

The **Voice** Winkler • Morden

VOLUME 17
EDITION \12

THURSDAY,
FEBRUARY 12, 2026
www.winklermordenvoice.ca

LOCALLY OWNED HISTORY BOOK FOR THE COMMUNITY

Winter IS HERE

ED'S TIRE

FULL MECHANIC SHOP & ALL YOUR TIRE NEEDS

HOURS: Mon-Fri 8AM-5:30PM | Saturday 8AM-12 noon

80 Thornhill St, MORDEN
204-822-6127
273 Main St S, CARMAN
204-745-2300

Giving back

MORDEN AREA FOUNDATION
Invest. Partner. Build.

000001
Date: Feb. 4, 2026

Pay to the Order of EDT Parent Advisory Council \$ 25,000.00
Twenty Five Thousand / 100 Dollars

Memo: Play structure for EDT Morden Area Foundation

PHOTO BY LORNE STELMACH/VOICE

Morden Area Foundation chair Brad Ritchie (left) and granting committee member Edith Lovatt (right) presented Mike Lawson of the École Discovery Trails parent advisory council with a grant for their playground project. It was part of \$86,000 in grants handed out to local organizations and projects last week. For the full story, see Pg. 14.

news > sports > opinion > community > people > entertainment > events > classifieds > careers > everything you need to know

Pembina Valley Local Immigration Partnership

Connect to our Guide & Toolkit for Building Communities that are Welcoming and Inclusive.

pvlip.ca

Got Connections?
When we connect, we belong.

Scan the QR Code to help build connections in your community.

Pembina Valley Local Immigration Partnership

"It is a place for community"

New rec. program at MEC looking to build connections

By Ashleigh Viveiros

A new drop-in program at Winkler's Meridian Exhibition Centre is bringing people of all walks of life together each week for a few hours of playful fun.

The city's recreation department in partnership with Central Station Community Centre and the Eden Health Care Services housing and supports program earlier this year launched the Community Connections program, which takes over the turf space every Tuesday morning from 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Anyone and everyone is invited to stop by during that time to enjoy free turf activities such as casual soccer or a myriad of lawn games, or to take a few laps around the walking track. Snacks and drinks are also provided.

"There just seemed to be a need for a space to get people out of the house and out doing something," said Winkler recreation programmer Meg

Dias. "Since I started my position here, the goal has been to fill the building as many hours as we can," she noted. "And if you're ever here on evenings and weekends, it's packed. But how do we get that feeling during the [week]day? So we've been trying to fill the hours with programming that meets the needs."

MEC already has turf programs up and running for seniors, homeschool families, and parents with young children, so adding this new one to the mix with a much broader focus fit right in.

"It's open to anybody, and I would love to see more people using it simply because I think it shows the diversity of our community," Dias said. "It helps to welcome people and make people feel included in our ever-growing community ... this isn't just a hockey rink or a field space for soccer or baseball—it is a place for community."

Crystal Harsant, a support worker for Eden's Central Commons facility, was on hand at last week's session with several residents.

Continued on page 13



PHOTOS BY ASHLEIGH VIVEIROS/VOICE

Above: Participants in last week's Community Connections program got in touch with their inner child for a game of dodgeball. The free turf program runs Tuesday mornings and provides access to a variety of games, including soccer (below).





6 Pavilions
Great Prizes!
Kids' Activities
Global Cuisine
Music & Dance
Skating
Snowshoeing
Ice Sculptures
Hot Chocolate
& More!

Sat Feb 14
12-5pm

FREE EVENT!

Morden's Multicultural
WINTERFEST

Schedule, map, & pavilion info:
morden.ca/winterfest



TWO MODES. ONE PASS.

NO MERCY.

DUAL-MODE CAZADO™



NOTHING CONTROLS WILD OATS IN WHEAT LIKE DUAL-MODE CAZADO™.

You needed a breakthrough to keep your fields cleaner, and ADAMA delivered. With best-in-class results and first-ever innovation, CAZADO™ controls Group 1 and Group 2 resistant wild oats like never before.

It feels good to be in control.



Scan the QR code to contact Andrew Kaminsky, your local ADAMA Area Business Manager.

CAZADO.CA

Always read and follow label directions. CAZADO is a trademark of ADAMA Agricultural Solutions Canada Ltd. ©2026 ADAMA Agricultural Solutions Canada Ltd.



Pride festivities coming to Winkler for the first time

By Ashleigh Viveiros

After stints in Morden, Altona, and Carman, the Pembina Valley Pride 2026 celebration is coming to Winkler.

The 2SLGBTQIA+ organization announced last week that their sixth annual Pride event will take place in the city on Saturday, June 13.

"Every year after our Pride festivities, we put out a survey post-event: what did we do well, what could we improve on, where would you like to see it happen next year? And every year Winkler was in there and last year it was the number one location," shared Pauline Emerson-Froebe, president of Pembina Valley Pride. "It is the largest community in the Pembina Valley, so it would only make sense that sooner or later we'd come to Winkler ... it is time."

Emerson-Froebe acknowledges this decision isn't sitting well with some people. News of the announcement immediately ignited a flurry of social media posts, some supportive and some decidedly negative.

She hopes Winklerites will extend Pride participants the same respect they'd expect from other community members at their own public gatherings.

"We just want everybody to have respect for each other, be nice to each other, be decent to each other. I don't think that is an unreasonable ask."

The entire point of a Pride event, Pauline Emerson-Froebe stressed, is to acknowledge that 2SLGBTQIA+ people exist and to provide a space where they can celebrate with others. This can be especially important in traditionally conservative communities where being different can be in-

credibly isolating.

"It does get really lonely ... am I the only one? And then people want to leave and in doing that they take their talents, they take their personalities, they take it all and they leave," she said.

"We're having it in Winkler to show the folks in Winkler, the queer people in Winkler—because there are some—that they deserve to exist and to be loved within the community," Emerson-Froebe said. "Every time we have come to a different community, it has made such a powerful impact on the queer folks of that community."

This year's Pride won't include a march through town but will instead be focused on a rally featuring guest speakers, stage performances, and other activities taking place at one location. Organizers are also planning to double security to ensure everyone participating feels safe.

Emerson-Froebe hopes some of the more hateful comments made online this past week aren't an indication of how the event will be greeted in real life by Winklerites. She reminds people that no one is obligated to participate in Pride if they don't feel comfortable doing so.

"If this isn't your groove, by all means find something else you want to do that day," she said, noting it's like any other community gathering in that "if you don't want to go to it, don't go to it."

"We're not trying to indoctrinate anybody with this. We're just doing this for the [2SLGBTQIA+] community and also for the allies," she said. "It provides an opportunity for allies to

Continued on page 4



VOICE FILE PHOTO

Pembina Valley Pride has hosted community celebrations for Pride Month in Morden, Altona, and Carman, and now they're coming to Winkler June 13.

SWEET DEALS ~ GREAT GIFTS

CLARKS 25% OFF

WINTER WEAR 30% OFF

CSA KEEN 25% OFF

CUSTOMER APPRECIATION BASKET ENTER NOW!

JEWELRY • BUCKLES HATS
WALLETS • PURSES 20% OFF

OLD WEST BOOTS 25% OFF

SLIP INS & CLOGS \$50 - \$100.00

KC's Shoe Repair

WORK & WESTERN WEARHOUSE
YOUR FAMILY FOOTWEAR STORE
WINKLER, MB • Ph: 325-5538
Service & Selection Guaranteed
Company charges welcome (must be arranged ahead of time)

HOURS: Monday to Friday 9:30 am to 5:30 pm
Saturday 9:30am to 4:00 pm
325 Kimberly Rd. - East of Canadian Tire
GIFT CERTIFICATES AVAILABLE

"WE'RE HAVING IT IN WINKLER TO SHOW THE FOLKS IN WINKLER, THE QUEER PEOPLE IN WINKLER—BECAUSE THERE ARE SOME— THAT THEY DESERVE TO EXIST AND TO BE LOVED WITHIN THE COMMUNITY."

Adult & Teen Challenge
SuperThrift

SHOP AND DONATE

NEW ITEMS GOING OUT DAILY

324 CARGILL ROAD, WINKLER

HOURS OF OPERATION:
Monday - Friday
9:00 am - 5:30 pm
Saturday
9:00 am - 5:00 pm

Like Us On

GVSD board gives green light for a new kind of high school experience

Big Picture Learning program to launch in Winkler

By Ashleigh Viveiros

Garden Valley School Division is giving Big Picture Learning (BPL) a go. The board of trustees last week voted in favour of moving ahead with the proposed project, which division staff have been researching for the past several months. BPL is an alternative method of high school education that puts an emphasis on practical learning experiences tied to a student's inter-

ests. "We started the conversations on this last year when we looked at our strategic plan and engaging high school students, providing pathways to graduation for some of our students who really struggle with engagement," explained superintendent Dan Ward. "We started talking about looking at high school a little differently for some of our students, and in that came conversations around Big Picture Learning." Personalized learning plans are created for

each BPL student that allow them to spend up to two days a week on internships out in the community being mentored by people who are putting the concepts and skills they're learning about into real-life action. Students are still required to attend school regularly and earn course credits so they can graduate with a provincial diploma, but they reach curriculum-based goals in a much more flexible, community-integrated environment than traditional classroom-centred teaching. "A lot of the instruction and learning is done through working with teachers and subject matter experts on a variety of projects and portfolios," Ward explained. "There's still lots of direct instruction, in particular in areas like math and sciences ... but you'll also see students working on individual projects as well, and working within teams around areas of inquiry ... and out on internships."

Continued on page 5



**NOW OPEN & SERVING
THE COMMUNITY!**



**WINKLER
MEDICAL CLINIC**

Your new community clinic providing
quality, compassionate care right here in Winkler.



Location:
Unit 2, 344 1st Street, Winkler, Manitoba



431-804-4610



Monday–Friday, 9:00 AM – 5:00 PM

WE ARE ACCEPTING NEW PATIENTS & WALK-INS!

Our dedicated team is here to support your health needs with timely, friendly, and professional care.

Your health matters—visit us today!

> PRIDE, FROM PG. 3

show their support in a public, visible way so that we are reminded that we aren't alone. "We're really excited about this because Winkler really is a lovely place," Emerson-Froebe added. "There are so many lovely people who have been so welcoming and so kind, and really that's what we're hoping for—that all of us for each other can be respectful and kind." It's a sentiment echoed by Winkler Mayor Henry Siemens, who issued a public statement in response to online chatter and the flood of emails he began receiving in the wake of the announcement. In it, the mayor pointed out that this is not a City-organized event, but noted Winkler does have "many public spaces and facilities that are used by the public for a wide variety of events. Council and I don't personally support all of the beliefs or ideologies of the various groups or events that might take place in Winkler but we do support people's individual freedom to plan and host their own events. "It is my sincere prayer that we, as a community, find a way to respect one-another's freedoms and pray that no one event would define who we are. That we would live out our faith every day with genuine love and respect and kindness for everyone and THAT is what would define us." In a later interview, Siemens reiterated that he hopes the true heart of Winkler will win out when it comes to how the community presents itself in the months ahead—and that includes how people act when it comes to dealing with an event they may not agree with. "How can we put our best foot forward as a community to show the world who we are?" he said. "We are an exceptionally generous, supportive community, and I want us to show the world that."



**RURAL
BUDS**
CANNABIS SHOP

**MORRIS • CARMAN
ST. PIERRE • ST. ADOLPHE**



Big Bros Big Sis finds a new home in Morden-Winkler community centres

Mentoring agency is celebrating 50 years in 2026 amidst navigating financial challenges

By Ashleigh Viveiros

Big Brothers Big Sisters began a new chapter in their 50-year history in the region last week.

Financial challenges forced the mentoring agency to sell its offices in Winkler late last year. They are now setting up shop at the Central Station Community Centre in Winkler and the 500 Stephen Community Centre in Morden twice a week to meet with prospective volunteers and families.

"We'll be at 500 Stephen Tuesdays and at Central Station Thursdays from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.," shared executive director Jenelle Neufeld as their first week in the new spaces came to a close.

She's optimistic this change will be a good one, long-term, for the agency, as it puts them in spaces where the families they serve can much more easily connect with them.

"Our old office was a little off the beaten path," she said. "For the demographic we serve, unless you have a car, then it was very out of the way."

"We wanted to meet people where they're already at and already accessing other social services," she said. "And we wholeheartedly support

and are behind what 500 Stephen and Central Station do ... they both have programs that are a very wrap-around approach to supporting people, so it just made sense. And they've both welcomed us with open arms."

Still, the decision to sell their offices wasn't one the non-profit's board took lightly. But it had become a necessity.

The unexpected loss of a longtime, externally-organized fundraiser a few years ago that had generated upwards of \$20,000 a year for the agency put them in a significant deficit they've yet to recover from, Neufeld explained.

That situation followed by consecutive years that saw other fundraising initiatives struggle to reach their targets put them in a situation where keeping the Winkler office was no longer feasible.

"It just wasn't sustainable," Neufeld said.

"Ninety-five per cent of our budget is fundraised donations and grants," she noted, observing that uncertain economic times certainly has a ripple effect through the community, including on non-profits, and Big Bros. has certainly felt the sting of that in recent

"WE'RE THE ONLY ONES DOING WHAT WE DO."



Big Bros executive director Jenelle Neufeld in the space they'll be setting up shop at 500 Stephen once a week moving forward, along with one day a week at Central Station in Winkler.

PHOTO BY
ASHLEIGH VIVEIROS/
VOICE

years. "We know we're not alone in this—it's difficult for everybody right now, and we're very aware of that."

But she feels strongly about the mission of Big Brothers Big Sisters, which is to create supportive mentoring relationships—be it through one-on-one matches or group programs—that help youth build confidence, develop life skills, and feel more connected to their community.

"We're the only ones doing what we do," Neufeld said, stressing they're going to do everything they can to get and keep their heads above water so they can continue with that programming.

Neufeld has made presentations to municipal councils throughout their service area asking them to consider

supporting Big Bros. in their budgets this year.

It's the first time the agency has had to make such a blanket request for municipal support. Neufeld hopes elected officials will consider the impact reaching youth early can have on their success later in life.

"Over the past six years, I've sat at a lot of tables in our region and we as social services agencies are talking a lot about the concerns that we all have—food insecurity, homelessness, financial insecurity, mental health," she said. "All these things that young people may have stacked up against them."

"There are a lot of social service agencies that are helping people in

Continued on page 7

> BIG PICTURE LEARNING, FROM PG. 4

"It's a model that exists throughout the world," he said, noting Manitoba currently has five BPL schools operating in Winnipeg. GVSD will be the third Manitoba school division to launch a BPL program.

BPL students are generally placed in small groups—about 15 students each—and are led by a teacher who stays with them from Gr. 9 all the way through Gr. 12.

"So they get to know each other and their teachers really well," Ward said.

GVSD intends to start with its first cohort of Gr. 9 BPL students this fall and grow from there.

That first year will focus on practical skills training, both in the classroom and on class field trips, with the student internships to come likely more so in the group's second year in the program.

"We're really going to be developing the global competencies, the soft

skills. Elements like good communication skills, good collaboration skills, critical thinking," Ward said. "All these pieces they're going to need to be successful in the world of work and throughout high school."

Discussions with local businesses this past year has yielded a great deal of interest in the program, what it might end up looking like, and how it could help more youth realize the opportunities that exist for building their post-high school careers here in Winkler. That bodes very well for the future of BPL internships, Ward noted.

"We feel confident in this," he said, stressing that it's very much going to be an extension of the existing vocational programs in the division. "We have great career education programs at both GVC and NPC, and we certainly don't want to detract from the work they're doing—we want to

complement the work that's already happening in those schools."

GVSD board chair Leah Klassen said they're excited to be taking this next step in alternative education options.

"We think it's going to be a good program to really embrace the whole notion of real-world learning," she said. "Linking learning back into the community, into service learning with maybe a non-profit organization or with a business ... getting ready for the world after graduation in a different setting than a traditional high school."

The financial impact is expected to be minimal in the 2026-2027 budget year, as the division will be able to shift around existing resources to accommodate the program.

Long-term, those costs will rise as more new cohorts enter the program, Klassen noted, but the benefits in terms of student engagement and

success, the board believes, will be worth it.

"We've seen this, in both urban and rural centers, working really, really well, and with an eye toward increasing graduation rates, ensuring that there's more opportunity for kids that maybe just aren't jiving in the regular kind of high school world."

"Linking it back to business, our area is so fruitful with entrepreneurs. So the mentoring potential is huge. Giving kids an opportunity to go, okay, I want to stay in school and I want to learn all this stuff and now I can talk to this business and they're showing me the ropes."

Divisional staff have already begun meeting to plan how to roll this program out. Registration is expected to begin later this spring.

More details will be made available shortly on gvsd.ca and through public information sessions expected to be held within weeks.

The Voice



PUBLISHER
Lana Meier



MARKETING & PROMOTIONS
Brett Mitchell



EDITOR
Ashleigh Viveiros



REPORTER
Lorne Stelmach



REPORTER
Holly Thorne-Wiebe



COLUMNIST
Peter Cantelon



SALES
Gwen Dyck



PRODUCTION
Nicole Kapusta



PRODUCTION
Tara Gionet



DISTRIBUTION
Christy Brown

The newspaper is supported by advertising dollars. If you enjoy the paper and would like to see it grow and prosper, visit any of the advertisers and businesses in our rural communities. Keep your dollars working at home and shop local.

Our commitment to you: we want to help build stronger communities through articles that both inform and entertain you about what's going on throughout the Pembina Valley. This is your community newspaper—let us know what you want to see in it.

OUR SISTER PUBLICATIONS



Funded by the Government of Canada



get heard

EDITORIAL > VIEWPOINTS > LETTERS

Who will they meet?

Given that Feb. 14 is Valentine's Day, I thought it appropriate to write a column about love. Did you know there is a point where statistics intersect with love? I will explain.

Depending on the studies you read, somewhere between 4.4 and 12 per cent of the Canadian population identify as 2SLGBTQI+. That's a lot. That's between 682 to 1,860 people in Winkler and between 3,000 and 8,000 people in the Pembina Valley.

What is the point of all of this? I mean, these are just statistics, right? Why do we care?

We care because behind these numbers exist people. Right now, somewhere between 3,000 to 8,000 people in the Pembina Valley identify as part of the Two-Spirit, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer and Intersex communities.

They are people who we work with, people we worship with, people who serve us a meal at the local restaurant, doctors, lawyers, plumbers, electricians, teachers, husbands, wives, partners, and more. They are tax paying, voting, living, breathing, feeling members of our communities. They are our sisters and brothers, our mothers, fathers, grandparents, and children. They are people we care about. They are people we love. Human beings.

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

GET IN TOUCH WITH US

GENERAL INQUIRIES:
204-325-6888

ADVERTISING:
Gwen Dyck 204-823-0535
gdyck@winklormordenvoice.ca

Advertising Deadline: Monday at 4 p.m.

This is why we care (or at least should care).

Recently, the 2SLGBTQI+ organization Pembina Valley Pride announced that the Pride celebration for 2026 will be held in Winkler. I applaud their choice of February—the month of love—as the month to make the announcement. In past years it has been held in Morden, Carman, and Altona, numerous times ... but never Winkler.

Why has it taken so long to come to Winkler, the region's largest community?

Well, to be honest, fear is a big part of why. Winkler is well known as a community very proud of its deep, conservative, evangelical Christian faith. In much of the 2SLGBTQI+ community (and beyond) these things are synonymous with intolerance, fear, anger, and hate—deserved or not.

So, it takes a great deal of courage for a group like Pembina Valley Pride to decide to host its event in Winkler. But why even bother? Why not just continue to avoid Winkler?

Well, Pembina Valley Pride knows that somewhere between 700-1,800 people in Winkler are part of the Pride community. These are people who have watched Pride events pop up around them in neighbouring communities wondering and hoping

one day they would see it in theirs.

It can be an isolating thing growing up different from others in a small, rural community. It can make a person feel alone and without value. God forbid if people found out about your difference. Then you must deal with bullying, harassment, and the depression that comes alongside that.

Youth who are 2SLGBTQI+ are more than three times more likely than their peers to struggle with suicidal thoughts; more than 85 per cent of these youth report having to deal with sexuality-based harassment. 2SLGBTQI+ youth are disproportionately represented amongst homeless youth. Resentment by peers and rejection by family are the key factors in driving these things.

This is one of the key reasons Pride events exist. Pride is an opportunity to state clearly to the Winkler 2SLGBTQI+ population that:

"You are not alone. You have a voice. You have value. We accept you for who you are. We will stand with you. You have a community."

And, most importantly: "You are loved."

You are loved. This is the primary reason for Pride.

Continued on page 7

Letter policy

The *Voice* welcomes letters from readers on local matters.

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.

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

NEWS DESK:

Ashleigh Viveiros Editor
204-332-3456 news@winklormordenvoice.ca

Lorne Stelmach Reporter
204-823-2655 lstelmach@winklormordenvoice.ca

MAILING ADDRESS:

Winkler Morden Voice
Box 39, Stonewall, MB R0C 2Z0

The *Voice* is published Thursdays and distributed as a free publication to 21,141 households. Republishing in whole or in part without permission is prohibited. Printed in Canada by Prolific Printing. The *Voice* received financial support from the Government of Canada in 2021.

View the *Voice* online at www.winklormordenvoice.ca or altonavoice.ca

• FAITH FOCUS

A place for refuge

The concept of refuge has been on my mind. The Bible presents God as our Creator and also as a refuge for all who seek Him. The word "refuge" appears approximately five hundred times in the Bible.

In Canada we are very familiar with weather conditions that require us to seek refuge. There are other kinds of storms that can swirl around our hearts and minds. In many different ways—personal, local and internationally—we are looking for a safe place where we can have relief from danger or anxiety. As we listen to or watch the daily news we see and hear of people who are seeking "refuge".

What is the Bible definition of refuge? The word is used most often to refer to a safe place, or to tell others to take



By Randy Smart

refuge. The Eerdmans Bible Dictionary says that it is a "shelter or relief from danger or anxiety; a high rock (Is. 33:16), a secure dwelling place (Deut. 33:27), a place to flee to (Psalm 142:4), a shelter (Is. 4:6)."

We will not be shielded from every unpleasant experience, but in the Lord we can find inner strength, certain hope and courage to face the unexpected, unknown and uncertain present.

One hymn that has helped to express the concept of God as a source of refuge is the song "A Shelter in the Time of Storm."

"The Lord's our Rock, in Him we hide, A shelter in the time of storm; Secure whatever ill be-tide, A shelter in the time of storm.

Refrain: Oh, Jesus is a Rock in a weary land, A weary land, a weary land; Oh, Jesus is a Rock in a weary land, A shelter in the time of storm.

A shade by day, defense by night, A shelter in the time of storm; No fears alarm, no foes af-right, A shelter in the time of storm.

The raging storms may round us beat, A shelter in the time of storm. We'll never leave our safe retreat, A shelter in the time of storm.

O Rock divine, O Refuge dear, A shelter in the time of storm; Be Thou our helper ever near,

A shelter in the time of storm."

In the New Testament the apostle Paul expressed praise to God who had provided comfort to him in challenging times. In 2 Corinthians 1:3,4 we read "Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves receive from God."

We may and should seek a safe place because of our own inner needs of soul and spirit. The Lord is the recommended shelter for our souls. Talk to him out loud and tell him of the deepest pains. He is not surprised and will not reject us. He offers us hope and shelter. When we have experienced the comfort that comes from God, we will, in quiet and thoughtful ways, be looking for opportunities to help others who are in seasons of despair and need.

Randy Smart has been a pastor in Southern Manitoba since 1979

"It's our job to set these kids up for the best chance that they have to reach their full potential"

From Pg. 5

the here and now," she continued, pointing to the work being done by the community centres and food banks, for example. "In my opinion, however, unless we are also investing money into the next generation, nothing is going to change.

"Our whole philosophy and mandate and mission and vision is breaking the cycles, or at the very least giving kids the opportunity and the tools to break those cycles."

The one-on-one mentoring relationships they foster are a big part of that—research has shown kids who have had another stable adult role model in their lives through Big Bros. are more confident, happier, and believe they're making better life choices as a result—but group programming has increasingly become another focus of the agency in recent years, including through youth-tailored workshops on things like financial literacy.

"It's our job to set these kids up for the best chance that they have to reach their full potential," Neufeld said.

They reached 125 kids in 2025—a ground-breaking number, especially considering the financial challenges they've been facing, Neufeld noted.

"So my plea to the business community, to the municipal governments is: imagine what we could do if we had the funding and support."

As they look to celebrate their 50th anniversary

in the Pembina Valley, Big Brothers Big Sisters is tackling its financial challenges head-on.

They have numerous fundraising initiatives in the works, including a monthly trivia night at the Heritage Farms Brewing Tap Room in Winkler, Wednesday night Chase the Ace at the Morden Legion, Bowl for Kids' Sake in March, the summer slo-pitch tournament, and a few other things yet to be announced.

They're also about to launch a major new sponsorship campaign dubbed "50 Doors" detailing how businesses can partner with them to support area youth. It comes with a variety of sponsorship levels for Big Bros. programming and events and recognition for that support.

"\$2,000 sponsors a 'door' and supports a young person through our programming for the year," Neufeld explains, noting they're aiming for 50 sponsored 'doors' to mark their anniversary.

You can learn more about 50 Doors by connecting with Neufeld at 204-823-1028 or via email to jenelle.neufeld@bigbrothersbigsisters.ca.

Donations to Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Pembina Valley can also be made online at pembinavalley.bigbrothersbigsisters.ca/donate/.

If you have benefited from Big Brothers Big Sisters programming in the past, either as a mentee or a mentor, Neufeld would also love to hear from you. They hope to share stories of personal impact as this milestone anniversary year continues.

> CANTELON, FROM PG. 6

When confronted with the reality of Pride coming to your community and decisions you may need to make, you may believe you face difficulty. But I can tell you that compared to most of us, for people growing up in the 2SLGBTQI+ community it is more difficult than you or I could ever imagine.

When Pride comes to Winkler, the city will be met with joy, happiness, and enthusiasm. Winkler will be met with pride.

Between now and June 13th, residents of Winkler and, no doubt, the small rural villages surrounding it have an opportunity to decide what kind of Winkler the Pride participants will be met with.

Will it be the stereotype? Will it be a Winkler with a face of fear, anger, blockades, threats, intolerance, and hate?

For many in the largely Christian community the question will be: which Christ will Pride be met with? Will it be a Christ filled with fear and anger? Will it be a hateful Christ who threatens harm? Who screams, "Sinner! Abomination! Get away from me, I have nothing for you!" Or will it be an open-armed Christ of love?

Will Winkler meet Pride with love?

How the city and its people meet Pride will directly inform the many community members who are part of the 2SLGBTQI+ community and its allies exactly what is thought of them. It will also communicate to the province, the nation, and beyond what kind of city it is.

Who will they meet?

HPV causes cancer in 100 Manitobans each year.

CancerCare Manitoba
ActionCancerManitoba
Brought to you by
CancerCare Manitoba
FOUNDATION
All funds raised stay in Manitoba.

VACCINE & SCREEN
to prevent
cervical cancer.
PracticePrevention.ca

Salem Crokinole Tournament returns March 5

By Ashleigh Viveiros

The second annual Salem Crokinole Tournament returns next month.

The Salem Ladies Auxiliary is once again hosting an evening of friendly competition at the Winkler personal care home on Thursday, March 5 at 6:30 p.m.

"Last year's was so successful that we just really felt we needed to go for it again. It's a wonderful event," shared Susan Hildebrand, Salem Foundation executive coordinator.

Nearly 40 teams came out to the inaugural tournament, raising over \$20,000 in pledges to purchase benches for Salem's pathway project.

"It was just amazing how the community jumped to embrace it and to support it," Hildebrand said, noting they had initially planned to hold the games in the Heritage Room but the sheer number of teams and all the fans cheering them on quickly saw the event spill out into the adjacent chapel space.

"The thing that we were most thrilled about was how the community and the residents and children of all ages all came together," she said.

"We had residents that were playing, young people playing—it was definitely a community event, and everyone had a great time."

This time around they're setting their sights on raising funds to spruce up Salem's staff lounge, which hasn't been upgraded in decades and, at times in recent years, has become part storage area while renovations occur elsewhere in the facility.

"We do have a staff lounge at present, but it hasn't been functional in a lot of ways, so they're looking to refresh it, take out what is there and start fresh," Hildebrand said, noting Salem's team works hard to care for the residents, and they deserve an inviting, comfortable space in which to take their breaks and recharge. "When you take care of your staff, it certainly makes a difference ... they're looking after our residents, after the people who have made this community what it is. When they get a nice place to refresh, they can come out and do well and just give more to the residents."

There will be prizes once again for tournament's top teams and organizers are also hoping to have some raffle goodies up for grabs.



VOICE FILE PHOTO

The Salem Crokinole Tournament last year brought together teams of all ages. The 2026 event takes place at the Winkler personal care home March 5.

Snacks and drinks will also be available by donation.

The tournament is open to all ages. Registration is \$5 per player (two players/team). Players are asked to collect pledges for the cause.

There is a limit of 32 teams this year, so register early to avoid disappointment. The deadline to sign up is Feb. 23. Call 204-325-4316 to register.

"I just encourage everyone to come out and have fun," Hildebrand said. "It's not about how good you play, it's how much fun you can generate in the environment."

"And if there are family members out there that have a resident here, we encourage them to team up and come and participate."

Manitoba gov't announces public schools funding increase

By Lorne Stelmach

On Monday, the province announced its financial support for education in Manitoba for the school year ahead, touting that it is increasing school funding overall by \$79.8 million to nearly \$2 billion.

While the funding overall represents a 3.5 per cent increase, it is somewhat limited for the school divisions in this region. Garden Valley School Division is receiving a 2.2 per cent or \$800,000 increase to about \$36.4 million, Western School Division is getting about two per cent or \$400,000 more to \$19.2M, Border Land School Division will see a 1.8 per cent increase of \$400,000 to \$21.1M, Red River Valley School Division increases \$300,000 or 2.1 per cent to \$16.3M, and both Prairie Rose and Prairie Spirit are receiving about \$300,000 or 1.9 per cent more to \$17.8 and \$17.1 million, respectively.

Education and Early Childhood Minister Tracy Schmidt suggested the previous government didn't ad-

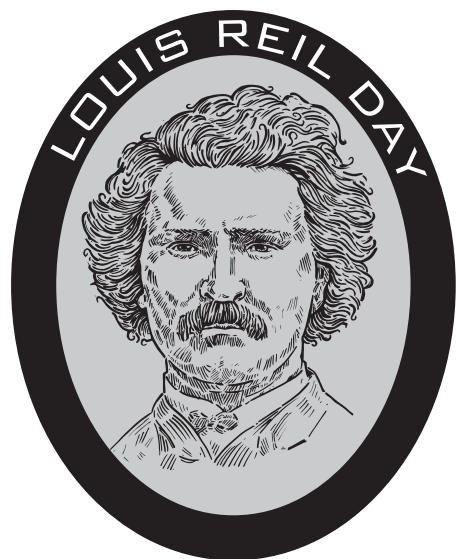
equately fund education and also restricted local authorities from raising property taxes.

"We're taking a different approach ... we know that schools and kids deserve to be invested in," she said, adding that they are suggesting to local divisions that it "allows them to go to their ratepayer in an equally stable and predictable way."

"We believe that providing stable and predictable funding is very important for school divisions ... that's what school divisions have been asking for, and that's what we have been delivering ... and we expect them to increase their budgets in a stable and predictable way that meets the needs of Manitobans when it comes to affordability."

"It means smaller class sizes and more individual attention for students ... and it's important to know that these things are only possible when schools have the proper funding that they need."

Continued on page 9



Our offices will
be closed
Monday,
February 16 in
recognition of
Louis Reil Day



Early ad booking deadline,
Friday, February 13 at 4:00 pm
Call 204-467-5836

Western SD asking for public input in budget process

By Lorne Stelmach

Western School Division is offering an opportunity for residents to have their say on the 2026-27 budget.

An online survey is part of the process that will lead up to the introduction of a draft budget at a public meeting at Maple Leaf School March 4 to be followed by formal approval at the following board meeting.

"We're still waiting to hear what the funding will be from the province ... they're not giving us a lot of time," acknowledged board chairperson Darcy Wolfe last week. The public schools funding announcement from the province came on Monday (see story on Pg. 8).

He noted the board has done a budget survey for a few years now in the lead up to when they introduce the budget for the next school year.

"This is something we put out while we're making our budget decisions. We are in the middle of budget season right now, so we are just trying to get information and feedback from the community, from staff members who we have talked to already," he said.

It is a short survey that asks a number of questions:

- What are some areas in WSD that are doing well that should be continued?
- What are some areas where WSD could improve?
- What should be the top educational priorities for WSD?
- What additional supports (eg., mental

health, cyber-safety, special education, Indigenous education, career guidance, extra-curricular activities, technology access, etc.) should be prioritized?

- What specific resources do you believe WSD is lacking?
- What specific facility or grounds upgrades, renovations, or new spaces would enhance student learning and well-being?
- What innovative ideas to improve student learning do you have?
- Do you feel all students have appropriate access to learning opportunities and resources based on their needs?

"It shouldn't take too long to fill out, and it's for anybody. You don't have to be a parent of a student or a staff member," Wolfe noted. "Anybody in Western School Division and anybody in the community is welcome to fill it out."

Wolfe said it is vital for the board to get input from the community.

"This is one of the ways for community members who don't usually communicate with the board to let their voice be heard. They are able to tell us through the survey what we are doing well, what we need to work on and what areas they feel might need investment, whether it's capital improvements or whether educational programs that might be missing.

"It's a really good way for community members to let us know what we need to be focusing on and what's important to them."

Wolfe acknowledged WSD has been fortunate with provincial funding in recent years.



"I think part of that was due to the province knowing that we had a new school that we needed to fund, but we don't have that this year," he noted. "We do have some different things we have to look at this year with teacher contracts and such ... so there are some added pressures that we are facing, and we're working on moving the dollars and cents around and making sure that we have enough to keep our schools well funded and well run."

There are of course always some pressures that come with being a growing division.

"Every year, there are more students, and with more students come new challenges. Some students are coming, and they need help with language skills and some students come with special needs," Wolfe said. "Every year, new challenges arise and new costs, and that's just part of the system."

> SCHOOLS FUNDING, FROM PG. 8

School divisions have often suggested they are receiving increases that are not enough to keep up with the level of growth and rising costs of education.

"We know that enrolment certainly is one factor that drives how much money a school division gets each year, but there's other factors that we consider," noted Schmidt.

The province attests that the overall 3.5 per cent funding increase for public schools in the 2026-27 school year will help manage enrolment changes and ensure students have the supports they need to succeed. The formula guarantee will continue for 2026-27, ensuring every school division receives an increase to the previous year's funding amount.

The Manitoba government's 2026-27 school funding now totals \$1.995 billion and includes:

- \$51 million increase to help public schools with operating costs, which includes the investment in salary harmonization and technical vocational education;

- \$30 million for a universal school nutrition program and Nello's Law, which protects the program for years to come, plus an additional \$3 million from the sale of U.S. alcohol products for the Children's Nutrition Council;

- \$15.2 million increase in capital support, which includes principal and interest costs related to building schools;

- \$16.6 million increase to independent schools under the funding agreement.

"When we came into government, schools across Manitoba were struggling after seven years of cuts," said Finance Minister Adrien Sala.

He touted a number of statistics including that the province had hired over 1,600 new staff since 2024 including over 800 new teachers and built 11 new schools, largely in Winnipeg and Brandon.

"Our government is committed to making sure every Manitoba family can count on strong, stable public schools, year after year. We are meeting the needs of students and communities by building new schools and feeding kids with our universal school food program," said Schmidt.

She noted the Manitoba government is allocating \$11.4 million in public school funding to support divisions most affected by teacher salary harmonization. Salary harmonization will be implemented in the 2026-27 school year to standardize teacher pay scales across school divisions to help minimize disparities.

"We've heard from many school boards that salary harmonization costs were creating significant pressures for this upcoming year," she acknowledged.

"By working together, we are creating a more equitable system that benefits teachers and supports stability for school divisions at a time when the demands on public schools are more complex than ever before," said Alan Campbell, president of the Manitoba School Boards Association.

"School boards recognize that the funding contribution for harmonization announced today is a step in the right direction and we look forward to continuing our work with government to ensure funding fully meets the needs of students, staff and communities across Manitoba."

The **Voice**

Get in touch with us via e-mail:

Send news items to: news@winklermordenvoice.ca
Advertising inquiries to: ads@winklermordenvoice.ca

Candlewick brings Meet Me In St. Louis to the stage

By Lorne Stelmach

A classic romantic musical comedy that dates back to a 1944 film is being presented this month as the Valentine's season production of Candlewick Players.

Meet Me in St. Louis is a classic MGM musical that focuses on four sisters on the cusp of the 1904 St. Louis World's Fair. The film spotlights the sisters' education in the ways of the world amidst plenty of song, dance, and period costumes.

"The show has great family values and dynamics, and most people can relate to these in some way shape or form," said actor Chuck Fefchak. "Strong-minded children express opinions that could alter Dad's employment. Younger siblings offer unrequested opinions on older siblings' choice of companion resulting in the expected rivalry. And in the end, these events bring a smile to patrons' faces who recognize these events in their own lives."

The storyline features the four sisters who are all blazing with excitement over the impending World's Fair. They are also in a state about the love life of their only brother, whom they suspect of ditching his sweet hometown girl for a snob from the east.



SUPPLIED PHOTO

Meet Me in St. Louis took the stage at the Kenmor Theatre in Morden last weekend and will continue its run with dinner theatre performances at the Manitou Opera House this weekend.

In the midst of the sisters' humorous maneuvers to rule or ruin their brother's new romance, the father finally breaks in with an announcement: he's been offered a better job in New York, which will mean leaving their home in St. Louis and missing the fair. At this, the girls unite for action.

"One can imagine the community importance of a World's Fair in 1904, but what if events prevented a family from enjoying them? What sort of re-

actions would we see? And what actions would teenagers take to be able to attend the World's Fair?" Fefchak said.

"As in every production we do, it's wonderful to watch the cast takes these well-known characters and present their own slant on their character," he noted. "We see some familiar faces in the cast, but this year we have a couple of newcomers to the Candlewick family. They bring a de-

lightful addition to this show.

"It's family-friendly fun. And a welcome reprieve from the winter doldrums."

Following shows at the Kenmor Theatre last weekend, the production continues with dinner theatre performances at the Manitou Opera House this Friday and Saturday.

Ticket information is available at candlewick.ca.

New construction numbers continue to grow across region

By Lorne Stelmach

New construction and development overall continued to pick up across the region through 2025.

That trend was reflected in the year-end building permit statistics of the MSTW (Morden Stanley Thompson and Winkler) Planning District.

Some of the numbers varied, but it overall looked positive for the region, suggested MSTW general manager Glen Wieler.

"The big difference in Winkler was the number of permits were very similar but the value was down," he noted.

"We had a couple of big projects that carried over from 2024," Wieler added citing the Winkler arena project as well as the wastewater plant. "Both were major projects going on in 2024 that are getting done now, so that's where the difference is now."

"Other than that, the number of permits across the board is quite consistent actually, considering the volume of work."

A key indicator is always the single-family housing starts, and they were up in both Winkler and Morden.

"That's definitely on the rise, so that's good to see," said Wieler.

"In Morden, they're still working on solutions for the wastewater ... and Winkler looks like they're waiting on developers to open up more lots for 2026. It always just takes time to get those projects completed before people start building houses. It's just a huge cost and a lot of work to get it done."

Here are some highlights from the key statistics for 2025:

WINKLER

Total building permits increased from 231 to 246.

The value of the development, however, decreased from over \$171 million to just over \$83 million.

New single family residential units were up from 29 to 58, and the value rose from \$10.7 million to \$22 million.

New multi-family developments decreased from 15 to 10 although the value rose slightly from \$30.2 million to just under \$32 million.

New commercial development dropped slightly from 15 to 12 while the value also went down from \$5.2 million to \$4 million.

New industrial development went from five to three, and the value dropped sharply from \$52.1 million to \$1.7 million.

MORDEN

Total building permits increased from 96 to 117.

The value of the development only dropped slightly from \$37.6 million to \$37.3 million.

New single family residential units almost doubled from 12 to 23 while the value also increased from \$4.8 million to \$9.4 million.

New commercial development dropped from eight to five although the value went up from \$4.1 million to \$6.1 million.

There was no new industrial development compared to the previous year when there were three permits with a value of \$5.6 million.

STANLEY

Total building permits dropped slightly from 125 to 121.

The value of the development however jumped from \$22.2 million to \$36.8 million.

New single family residential units

went up slightly from 21 to 23, while the value rose from \$9.3 million to \$12.3 million.

New commercial development went down from 13 to 11 while the value went up however from \$1.3 million to \$8.2 million.

There was just one new industrial development with a value of \$700,000 compared to zero the previous year.

THOMPSON

The RM of Thompson had 18 permits last year compared to 12 the year before while the value rose from \$2.2 million to \$2.9 million.

Overall, Wieler said it was encouraging to see development picking up across the region.

"People are still moving here. They're still buying houses and building ... so it's good to see all those things happening."

"There's still lots of multi-family development going on in the region," he added. "We've seen more and more of those coming up in the last five years plus ... there's still lots of people who want to move to the region, so that's a good thing."

Minnewasta Golf clubhouse on track for summer opening

By Lorne Stelmach

Work on the new clubhouse and restaurant at the Minnewasta Golf and Country Club has been progressing well, and officials are optimistic the project is on schedule.

General manager and golf pro Greg Hesom said a key aspect of the construction was being in a position to move on more to interior work before the onset of winter.

"The building was closed in before the cold weather arrived, so the guys are able to work inside with heating," he said. "The interior walls are framed ... the plumbing is going in, the electrical is going in and then dry-wall following shortly after that.

"Our goal was for sometime in June, and it looks like we are still on track for that," Hesom said of the projected finish date.

The fire that destroyed most of the clubhouse and restaurant came early in 2025 after a gala had just recently celebrated the official opening of the new facility built after another blaze three years prior destroyed the original building.

While the clubhouse completion date is a bit of a moving target, Hesom said they will start the season with a snack shack and tent, so Santa Lucia will be open for business.

He is somewhat cautious and re-

Continued on page 12



PHOTO BY ASHLEIGH VIVEIROS/VOICE

Work is moving along nicely on the Minnewasta Golf and Country Club clubhouse, which was destroyed by fire early last year. A June opening is in the works.

Focus on FINANCE



3 smart ways to maximize your next tax refund

Who doesn't love receiving a tax refund they're entitled to? It's even more satisfying when it's the result of smart planning. Do you know how to make the most of yours? Here are three ways to increase your refund.

1. CONTRIBUTE TO A SUITABLE SAVINGS ACCOUNT

Savings accounts, such as TFSAs and RRSPs, allow you to

invest money while lowering your taxable income. This is a great way to boost your tax refund. However, to avoid potential tax penalties, be careful not to contribute or withdraw too much.

2. CLAIM ELIGIBLE DEDUCTIONS

Find out which deductions are available to you. Depending on your situation, you may be able to claim child-care costs, moving expenses or other eligible deductions to reduce your taxable income. Talk to a finance expert to identify the best opportunities.

3. USE AVAILABLE TAX CREDITS

Tuition fees, medication expenses and charitable do-

nations may qualify for tax credits. In some cases, buying a home or claiming work-from-home expenses can also offer valuable savings.

Once you've applied these strategies, you can use your refund to pay off your debts faster, replenish your savings or finally start that kitchen renovation project you've been dreaming about. The possibilities are endless!

With a little bit of foresight and planning, you can optimize your tax refund. Need tax advice? Not sure where to start? Consult a financial expert near you.



Build a solid long-term plan.

I can help you develop a customized financial and retirement strategy that meets your needs today and builds a solid foundation for your future.

Critical illness insurance • Savings plans • Estate and Financial Planning Service



Brad Ritchie*, CFP®
TruPath Financial Solutions Ltd.
Tel: (204) 822-6777
sunlife.ca/brad.ritchie

Mutual fund business is done with your advisor through Sun Life Financial Investment Services (Canada) Inc. Advisors and their corporations conduct insurance business through Sun Life Financial Distributors (Canada) Inc. Sun Life Insurance Company of Canada is the insurer and is a member of the Sun Life group of companies. © Sun Life Insurance Company of Canada, 2024.

It is RRSP season, and you will see many ads suggesting you should make your contribution. Before making any decisions, there are some important questions to ask:

- Should I contribute?
- How much should I contribute?
- Are there other options?

That is where a certified financial planner, like myself can help you figure out how to make the most of your RRSP.

March 2nd, 2026 is the deadline to make an RRSP contribution that is deductible against your taxable income for the 2025 tax year. If you have questions, reach out and together we can help guide you to the best decision.



LYNES FINANCIAL GROUP

INVESTMENTS • WEALTH STRATEGIES • INSURANCE

Taxes are likely your largest expense, making them your greatest opportunity for savings. Let us help you optimize your tax strategy.

Phone 204-371-1490 Email: mlynnes@raintreefs.com

TAX PREPARATION SERVICES

LAITY TAX ✓
& BOOKKEEPING SERVICES INC.

Our team is fully competent in your Financial, Bookkeeping and Tax Service needs.

Winkler, MB • 431-775-7742

getinformed

Former fire chief featured in episode of What Do You Do

By Lorne Stelmach

An online video series that profiles different occupations has shone a spotlight on retired Morden fire chief Andy Thiessen.

If you've ever wondered what it takes to lead a fire department, a recent episode of *What Do You Do* produced by 47Filmworks follows Thiessen on the job, both at the fire hall and out on calls.

"In the end, we got a really good

comprehensive idea of what it's like to run a fire department," said Clarke Wainikka, who is a Mordenite herself and has been part of the 47Filmworks crew.

"I think they did a really nice job. They painted me in a much better picture than I ever thought I would look like," joked Thiessen.

They started filming for the piece about a year and a half ago, and it over time covered everything from firefighter training to actual fire calls.

The profile also touches on recruitment as well as the wide array of equipment that firefighters use.

"It took longer than we wanted it to, but we're very happy and proud to show it now," said Wainikka.

And it was particularly special to be able to encounter a few fire calls along the way, she added.

"Andy's first interview, I think, was interrupted by a fire call," she noted. "Then we were also doing interviews with other firefighters at Andy's retirement, and it was also interrupted by a call, and that moment is also in the documentary."

Wainikka said it was extra special for her to have this opportunity to connect with Thiessen for the feature.

"The series focuses on unique jobs and dream jobs," she explained. "It started as an idea to serve as a resource for students who didn't feel like they really knew what they wanted to do in life ... it just came from an idea of having more resources of what people do out there."

On their dream job list was a firefighter or fire chief. Wainikka noted Thiessen didn't hesitate when approached with the idea.

"One of the most interesting parts of my job is meeting people who are really interested and passionate about what they do, and Andy just exemplifies that," said Wainikka, who noted

it was a bit of a surprising twist when they learned he would be retiring after 45 years of service with the fire department, including the last 30 as chief.

"We didn't know that when we started the documentary ... then we decided, well, this is part of Andy's story ... so let's follow it all the way to the end."

"As the whole process was going on, I decided to retire, so then the whole flavour of the documentary kind of changed ... and it included all of that as well," said Thiessen.

He found it interesting to be put in the spotlight.

"It was very humbling ... and for me, because I did retire, it's a great keepsake for me that I will be able to have for a long time," said Thiessen. "They made me feel very comfortable with it ... it was a great group of people following me around there for a while."

Thiessen added it gave him a bit of a new perspective on what he has done for most of his life.

"After it was done, I kind of leaned over to [my wife] Tami ... and I thought I had a really great career and have really been blessed to have that kind of a job."

> MINNEWASTA, FROM PG. 11



SUPPLIED PHOTO

A film crew followed former Morden fire chief Andy Thiessen around in his final year and a half on the job for a recent episode of *What Do You Do*.

JOIN US FOR THE FEBRUARY CONSIGNMENT SALES 2026

FEBRUARY OFFSITE Consignment Sale

Viewing: Feb. 16th-19th from 9 AM to 5 PM.

Bidding starts: Feb. 19, 2026 at 9:00 AM

Lots start closing on Feb. 25, 2026 at 10:00 AM.

Pick up days: Friday, Feb. 27th &

Saturday, Feb 28th from 9 AM to 5 PM

FEBRUARY ONSITE Consignment Sale

Viewing: Feb. 16th-19th from 9 AM to 5PM.

Bidding starts: Feb. 19, 2026 at 9:00AM

Lots start closing on Feb. 25, 2026 at 10:00AM.

Pick up days: Friday, Feb. 27th &

Saturday Feb 28th from 9 AM to 5 PM



GRUNTHAL
AUCTION
SERVICE

Call today if you would like to consign your items! Office (204) 434-6519 • Brad Kehler (204) 346-2440 Darryl Enns (204) 216-0931 • Ed Pytyjuk (204) 392-8442
ITEMS ARE SOLD AS YOU SEE THEM. Call Now to Consign in Upcoming Auctions. If you require help or do not have internet access please call the office at (204) 434-6519.

strained in his enthusiasm for the rebuilt facility—his second new clubhouse since coming on staff at the golf course.

"I'll be excited when it's been standing for a couple of years, to be quite honest," he said jokingly. "Surreal would be the word that I use. It's a little bit like [the movie] Groundhog Day actually. It's been a straight five years of either planning or building.

"It's a good thing for the golf course and a good thing for the community, and we will carry on as best we can," he said, adding it will be nice to eventually turn the focus back to running a golf club again.

In the meantime, it will also be a bit of a process to also get the sit-down restaurant up and running again considering they will need to build a new team.

"It will be a soft start," Hesom said. "It's going to take time to build it up again and to do it properly."

Emerson cat in the running for America's Fav. Pet

By Lorne Stelmach

An Emerson resident has been earning attention online recently for his feline companion.

Bradley Le Sage happened to come across a post on Facebook about the America's Favorite Pet contest, and he entered his cat Bert.

Le Sage was somewhat surprised when Bert got selected to advance in the competition, where the ultimate winner will be featured in *Modern Cat* magazine and win \$10,000.

"I'm surprised it actually went somewhere," said Le Sage. "It's actually given me the opportunity to kind of try to put my own thing together."

Le Sage said Bert is a symbol of resilience as a Christmas Eve rescue who survived a snowstorm.

On the contest's voting page, Bert is described as a total foodie who never misses a meal.

"After months of wondering where the food was going, his healthy weight is finally showing," it reads. "His favourite treat is sitting regally in his own chair at the coffee table like the king he is. He's gone from skinnied to sturdy."

When asked what is Bert's most unique quality, it's noted he "possesses a rare 'aura adoration' that draws other cats and people to him for comfort. He's not just a pet. He's a silent guardian who always knows when you need a paw to lean on."

Le Sage added further thoughts about Bert.

"He's really gentle," he said, noting how he was really timid at first but has since become a little more open and will play much more now. "He was scared of everything before I got him."

Le Sage is now inspired to do something to help other cats like Bert.

"It gives me a good chance to start up something local for animals here who are kind of neglected and have special needs," he said.

He sees a need for something to serve the area in and around Emerson.

"There are quite a few strays around here ... there's isn't much in this area for animals."

Bert has made it pretty far in the competition—he's currently up against four other cats in his voting group. You can vote until Feb. 12 online at americasfavpet.com/2026/bert-be4b/.



SUPPLIED PHOTO

You can vote online for Bert the cat to make it to the next round of America's Favorite Pet through Feb. 12.

> COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS, FROM PG. 2

"Just to get out—even if it's just to walk around the track—and get some exercise, get out into the community. We love it," she said. "We've come with at least five to seven people every week, and then there's other places, like Linden Place, Gateway, coming as well."

Participants last week spent part of the two hours

reacquainting themselves with the rules of dodgeball, having a blast getting back in touch with their inner child.

"That's the whole point, isn't it?" Harsant said. "Playing badminton or dodgeball, doing those things you did as a kid. It's okay to have that time to just play sometimes."

Community Connections will run at the MEC at least through April.

If you have an idea for a rec. program that could make use of the city's facilities, Dias urges you to contact her: she's always open to new ideas.

"We try to open up the space as often as we can when it's not rented out," she said. "We want to get people moving."

For the complete list of MEC programs, head to themeridianexhibitioncentre.ca.

When your heart needs adventure



WHITESHELL PROVINCIAL PARK | 49.70408° N, 95.19041° W



NESTAWEYA RIVER TRAIL | 49.88613° N, 97.13236° W

Whether it's a quiet moment on a cross-country ski trail or the thrill of the slopes, there's no shortage of ways to enjoy the fresh powder. Snowshoe or hike in provincial parks, skate on the frozen Red and Assiniboine Rivers and wander the world's largest snow maze. There's nothing like a frosty adventure to get your heart racing.



Find heart-stirring itineraries at travelmanitoba.com

MANITOBA

Morden Area Fdn. hands out \$86K in grants

By Lorne Stelmach

The Morden Area Foundation capped off another successful year with the presentation of grants last Wednesday at the Morden Legion.

The event saw the foundation hand out over \$86,000 in total to 10 recipients, along with one special matching challenge grant.

It means the foundation in the past year has given back a total of about \$311,000—something grants committee chairperson Yvonne Stoesz said was definitely cause for celebration.

“We have over \$7 million [in endowment funds], and the interest from that we are able to grant out,” she explained. “It’s absolutely the best part about being on the board.

“I also enjoy when people submit their grants. They do a 15-minute interview with the board and the granting committee, so we get to hear the passion that people have for Morden, for children, for newcomers,” Stoesz

“IT SHOWS THE DIVERSITY OF MORDEN AND THE GENEROSITY OF MORDEN.”

added. “It shows the diversity of Morden and the generosity of Morden. I am inspired.”

The evening included the announcement of a new scholarship fund: the Tio and Leanne Bellisario Excellence in Science Scholarship Fund. As well, through the William and Colleen Lyne family, four new funds were established in support of the Prairie Crossroads School, Pembina Valley Child Care Centres, Morden Caring and Sharing school meals program, and the Alzheimer Society of Manitoba.

There was also a new fund an-



PHOTOS BY LORNE STELMACH/VOICE

Morden Area Foundation board members distributed \$86,000 in grants to numerous local organizations last week, including the police/fire rink renovation project (above) and the Menzies Medical Centre (below).

nounced in connection to St. Thomas Anglican Church in Morden, which is celebrating its 140th anniversary this year.

Cheryl Digby shared briefly about the Clark Elder Fund established in honour of her son. She recalled him being inspired at a young age by a coach, so they want to enable others to be able to experience and gain from sports in his memory.

“Sports weren’t just a passion for him,” she said. “Clark knew that on the field, everyone has a place.”

A number of new grants were also presented:

- École Discovery Trails School: \$25,000 for a play structure.
- “The big thing with this play structure is it’s not just for the school, it’s also for the community,” said parent advisory council representative Mike Lawson, who noted it overall is about a \$400,000 project.

- Menzies Medical Centre community board: \$15,000 in support of a return of service physician recruitment initiative that will have beneficiaries commit to serving here for a few years.
- “Thank you very much for trusting us with the work that we are trying to do,” said executive director Nicole Walske.
- Morden Curling Club: \$10,000 for an accessible washroom as well as an accessible entry.
- Regional Connections: \$10,000 for leasehold improvements for its new building project in Morden.
- Pembina Valley Child Care Centres hive site in Morden: \$7,000 for nature playground fencing.
- Canadian Fossil Discovery Centre: \$6,800 for the acquisition of a robotic station.

Continued on page 15

OIL & FILTER SALE

ON NOW UNTIL MARCH 31, 2026

SAVE 15% OFF
MIN. \$500 PURCHASE

PREMIUM LUBRICANTS AND COOLANTS.

SAVE 45% WITH FLEETGUARD FILTER UP TO

SAVE 30% UP TO

Compared to regular pail price of CNH lubricants.

5% ADDITIONAL REBATE ON PURCHASES OF ALL CNH LUBRICANTS AND COOLANTS WHEN CHARGED TO A CNH CAPITAL PRODUCTIVITY PLUS ACCOUNT.

Extends oil change intervals up to 600 hours

Reduces hydraulic foaming • Highest water tolerance rating

RME's ON-FARM BULK OIL... Delivered!!!

SAVE 30% UP TO

Compared to regular pail price of CNH lubricants.

5% ADDITIONAL REBATE ON PURCHASES OF ALL CNH LUBRICANTS AND COOLANTS WHEN CHARGED TO A CNH CAPITAL PRODUCTIVITY PLUS ACCOUNT.

RIGHT by YOU

GENUINE PARTS

@RMEHQ RMEHQ /RockyMountainEquipment ROCKYMTN.COM

© 2026 Rocky Mountain Equipment LP. All logos and designs are trademarks of their respective companies. *Offer valid until March 31, 2026. **Minimum annual order of \$2,500 to qualify. ***Minimum purchase required of 500 litres of one lubricant, or 300 litres x2 of two different lubricants, totalling a minimum 600 litres. Offer expires March 31, 2026. ****Quality minimum purchase of \$1,000 or more required. Offer expires April 30, 2026. See dealer for further details.



"It keeps building"

By Lorne Stelmach

At its annual meeting last week, Morden Area Foundation board chair Brad Ritchie reflected on how far the agency has come in the more than three decades since its inception.

"It keeps building," Ritchie said last Wednesday as the foundation gathered to hand out its most recent grants at the Morden Legion hall.

"The responsibilities that the board members carry, they become more significant. They become different but they become more significant," he reflected. "We recognize our role has expanded, not only in giving out money but growing the endowment and learning about what the needs of the community are because it's becoming a more and more diverse community. We certainly try to have a very broad knowledge of what's happening in Morden and area."

The foundation reported revenue of over \$404,000 for the past year, over \$341,000 of which was in investment income. Meanwhile, expenses came in at just over \$378,000, with a majority of that in grants that totalled over \$310,000, resulting in a surplus of over \$26,000.

The foundation currently has overall investments that increased in value to over \$7.2 million.

Some of the major funds that contribute to that overall total include the Canadian Fossil Discovery Centre sustainability fund (valued at over \$1.7 million), the Thomas Sill Foundation

fund (over \$1.3 million), the foundation's general community fund (over \$1.1 million), the Learn and Return health care bursary (over \$679,000), the Morden Area Foundation support fund (over \$416,000), Power of the Purse (over \$178,000) recreation and sport fund (over \$147,000), the Manitoba Baseball Hall of Fame (over \$125,000), William and Colleen Lyne Scholarship fund (over \$122,000), the Morden Area Foundation managed fund (over \$108,000), and the City of Morden fund (over \$103,000).

Ritchie also highlighted the success of some of the foundation's initiatives including the Giving Week Challenge, which was boosted by donations from Decor Cabinets and the estate of Harold Bollenbach along with matching funds from the province and Winnipeg Foundation.

Other initiatives ranged from the annual Citizen of Distinction Award to the Power of the Purse fundraiser to the ongoing work of the Youth in Philanthropy group at Morden Collegiate.

Ritchie said the annual meeting and grants night offered a great opportunity to promote and raise awareness of the foundation.

"It's our chance to share with the community where we are from a number of aspects, certainly from a financial perspective because we are an endowment, and where we are about growing the endowment and sharing the growth with all the worthy grant



PHOTO BY LORNE STELMACH/VOICE

The Morden Area Foundation board oversees investments totalling over \$7.2 million, interest from which is granted back out into the community.

applications that come in on an annual basis," he said.

"And also it's an opportunity to rekindle awareness about who we are, what we do and how people can support the foundation, as we need support so we can continue to support our growing community and the other increasing challenges that we see."

Ritchie was also thankful for the board, citing how it is made up of people with a good combination of experience, skills, and knowledge.

He concluded with thanks for the community support that makes it possible.

"We're very grateful for the generosity of people who give, mostly from Morden but from other parts of the province as well," Ritchie said. "They see that there's a need, and they see that we're filling that need, and they know that when they're giving to the Morden Area Foundation their money is going to last forever."

> GRANTS, FROM PG. 14

- Morden Family Resource Centre: \$5,200 for four parent and child six-week pre-school programs.

- Morden History and Archives: \$3,100 for the preservation of historical Morden photographs.

- Morden Activity Centre: \$2,137.11 for an automated external defibrillator.

- Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Pembina Valley: \$1,800 for its after school mentoring program.

In addition, there was \$18,000 in matching funds presented to the Morden Police and Morden Fire departments in connection to their fundraising campaign for upgrades at the outdoor skating rink.

Stoesz said the foundation aims to

support a wide range of organizations and projects in the community, though she suggested they have "been more intentional to hit some of those wellness indicators, like education, health, food security ... we have been more deliberate."

She said they are also "being more intentional to actually ask the community what are the needs, so not only people who come to us with applications.

"What are the needs we are seeing? Maybe they're not applying? Maybe they don't know about the foundation? How can we meet the needs of Morden and areas that are maybe missed or fall through the cracks?"



We know you count on us for reliable, affordable energy. But we're not just delivering energy – we're building for the future.

Find out how at hydro.mb.ca/energy-for-life



 **DOELL**
LAW OFFICE
1- 655 Main St, Winkler
(204) 325-8807

The *Winkler Morden*
Voice
Your Community
NEWSPAPER



Getting married in winter: a bold and rewarding choice

Although many associate weddings with the summer season, winter weddings offer plenty of advantages. Venues and hotels are less busy in the off-season. Caterers, photographers and entertainers tend to have more availability. Also, prices are often lower. Here's how to make your winter celebration a success.

- **Location.** Choose a setting that feels warm and inviting, such as a lakeside cottage, a picturesque inn, a cozy hotel or even a modern sugar shack. Just make sure the location is accessible. Avoid remote spots with poorly maintained roads that could become dangerous in snowy conditions.
- **Decorations.** A winter-themed wedding naturally has a magical feel. Opt for seasonal colours like white, pine green and icy blue. Decorate with natural elements, such as fir branches and pinecones. Add soft lighting with candles—LED candles that mimic flames are a safe choice.



And they
LIVED HAPPILY
ever after...

WEDDING SPECIAL

**Inverness Falls
Resort**

*Romance,
Relaxation &
the Great Outdoors*

Whiteshell Park **204-369-5336**

**EARTH BUDS
FLORIST**

hello@earthbudsflorist.com
204-325-4596
585 1st St unit 5B

- **Outfits.** If you'll be spending part of the day outdoors, especially for that quintessential winter photo shoot, make sure you stay warm by choosing elegant and warm clothing. Think long-sleeved dresses, faux-fur capes, quilted coats, wool suits, luxurious scarves and elegant lined boots.
- A winter wedding creates a romantic atmosphere and endless creative possibilities. Work with local businesses and professionals to plan your snowy wedding.

**ANY
SUIT,
SHIRT
& TIE
\$329**

**Saban
& COMPANY**

Mens & Womens Clothing • Footwear • Swimwear • Trophies & Engraving
205 LaVerandrye Blvd., Morden
Mon-Wed. & Saturday 9 to 5:30 Thurs. & Friday 9 to 9

LIVIENNE
BRIDAL BOUTIQUE
WEDDING GOWNS, GRAD DRESSES,
BRIDESMAID DRESSES, & MORE

@LIVIENNE BRIDAL • 204-325-5595
253 MAIN AVE, PLUM COULEE, MB

"We Do"
INVITATIONS

Invitations
Announcements
Save The Date Cards
Personal Stationary
Thank You Cards

**Interlake
Graphics**

74 Patterson Drive,
Stonewall
204-467-5836
igraphic@mts.net

MITT closing up shop; future of Morden program uncertain

By Lorne Stelmach

The shutdown of a Winnipeg-based educational institution has had a bit of a ripple effect with a new educational initiative based in Morden facing an uncertain future as a result.

The Manitoba Institute of Trades and Technology (MITT) announced last month that it would be winding down operations, with select programs transferring to Red River College Polytech (RRC Polytech).

In a statement, MITT cited how over the past two years the federal government has made rapid, ongoing changes to the international student program.

"These changes have created uncertainty for students and post-secondary institutions across Canada and sent a message abroad that international students aren't valued here.

"As a result, institutions have faced financial and operational shocks that they could not reasonably anticipate or absorb," the statement continued. "The Manitoba Institute of Trades and Technology has seen international enrolment drop by more than 55 per cent, making its current financial model unsustainable."



VOICE FILE PHOTO

The Manitoba Institute of Trades and Technology had partnered with Morden on a new network and systems administrator program last fall. The Winnipeg-based school has announced it will be shutting down.

Last fall, MITT in partnership with the City of Morden launched a network and systems administrator diploma program out of renovated space in Boundary Trails Place.

The diploma program's aim was to

provide hands-on learning in information and communication technology and practicum experiences with local employers.

A representative for the City of Morden declined to comment at this time

given they had little more information about MITT's decision to shut down or about the possible future of the local program.

The statement from MITT sought "to reassure students and parents that all students will be able to complete their studies. The transition will occur over the next year, with some programs and functions extending beyond this timeline under RRC Polytech's leadership. Students will continue to access their programs as they currently do.

"We will work closely with the province and RRC Polytech to ensure students are supported and have a clear, well-defined plan for completing their program—whether they're in our post-secondary, high school, adult learning, or English language programming. Any industry training that is underway will also continue to completion.

"As an initial step, a comprehensive review of MITT programs will be conducted. We will engage with students, partner institutions, school divisions, industry partners, and other key stakeholders to ensure all programming and partnerships are addressed thoughtfully and responsibly."

One man facing drug charges in Altona bust

By Voice staff

One man was arrested following a large-scale police operation in Altona late last month.

On Jan. 30, Manitoba First Nations Police Service (MFNPS) executed search warrants at multiple locations, with tactical support provided by officers from Altona, Winkler, and the

RCMP.

The investigation into drug trafficking activities impacting Roseau River First Nation and surrounding communities began last September, police share, based in part on tips received from the community.

Investigators identified a person of interest with suspected direct involvement in supplying metham-

phetamine and cocaine to community members. Police say he allegedly had frequent visits to known drug houses and connections to individuals actively selling drugs on his behalf.

The suspect was arrested and later released from custody to appear in court in Emerson to face charges of possession for the purpose of trafficking (both methamphetamine and co-

caine) and possession of proceeds of crime.

Other individuals interviewed in connection with the investigation were released without charges at this time.

The investigation remains ongoing.

Officials warn of measles exposures at Ag Days

By Voice staff

Public health officials with Manitoba Health, Seniors and Long-Term Care are notifying the public of new measles exposure sites in Brandon and southern Manitoba.

Anyone who attended Ag Days in Brandon, visited hotels, restaurants and shops should monitor for symptoms until Feb. 13. Possible exposures may have occurred in the city on the event days, on the days leading up to it and the days following it, beyond the locations listed.

Anyone at these locations on the

specified dates and times is asked to monitor for symptoms until the identified dates and contact your health care provider should they occur:

- Manitoba Ag Days, Keystone Centre, Brandon, Jan. 20 from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. Monitor for symptoms until Feb. 11. Jan. 21 from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. Monitor for symptoms until Feb. 12. Jan. 22 from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. Monitor for symptoms until Feb. 13.

- Great Western Roadhouse, inside the Canad Inns Destination Centre, 1125 18th St., Brandon on Jan. 20 from 5 p.m. to 9 p.m. Monitor for symptoms until Feb. 11.

- Manitoba Ag Days, Agriculture in the Classroom event at the Provincial Exhibition of Manitoba Dome Building, Unit 1-A, 1200 13th St., Brandon, Jan. 20 from 9:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monitor for symptoms until Feb. 11. Jan. 21 from 9:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monitor for symptoms until Feb. 12. Jan. 22 from 9:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monitor for symptoms until Feb. 13.

- Stacked Pancake and Breakfast House, 777 Norquay Dr., Winkler, on Feb. 1 from 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Monitor for symptoms until Feb. 23.

- Boundary Trails Health Centre public health office, near Winkler, on

Feb. 2 from 10:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. Monitor for symptoms until Feb. 24.

- Boundary Trails Health Centre emergency department, near Winkler, on Feb. 3 from 7 p.m. to Feb. 4 at 1:10 a.m. Monitor for symptoms until Feb. 26.

Public health is also asking anyone who was at these locations during the specified times to check their immunization records and ensure they are up to date with measles vaccine (MMR or MMRV).

sports & recreation

Royals roll, Bombers surge, Wild stumble heading into playoffs

By Lana Meier

The Winkler Royals, Morden Bombers and Red River Wild each closed out the SEMHL regular season with contrasting results last weekend as the league prepares to transition into playoff hockey.

League-leading Winkler continued its strong finish with a pair of convincing wins, defeating the Carman Beavers 11-8 on Friday before routing the Warren Mercs 10-1 on Saturday.

Friday's matchup with Carman was a wide-open affair that saw the teams trade goals throughout the first two periods. Winkler struck twice in the opening 90 seconds and never trailed, getting multi-point performances from Justin Augert, Adam Henry and Aaron Lewadniuk. James Penner scored the game-winning goal early in the third, while Matthew Thiessen stopped 37 shots to earn the win.

The Royals followed up with a dominant showing Saturday in Altona, holding Warren to a single power-play goal while pouring in 10 of their own. Augert scored twice, Henry added a goal and an assist, and Thiessen turned aside 47 shots as Winkler closed the regular season first overall with a 14-3-1 record and 29 points.

Morden capped off its regular season Saturday with a 9-4 victory over the Notre Dame Hawks, powered by a three-goal special teams effort and balanced scoring throughout the lineup.

After trailing briefly early, the Bombers took control with five unanswered goals spanning the first and second periods. Collin Shirley, Mike Rey and Jay Fehr each finished with multi-point nights, while Reed Peters made 40 saves in goal.

The win secured Morden fifth place in the standings with an 8-9-1 record, positioning the Bombers as a poten-



PHOTOS BY RICK HIEBERT/VOICE
Notre Dame's Jake Carel and Morden's Tyler Campbell race for the puck in Saturday's 9-4 Bombers victory. Right: Morden's Cade Kowalski (left) receives the 2025-26 SEMHL Rookie Of The Year Award from presenter and teammate Collin Shirley.

tial first-round spoiler heading into the postseason.

Red River struggled down the stretch, falling 5-2 to the Springfield Winterhawks on Friday before suffering an 11-1 loss to the Ile des Chênes Northstars on Saturday.

Against Springfield, Red River opened the scoring but was undone by special teams, allowing two power-play goals late in the second period. Jayden Catellier stopped 34 shots in the loss.

Saturday's contest against Ile des Chênes quickly got away from the Wild, who were limited to a single second-period goal from Clint Lucier as the Northstars struck early and often. Red River used two goaltenders as Ile des Chênes extended its road dominance.

Despite the losses, Red River finished fourth in the SEMHL standings at 10-6-2 with 22 points.

Playoffs next



The SEMHL regular season concludes Feb. 10, with all nine teams advancing to the playoffs. The postseason opens with a Survivor Series between the eighth- and ninth-place teams, with the winner moving on to

face the first-place club. The remainder of the playoffs will feature best-of-five series in the first two rounds, followed by a best-of-seven league final.

Flyers win three straight

By Ashleigh Viveiros

The Winkler Flyers added three more to the win column in MJHL action this past week.

On Feb. 3 they welcomed the sixth-place Winnipeg Blizzard to town, and sent them packing with a 7-2 loss.

It was all-Winkler through the first 40 minutes, with goals from Connor Rieger, William Lyons (with two), Ethan MacTavish, Niklas Gudmundson, and Charlie Weaver giving the home team a 6-0 lead heading into the final frame.

There, the Blizzard bookended the period with goals, wrapped around one more from MacTavish.

Liam Russell was called on to make 20 saves in net off 22 shots. His teammates fired 36 the other way.

The Flyers then squared off against the first-place Niverville Nighthawks Friday night, also in Winkler.

The two teams matched each other shot for shot through the first period—seven in all—but when the whistle blew it was Winkler who was up 2-1 thanks to goals from Tanner George and Joshua Ingram.

Another close period in the second frame—with 14 shots on net from Winkler and 13 from Niverville—saw the Flyers add three to the Night-

hawks' two to remain in the lead 5-3. Scoring was courtesy of Riley Fequet, Aiden Jacobson, and Gudmundson.

Niverville tried to close the gap in the third, but Winkler matched them goal for goal thanks to George and Bernier to win it 7-5.

Liam Ernst was between the posts for the Flyers this game and he made 24 saves as shots on goal clocked in at 29-29.

The next night the Flyers blanked the visiting Swan Valley Stampede 7-0. Gudmundson and Weaver both scored twice while Trevor Dalton, George, and Lyons contributed singles.

Russell got the shutout in net, making 30 saves.

The Flyers remain in fourth place in the MGEU East Division with a record of 26-16-1-2 and 55 points. They're tied in points with the third-place Terriers, though Portage has two games in hand. In first and second place is Niverville (79 points) and Steinbach (72), both of whom have earned their seat at the playoff table.

This week Winkler hosts Portage Tuesday, Virden on Friday, and Waywayseecappo Saturday night. They then hit the road to play in Virden on Louis Riel Day.



PHOTO BY RICK HIEBERT/VOICE

With Jacob Michelson and Evan Panzer at the doorstep, Flyers netminder Liam Ernst makes a save during their penalty kill to help keep the Flyers in the lead in their 7-5 win over Niverville Friday night.

A rocky week for U18 male PV Hawks

By Lorne Stelmach

It was an up and down week for the male U18 Pembina Valley Hawks, as they dropped two of their three games.

It started with a 6-3 loss to the Winnipeg Wild last Wednesday, but the Hawks then rebounded to double up Kenora 8-4 Friday. Sunday, though, then saw Pembina Valley fall 7-2 to Brandon.

Koen Bleznuk was under fire in the Hawks' goal against the Wild in Winnipeg as he stopped 43 of 48 shots before the Wild put it away with an empty netter. Shots on goal overall were 49-23.

Ocean Fehr had a goal and an assist for Pembina Valley, with the other markers coming from Carson Hiebert and Cole Secord.

It was a different story against Kenora as the Hawks had a 46-26 edge in shots and took period leads of 4-1 and 6-3.

Tyson Pethybridge had a goal and an assist with Paxton White contributing a goal and a pair of assists. Also scoring were Fehr, Secord, Caden McMahon, Logan Delichte, and Mason Leite.

The Wheat Kings connected for a pair of power play goals as they held period leads of 3-1 and 4-2 before collecting three more unanswered goals in the final frame.

Hiebert and Ragnar Gillis scored for the Hawks, while Bleznuk took the loss with 32 saves. Shots on goal overall were even at 39 apiece.

Pembina Valley remains in eighth place at 23-17-1-1 for 48 points, which leaves them one back of Parkland and three behind Southwest.

The Hawks continue a five game homestand this weekend starting with Eastman Friday followed by Interlake Saturday and then the Winnipeg Bruins Sunday.



PHOTO BY RICK HIEBERT/VOICE

Flyer Jacob Michelson was honoured as RBC's MJHL Community Ambassador at Friday's home game. Michelson was recognized for his work in the community, including mentoring younger athletes with Winkler Minor Hockey and through Big Brothers Big Sisters' floor hockey program and volunteering at the Winkler Food Cupboard and Salem Home. The award comes with a \$1,000 donation from RBC to the school of Michelson's choice: Emerado Centennial School.

The **Voice**

Get in touch with us via e-mail:

Send news items to: news@winklermordenvoice.ca

Advertising inquiries to: ads@winklermordenvoice.ca

What's *your* story?

Carman family watches Olympic history unfold

By Jessica Eblie

When the women's doubles luge competition launches at the 2026 Olympic Winter Games in Italy, former long-time Carman residents, Wayne and Carol Allan, will be watching with pride. Their granddaughter, 22-year-old Kailey Allan, will be representing Team Canada in the inaugural women's doubles luge event.

Kailey will compete on Feb. 11 in Cortina d'Ampezzo as part of Canada's women's doubles luge team, with her partner Beattie Podulsky. While doubles luge has been an Olympic event for decades, Milano Cortina 2026 will mark the sport's debut for women. The discipline features two athletes racing together on a single sled, requiring precise timing, communication and trust while reaching speeds of more than 130 kilometres per hour.

For Wayne and Carol, who lived in Carman for nearly 40 years before moving to rural British Columbia in 2015, the moment is historic, celebratory and deeply personal. "We were in Carman for about 40 years," Carol said. Carol added that she still hears from friends in Carman who are following Kailey's Olympic run via Facebook.

According to Kailey's parents, Stacey and Don, she has always been a superb athlete. "She did every sport she could growing up," Carol said. "She did ski racing, competitive softball, and track, (but) as you go along and get older, you have to start weeding out some of these sports."

Kailey first stepped onto a luge sled at age 10, after spotting a sign in Calgary inviting youngsters to try the sport. What began as a summer camp soon became a high-performance pursuit, carrying her from training sessions to international competition venues around the world.

For the first 11 years of her luge career, Kailey competed as a singles slider. She represented Canada at the Youth Olympic Games in 2020 in St. Moritz, Switzerland, gaining experience on the international stage and earning a seventh-place finish overall. Kailey came up short in qualifying for the women's singles luge event at the Beijing 2022 Winter Olympics, but nevertheless persisted in her efforts to qualify for the 2026 Games. That determination ultimately led to a new goal — women's doubles luge.

About 18 months ago, Kailey and fellow Calgary-based athlete Beattie Podulsky decided to partner up, forming one of Canada's most competitive women's doubles luge teams. "They were both single sliders previously and thought, well, Canada needed a doubles women's team," Stacey said.

Despite their recent partnership, the duo has already found success. Last season, they earned a bronze medal at the Under-23 World Championships and another bronze as part of Canada's mixed team relay at the International Luge Federation (FIL) World Championships in Whistler, BC. In the lead-up to the Olympics, the duo ranks just outside the top 10 internationally in women's doubles and has placed well in qualifying competitions leading up to Milano Cortina.



SUBMITTED PHOTOS

Kailey Allan (right) and her partner Beattie Podulsky, at the 2025 International Luge Federation (FIL) World Championships in Whistler, B.C., where they captured the bronze.

"Their goal is to do well (at the Olympics), probably place in the top eight, maybe top six," stated Stacey.

According to the Allan family, luge is "the fastest sport on ice." Singles sliders can reach speeds exceeding 143 kilometres per hour, while doubles athletes face added challenges of weight, balance, unison and trust. For the duo of Kailey Allan and Podulsky, Kailey rides on the bottom of the sled, with her partner lying on top of her. The athletes are secured together, navigating narrow ice corridors at extreme speeds, all while trying to be the fastest team in order to win the event.

"It's kind of like driving a double-decker bus down an F-1 track," Stacey said.

Despite the intensity, Kailey's family describes her as someone who balances competitiveness with joy. "She's determined and driven, but she's having fun," Stacey added. "There's always a smile on her face."

As the Olympics approach, Allan's participation offers local readers a chance to witness both an Olympic first and the success of an athlete connected to the community through family roots rather than residence. Kailey's Olympic moment is a reminder that no matter where you grew up in Canada or who you are, Olympic dreams can take shape and slide all the way to the global stage.

As the Allan family prepares to travel to Italy to support Kailey in person, they say the experience has already been incredible. Beyond medals and rankings, they hope Kailey's journey sends a message to young athletes.

"Anything's possible," Carol said. "The places she's been, the people she's met. Sport builds character and life experience."

In a text communication, Kailey stated that she is looking forward to competing and has done everything possible to prepare for these Games. "I'm super excited to compete in my first Olympic Games and represent Canada in the first ever women's doubles event," she added.

Although Carman was never Allan's hometown, her family's decades-long presence in the community means her Olympic debut is being followed with interest by residents who knew her grandparents and have watched her career unfold from afar.

As the Olympics approach, Allan's participation offers local readers a chance to witness both an Olympic first and the success of an athlete connected to the community through family roots rather than residence. Kailey's Olympic moment is a reminder that no matter where you grew up in Canada or who you are, Olympic dreams can take shape and slide all the way to the global stage.

"ANYTHING'S POSSIBLE. THE PLACES SHE'S BEEN, THE PEOPLE SHE'S MET. SPORT BUILDS CHARACTER AND LIFE EXPERIENCE."



Kailey Allan (back) and Beattie Podulsky (front) preparing for a luge run in competition.

Manitoba's ice makers: small-town roots, world-class impact

By Annaliese Meier

While elite curlers compete under bright lights at national and international championships, the conditions they rely on are often created by ice makers with roots in small Manitoba communities.

That connection was on display at the Selkirk Curling Club, where fresh ice was being prepared ahead of men's provincial competition under the direction of Matt Rankine, a Manitoba-based ice technician whose work regularly takes him across North America.

Rankine is part of a group of Manitoba and Winnipeg ice makers widely respected within curling circles for their technical expertise and consistency at major events. Another Manitoba ice maker, Greg Ewasko of Tyndall, is currently in Italy preparing ice for the upcoming Olympic Winter Games. Ewasko would otherwise have been part of the Selkirk crew, Rankine said.

From Rankine's perspective, Manitoba's reputation for producing world-class curling ice is built on decades of mentorship and shared knowledge.

"I would say it's kind of a legacy thing," Rankine said. "We were fortunate enough to have Hans Wuthrich in our province, and Eric Montford, who—along with Shorty out of Ontario—really developed this way of making ice. The grassroots of it started right here in Manitoba."

That knowledge, Rankine said, was passed down through generations of technicians, including Mark Shurek and Ewasko, both of whom have worked major national and international events.

"I'm two generations removed from that," he said. "I got the opportunity to learn from Greg Ewasko, Hans Wuthrich, Mark Shurek and Eric Montford, who is my uncle. To be able to learn from the best in the world is a pretty special thing."

Curling ice preparation is a highly specialized skill requiring precise control of temperature, humidity, pebble and surface texture. Even small imperfections can affect stone movement and fairness of play.

"It has to be perfectly flat and perfectly level," Rankine said. "The rocks will always find areas that are not level."



George Hacking, skip of the provincial senior men's champions, sweeps during a practice game at the Selkirk Curling Club. The game helped break in freshly prepared ice ahead of men's provincials.



Matt Rankine oversees ice preparation at the Selkirk Curling Club ahead of men's provincial competition. The Manitoba-based technician is part of a network of ice makers regularly selected for national, international and Olympic-level events.

At Selkirk, Rankine worked alongside club volunteers to break in newly refreshed, or "green," ice — a stage where technicians are still fine-tuning conditions and want stones running repeatedly over every sheet.

That process included a practice game played by the provincial senior men's champions, skipped by George Hacking. The goal, Hacking said, was to help "work in" both the ice and the rocks before the provincials begin.

"We always appreciate the opportunity to practice on competition ice, so we volunteered to play against a Selkirk team to break in the rocks and the ice," Hacking said. "We had a very good turnout of volunteers and the exercise was a great success."

From a curler's perspective, Hacking said green ice can play differently than a settled surface, especially when stones have been freshly sanded.

"Green ice is very heavy and with fresh sanded stones it's very swingy and heavy," he said. "It's a good opportunity to work on positive releases to try and 'set a rock back' to delay the massive curl at the end."

Hacking said the practice game also serves a practical purpose for the ice crew: it gives technicians



Volunteers and ice technicians work together at the Selkirk Curling Club as freshly prepared ice is broken in ahead of men's provincial competition. A practice game involving the provincial senior men's champions helps break in the ice and stones while providing early feedback on consistency.

immediate, real-world information about how the stones are tracking — and whether anything needs to be corrected before competition begins.

"They watch and look for any feedback — hopefully the rocks track consistently and fairly evenly as to line and weight," he said. "The more consistent the rocks, the more personal skill is a factor."

As experienced competitors, Hacking said senior-level curlers can help identify issues early, including stones that aren't running true.

"The main thing is to get the rocks moving," he said. "If we saw a 'bad rock' we could notify him, but the Curl Manitoba rocks are high quality and consistent."

While curlers can offer feedback, Hacking emphasized that ice maker expertise is the foundation of fair, consistent championship conditions.

"Ice maker expertise is the most critical factor — balancing temp and humidity to keep the ice hard, without a lot of frost buildup," he said. "Curlers are at their mercy — but it's the same for both teams."

Rankine said that balance is achieved through constant monitoring and adjustment, including control over building temperatures.

"You're constantly just trying to make sure the water is the best, the scraper blade is the best, the temperatures are set proper — everything," he said. "Because without that, they'll notice."

Volunteers remain essential to delivering that standard, Rankine added.

"It's huge," he said. "Without volunteers, we couldn't do this."

Although Selkirk's senior men's team is not competing this week due to scheduling conflicts between Manitoba qualifying and the Canadian championships, Hacking said the club's involvement remains significant.

"Selkirk hosts quite often in the rotation and other than Steinbach's new facility, Selkirk's one of the best places to watch," he said. "It takes hundreds of volunteers, and Selkirk and area curling clubs step up to volunteer and provide the best ice, sight lines and entertainment value whenever we host."

Hacking also pointed to Selkirk's ability to deliver under pressure, including hosting a provincial event in a modified bubble in 2022.

"The committee works countless hours and should be commended for bringing Selkirk to the forefront of the curling world whenever we host," he said.

Rather than being measured solely by teams on the ice, Manitoba's influence on curling continues to be felt behind the scenes — through the ice makers, volunteers and veteran curlers who help shape championship play long before the first draw begins.

PHOTOS BY BRETT MITCHELL/VOICE

Calvert claims first Manitoba men's title at Bunge Championship

By Haley Cvar

Manitoba has a new men's curling champion.

Braden Calvert and his Heather Curling Club rink captured the Bunge Championship title Sunday afternoon in Selkirk, defeating Jordon McDonald of the Assiniboine Memorial Curling Club in an extra end to earn their first Manitoba men's crown.

Calvert, joined by third Corey Chambers, second Kyle Kurz, lead Brendan Bilawka and alternate Rob Gordon, prevailed in a dramatic rematch of Saturday night's Page 1-2 playoff game, also won by the Heather rink.

The championship final was tied 7-7 after 10 ends when Calvert slid a foot deep on his last-stone draw, conceding a single point to force an extra end. In the 11th, Calvert set up the winning chance with a perfect first-stone hit, leaving McDonald facing a difficult draw around two centre-line stones. McDonald made the shot but left Calvert a short runback, which he converted to seal the win to represent Manitoba at the national championship.

For Calvert and his teammates, the victory marked a breakthrough after falling short in the past two provincial finals — losing to Reid Carruthers

in 2025 and Brad Jacobs in 2024.

McDonald's rink, which includes Jacques Gauthier, Elias Huminicki and Cam Olafson, had reached the final earlier Sunday with a six-end semifinal win over Brett Walter's Assiniboine Memorial team.

The result capped a week that guaranteed a new provincial champion. Defending champion and top seed Reid Carruthers and his Granite Curling Club rink were eliminated Saturday afternoon by Kelly Marnoch's Carberry foursome, opening the door for a first-time men's champion.

None of the three teams remaining heading into the final day — Calvert, McDonald and Walter — had previously represented Manitoba at the Canadian men's championship, though several players had won provincial titles at the junior, U18 or mixed levels.

Calvert earned his spot in Sunday's final by edging McDonald 8-7 in the Page 1-2 playoff Saturday evening. McDonald led 5-3 at the mid-game break but surrendered five points over the next four ends. Facing a McDonald stone on the button in the 10th, Calvert executed a near-perfect freeze, limiting McDonald to a single point.

Earlier in the playoffs, Walter defeated Marnoch 8-6 in the Page 3-4 game, running the Carberry rink out



PHOTO BY BRETT MITCHELL/VOICE

Braden Calvert (left) poses with third Corey Chambers, second Kyle Kurz, lead Brendan Bilawka and alternate Rob Gordon after capturing the Bunge Championship title Sunday in Selkirk. The Heather Curling Club rink claimed its first Manitoba men's crown with an extra-end win in the final and will represent the province at the Montana's Brier in St. John's, N.L.

of stones in the 10th end. Marnoch had advanced with his upset of Carruthers, while Walter reached the playoff round with wins over Steve Irwin of Brandon and Tanner Lott of Fort Rouge.

The championship field featured a new triple knockout format, with Carruthers, McDonald, Calvert and Walter all advancing through the opening round unbeaten. Preliminary round wins for Calvert came over Stefan Gudmundson of Steinbach and

Irwin, while McDonald defeated Derrick Anderson of Gimli and Marnoch. Walter's early victories were against Marcus Titchkosky of Morden and Lott.

With the win, Calvert will represent Manitoba at the Montana's Brier in St. John's, N.L., from Feb. 28 to March 7. Manitoba will be represented by two teams at the national championship, as Matt Dunstone's rink has pre-qualified for the event.

Female Hawks fall short against Chiefs, Wildcats

By Lorne Stelmach

They were close, hard-fought games, but the female U18 Pembina Valley Hawks unfortunately came up short in their two matchups this past weekend.

Sixth-place Pembina Valley first fell 3-1 to the fifth-place Yellowhead Chiefs Friday and then were edged 3-2 Saturday by the third-place West-

man Wildcats.

Delaney Darby opened scoring in the first period for the Hawks against Yellowhead, but the Chiefs tied it up with a second period powerplay goal then collected the winner and an empty net goal in the third.

Hannah Bannister made 36 saves in net for the Hawks, who overall were outshot 39-25, with one shot being the empty net goal.

A power play goal made the difference for Westman as they connected on the man advantage with just under nine minutes remaining in the third period to snap the 2-2 tie.

The Wildcats had taken a two-goal lead before Casey O'Brien and Sophia Cox connected about a minute and a half apart to even the game in the final frame. Madison Froese made 27 saves with Westman holding a 30-23

edge in shots on goal.

At the end of the weekend, Pembina Valley sat in sixth place at 8-17-0-1 for 17 points, which had them even with Central Plains, with a game in hand. They were 11 points behind fifth place Yellowhead and nine points ahead of last place Interlake.

Pembina Valley closes out their schedule by hosting Eastman Monday then visiting Interlake Friday.

Did you know that we employ 56 carriers to deliver the newspaper and flyers door to door in Morden and Winkler - keeping our dollars local.

DID YOU KNOW?

Every flyer booked in the Winkler-Morden Voice supports our future generations.

Purchase ad space or book your flyer with the Winkler Morden Voice and support our local economy. We have 56 local carriers that look forward to delivering the Winkler Morden Voice every week to save money to plan for the future.

Support our future generations and book an ad or flyer with us today

Call or text Gwen Dyck @ 204-823-0535 or email: gdyck@winklermordenvoice.ca

Thank you to PharmaChoice, Peavey Mart, Walmart, Natural Factors & Home Hardware for supporting our local carrier force.

Einarson claims fifth Scotties in extra end

By Haley Cvar

Kerri Einarson captured her fifth national championship Feb. 1, defeating Kaitlyn Lawes 4–3 in an extra end to win the Scotties Tournament of Hearts in Mississauga, Ont.

The Team Canada skip forced an 11th end before stealing the winning point to edge the Manitoba rink in a tightly contested final.

“Oh, my God, what an amazing feeling,” Einarson said during a post-game interview on TSN. “Just overwhelmed. I’m super proud of us. It was a grind this week and we had to make some big clutch shots to get ourselves into this final. So I’m super proud of my team and thank you to all the fans.”

Lawes entered the championship game undefeated and was appearing in her first Scotties final since 2015, when she won the national title playing third for Jennifer Jones’s Manitoba team.

Einarson struck first in the second end after Lawes’s final stone came up light, allowing Canada to pick up an easy steal. Another Manitoba error proved costly in the fourth end when Lawes attempted a short-angle runback wrecked on the guard, giv-

ing Einarson a second steal and a 2–0 lead.

Manitoba tied the game in the sixth following an uncharacteristic miss by Einarson. Her final takeout attempt, her rock did not connect and slid through the house, opening the door for Lawes to draw for two.

Lawes took her first lead of the game in the seventh when Einarson narrowly missed a double takeout, leaving one Manitoba stone biting the red ring for a single.

After two blank ends, the teams reached the 10th end with Lawes holding last rock and four stones in the house. Facing elimination, Einarson executed a precise angle raise for the single and force extra ends — a shot she described as one of the week’s defining moments.

“All I thought in my head was, ‘Just make this one for your team, Kerri, and take it to an extra,’” she said. “So yeah, it was a clutch one. It’s incredible.”

The championship run capped a demanding playoff path for Einarson, who lost 10–2 in eight ends to Lawes in Saturday’s 1/2 Page playoff and had to advance through the semifinal to earn a rematch.

Einarson sealed the title with a steal



PHOTO CURLING CANADA/ANDREW KLAVER

Scotties Tournament of Hearts champions Kerri Einarson (skip), Val Sweeting (third/vice-skip), Shannon Birchard (second), Karlee Burgess (lead), Krysten Karwacki (alternate/lead) and Reid Carruthers (coach).

in the 11th end, reclaiming the Scotties crown and the right to represent Canada at the upcoming world championship in Calgary — an opportunity she said remains deeply meaningful.

“It feels amazing,” she said. “To wear the maple leaf is an absolute honour, and we’re so looking forward to playing here in Canada.”

With the Scotties title secured, Einarson and her team will now turn their attention to the World Women’s Curling Championship, scheduled for March 14–22 in Calgary. The event will see Canada host the world’s top women’s curling teams, with Einarson once again wearing the maple leaf on home ice.

Mudbugs rebound with two wins in busy HTJHL week

By Lana Meier

The Red River Mudbugs closed out a demanding three-game stretch with a pair of wins, rebounding from a narrow midweek loss to finish the week on a positive note in Hanover Tache Junior Hockey League action.

Red River opened the week Wednesday with a 3–2 road loss to the East St. Paul Gators at St. Jean Arena. After 40 scoreless minutes, the Mudbugs answered an early third-period goal with a powerplay marker from Gavin

Hildebrandt, assisted by Ty Tarnick and Ethan Clace, before Griffin Hildebrandt gave Red River a brief 2–1 lead midway through the period. East St. Paul responded quickly, however, and scored the eventual game-winner at 13:01. Tyler Blanchette made 35 saves in the loss.

The Mudbugs bounced back Friday night with an impressive 5–2 home win over the Springfield Xtreme. Red River jumped out to a fast start with first-period goals from Griffin Hil-

derbrandt, Braison Penner and Reece Fehr, with Fehr’s tally standing up as the game-winner. Penner added his second of the night late in the third, while Connor Parago stopped 24 shots to secure the victory.

Red River carried that momentum into Saturday’s road matchup against the Steinbach Huskies, earning a 5–4 shootout win at the T.G. Smith Centre. After falling behind 2–0 early, the Mudbugs responded with three straight goals in the second period

from Hilderbrandt, Hildebrandt and Tyson Froese. Steinbach rallied to force overtime, but Froese scored the lone goal in the shootout, and Parago turned aside 60 shots in a standout performance.

With the week’s results, Red River finished the regular season at 12–17–1, placing eighth overall and setting up a best-of-three play-in series against East St. Paul. Dates and times for the series were not available at press time.

Twins pull away in second period to defeat Twisters

By Lana Meier

A four-goal second period proved decisive as the Ft. Garry/Ft. Rouge Twins defeated the Pembina Valley Twisters 6–3 in Manitoba Major Junior Hockey League action Friday night at the Morris MultiPlex.

Pembina Valley opened the scoring midway through the first period when Ayden Lazarenko found the net at 7:37, giving the Twisters an early 1–0 lead. Ft. Garry responded early in the second period, however, and quickly took control of the game.

Lucas Spencer tied the contest at 2:42 of the second period, before Ketema Wall restored the Twisters’ lead with a shorthanded goal at 6:33. The lead was short-lived, as the Twins scored three unanswered goals later in the period — including a power-play marker by Drew Russell at 19:15 — to take a 4–2 advantage into the intermission.

Ft. Garry added two more goals in the third period, with Spencer completing a hat trick and Russell scoring his second power-play goal of the

night. Carter Unger scored Pembina Valley’s final goal at 4:26 of the third period, converting on the power play.

The Twins outshot the Twisters 53–38. Rowan Cherkas made 47 saves in goal for Pembina Valley, while Alex Pauls stopped 35 shots to earn the win for Ft. Garry.

With the loss, Pembina Valley fell to 5–27–1 on the season and remains 10th in the MMJHL standings. Ft. Garry improved to 17–14–3 and sits seventh overall.

The teams will meet again later this

season as Pembina Valley continues its final stretch of the regular season.

Several local players were recognized with selection to the 2026 MMJHL All-Star Game, which was played Saturday, Feb. 7, at Eric Coy Arena in Winnipeg. Representing the Pembina Valley Twisters were forwards Owen Vanrobaeys, Ethan Wilde, and Matt Lizotte. The All-Star selections highlight strong individual seasons and gave local fans a chance to see familiar faces compete alongside the league’s top talent.

Classifieds Announcements

Book Your Classified Ad Today - Call 467-5836 or Email ads@winklermordenvoice.ca

FARMLAND TENDER

FARMLAND FOR SALE BY TENDER R.M. of MONTCALM

Title #	Legal Description	Total Acres
1334790/1	S 1/2 OF N 1/2 OF NW 1/4 6-2-1 EPM	41.50
3008616/1	THE N 1/2 OF THE N 1/2 OF THE NW 1/4 OF SECTION 6-2-1 EPM	41.50

When submitting an offer, please note:

1. The highest, or any, offer will not necessarily be accepted.
2. Offers may be for both or either parcel.
3. The date of closing and possession will be March 27, 2026.
4. The date of adjustments will be January 1, 2026.
5. You must provide a certified check or bank draft in the amount of \$10,000.00 payable to Cole & Mace Law Office. The cheques accompanying unsuccessful tenders will be returned.
6. You must rely on your own research of the property.
7. Tenders are binding upon acceptance and not subject to any conditions precedent.
8. Tenders may only be submitted in the form provided by Cole & Mace Law Office; a form of tender may be requested from Cole & Mace Law Office in person at the address below, or by emailing: adam@colemacelaw.com.
9. The Vendor will be responsible for the taxes on the property up to the date of adjustments.
10. The Purchaser will be required to pay GST unless the Purchaser is registered for GST and agrees to self-assess.
11. Title to the land will be transferred free and clear of all encumbrances and liens, excepting Caveat No. 3614192/1.

Signed and sealed Tenders will be received up to 4:00 p.m. on March 3, 2026 at:

Cole & Mace Law Office

26 Centre Ave. East, Box 2039, Altona, Manitoba, R0G 0B0

Attn: Adam Mace

Cash 4 Coin Collections!



Also BUYING Old Jewelry, Nuggets, Bullion, Gold, Silver, Platinum, Sterling Silverware, Franklin Mint sets, Royal Canadian Mint Coins, pre 1937 Paper Money, old coins, numismatists, Rare Coins, Silver Coins, Gold coins, etc.

Covering Winnipeg & Rural

Manitoba. I drive to you!

CALL ME NOW!!

TODD:

1-204-904-9705

TURN YOUR STASH INTO CASH!!!



Now buying GOLD, SILVER & PLATINUM.

Buying old Jewelry, Broken Jewelry, Bullion, Bars, Ingots, Wafers, Nuggets, Gold dust, Dental Gold, Coins, Coin Collections, Numismatics, Sterling Silverware & more! Estate liquidations of Precious Metals.

I PAY CASH!

Covering Winnipeg & Rural

Manitoba. I drive to you!

CALL ME NOW!!

TODD: 1-204-904-9705



Looking for:

FREELANCE PHONE

INTERPRETERS
in Manitoba

- Meaningful work
- Flexible hours
- Paid per minute
- Experience an Asset

Help Others who Speak Your Language be Heard

Apply Today:

recruiting@cantalk.com



Power Builder Advertising WORKS!

- GET SEEN by over 360,000 Manitoba Homes!
- Use your LOGO!
- Create instant top of mind awareness
- Showcase your info, business, product, job, announcements or event
- We format it, to make it look great!
- Starting at \$339.00 (includes 45 lines of space)
- The ads blanket the province and run in MCNA's 31 Manitoba community newspapers
- Very cost effective means of getting your message out to the widest possible audience

Contact this newspaper NOW or MCNA at **204.947.1691** or email classified@mcna.com

www.mcna.com

APARTMENTS FOR RENT

BRAND NEW STUDIO APARTMENTS FOR RENT IN ALTONA.

Utilities included.
Fridge, stove and dishwasher included.
Indoor parking extra.
Call Rick at 204-324-7222

BATTERIES FOR EVERYTHING! 50,000 BATTERIES IN STOCK

*Auto *Farm *Truck
*Construction *ATV
*Motorcycle *Golf Carts
*Rechargeables *Tools
*Computers *Medical
*All phones *Chargers
*Marine *RV & more
Shipping/Delivery avail.

THE BATTERY MAN
1390 St. James St.
Winnipeg
TF 1-877-775-8271
www.batteryman.ca

Online McSherry Auctions

Vintage & Collectible Toys
Tues., Feb. 17 @ 7:00 PM
Toys from Estate of: Dennis Jones

Estate & Moving
Wed., Feb. 18 @ 7:00 PM

McSherryAuction.com
204-467-1858
or **204-886-7027**
mcsherrytld@gmail.com

CAREERS



Assiniboine College

PEOPLE MAKE IT HAPPEN

Instructor, Practical Nursing

School of Nursing

Full/Part-Time, Term & Casual (Jan 26, 2026, to June 11, 2027)

Fort Alexander, MB (Sagkeeng FN)

Comp #46-25/26

Salary: \$65,184 to \$102,262 annually (\$34.58 to \$54.25 hourly)
(Educational supplement: Masters \$1.60/hour, PHD \$3.19/hour)

As an Instructor in our Practical Nursing program, you will play a vital role in shaping the future of nursing education. Reporting to the Chairperson or Program Coordinator, you will develop and deliver curricula, evaluate student performance, and engage in various administrative functions. You will also support college promotion, student recruitment, student placement, and industry liaison.

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.

For accommodations or alternative formats, contact careers@assiniboine.net or 204 725 8729.

Assiniboine College is privileged to provide learning opportunities on the lands of the Dakota Oyate, Nakoda Oyate, Ininiwak, Nehethowak, Nehiyawak, Anishininewuk, Denesuline, Anishinaabeg, and the National Homeland of the Red River Métis.

SCRAP METAL

Buyer for all farm-yard scrap, machinery and autos. No item too large! Best prices paid. Phone Alf at 204-461-1649.

WANTED

Firearms wanted. Looking for all unwanted firearms. Fully licensed for both non-restricted and restricted. Anywhere from individual items to estates. Cash buyer, paying top dollar. Please call or text Adam at 204-795-2850.

WANTED/BUYING
1950's-80's Scandinavian, Danish, Canadian Mid-Century Modern Furniture (Teak, Walnut, Rosewood), lighting, ceramics, textiles, stereo or design. Contact Daniel at TEXT/PHONE: 204-918-1607.

NOTICES

URGENT PRESS RELEASES - Have a newsworthy item to announce? An exciting change in operations? Though we cannot guarantee publication, MCNA will get the information into the right hands for ONLY \$35 + GST/HST. Call MCNA 204-947-1691 for more information. See www.mcna.com under the "Types of Advertising" tab for more details.

NOTICES

NOW BOOKING YOUR CLASSIFIED ADS FOR 2026! Let us help you book your blanket classified ads across Manitoba, and increase your presence! If have a booth at any upcoming **TRADE SHOWS**, advertise, and let people know that you will be there by placing an ad with us! Your ad will be seen in the MCNA Member Newspapers, in over 368,000+ homes in Manitoba. Please Call 204-467-5836 or MCNA at 204-947-1691 for more details or to book ads. Take advantage of our great pricing! MCNA - Manitoba Community Newspapers Association. www.mcna.com

HEALTH

Are you suffering from joint or arthritic pain? If so, you owe it to yourself to try elk velvet antler capsules. Hundreds have found relief. Benefits humans and pets. EVA is composed of proteins, amino acids, minerals, lipids and water. Key compounds that work to stimulate red blood cell production & cartilage cell regeneration & development. Stonewood Elk Ranch Ltd., 204-467-8884 or e-mail stonewoodelkranch@gmail.com

Remember Your Loved Ones

with an Announcement in the

The **Winkler Morden Voice**

Call 204-467-5836 or ads@winklermordenvoice.ca

FIND THE RIGHT PERSON FOR THE POSITION with an EMPLOYMENT/CAREERS AD in

The **Winkler Morden Voice**

Call: 204-467-5836

Book Your Classified Ad Today - Call 467-5836 or Email ads@winklermordenvoice.ca

Classifieds Announcements

The Winkler Morden Voice

Book Your Classified Ad Today - Call 467-5836 or Email ads@winklermordenvoice.ca

OBITUARY



Dorothy Anne Rudy (nee Pokrant)

With love and sadness we announce the death of Dorothy Anne Rudy (nee Pokrant), born January 8, 1930 in Morden, MB and peacefully passed away January 18, 2026 in Kelowna, BC.

She is survived by her children Marshall (Sue), Peter (Sonja) and Susan; five grandchildren and 12 great-grandchildren, along with her brother-in-law Cliff, sister-in-law Marg and many nieces, nephews and friends.

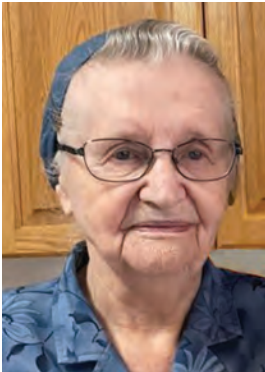
She was predeceased by Fred Rudy, her husband of 54 years in 2024. Also by her parents Edward and Annie Pokrant, her sisters Verna and Mary, her brother Arnold, sister-in-law Olga and her nephews Bruce and Greg.

After school in Rosenfeld, Dorothy enrolled in nursing school at St Boniface Hospital in Winnipeg, graduating in 1954. She made many lifelong friends from her nursing class. Dorothy was employed in many hospitals and really enjoyed her time with Winnipeg VON and Kelowna Home Care before retiring in 1985.

At a party in 1968, she was introduced to Fred Rudy and they were married in April, 1969 in Winnipeg. Dorothy and Fred enjoyed traveling, making many trips out to the Prairies to visit family. An early trip to Europe with a friend preceded trips to Arizona, Mexico, Hawaii, Alaska, Newfoundland, Cuba and many RCAF reunions in Canada with Fred.

Faith was an important part of Dorothy's life and she was a lifetime member of the Lutheran Church. Dorothy was an outstanding cook. Many recipes of her meals and desserts are still being used today by family. She enjoyed family get togethers, live theater and volunteering for over 20 years at Kelowna General Hospital. She always found time to observe the beauty she found in sunsets, stars and the northern lights.

A celebration of life will be held at a later date.



Susan Elias (nee Wiebe)
1927 – 2026

Susan Elias passed away 8:00 a.m. at Salem Home in Winkler at the age of 99 years, and 15 days.

Susan was born on January 12, 1927, to Martin and Anna (Thiessen) Wiebe in the RM of Stanley, Manitoba. Our mom grew up south of Morden and received her education in the Waldheim and Osterwick Schools.

She was baptized upon confession of her Faith in Jesus Christ, on June 12th, 1946 in the Blumenfeld Old Colony Church.

On October 10, 1948 she married Jacob Elias. They were married for 65 years, 3 months and 3 days. They were blessed with six daughters and 1 son.

When Mom and Dad were married, they moved into the small lean-to attached to the Blumenfeld General Store which they owned. Their first daughter was born when they lived in this "Tiny Home". After a few years, they moved into the house which was located on the store property in Blumenfeld. In 1959 they sold the store, built a new house, and moved just west of Blumenfeld, onto a barren grassland which had been the community pasture. After the many rows of trees were planted, Mom spent hours and hours, stooped over and pulling quack grass roots out of the dirt. It was not easy to keep up with her work ethics.

Our mom had many interests, both in the home and out in the yard. We will list only a few of them. In summer she would love to make Waffles for supper on the outdoor, wood-fired waffle iron. I remember Dad sitting there and saying, "Dit zaul dann scheen gon!" We all enjoyed it. Mom baked the best apple pies in the world! She really enjoyed painting the buildings on the farm. Dad had built a "Zoom-boom" bucket on the front-end loader with long pipes and a 45 gallon drum. This made it so easy for Mom to paint the barn. She was painting 25 feet up with her feet on the ground (Dad had put a few inches of dirt in the barrel to make it more stable). Mom loved working in the garden, and preparing meals from her produce and home grown meats, like pork and chicken.

Our home was always open to hosting visiting friends and families from Mexico, Ontario or anywhere else. Some of those friendships have lasted to this day. In spite of Mom's busyness at home, she would still take time for her family and for mission work. After Dad was ordained as a minister, she and Dad spent countless hours doing ministerial visitations. She also volunteered at MCC and later on at Faith Mission. She made a handstitched quilt for each of her children after they got married. She also made pillows and blankets for missions, too numerous to count. Mom knit hundreds of pairs of mittens for her friends, grandchildren and for Faith Mission. Mom and Dad still had time to go to Altona every week to visit their daughter Susan in the hospital for 16 years.

After Dad and Mom moved to Winkler in 1993, they dedicated even more of their time faithfully volunteering at Faith Mission. After Dad passed away in 2013, Mom continued her work there till about 2021 when her memory started failing. On November 17th, 2022, Mom moved into Eastview Place in Altona. On May 11th, 2023 she moved into Salem Home in Winkler, where she lived till her passing.

A Funeral Service took place on February 1, 2026, at the Chortitz Old Colony Mennonite Church, followed by the burial at the Blumenfeld Cemetery.

Wiebe Funeral Homes, Winkler
in care of arrangements
wiebefuneralhomes.com



Your memory will live forever Engraved within our hearts

take a break > GAMES

SUDOKU

			9		5			
			6					3
	3					1	5	4
						8		
		7					6	9
8	1			9				
2	4							6
			8					
	8	6	1		4		3	

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!

5	3	6	4	2	1	9	8	7
2	1	4	7	9	8	5	6	3
9	8	7	6	5	3	1	4	2
7	2	5	9	6	4	3	1	8
6	9	3	8	1	2	7	5	4
1	4	8	3	7	5	2	9	6
4	5	1	2	8	7	6	3	9
3	6	2	1	4	9	8	7	5
8	7	9	5	3	6	4	2	1

Sudoku Answer



Biz Cards



deappliancerepair.ca
204-325-1929

DE APPLIANCE REPAIR

Save \$20 off Service Labour
Winkler and within 25 km of Winkler,
when paid by cash, e-transfer or debit
Only 1 coupon per visit, expires December 31, 2026

COUPON • COUPON • COUPON

Advertising that Works!
To place your BIZ CARD
call 204-467-5836

Ukrainian HOUSE RESTAURANT

290 Stephen Street • Morden, MB • (204) 512-3300

get inspired

> MEAL IDEAS



Pulled Pork Sandwiches with Pickled Celery and Jalapenos

Recipe courtesy of The Adventure Bite

Prep time: 10 minutes
Cook time: 10 hours
Servings: 9-10
4 1/2 pounds pork shoulder or Boston butt
26 ounces sweet and spicy barbecue sauce
1/2 tablespoon garlic
1/2 tablespoon fresh cracked black pepper
fresh sandwich buns
Dandy Celery, cut and pickled

jalapenos
coleslaw (optional)
potato salad (optional)
baked beans (optional)
Place pork in slow cooker.
Mix barbecue sauce, garlic and pepper. Pour over pork shoulder.
Cook on low 8 1/2-10 hours or high 6-7 hours.
Shred meat and serve on buns with pickled celery and jalapenos. Top with coleslaw, if desired. Serve with potato salad or baked beans, if desired.



Simple Skillet Mac and Cheese

Recipe adapted from Mel's Kitchen Cafe

Total time: 30 minutes
Servings: 6
3 1/2 cups water, plus extra if needed
1 can (12 ounces) evaporated milk, divided
12 ounces pasta shells
salt, to taste
1 teaspoon cornstarch
1/2 teaspoon dry mustard

1 1/2 cups shredded cheddar cheese
1 1/2 cups shredded Monterey Jack cheese
2 tablespoons butter, cut into small chunks
ground black pepper, to taste
In nonstick skillet over high heat, bring water, 1 cup evaporated milk and shells to simmer. Season with salt, to taste. Cook, stirring, until pasta is tender and liquid thickens, 9-12 minutes.
In small bowl, whisk remaining evaporated milk, cornstarch and dry mustard. Stir into skillet. Continue simmering until slightly thickened, about 1 minute.

Remove skillet from heat. Stir in cheddar and Monterey Jack cheeses in batches, adding water to adjust consistency. Stir in butter then season with salt and pepper, to taste.

Photo courtesy of Unsplash

Ask the Money Lady

Dear Money Lady Readers – Why not adopt the new “Soft-Life” culture in 2026?

The hustle culture is something my demographic, (ages 50 to 65) and our parents have been used to all our lives. Living by the motto that you can't be successful unless you “work really hard, show up every day ready to overcome any obstacle, with a no-limit attitude, and of course, programed for greatness.” We quickly passed judgment on anyone who didn't seem to be working hard, and everything in our lives had to become second to our all-encompassing career. Sound familiar? There are tonnes of books out there printed in the 80's, 90's and early 2000's pushing the hustle culture. Suggesting you should create your own “vision board;” telling you to not limit yourself, and this one I love: “never settle for less than what you truly deserve.” My generation was always told to: “suck it up but-tercup – stop complaining and get out there, get over it, work harder, and do more.” Well, that's not the way life is now.

Today young Millennials and the vast majority of Canadian and American Gen'Zs are adopting the new “Soft Life” culture, the complete opposite of their parent's belief system. They don't want to live to work, like mom and dad did. No, they want to enjoy their life, focusing on balance, ease, self-care and personal fulfillment through intentionally enjoying the small wins. Have your Gen'Zs hit you with these statements yet: “we need you to respect our boundaries” or how about this one, “it's not about the money” (regardless of you paying, you still have to go along with their choices not yours). Parents and older generations are having a tough time making this mental shift and many have written me about their troubles. They believe their kids are unmotivated or ungrateful for the monetary assistance from their parents.

While I definitely can relate, I'm thinking the hustle culture generation should also adopt the “Soft-Life” mantra too. Now before you throw down the paper in disgust – keep reading please. When we were young, it was all about proving “you could do it!” But to what end? I've seen co-workers, family and personal friends hit their late 40's and 50's still pushing, only to be silenced by a single tragedy. Was it worth it – maybe, only you will know? I



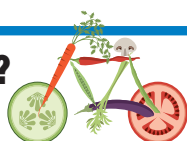
never thought I would ever say this, but I'm glad this next generation is pushing back on the hustle mentality. Good for them to want more out of life than just their career. It's been tough for all of us oldies to deal with the micromanaging bosses, back-stabbing coworkers and piers that have accomplished more in less time.

The Soft-Life is really not about having a lot of money, but rather the evolution of an occasional “treat yourself” lifestyle to be happier. This could mean buying a name-brand grocery product instead of a generic one. Burning a scented candle on your desk while you work from home. Treating yourself to a special coffee drink, spending the afternoon curled up on the sofa with a good book and a plate of homemade cookies, or working on a quite task like a puzzle. The trend is to slow down, enjoy the little things and stop the “pushing for more” attitude. This movement rejects the idea that a difficult life is the only path toward an enjoyable one. It's all about a life designed for calm, less complexity, sincerity with people, and finding time to unwind, pursue hobbies or spend time with the ones we love. Could we be entering an age of more traditional values? Maybe. Choosing to reject the old narrative can't be that bad. We all would be better off if we could stop and put our mental and physical health first for once, not just for a day or a weekend, but for our whole life.

Good Luck and Best Wishes,
Money Lady

Written by Christine Ibbotson, Author, Finance Writer and Syndicated Money Coach on BNN Bloomberg. Christine is also part of the everyday lineup on CTV Your Morning in every province. No AI. Follow Christine on Instagram @askthemoneylady, or on Facebook (Christine Ibbotson).

Do you have a Health or Wellness Business?
Call 204-467-5836 to advertise



WINKLER AUTO DEALERS



2022 BRONCO SPORT BIG BEND 4X4

- 1.5L ECOBOOST
- APPLE CARPLAY/ANDROID AUTO
- HEATED CLOTH
- TRAILER TOW PKG
- PUSH-BUTTON & REMOTE START
- 90,000 KM

\$27,900

PLUS PST/GST
STK# 25U002

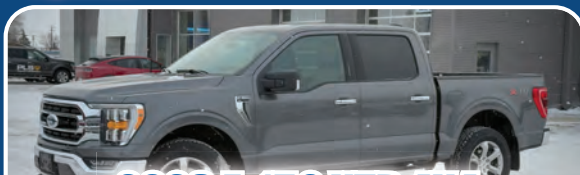


2023 EDGE SEL AWD

- 2.0L ECOBOOST
- SYNC 4 W/ NAVIGATION
- APPLE CARPLAY/ANDROID AUTO
- HEATED LEATHER
- ADAPTIVE CRUISE W/ LANE CENTERING
- 90,000 KM

\$32,900

PLUS PST/GST
STK# 25U119



2023 F-150 XTR 4X4

- 3.5L ECOBOOST V6
- SYNC 4 W/ NAVIGATION
- APPLE CARPLAY/ANDROID AUTO
- INTERIOR WORK SURFACE
- 40-20-40 FRONT BENCH
- 59,000 KM

\$49,900

PLUS PST/GST
STK# 25U133



2021 F-150 PLATINUM 4X4

- 3.5L POWERBOOST HYBRID V6
- WIRELESS APPLE CARPLAY/ANDROID AUTO
- ADAPTIVE CRUISE W/ LANE CENTERING
- TOW PKG W/ MIRRORS
- 7.2KW PRO-POWER ONBOARD
- 97,000 KM

\$49,900

PLUS PST/GST
STK# 25U059



Permit No. 1162

Since 1955



Bob Derksen

Brian Derksen

Konrad Friesen

Ike Dyck

690 MEMORIAL DRIVE • 325-4777
WWW.HOMETOWNFORD.CA



JUST IN!

STK #W14487A

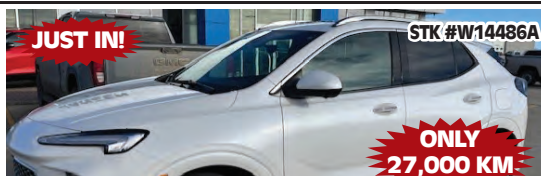
ONLY
18,000 KM

2025 CHEV/BLAZER 2LT AWD

- 2.0 ENGINE, 9 SPEED AUTO,
- ADAPTIVE CRUISE, TECHNOLOGY PKG,
- SPORT EDITION PKG, ETC,
- BALANCE OF FACTORY WARRANTY

ONLY
\$38,668

+ TAX



JUST IN!

STK #W14486A

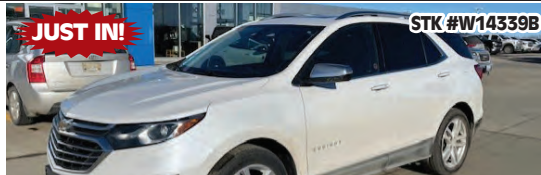
ONLY
27,000 KM

2025 BUICK/ENCORE GX/AVENIR AWD

- 1.3 ENGINE, 9 SPEED AUTO, LEATHER
- INTERIOR, POWER SUNROOF, ADAPTIVE
- CRUISE, TECHNOLOGY PKG, LOADED,
- BALANCE OF FACTORY WARRANTY

ONLY
\$38,676

+ TAX



JUST IN!

STK #W14339B

2018 CHEV/EQUINOX PREMIER AWD

- 1.5 ENGINE, 6 SPEED AUTO,
- LEATHER INTERIOR, POWER
- SUNROOF, TRUE NORTH EDITION,
- 178,000 KM'S

ONLY
\$18,691

+ TAX



JUST IN!

STK #W14437A

2019 HONDA ODYSSEY EX-L

- 3.5 ENGINE, 9 SPEED AUTO,
- 7 PASS SEATING,
- LEATHER INTERIOR, LOADED,
- 172,000 KM'S

INQUIRE FOR
PRICE



Permit #2816



KURT MILLER
kurt@jpb.ca

HENRY BLATZ
henry@jpb.ca

KEVIN TALBOT
kevin@jpb.ca

ROBERTO KORT
roberto@jpb.ca

1-888-305-8917 • 204-325-9511
WWW.JANZENCHEVROLETWINKLER.CA



HONDA GENERATORS "DON'T GET CAUGHT WITHOUT POWER"



Ultra-Quiet 1000i

- AC Voltage Available: 120
- Approximate Running Time (hrs)/ Tankful: 3/ 7*
- Cold Climate Technology™: Standard
- Dry Weight: 13 kg (28.7 lbs)

EU1000iTC3

NOW \$1169.00



Ultra-Quiet 3000i ES

- AC Voltage Available: 120
- Approximate Running Time (hrs)/ Tankful: 7.2/ 20*
- Cold Climate Technology™: Standard
- Dry Weight: 59.0 kg (130 lbs)

EU3000iSC4

Regular Price
\$3126.00

Save*
\$350

NOW \$2776.00



Ultra-Quiet 3200i

- AC Voltage Available: 120
- Approximate Running Time (hrs)/ Tankful: 3.3**/ 8.6***
- Cold Climate Technology™: Standard
- Dry Weight: 27 kg (59.5 lbs)

EU3200iC

Regular Price
\$3316.00

Save*
\$200

NOW \$3116.00



Ultra-Quiet 7000i ES

- AC Voltage Available: 120/240
- Approximate Running Time (hrs)/ Tankful: 6.9/10.4*
- Cold Climate Technology™: Standard
- Dry Weight: 118.1 kg (260.4 lbs)

EU7000iSC1

Regular Price
\$5828.00

Save*
\$600

NOW \$5228.00



WAYNE

CHUCK

BILL

JODY



WWW.SOUTHLANDHONDA.COM
1-877-246-6322 • 325-7899 Permit #9725

*Honda Loyalty Program, **Lease Rate, ***Vehicles not exactly as pictured.