Tanner Treichel, Tyler Fehr, and Nash Sugden with the U18 trophy. The Morden team won it in front of a hometown crowd Sunday. Right: Team Sugden in action.



Representing our region in the women's event was Team Krahn, who got knocked out of the playoffs by Team McPherson, the eventual champions, in the semi-final.



On the ice at the Morden Curling Club.



Team Fehr, also from Morden, were 1-4 at the championship tournament.

Flyers down Nighthawks 5-2, have high hopes for back end of season

By Ashleigh Viveiros

The Winkler Flyers started 2025 with a win last weekend, defeating the visiting Niverville Nighthawks 5-2 Sunday evening.

Goals from Connor Jensen in the first and Nicholas Mckee in the second had the home team up 2-0 before Niverville finally got on the board.

The third period saw Sully Ross and Will Lyons widen the gap to 4-1 before the Nighthawks managed their second of the night. Mckee then put the final nail in the coffin with 1:59 left on the clock.

Liam Ernst turned away 21 shots on goal as the Flyers outshot the visitors 26-23.

The win brings Winkler's record to 23-6-2, good for 48 points and second place in the MGEU East Division standings.

Winkler trails the first-place Steinbach Pistons by six points and has just two points up on the third-place Portage Terriers, but have several games in hand over both teams.

This week Winkler was slated to host the Neepawa Titans Tuesday and then to head into Selkirk to play the Steelers Saturday. On Sunday they'll be in Portage to face the Terriers.

With more than half of the 58-game MJHL hockey season now behind them, head coach and general manager Matthew Melo is feeling pretty good about where the team is at right now.

"We're really pleased with how things have gone," he said of the defending champions' output through the first few months of the 2024-25 campaign. "Things haven't been perfect—there's been ups and downs and learning curves and areas of growth—but as a whole, we're really excited about where our group's at and what we've developed so far within our group in terms of our identity and who we are and how we want to play, and how guys have come along in their own individual games.

"Obviously there's always a couple games that you're kind of kicking yourself and saying, 'Hey, we'd like that one back' or, you know, maybe we feel like we shot ourselves in the foot and could have had a few more points here or there, but as a whole we're really excited about where we are headed into the second half."

Melo feels the team is "displaying a lot of depth" across every position.

"[Goalie] Liam Ernst has had an incredible year; you're seeing that culminate with three shutouts in a row here recently," he said. "Then on defence—it took a little bit for our D to get going as a group, but in my opinion, we have the best D-core in the league. I think now we're starting to see our group really round into form with our defensive play, and a large part of that is coming through our veteran D-core in the way they're playing. And then up front, we have a really good core of veteran forwards.



PHOTO BY RICK HIEBERT/VOICE

Flyer Nicholas Mckee battles with Nighthawks Avery Laliberte for puck control in Sunday's 5-2 Winkler victory.

They're playing to their potential.

"And our young guys are coming along and they've been given quite a bit of opportunity," Melo added. "They've just done an incredible job developing and growing and being responsible and dependable.

"We haven't given up a lot of offense, we play really tight against and I think it's really difficult for teams to generate anything against us pretty much every night—which is exactly how we want to play."

If there's room to grow it's in the area of consistency, Melo observed.

"Really, for a lot of big games, in-division games, our guys step up and

bring their best, so we talk a lot about how can we stack our best with another day ... how can we continue to stack those days consistently ... how do we not have these days or these moments of drop-off?

"I think the other piece would be probably on the offensive side, just continuing to generate a little more offense, to score a little more," Melo said. "Those would be two areas that we talk about or we focus on quite often and what could just lead to sustained and continued success down the home stretch."

Male U18 Hawks looking to turn things around

By Lorne Stelmach

The male U18 Pembina Valley Hawks are looking to turn things around now as they move into the second half of the season.

They were currently riding a seven-game winless skid going back to a 4-3 overtime loss against the Winnipeg Wild Dec. 11.

The streak was extended this past weekend with a 4-2 loss to the Winnipeg Bruins Friday and then a 5-2 defeat by the Wild Sunday, but coach Jeff Andrews remained hopeful for his team, which is sitting in ninth

place at 11-14-3-1 for 26 points.

"Our group is optimistic about what we can accomplish in the second half of our season," he said. "We have lots of ground to make up in the standing but feel we can challenge for a play-off spot and be a really hard test for any of the teams we will face in the playoffs."

Against the Bruins, the Hawks couldn't quite recover after giving up three straight goals to Winnipeg, which outshot Pembina Valley 37-19. Tegan Fehr and Adrien McIntosh scored for the Hawks while Kars-

en Dyck took the loss in net with 33 saves.

The Hawks were within one of the Wild at 3-2 late in the third period before Winnipeg put it away with a pair of empty-net goals.

Ryder Wolfe scored both Hawks' goals, and Ryler Gates stopped 31 of the 34 shots he faced with Winnipeg holding a 36-28 edge in shots overall.

Just before the holiday break, the Hawks had a dropped a 6-2 decision Dec. 21 to Eastman where the Selects took control with four goals in the first period.

Pembina Valley then trailed 2-0 and 3-1 at the intermissions before falling 6-1 to the Interlake Lightning Dec. 22.

The Hawks are eight points behind Interlake, Parkland, and the Winnipeg Thrashers while sitting just two ahead of Kenora and three up on Norman.

After a game this Tuesday against Central Plains (results were not available at press time), the Hawks are set to take on the Wild on the road Saturday and Eastman at home Sunday.

Rock Thrower Research Project motivates local curlers

By Siobhan Maas

A crowd of 40 curlers from across southern Manitoba gathered at Morris Curling Club's Cargill Curling Training Centre (CCTC) last month to participate in the Canadian Rock Thrower Research Project.

Chris and Lorne Hamblin, Morris-area residents and Level 4 NCCP Olympic coaches, are visionaries in the sport of curling. After Lorne coached three of their sons to win the World Junior Curling Championships in 2002, the pair knew they had found their calling, leading to five years of high caliber coaching and working with international deaf athletes.

Established in 2016 through efforts by the Hamblins, the CCTC has been supported by many grants to make year-round curling training possible in Manitoba, including the installation of a geothermal unit.

Working closely with curling teams from around the world, the Hamblins have long been curious about a curling rock's dynamics and how to ensure throwing rock consistency during training sessions. The duo worked with Manitoba's Eascan Automation

Inc. to develop the world's first robotic curling rock thrower, unveiled in 2017. This machine remained, until 2024, the first rock thrower capable of delivering rocks with a high degree of accuracy. A similar machine now also exists in Japan.

Last fall, the provincial government awarded a \$50,000 grant to the CCTC towards research and recruitment. The grant allows the centre to support curlers in two aspects: research and the development of educational camps for all levels of curlers, including high performance athletes, and the recruitment of youth.

The Dec. 28 event in Morris studied the curling world's question of how a rock's end point is impacted by environmental and human variables—weight, curl, sweeping, and trajectory—with the constant nature of the rock thrower ensuring an accuracy level of 99 per cent.

Participants of all ages and skill levels took part in the real-time research, including Canadian curler Darcy Robertson alongside junior curlers, to discover the most effective sweeping techniques, understand how rotation affects the rock's horizontal movement across the ice, and identify optimal release points.

Quinn Jones from East St. Paul, "plays for fun" and participated in the project to "understand the importance of weight and rotation. It was good to see the different tests in action."

Following the morning's on-ice experience, Ellie Friesen, 13-year-old skip for Altona's Team Friesen, remained curious to the variables affecting "where the rock ends up."

Despite not yet having played any formal games as a younger team, Sadie Froese from Team Kim was eager for the upcoming Feb. 1-2 Youth Spiel in Altona.

Set up for all Manitoba ath-



Volunteers measuring accuracy of different variable impacts on rock end point.



PHOTOS BY SIOBHAN MAAS/VOICE

Participants analyze release point and rotation impacts on end point as the Morris Curling Club hosted the Canadian Rock Thrower Research Project last month. Below: Canada's only robotic rock thrower with Lorne Hamblin (right).



letes curling in recreation, regular, or stick leagues, Chris Hamblin hoped "this event generated more questions for curlers. This was an opportunity for the average curler to try things they see on television. The information collected isn't so much a specific measurement of sweeping, but rather a recognition that each player needs to test out their own techniques and abilities."

The rock throwing machine is available for rent if teams wish to evaluate and hone their curling skills. If enough interest exists, the Morris Curling Club hopes to host another session in the future.

Results from the study will be released only to participants prior to submission to the government grant committee.

Morden Bombers double up on Warren Mercs 6-3

By Ashleigh Viveiros

The Morden Bombers were the lone local SEMHL team to play last weekend, and they certainly started off the new year right.

Morden welcomed the Warren Mercs to town Saturday, and doubled up

on them 6-3.

Mike Rey and Colin Shirley both had two-goal nights while singles came courtesy of Jay Fehr and Colin Hildebrand.

Reed Peters made 43 saves in net as the Mercs outshot the Bombers 46-38.

The win bolsters Morden's record to 5-4, good for 10 points and seventh place in the 10-team South Eastern Manitoba Hockey League.

At the top of the standings this week is Ste. Anne (9-2), Springfield (8-2-1), and Red River (7-3-1). In fourth place

are the Winkler Royals (7-3-0-1).

This Saturday sees the Bombers host Portage while the Red River Wild plays in Warren. On Sunday, the Royals host Notre Dame and the Bombers play in Warren.

“We’re proud of their progress and what lays ahead”

By Lorne Stelmach

As the female U18 Pembina Valley Hawks kicked off the new year and head into the stretch run, coach Matt Victor is encouraged and hopeful about the team’s chances.

“It’s been a decent start,” said Victor, who saw the Hawks slip to 9-14-1 for 19 points but remain in sixth place after a 3-2 overtime loss Friday to the Winnipeg Avros and a 3-1 defeat by Westman Sunday.

Victor said the team has talked a lot about the process of learning from experiences—experiencing a loss, learning from it, and gaining wisdom moving forward.

“Our group deals with adversity with a never-give-up attitude,” he said. “A great example of this was our last game before the holiday break, being down 2-0 late in the third versus Central Plains, with it being our fourth game in five nights, coming back to tie it and winning in the shootout.”

The Hawks did well to push the first-place Avros to overtime. They had it even at 2-2 after 40 minutes on second period goals by Jessica Anderson and Skyla Hildebrand, and they outshot Winnipeg 40-33.

Against Westman, the Hawks’ attack was mostly shut down with



VOICE FILE PHOTO

The Pembina Valley Hawks U18 ladies team are in sixth place with a record of 9-14-1 for the season so far.

the Wildcats holding a 38-16 edge in shots. The lone Pembina Valley goal was in the second period by Emma Roch.

Earlier, leading into the holiday season break, the Hawks had kicked off a busy stretch with a big 3-2 over-

time victory over the Winnipeg Ice Dec. 18. There were mixed results then starting with a 5-3 loss Dec. 20 to the league-leading Winnipeg Avros followed by a 4-1 defeat by the Yellowhead Chiefs Dec. 21. The Hawks turned things around Dec. 22 as they

came back from a 2-0 deficit to pick up a 3-2 shootout win over the Central Plains Capitals.

The stretch run continues this weekend with the Hawks hosting Westman Friday then visiting Central Plains Sunday.

“Going into the new year stretch, I’m confident that our group will continue to show more consistency and battle with the top teams in the league,” said Victor.

“I expect our goaltending tandem to push each other,” he said, adding he is looking to his “defence core to control pucks and win defensive zone battles and forwards to continue their improved creativity in the offensive zone, finding seams to capitalize inside the dots.”

“We are proud of their progress and what lays ahead for this team moving into final stretch and into playoff push.”

“OUR GROUP DEALS WITH ADVERSITY WITH A NEVER-GIVE-UP ATTITUDE.”

Pembina Valley Twisters hoping to improve in league standings

By Jo-Anne Procter

The Pembina Valley Twisters are gearing up for a fresh start in the Manitoba Major Junior Hockey League (MMJHL) in the new year as they look to climb out of the league’s last place spot.

Their latest game against the River

East Royal Knights showcased just how competitive they can be. The game at Terry Sawchuk Arena ended in a 3-2 overtime loss, giving the Twisters a point.

The Royal Knights Liam Urciuoli opened the scoring for his team in the first period followed shortly by Twisters’ Gage Ferguson’s goal assist-

ed by Dominic Rooney and Matthew Bighetty.

There was no scoring in the second period. Urciuoli scored again at the beginning of the third period. Twisters’ Cohen Thomas evened up the score with a power play goal, assisted by Austin Spicer and Josh Guilford. Royal Knights Raf Padua scored the

overtime goal for the Royal Knights. Twisters goaltender Maysen Mazurat made 29 saves in his team’s overtime loss.

Looking ahead, the Twisters will face the Raiders on Jan. 10 and the Transcona Railer Express on Jan. 12.



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get informed

Rhineland reeve reflects on a year of challenges and progress

By Lori Penner

The Municipality of Rhineland is reflecting on a productive 2024.

Reeve Don Wiebe highlighted several vital projects that were completed last year, starting with the Border Road east of Gretna.

"The road was seriously compromised due to some high-water events over the last couple of years. We made a claim under the Disaster Financial Assistance (DFA) program. Our application was accepted, and as a result, the road was stabilized at a cost of \$3.1 million. We're very happy to have that completed."

Two other DFA projects are currently in progress, Wiebe added. One is a three-span bridge across Buffalo Creek on Rd. 9, and the other is a repair to Buffalo Crossing on Rd. 7 West.

"They've been approved, but we're waiting for the province to give the final okay. But that work should proceed soon."

Rhineland is also completing two potable waterline looping projects. The first is a line near the village of Blumenort.

"They have very low pressure there, so we're twinning that line, which should help with that. We also have a twin line from the Plum Coulee reservoir to the West Ag Park. That's almost complete, as well."

The year also saw the completion of the new fire hall and public works building in Plum Coulee. Rhineland invested \$800,000 into the project.

"That was a big project, and many people were very happy to have it completed," noted Wiebe.

The Gretna Arena likewise received significant upgrades, including new

doors, dehumidification systems, and major improvements to the entrance and viewing area.

"We're getting very good reports about that," the reeve shared.

Another essential but less glamorous project was the desludging program at the Plum Coulee lagoon. The Municipality of Rhineland council approved the 20-week treatment through Clean Water Pro based in Carman earlier last year. According to the company's information, the sludge level went down between six and 14 inches throughout the lagoon.

"It certainly extends the life of the lagoon and delays mechanical desludging processes, which are really quite expensive," Wiebe said. "So, we're really pleased with these results so far."

Rhineland's Priority Grain Roads project was not completed last year, but Wiebe is confident it will be finished in 2025.

"We're dealing with reinforcing 30 miles of road. We had a side issue with flooding on Rd. 9. The drain was threatening to flood on the south side of the road, so we took extra time to build up that road by a foot and a half."

Wiebe noted that Rhineland will continue to document farmers' concerns and demonstrate the need for provincial drain maintenance.

"We're always dealing with drainage issues and struggling with how to cope with heavy summer rains, which can result in significant crop damage. It's a complicated issue, so we're seeking hydrologists to help in problem areas. Finding solutions for low-lying areas is quite complex and difficult. That's been a big struggle for 2024. We've also been sharing

our concerns with the province about low-level crossings and provincial bridges. Some of them are showing considerable wear."

In terms of municipal collaboration, Rhineland held numerous meetings with neighboring municipalities, including Morris, Montcalm, and Stanley.

"These meetings are productive in not only sharing concerns but coordinating water management and road maintenance," Wiebe said. "We ensure communication and help with planning."

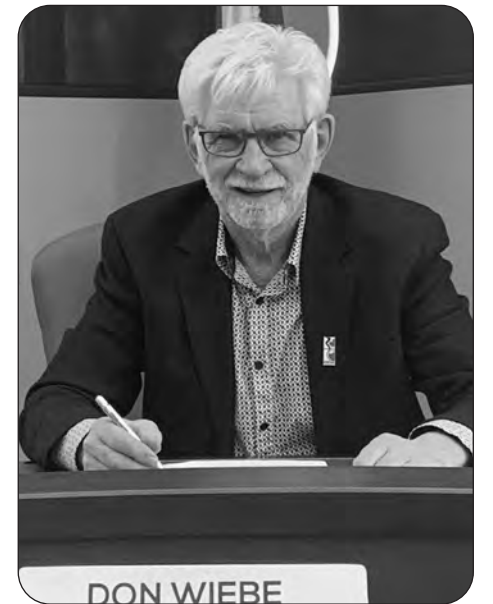
Rhineland also worked closely with the Town of Altona concerning health care and economic development. Wiebe said they will continue to work with Altona to get the province to approve a traffic study, which they feel could help resolve the Highway 30 access management issue.

Rhineland has also collaborated with the Pembina Valley Water Co-op (PVWC) and the other 13 member municipalities to secure sustainable drinking water for the growing region.

"Progress is going well on the Letellier water treatment plant. The new reservoir is finished and operational. There's also a lime plant. The next strategy is to develop a membrane plant. We use both methods simultaneously. Hopefully, we will continue that."

A detailed study regarding all possible water sources in the region was completed, and the results will soon be shared with the PVWC board.

Rhineland bid farewell to 2024 with a well-deserved pat on the back. The municipality, a member of the Manitoba Good Roads Association, was



SUPPLIED PHOTO

Municipality of Rhineland Reeve Don Wiebe says 2024 was a productive year, and he expects 2025 to be as well.

recently notified that it had received two awards: The Provincial Shield Award for the Most Improved Roads and the Judge's Shield award for the Best Maintained Roads.

"We're really excited about it. It was kind of like a Christmas gift," Wiebe said. "It really reflects the hard work and pride that our Public Works staff takes in improving and maintaining our roads. It was a positive way to end 2024."

He commended the commitment and diligence of all Municipality of Rhineland staff members.

"I want to acknowledge all the hard work they put into their roles. I also want to recognize members of council for their dedication and service to the municipality. It's been good all around. It's been a progressive year."



Students spread holiday cheer

The Cultural & Educational Center LEADER helped spread some joy in Morden last month. Students made and presented Christmas cards to the residents of Tabor Home. The youth dance group Prestige were also on hand to perform for the care home's residents.

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PUBLIC NOTICE

PUBLIC NOTICE

The City of Winkler purchases approximately 35% of its water from the Pembina Valley Water Cooperative (PVWC). The Public Utility Board has approved a rate increase for PVWC in the amount of \$0.29/1000 gallons, effective January 1, 2025. This rate increase reflects a "pass through" rate increase of \$0.10/1000 gallons for Winkler consumers.

Public notice is hereby given that the utility rate increase will be \$1.13/1000 gallons effective for the March 15, 2025, quarterly billing in the City of Winkler. That being from the present water rate of \$8.76/1000 gallons to \$9.06/1000 gallons and the sewer rate from \$8.42/1000 gallons to \$9.25/1000 gallons.

Jody Penner
City Manager

PUBLIC NOTICE

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

UNDER THE PLANNING ACT

The City of Winkler, under the authority of The Planning Act, will hold a hearing at which time and place the council of the City of Winkler will receive representation from the applicants and any other persons who wish to make representations in respect of the Rezoning Application No. RZ2024-007 and By-law No. 2329-24, being an amendment to Winkler Zoning By-law 2271-21 of the City of Winkler.

The general intent of the above By-Law No. 2329-24, is to zone the land described below, Namely:

675 Pth 14, legally described as Lot 2, Plan 71465 MLTO.

as shown outlined in a heavy solid line on the map attached hereto as Schedule "A", and forming part of this by-law, be rezoned

FROM: "DR" DEVELOPMENT RESERVE
TO: "CG" COMMERCIAL GENERAL

A copy of the above By-Law No. 2329-24 and supporting material may be inspected by any persons between the hours of 9:00 AM and 5:00 PM, Monday to Thursday and 9:00 AM and 4:30 PM, Friday, in the City Office.

Date of Hearing: January 28, 2025
Time of Hearing: 6:30 p.m.
Location: Winkler Council Chambers, 185 Main Street, Winkler, Manitoba

DATED at Winkler, in Manitoba, this 11th day of December 2024.
Designated Officer, City of Winkler



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CAREERS

BUNGE

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Preference will be given to those candidates holding a valid provincial Millwright or Industrial Mechanic ticket. Candidates who do not hold a valid ticket will be expected to enrol in the apprenticeship program to obtain their ticket as soon as possible.

Overtime and on-call duties are required. The successful applicant will possess excellent written and verbal communication skills, trouble shooting skills, and be a team player.

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A job description for this position can be found online on the Bunge website: https://obs.bunge.com/. enter "Altona" in the field "Search by Location". Click on "Maintenance Mechanic/Millwright" to read the description. Applications should be made online with an attached resume.

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Insurance Specialist

Competition: #2024-25-18
Location: Morden

Manitoba Agricultural Services Corporation (MASC) has an exciting opportunity for you to be a part of a team that values building relationships, enables change, and supports the agriculture industry in Manitoba. Come join our team as we offer an engaging work environment, competitive pay, a comprehensive benefits package (including pension plan), and we encourage a healthy work-life balance.

Reporting to the Senior Insurance Specialist, the Insurance Specialist is responsible for providing a high level of personalized customer service to Manitoba producers. The successful candidate will be the insurance expert for the service centre team. In this role, you will be responsible for ensuring that MASC's insurance products are administered effectively and resolving client issues. You will also be responsible for planning and implementing the insurance-related goals and targets as part of the service centre and divisional strategic plans.

MASC values excellence, integrity, and accountability. We strive to enhance existing products and develop new products, transform service delivery to enrich the client experience, pursue customer driven organizational change, and maximize performance, engagement, and development of all employees.

MASC has five core competencies: communication, decision making, initiative & innovation, leadership, and organization. Competencies relate to every position at MASC and along with the technical requirements, are included in the qualifications for all positions at MASC.

ESSENTIAL QUALIFICATIONS:

- Post-secondary education in agriculture and related experience or an equivalent combination of related education and experience may be considered.
- Experience providing a high level of customer service.
- Experience interpreting and applying regulations, contracts, policies, and procedures.
- Experience in the agricultural industry.
- Knowledge in sales and marketing.
- Knowledge of agricultural insurance.
- Ability to use Microsoft products (SharePoint, OneDrive, Excel, Word, Outlook, PowerPoint) in a cloud-based environment.

DESIRED QUALIFICATIONS

- Ability to communicate verbally in both official languages (French and English) is an asset.

CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT:

- Must be legally entitled to work in Canada.
- Must possess a valid driver's licence, access to a vehicle and the ability to travel within the Province of Manitoba.

SALARY: \$65,307 to \$ 78,395 per annum
CLOSING DATE: **January 17, 2025**
COMPETITION: #2024-25-18
APPLY IN WRITING TO: MASC – Human Resources
 Unit 100 – 1525 First Street S.
 Brandon, MB R7A 7A1
 E-mail: hr@masc.mb.ca

We believe diversity strengthens our ability to provide excellent customer service in a positive work environment. We encourage all to apply. Only those selected for further consideration will be contacted.



www.masc.mb.ca

PUBLIC NOTICE



RURAL MUNICIPALITY OF STANLEY ANNUAL PUBLIC NOTICE Additions to the Voters List and/or Personal Security Protection Requests

In accordance with Section 36 of The Municipal Councils and School Boards Election Act (MCSBEA), the Rural Municipality of Stanley Voters List is open for changes or revisions.

- Any person who is eligible to vote in municipal elections in the Local Authority of Rural Municipality of Stanley can have his or her name added to the Voters List or have any information about the voter on the Voters List corrected.
- Any person can request to have his or her name and address obscured from the Voters List.

A person whose name has been obscured will receive a Personal Security Certificate and identification number. In a civic election, that person may only vote by Sealed Envelope Ballot and cannot vote in person at the regular or advance voting places. To implement the above, a written request must be submitted to the RM of Stanley, in person, by phone, mail or email to:

Terry Penner, Chief Administrative Officer
 1-23111 PTH 14
 Stanley MB R6P 0B1
 Phone: (204) 325-4101
 info@rmofstanley.ca

The next General Municipal Election takes place on October 28, 2026.

REGISTRATION



Western School Division

Kindergarten Registration for September 2025

In order for the schools to prepare for the 2025-2026 school year, it is important that parents register their children for Kindergarten from **January 17 to January 31, 2025**.

Additional information is available at www.westernsd.mb.ca.

Registrations may be completed and submitted electronically, or a registration package can be picked-up at the school and returned between 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. from January 17 to January 31, 2025. Children born in 2020 or earlier are eligible to enrol. All parents shall include a copy of their child's birth certificate, or another document to identify their birth date with the registration.

Please enrol at the school within whose catchment area your residence is located. For Kindergarten program and registration information, please call the schools directly.

Catchment areas are:

Minnewasta School, 1 Academy Drive, Mr. Geoff Sutton, Principal, 204-822-4580 • English program only. All rural. Within the city, all areas south of South Railway St. as well as the area south of Hwy 3 and west of Mountain St.

Maple Leaf Elementary School, 225 12th Street, Ms. Cindy Dick, Principal, 204-822-4458 • English program only. Within the city, the area north of North Railway St. and east of Mountain St.

École Discovery Trails, 1079 Parkhill Drive, Mr. Samuel Jerema, Principal, 204-822-4448 • All French Immersion. English program students residing north of Hwy 3 and west of Mountain St.

Kindergarten Information Session

Western School Division will be holding a Kindergarten Parent Information session on Thursday, January 16, 2025 at 7:00 p.m. at École Discovery Trails. We look forward to seeing all the new Kindergarten parents on this evening.

More detailed information is available online at www.westernsd.mb.ca, at the schools, or at Western School Division Office, 204-822-4448.

Classifieds Announcements

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BIRTHDAY



To my dad,
Happy 73rd birthday!
Thank you for the legacy of passion, adventure, vision, the love of old things, and cozy spaces and fires, talking to people with ease, history, travel, Lord of the Rings, perseverance and working hard in every area of life and Never giving up! In which God gave uniquely to you, and passed down to me. And I'm so grateful.
I love you forever Dad.
You are irreplaceable.
Here's to a new year...A new chapter of life.
Can't wait to putt for you again.
I'll be waiting on hole #16...
Proverbs 3 (NIV)

-Love your daughter,
Heather (aka: Feather)

IN MEMORIAM



Ruth Gall (nee Link)
1928 - 1990
In Memory

We thought of you today,
But that is nothing new;
We thought of you yesterday,
And days before that too.
We think of you in silence,
We often speak your name;
All we have are memories,
And your picture in a frame.
Your memory is our keepsake
From which we'll never part;
God has you in His arms,
We have you in our heart.
-Dearly missed by your family



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REAL ESTATE



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309 Montreal Ave.,
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Phone owner at 204-712-6433

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Roseisle Backhoe Service Ltd. is seeking a FULL TIME Red Seal heavy diesel mechanic, for an excavating and trucking company. Pay is negotiable depending on qualifications and experience. Welding experience is an asset. Class 1 drivers license and or the ability to operate heavy equipment will also be considered an asset.

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CAREERS



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Facilities
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Brandon, MB
Comp #65-24/25

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How to Apply:

If you are interested in this career opportunity, please email your resume and cover letter with reference to this competition to careers@assiniboine.net. We thank all applicants for their interest; only those selected for further consideration will be contacted.



Biz Cards
Call 467-5836

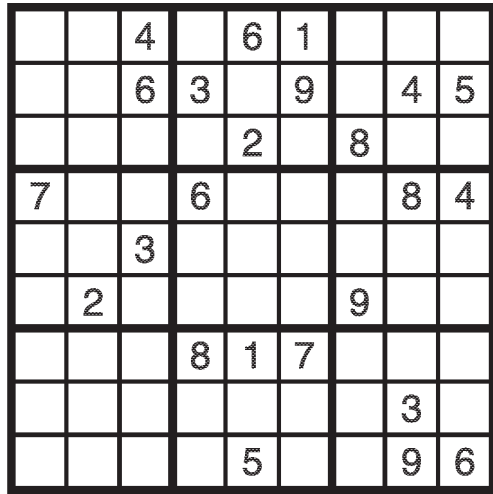
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SUDOKU



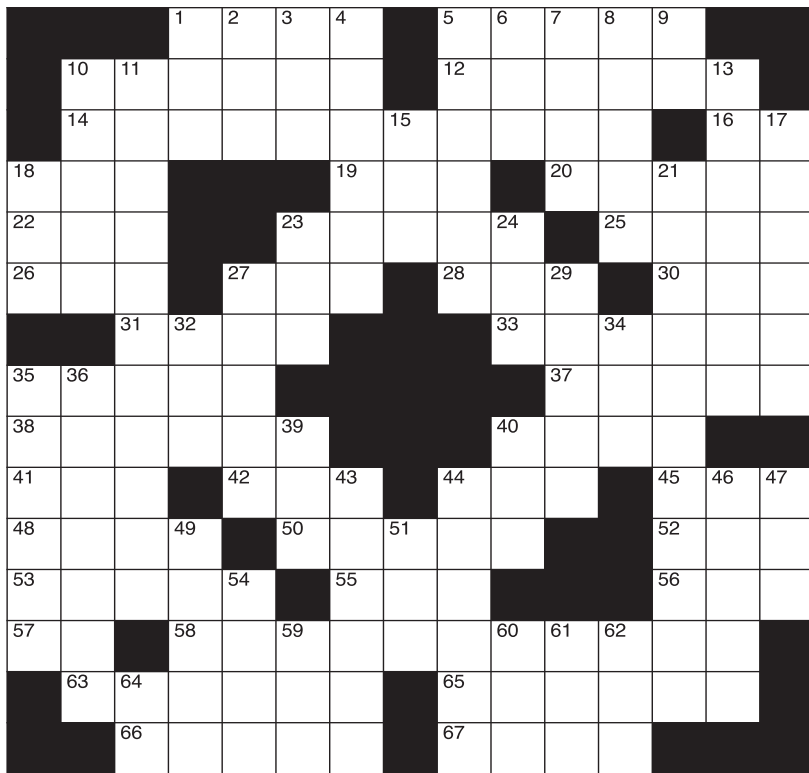
Fun By The Numbers
Like puzzles? Then you'll love sudoku. This mind-bending puzzle will have you hooked from the moment you square off, so sharpen your pencil and put your sudoku savvy to the test!

Level: Intermediate

Here's How It Works:

Sudoku puzzles are formatted as a 9x9 grid, broken down into nine 3x3 boxes. To solve a sudoku, the numbers 1 through 9 must fill each row, column and box. Each number can appear only once in each row, column and box. You can figure out the order in which the numbers will appear by using the numeric clues already provided in the boxes. The more numbers you name, the easier it gets to solve the puzzle!

X CROSSWORD



CLUES ACROSS

1. Hand (Spanish)
5. Siskel and __, critics
10. Seaman
12. Chemical weapon
14. One who eliminates
16. They precede C
18. Baseball stat
19. Americans' "uncle"
20. Cassia tree
22. Surround
23. Crisp and Pebbles are two
25. A sudden very loud sound
26. Affirmative
27. Disadvantage
28. Corpuscle count (abbr.)
30. OJ trial judge
31. New York art district
33. Become more bleak
35. Upstate NY city
37. Clarified butters
38. One who witnesses
40. Condemn
41. __ juris
42. Natural
44. Prohibit
45. Swiss river
48. Greek war god

50. 5 iron

52. New Zealand mountain parrot
53. Scandinavian surname
55. Follows sigma
56. Doctor of Education
57. Spanish be
58. One that feeds on bugs
63. Tooth issue
65. Get into
66. Lumps of clay
67. Overly studious student

CLUES DOWN

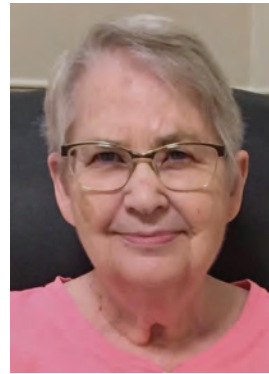
1. Variety of Chinese
2. Boxing's GOAT
3. Japanese classical theater
4. Prayer
5. Inspire with love
6. Ballplayers' accessory
7. Retailer payment system
8. More raw
9. Atomic #81
10. Fencing sword
11. Hostilities
13. Sea dweller
15. Resinlike substance secreted by certain insects

17. Businessmen
18. Rest here please (abbr.)
21. Loud devices
23. Make a soft murmuring sound
24. One point west of due south
27. Trout
29. Type of grass

Classifieds The Winkler Morden Voice Announcements

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OBITUARY



**In Loving Memory of
Margaret Ann Howden
1945 – 2024**

With deep sadness, we announce the passing of Margaret Ann Howden (née Pratt), a cherished wife, mother, grandmother, sister, and friend, on Friday, December 6, 2024, at Tabor Home in Morden, Manitoba. She was 79 years old, a lovely woman of grace and kindness who was deeply dedicated to her family.

Margaret was born in 1945 in Deloraine, Manitoba to her loving parents, Florence and William (Bill) Pratt. She grew up in a close-knit community and graduated from Boissevain Collegiate in 1963. While working at a local café, Margaret met the love of her life, Dennis Howden, a spirited young man fresh from the agriculture program at the University of Manitoba. They married in 1964 and embarked on a life filled with adventure, love, and devotion.

Their journey began in Selkirk, where their daughter Cindy was born. They later moved to Winnipeg and then to Virden, where they welcomed their son Don. In 1974, the family settled in Morden, a community where Margaret's warmth and vibrant spirit left a lasting impression on everyone she met. Seeking new experiences, she and Dennis relocated to Westlock, Alberta, eventually retiring there in 1999. In 2012, longing to be closer to family and the familiar comforts of home, they returned to Morden. They also cherished five winters in their Palm Springs home, where they enjoyed day trips and new adventures together.

Margaret had a special gift for nurturing others. As a librarian, she found joy in reading and lifelong learning, inspiring children and adults alike. From her early years at the Maple Leaf School library to her retirement from the Westlock Municipal Library, Margaret's dedication left a lasting imprint on countless lives.

Her artistic talents shone brightly in her paintings, capturing the beauty of the world around her in serene landscapes and delicate flowers. Each stroke of her brush reflected her gentle and thoughtful nature, creating works that will forever remain as a testament to her creative soul.

Margaret is survived by her devoted husband of 60 years, Dennis; her children Cindy (Bruce) Murray and Don (Catherine) Howden; and her beloved grandsons Scott (Nicole) and Connor. She also leaves behind her dear sister, Lucille (Garry) Hardy, who shared in her laughter and memories.

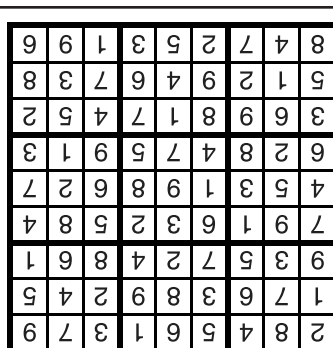
Margaret was predeceased by her mother Florence in 1977 and her father Bill in 1987, whose love and values she carried forward throughout her life.

A funeral service celebrating Margaret's life was held on Saturday, January 4, 2025 at 2 p.m. It will take place at the Wiebe Funeral Home in Morden, MB.

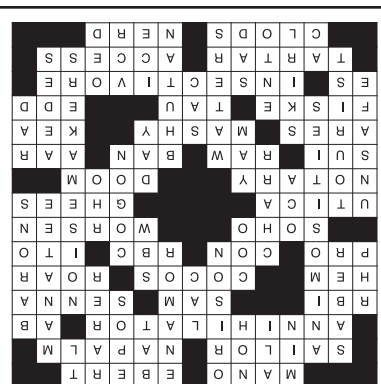
In lieu of flowers, donations in Margaret's memory may be made to Alzheimer Society of Manitoba.

Margaret will be remembered for her warm smile, quiet strength, and the legacy of love and inspiration reflected in her family. She was a beacon of light in the lives of her family and friends, and her memory will forever be cherished.

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



Sudoku Answer



Crossword Answer

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JANUARY is Alzheimer's Awareness Month

The National Institutes of Health reports that incidences of Alzheimer's disease and other dementia increased by roughly 148 percent between 1990 and 2019. By 2020, more than 55 million people across the globe were living with dementia, according to Alzheimer's Disease International (ADI). ADI adds that Alzheimer's disease is the most common cause of dementia, accounting for as many as 75 percent of all cases worldwide. Alzheimer's disease (AD) is perhaps the most widely recognized form of dementia. But even those who are familiar with AD may not know the answers to common questions about it.

Are Alzheimer's and dementia one and the same?
No. Dementia is an umbrella term that refers to a various condi-

tions that the National Institute on Aging notes affect a person's ability to think, reason and remember. AD is merely one type of dementia, and additional forms of the condition include Lewy body dementia and vascular dementia.

What distinguishes Alzheimer's disease from other forms of dementia?

The David Geffen School of Medicine at the University of California, Los Angeles reports that Alzheimer's is characterized by progressive memory loss and cognitive decline. In addition, the Alzheimer's Association® notes AD affects the part of the brain associated with learning first, so individuals with the condition often exhibit difficulty remembering in the early stages of the disease.

Are there other early signs of AD?

The NIA notes there are some additional early signs of AD, but also points out that different people exhibit different early signs of the disease. Some early signs may include:

- Decline in ability to find the right words
- Vision/spatial issues
- Mild cognitive impairment (MCI): The NIA notes that signs of MCI include losing things often, forgetting to go to appointments

or other events, and struggling to come up with words compared to people in the same age group. The presence of MCI does not necessarily mean a person will develop Alzheimer's, and certain conditions, including stroke, can increase risk for MCI.

What causes Alzheimer's disease?

The causes of Alzheimer's remain a mystery, though research is ongoing and medical professionals have

connected some dots. For example, the NIA notes that the presence of the genetic condition Down syndrome increases a person's risk of developing AD. That supports the notion that some cases of AD are caused by a genetic component, which scientists believe may also explain cases of early-onset dementia. The NIA notes that research also indicates late-onset Alzheimer's, which is typically diagnosed

in individuals in their mid-60s, is linked to age-related changes in the brain that occur over several decades.

Is there a cure for Alzheimer's disease?

No. There is no cure for Alzheimer's disease, and the NIA notes that no scientific evidence exists to support claims that various supplements or products like coconut oil can cure or delay the onset of AD.



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