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Cheer Board elves at work

PHOTO BY ASHLEIGH VIVEIROS/VOICE

Winkler Christmas Cheer Board volunteers (above) delivered 388 care hampers to families in need last week while the Morden Christmas Cheer Board expected to deliver 240 hampers this week. For the full story, see Pgs. 2-3.

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



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Cheer Board volunteers spread holiday cheer

By Ashleigh Viveiros

The Winkler and District Christmas Cheer Board last week helped make the holidays a little brighter for families struggling to make ends meet.

On Dec. 11, volunteers delivered 388 care hampers throughout Winkler and the surrounding area.

It wouldn't have been possible if not for the outpouring of support from the community, which donated thousands of dollars and countless non-perishable food items, said board president Kris Derksen.

"Food donations were much the same as last year," she said, adding monetary donations were still being calculated at press time but looked to be on track to cover expenses.

Cheer Board workers set up shop in the Winkler MB Church Dec. 9-11 to ensure each hamper was filled with enough non-perishable food items and other household necessities to help recipients get through the holidays.

"We always have fantastic support from our volunteers," Derksen said, noting they have a core group of people who ensure the massive opera-



PHOTO BY ASHLEIGH VIVEIROS/VOICE

Volunteers amidst a sea of care packages at the Winkler MB Church. Dozens of people came out last week Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday to help the Winkler Christmas Cheer Board wrap gifts and fill boxes with food for families in need. Volunteer drivers then loaded up their cars to deliver the goodies Wednesday night.

tion goes off smoothly every year.

On the evening of the last day, delivery drivers loaded up their vehicles and set out to get the hampers into the hands of those who needed them.

The number of drivers was down significantly this year. As a result, many returned again and again to get

the job done.

"We had very few drivers but they came back, some of them, seven or eight times, so we're thankful for that," Derksen said, noting it only took about two hours to get all the hampers out the door. "The community, as soon as they see the need, they

always step up."

One driver returned with a thank-you card from a recipient that helped put the impact of the Cheer Board's work into focus.

"It was a very meaningful card," Derksen said. "They were so thankful."

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Morden Christmas Cheer Board prepares over 240 hampers

By Lorne Stelmach

It was very much business as usual this week for the Morden Christmas Cheer Board.

An army of volunteers took over the hall of the Morden EMMC from Monday to Wednesday to prepare and deliver 240 hampers.

"We've got a ton full of volunteers, and it all came together quite nicely," the Cheer Board's Lesley Andrew said as the main packing got underway Monday.

The hamper count at the start of the week was nearly the same as last year, although they always anticipate a few late requests to trickle in by delivery day on Wednesday.

"We're always expecting a little more just because that seems to be the trend," Andrew said.

Monetary donations as well as gifts of non-perishable food items and toys

help the Cheer Board fill the hampers with items families in need can use to get through the holiday season.

"We've had to, I think, reduce some of our dry goods only because the cost of food is going up ... but they do get a substantial hamper. There's lots there," said Andrew, who noted the recipients vary widely.

"We have families of one, we have families of nine ... it runs the whole gamut."

She was pleased again with the strong level of support in terms of both donations and volunteers.

"It is almost like a machine running on its own ... people know in the community when we start collecting and everybody is looking to somehow donate," Andrew said.

"I don't know that we could do it without the businesses. They've been so supportive," she added. "It's really been just wonderful support from the community. It's really been a wonderful, supportive community."

"IT'S REALLY BEEN JUST WONDERFUL SUPPORT FROM THE COMMUNITY."



PHOTO BY LORNE STELMACH/VOICE

The Morden EMMC was abuzz with activity this week as volunteers helped the Morden Christmas Cheer Board pack and deliver over 240 care hampers to families in need.

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getheard

EDITORIAL > VIEWPOINTS > LETTERS

Christmas concert etiquette

Here we are in the dark, bleak, cold end of the year when things turn festive and we are subjected to, err, I mean privileged to participate in the myriad and countless seasonal concerts that our wee ones happily put on for us.



By Peter Cantelon

For your safety and enjoyment, it is important to understand the nuanced and somewhat complex web of rules of engagement when approaching such a concert, either as a veteran or an innocent.

To that end I have created a small beginner's primer to help you survive the onslaught of joy and frivolity that will slap in you the face with merriment until you are red and can barely breathe from the sheer pleasure of it all.

For instance, if you are the designated early arrival family member (EAFM) you will want to get to the concert location at least three days in advance of the event to ensure a decent seat. Arriving this early also allows you to obtain a parking space somewhere within a 5 km circumference zone.

By following this first piece of advice you will likely secure a seat in the middle part of the audience. There's no point attempting to get closer as this zone is secured weeks in advance by The Grandparents who fiercely guard their area with a series of pacts and staggered defensive employments. Unless you are willing to wage a pitched battle, leave the front third of the room to the Grey Guard.

You should bring a sleeping bag and pillow for comfort but be prepared to

defend your own small area or else sleep will become your enemy.

To that end, we reach the next tip, which is a word of advice for dressing: LAYER. You will want to wear at least 60-70 articles of clothing to spread across the requisite 64ish seats you will need to reserve for friends and family who may attend.

Once you have confidently estimated the number of people joining your group add a "just in case" buffer of approximately 10 per cent.

Hats, mitts, gloves, overshoes, boots, earmuffs, glasses, a wig or two, sweaters, socks, scarves, coats, overcoats, undercoats, earrings, cellphones, etc. will all serve as placeholders to make the seats next to you appear occupied until your group arrives approximately 10 seconds ahead of the event's start. (It is unwise to use underwear unless absolutely necessary as nudity is often frowned upon at children's Christmas concerts.)

To avoid having to answer questions from the uninitiated about whether these seats are reserved, continued use of your phone whilst wearing dark sunglasses is highly recommended. AVOID EYE CONTACT at all costs and respond to inquiries with a drunken, half-crazed mutter to frighten interlopers away.

With these simple tricks you are now ready to enjoy the concert. Be aware that since we are a rapidly growing population in desperate need of new schools, the average event will feature the singing and musical stylings

"GET TO THE CONCERT AT LEAST THREE DAYS IN ADVANCE TO ENSURE A DECENT SEAT."

of approximately 2,456 children (per event).

In order to ensure that each little angel receives their fair share of the spotlight, the concerts will typically last approximately seven hours and 33-36 minutes with no intermission. A word of advice: GO TO THE BATHROOM before you attend.

Of course, this is just the beginner's primer. The intermediate and advanced primers delve into strategy and tactics, emergency concert first aid, seasonal diplomacy and, of course, details on forming your own guild with other families and developing trading blocs and bilateral concert agreements.

You are now ready to thoroughly enjoy your seasonal concerts. A typical resident in the region will attend approximately 17 of these over a six-day period, which makes trans-dimensional, temporal scheduling an absolute necessity (see Appendix C, paragraph 5, line IV for a happy "How To" guide and sample templates).

Remember: it's all about the kids!

Letter policy

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

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

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

Please include your full name, address, and phone number for verification purposes.

Your name and city will be published with your letter. We do not print anonymous letters.

Send your letters to us by e-mail at news@winklermordenvoice.ca, or via mail to:

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getinformed

NEWS > VIEWS > WINKLER > MORDEN > SURROUNDING AREAS

New childcare space a game changer for immigrant parents

By Ashleigh Viveiros

Regional Connections in Winkler opened the doors on its new childcare space a few weeks ago, and it's a game changer for many newcomer families.

The new daycare room allows parents enrolled in the immigrant services agency's English programs to have their children looked after on-site for free while they focus on their studies.

"It's amazing because ... we can stay and study English," said Kateryna Semenovva, who has three children under the age of five at the daycare most days of the week while she attends classes nearby. "It's very difficult if you have kids at home. It's not possible."

"It's so beautiful [that] Regional Connections provides this place. It's a new place, it's bigger. We can leave our children and it's a safe place," she added, stressing she loves the fact "we stay in one building ... it's so important to parents because your children are close and you can see them and not worry."

"It's good for the child to be taken care of [here] and we can learn," agreed Yasmin Alabboud, a fellow English student.

Alabboud had previously spent about a year in classes before taking a break after the birth of her son.

"I had my son and I have to stay

home with him. [There was] no care for him when he was a baby," she said. "Now they have [care] for babies six months and after and I came back."

Regional Connections has offered childcare to its English students in the past, but it was in a small multi-purpose room not ideally suited to the task.

When space adjacent to their offices on Perry St. became available they were able to renovate it to better meet the needs, said Diane Toews, Care for Newcomer Children coordinator.

"The additional space and the windows are an awesome thing, too," she said. "Getting natural light into the childcare room, it just really lifts the mood. Our previous room didn't have much for windows."

"The children are just loving the new space," Toews said. "They're running around a lot."

The space also includes its own washroom and a small pick-up/drop-off area just off the building's main entrance.

Toews said the new childcare room, which has openings for 27 kids, has helped a lot of parents get back into class. So did lowering the minimum age for children from 18 months to six months.

"As soon as we opened up that opportunity then a lot of parents were really excited," she said. "Because when they're waiting for childcare to



SUPPLIED PHOTO

Regional Connections in Winkler opened the doors on its new childcare room last month. The dedicated space allows parents in the centre's English classes to better focus on their studies knowing their children are being well cared for nearby.

open up until their child reaches 18 months, it's a long time of not taking classes. This has enabled us to offer more care so they can come sooner.

"A lot of moms explain that they're home alone and they're kind of isolated," Toews added. "They don't know the language and they don't know what to do or where to go, and so this just opens up so many opportunities for them."

It's giving kids get a leg up as well, helping prepare them for school by

giving them a place to begin to learn English and hone their socialization skills.

"This is a big stepping stone," Toews said. "We're talking about colours and numbers and slowly the English weaves its way in there ... the capacity for children to learn another language is incredible."

Work on the childcare room took place throughout the summer and fall months. The cost of approximately \$120,000 was covered by funding from the provincial and federal governments, grants from the Thomas Sill Foundation and the Winkler Community Foundation, and a donation from the Access Credit Union.

Morden council passes interim budget

Interim financing plan to tide city over until February: mayor

By Lorne Stelmach

Morden council approved an interim budget Monday that will carry the city into the new year until its full financial plan is approved.

"The interim operating budget kind of staves off starvation until we get it approved. We won't spend the entire interim operating budget because we'll have an actual budget significantly before we spend our way through that budget," said Mayor Brandon Burley, noting their plan is to present the full budget in February.

In the meantime, the interim finan-

cial plan sets out operational spending of \$6.8 million and utility expenditures of \$1.5 million.

"There's nothing in terms of surprises in that interim budget ... it's just keep the city running until we announce our capital plans for 2020," Burley said.

"We've had preliminary budget discussions based on our strategic plan," he continued. "We have some good capital plans for the year, some that I'm really excited about that will be finalized in the first couple weeks of January with a cost assessment being done by city staff."

Burley suggested their overall aim would be to try to keep municipal taxes in check.

"That's always the goal ... to provide value for dollars. Our hope is that we can justify any taxes we take ... we want to make sure those numbers are strongly defensible," he said.

"We owe an obligation to citizens to ensure that they do receive value for dollars ... it's hard to tell what those numbers will look like right now, but our goal is to provide a fiscally responsible budget for 2020."

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Winkler library celebrates grand re-opening

By Ashleigh Viveiros

After months of renovations, things are finally starting to return to normal at the Winkler Centennial Library.

The library hosted a re-opening celebration Tuesday to mark the completion of the extensive repairs required in the wake of a burst water pipe in early June.

The pipe, which broke near the front foyer one weekend after closing and spewed water unabated until opening Monday morning, didn't damage any books but did destroy the carpeting, walls, and furniture in much of the building.

The incident ultimately proved to be a blessing in disguise of sorts, said branch librarian Randall Klassen.

"There were things that we've wanted to get done for a long time that were originally a long way down the road to ever getting done, but this gave us an opportunity to do them now," he said.

That included a fresh and more colourful coat of paint, new flooring, new furniture, and a new and improved circulation desk.

And since the library's massive col-

lection of books and other lending materials had to be moved around anyway for the renos, they used it as an opportunity to completely restructure the shelving units to make things more efficient and accessible. They also created a dedicated reading nook in the young adults section.

"The library may look the same from the outside, but inside it's pretty much brand new," Klassen said.

South Central Regional Library director of library services Cathy Ching estimates about \$250,000 worth of work was completed on the library, all of it thankfully covered by insurance.

"It was quite a year, but we survived and it's given us food for thought for the other branches," she said, noting many of their other locations will be needing similar upgrades in the years ahead, hopefully without having to go through a major destructive event first.

"Every branch is going to need something down the road and this was sort of a wake-up call that things like this can happen," Klassen added.

Meanwhile, the Winkler library now has sensors installed in its water system to ensure any leakage is caught



PHOTO BY ASHLEIGH VIVEIROS/VOICE

South Central Regional Library's Cathy Ching and Randall Klassen amongst the Winkler library's newly redesigned book stacks. Repairs to the damage caused by a burst water pipe took several months to complete.

quickly before major damage is done.

PATIENT PATRONS

Ching thanks patrons for their patience over the past six months.

"I know people were wondering what was taking so long, but when you think of all the stuff that had to be moved in order to do anything ..." she said, noting 180,000 books were moved during the restoration process, over 7,000 square feet of flooring was replaced, and 2,000 sq. ft. of new paint was applied.

Further complicating matters was the fact many of the materials weren't readily available locally for a job of this size.

"We had to wait on product," Ching said. "This much carpet, for example, isn't sitting in a warehouse in Winkler somewhere."

The library was able to keep a small children's section open through the summer, but adult patrons had to wait until early October to get back inside, and even then it was still a few more weeks before the permanent circulation desk was installed.

SCRL's other branches saw a huge uptick in out-of-town patrons while the Winkler library was closed, Ching said.

"We could certainly tell," she said. "Morden was crazy-busy. They had 1,500 more people come in in July alone."

"Now we can finally say we're done, everybody come back, come check it out," Klassen said. "Hopefully you checked out some other libraries while we weren't open and now you can have your library back."



Library patrons are now greeted by a new circulation desk—the last piece of the puzzle when it came to renovations after the flooding in June.

PHOTO BY ASHLEIGH VIVEIROS/VOICE

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Morden Area Fdn. distributes over \$44K to local projects

By Lorne Stelmach

The Morden Area Foundation marked the end of another year with yet another milestone in reach.

Its annual meeting and Christmas party last Wednesday also saw the foundation hand out over \$44,000 in grants.

Board chair Allison Braun said it all combined to give the organization much cause for celebration.

"We're just about to hit our \$2 million mark in our endowment fund, so that is so exciting," Braun said. "We thought it was great when we hit \$1.5 million, and now we're almost at \$2 million and we might even hit it by the end of the year."

"It is something to celebrate ... the foundation's in great shape," she added. "That \$2 million is going to continue to grow and the interest we get from that ... it will just continue to grow and we'll just be able to continue to help Morden and the area be a great place to live."

The grants handed out last week included two presented to the Pembina Valley Child Care Centre, including over \$14,000 for an intercom security system at the new Morden day care and \$6,000 for roofing on the existing facility.

Executive director Shuana Richards noted they had wanted to replace the roof last year already, but it is the foundation's support that has now made it possible.

Receiving \$13,000 was Morden Fire & Rescue for new mobile electric hydraulic extrication tools that Fire Chief Andy Thiessen called a wish list item for the department.

"We will have an extrication tool on all of our vehicles," he said. "It's going to really help with our response."

The City of Morden was presented with \$4,900 in support of its new bike

share program as well as an extra \$250 for public skating.

"We're very excited to get this rolling," said recreation programmer Stephanie Dueck of the bike share, noting it will be a free program with the aim of helping encourage active living in the community.

Finally, the Pembina Hills Arts Council received just over \$2,900 for a new pottery wheel and stools as well as another \$3,000 for a new public art installation that will have a flora and fauna theme.

"It's one of our most successful programs," said programs and outreach co-ordinator Tricia Dyck, commenting on their pottery classes and workshops. She noted she's also excited about the art installation, which will involve a set of nine sculptures that will also function as seating.

Continued on page 9

PHOTOS BY LORNE STELMACH/VOICE
The Morden Area Foundation's board of directors handed out over \$44,000 in grants from its endowment fund last week to representatives from the Pembina Valley Child Care Centre (above, left), the Pembina Hills Arts Council (above), and the City of Morden (below). Right: Morden Fire & Rescue received funding for new mobile extrication tools. Below, left: Grade 5 student Kate Giesbrecht addressed the foundation's Christmas party/grant distribution celebration to share some of the activities of the Pay It Forward project at École Morden Middle School.





PHOTO BY LORNE STELMACH/VOICE

Making the Fire Prevention Week contest award presentation to Morden Gr. 3 student Anastacia Bolgart were Portage Mutual Insurance's Mike Edgar and Jeff Klippenstein, Morden Fire Chief Andy Thiessen, and Kelly McLean from the Office of the Fire Commissioner.

Morden student wins Fire Prevention Week contest

By Lorne Stelmach

Morden's run of luck with a provincial Fire Prevention Week contest continued this year.

Last week, Minnewasta School Gr. 3 student Anastacia Bolgart received one of five awards presented to K-4 kids across Manitoba.

Over the past 12 years that Fire Chief Andy Thiessen could recall participating in the contest, that makes at least four times a Morden student has brought home the award.

"The kids participate really well, and they're usually very excited every time we come in and talk about it," he said. "The homework that the kids took home is actually paying off for someone and also their classmates too."

The competition asks students to prepare a fire escape plan for their homes and submit it with their entry. Winners in each of the grades receive a \$200 Lego gift card, an award certificate, and prize bags for their classmates.

"Morden always has a great turnout when it comes to supporting and having kids do their fire escape plans," said Kelly McLean, municipal support officer with the Office of the Fire Commissioner.

"It's a great initiative ... it's great for the kids," she said, adding it is about the kids having fun with it but it also "never hurts to get the message out."

Portage Mutual Insurance sponsored the contest held in conjunction with Fire Prevention Week in October.

Mayor confident Morden's wastewater system has capacity needed ... for now

By Lorne Stelmach

City officials are confident Morden is close to having the province give the all clear on new development.

They have offered their evidence and made their case to Manitoba Sustainable Development on the wastewater capacity issues that led to the freeze earlier this year, and Mayor Brandon Burley suggested last week that it will be lifted soon.

"We were told we're a couple weeks out," he said. "They've received the documents and they've expressed their satisfaction with them, and we're just waiting for the letter."

The move by the province to put a hold on new development came in June. Burley said the city has been in discussions with the government ever since to address the concerns about capacity.

The issue arose after an early discharge from the lagoons in 2018. Morden's rapid population growth led Sustainable Development to ask the city to prove its system could meet the needs.

Sustainable Development has "provided very clear direction in terms of what they need each step of the way," Burley said.

"They have worked with not only us but the local developers to en-

sure that construction can continue moving forward in a way that meets Sustainable Development's requirements," he added. "We've had developers making the necessary changes to their plans so that construction can proceed while the last steps are completed."

In 2018, the city had only discharged three cells going into the winter storage season, but the end of this past October saw Morden able to discharge all five secondary cells after treating them according to all of provincial requirements.

As of November 19, 2019 the total volume of the effluent in Morden's lagoons was 733,842 cubic metres, which gives an available capacity of 517,999 cubic metres for the winter. That is compared to the same time in 2018 when there was 827,027 cubic metres of effluent in total and 424,814 cubic metres available.

Burley said that puts Morden in a much better position and council is confident this increased capacity should be enough for the next few years.

"There's plenty of capacity, but we just have to prove to them that we're prepared to manage it appropriately, and that's kind of what we're doing while we wait for the new [wastewater] mechanical plant," the mayor

said.

"As the city grows, of course, we are going to be more and more dependent on our capacity, so we are looking at ways to reduce our dependency on that, not just to manage our facility but also to manage our natural resources."

With that thought in mind, he added the community also needs to be part of the solution. Residents, for example, can help by ensuring water is not going into the system from their home's sump pits.

The city itself also needs to look at such areas as the amount of water going out from the spray park.

"It puts tens of thousands of gallons into our lagoon every day ... we may need to delay opening our spray park if we can't manage our capacity appropriately," said Burley, adding there may be some way of recycling and re-using that water.

"So we're asking the community to do their part ... that they're watching the way they're using our water. Those are important pieces, and the city is going to be looking at infrastructure pieces as well to help manage that," said Burley.

"There are pieces that we can do, and we're committed to doing them, but we have to manage more than just our sewer, we have to manage

"THERE'S PLENTY OF CAPACITY, BUT WE JUST HAVE TO PROVE TO THEM THAT WE'RE PREPARED TO MANAGE IT APPROPRIATELY ..."

our water. We have a great resource, but we cannot take it for granted either."

With the significant growth across the region, Burley stressed that a new wastewater treatment plant is sorely needed.

"We don't want to spend a million dollars to increase capacity when we're a stone's throw from a mechanical plant," he said.

"We know we need that mechanical plant for the long term, and we're trying to make the case that yes, we have capacity issues, while still making the case to the same department that we have capacity for now," Burley explained. "At the rate that we're growing, we don't have decades, we've got years before that becomes a necessity."

WBS Construction marks 40 years by giving back

By Ashleigh Viveiros

WBS Construction decided to wrap up 2019 by playing Santa Claus.

The Winkler company has been making the rounds in recent weeks donating funds and equipment to a variety of community projects.

"This year WBS hit 40 years and so the idea was rather than throw a party we would give something back to the communities that we've been involved in over the years," said Mark Sawatzky, a training and business consultant with the company.

And so, in honour of the milestone, WBS co-founder Harv Thiessen and his son Derek, the company's general manager, have presented a dozen gifts to organizations in Winkler, Morden, Plum Coulee, Altona, and



SUBMITTED PHOTOS

WBS Construction's Harv and Derek Thiessen made the rounds presenting donations to a dozen community groups and projects, including funds for seating at the Morden Rec. Centre (above, left), a collapsible electric wheelchair at Salem Home (above, right), and a donation to the Plum Coulee footbridge project (below)

WSD green lights new vice-principal position

Increasing enrolment has led Western School Division to create a new vice-principal position at Minnewasta School.

The division last week announced Korina Peters will serve as the interim vice-principal for the remainder of this school year. The process to fill the role on a permanent basis will happen next spring.

In a news release, the division said it continues to see rapid and sustained growth, including at Minnewasta, which is now up to five modular classrooms with an enrolment of 328 students and counting.

For now, the vice-principal duties will be just a 0.2 full-time equivalent position.

Since coming to the division in 1997, Peters has worked at all four Morden schools as a classroom teacher for a variety of grades as well as a resource teacher and a numeracy coach.

"Western School Division is very pleased to announce this appointment," the division said. "We believe that this announcement is a positive message to our students, staff, and community and will assist the division in meeting the exciting opportunities outlined in the board's priorities plan."

Carman.

"What we focused on was youth, our community's future, and then also seniors, who laid the foundations we all enjoy today," Sawatzky explained.

The list of recipients includes:

- Pine Ridge Elementary School, wireless heart rate monitoring system.
- Garden Valley Collegiate, pinnies for gym.
- Winkler Rec. Centre, funding for a children's play structure at the Meridian Exhibition Centre
- Salem Home, an electric collapsible wheelchair.
- Buhler Active Living Centre, an electric wheelchair.
- Plum Coulee, funding towards the footbridge project.
- Morden Collegiate, a wireless heart rate monitoring system.
- Morden Rec Centre, inside seating for the east rink.
- Carman Collegiate, beach volleyball court.
- Miller Collegiate, soccer field repairs.
- Gardens on Tenth, an electric wheelchair.
- BTHC Foundation donation.



> GRANTS, FROM PG. 7

"We've finished a lot of projects for a lot of non-profit organizations this year," observed Braun.

She said being able to play a pivotal role in making things happen in the community makes their efforts on behalf of the foundation so rewarding.

"The foundation is the solution to so many problems, financial problems, for our charitable organizations and our non-profit organizations in the community," she said. "We're the ones that, when they have projects on the go and they're cash strapped, they can come to us and we can help them out."

The foundation overall handed out grants of over \$55,000 this year, and its approaches the year end with total net assets that have risen from \$1.84 to over \$1.92 million.

The general endowment commu-

nity fund is at over \$721,000. There are also a wide range of other specific targeted funds. The largest is the foundation support fund at just under \$254,000, while the recreation and sport fund is at almost \$132,000.

Other funds range from scholarship funds to those supporting such places as the Canadian Fossil Discovery Centre, Manitoba Baseball Hall of Fame, and the library to South Central Cancer Resource and Morden Caring and Sharing, among others.

Braun also celebrated the success of the foundation's initiatives over the past year, ranging from the Power of the Purse in the spring to the 24-Hour Giving Challenge last month.

"It's been a great year ... we had a record breaking 24-Hour Giving Challenge, we beat it by over \$6,000

over last year," she noted. "We just can't wait for the Power of the Purse this spring."

She looked forward to simply carrying on in the year ahead while continuing to get the word out about the foundation.

"We're always wanting to educate people as to what the foundation does and different ways that they can give to the foundation," she said, citing the various ways of charitable giving such as through wills and estates.

"It's a way that you can really leave a legacy by giving to the foundation through charitable giving ... those are things we want to continue to educate people about; let them know that we are here and that we are a really good solution ... we can continue to help grow our community."

A Christmas garage sale

By Lorne Stelmach

Maple Leaf School Grade 2 students held their annual fundraising garage sale last Friday.

Under the guidance of teacher Jenn Stein, the kids led the charge in planning and running the sale.

After raising \$1,145 last year, this year the kids set their sights on raising \$1,200 to be split between the Pembina Valley Humane Society and Morden Christmas Cheer Board.

"I told my daughter I would keep doing it until she was done Grade 4 for sure," Stein said on Friday with a chuckle. "I had thought about retiring ... but no, the staff and students are not going to let me do that."

"It brings a lot of Christmas cheer to our school. Everyone was looking forward to it."

The sale has been held annually at the school since 2008, organized by classes ranging from Gr. 2-4.

It's a lot of work for the students, Stein noted, who start by deciding where they want to donate the money and then work on gathering donations of items for the sale as well as a silent auction.

"We wrote those letters and the kids actually delivered them with their parents ... and when we heard back, if it was possible, the students even went to pick up the silent auction prizes," she said.

"It is challenging for them ... there are some real lessons learned," Stein said. "The students learn time management skills, self regulation skills, money management ... we've been counting a lot ... so it's a lot of math and writing and critical thinking."

For the kids, it's a chance to give back.

"It feels good ... we've already got more than a hundred dollars," Sophia Martens said as the sale was just getting underway. "I like going into



PHOTO BY LORNE STELMACH/VOICE

Maple Leaf School teacher Jessica Stein's Gr. 2 class organized a garage sale Friday to raise funds for the Pembina Valley Humane Society and the Morden Christmas Cheer Board.

school earlier ... we have to go into school earlier than we usually do."

Aria Hildebrand enjoys it "because we raise money for the Pembina Valley Humane Society and the Morden Christmas Cheer."

"It's just our class, and we're donating a lot of stuff that's fun. There's lots of fun games ... and we both get to work at a colouring station and a reading station."

Business tax rebate program paying dividends: mayor

By Lorne Stelmach

An initiative now into its third year is having a positive impact on economic growth in Winkler, Mayor Martin Harder suggested last week.

Speaking after the meeting of council last Tuesday, Harder said the commercial and industrial tax credit system continues to be well received and valued.

"It's been catching on," he said. "People are appreciating the fact that they are receiving these rebates. It's an incentive, which is what it was designed to do, and I think we were way ahead of the curve. There's a lot of people who are following now and having incentives as well."

The initiative sees a new company in year one receive a full 100 per cent rebate. That then reduces to 80 per cent in the second year, 60 per cent in the third, 40 per cent in the fourth, and finally 20 per cent in the fifth.

"So it basically takes you six years

before you get the full tax bill," said Harder. "As we go along, it gets less of a rebate, but yet there's always more things that get built, and so therefore this program continues."

"I think this year it was just over \$85,000 that was returned to the businesses, so it's significant ... it's working well."

Harder also touched on the city's continuing efforts to manage the costs around the Meridian Exhibition Centre.

There has been a range of cost increases connected to materials used on the project, the mayor said, and the city is also looking at projected operating costs of the facility.

"The number looks like it's just over a million dollars higher than what was originally intended, so we just have a bigger job on our hands to raise a little bit more capital in order to cover what we have agreed to borrow," said Harder.

"It's as streamlined and efficient

as we can make it ... and some of the changes that took place are actually reducing the operating costs, so that's helpful for the long run ... it means a little more capital up front," he continued. "We're not done applying for grants yet. We're still hopeful there will be some grants that will become available and maybe cover it that way; otherwise, it's raise a few more dollars."

Meanwhile, they also are looking at ways to address rehab work on the existing arena, according to recreation committee minutes, which also noted a target date for the grand opening remains September 2020.

There also continues to be discussions at that committee level about Winkler Arts and Culture and the role of the city with the organization. Harder said the focus of those discussions was how to work towards a more sustainable future for the gallery.

City staff currently dedicate a portion of time to Winkler Arts and Culture. Harder said the city ideally would like to have the centre become more self-sustaining.

"Obviously, their ability to raise funds is not as great, so we're looking at how do we set it up so that it's survivable in the long term, and at the same time, maybe not using our city staff to do day-to-day," he said.

"The city will continue to support them, but they just need to structure it a little different," he added, noting they want to "help set them up for success because it's of value to the community. It needs to be operated also with the taxpayers in mind as well."

Finally, council last week also received a couple more funding requests for the year ahead.

In addition to base support of just over \$166,000, the South Central Regional Library is asking for an additional 55 cents per capita, which would work out to nearly \$7,000 more in funding.

Library representatives noted they are continuing to seek ways to reduce costs without jeopardizing programs, while the library has also seen a reduction in its general reserve over the past few years.

As well, the Winkler Family Resource Centre is hoping for an additional \$2,000 on top of the \$5,000 that it has received from the city in the past.

Addressing council last week, director Cathy Savage noted the centre has seen a significant increase in interest in its programming lately and needs a bit more money to help offset those costs.

"I'm thrilled with how many people are coming," she said. "It's fantastic."

The **Winkler Morden**
Voice

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Christmas cookies for Genesis House

Nighthawks bake up hundreds of treats for the victims of domestic violence

By Ashleigh Viveiros

Northlands Parkway Collegiate baking and pastry arts students used their skills to do some good this holiday season.

The class baked hundreds of Christmas cookies and treats for donation to Genesis House, the regional shelter for abused women and their children.

"There was a lot of production and we all worked together as a team and we packaged them all together to give them [to Genesis House] today," explained Gr. 10 student Anna Dyck.

Knowing the cookies are going to families who might be having a difficult time over the holidays made all the work worthwhile, Dyck said.

"We all love baking but then we get to help other people in that process? It's a really awesome feeling."

Shelter reps stopped by the school on Friday to pick up the goodies and talk to the teens about the services they offer the victims of domestic violence.

Samantha Toews, the shelter's chil-

dren's counsellor, said they're "just absolutely overjoyed" to receive such a generous donation.

"Before we were even contacted by them we had decided that this year we wanted to set up necessity baskets ... to send home with the families for Christmas," she explained. "And then about a week later we got this email ... that the kids wanted to do this. So we were just overjoyed. This is another thing that we can put in there."

The care baskets are meant to provide a measure of comfort to families, Toews said, and Christmas cookies certainly go a long way toward doing just that.

"Christmas baking is definitely something that is a treat and it's something that is often taken for granted," she said. "That we're able to provide that this year is very welcomed and definitely will be more than appreciated by our families."

Every time the community steps up to help the families at Genesis House through initiatives like this, Toews stressed, it sends a clear message of



PHOTO BY ASHLEIGH VIVEIROS/VOICE

Northlands Parkway Collegiate baking and pastry arts students whipped up hundreds of Christmas treats for the local women's shelter last week. Back row, from left: Damaris Dueck, Trudy Neufeld Rempel, Jolina Thiessen, and Anna Dyck. Front row, from left: Alex Klassen, Lynn Franz, and Jessica Goertzen.

love and support.

"A lot of the families that come in, especially over Christmastime, the family peace ... is something that's been broken," she said. "So when they hear that there's other people from the community that are reaching out ... and are willing to do extra work for them and for us and to bring a piece of this warmth into their home is absolutely huge."

Toews was also excited at the oppor-

tunity to speak with the teens about Genesis House's programming.

"I think it's really cool to be able to come into a classroom setting and to deliver to smaller groups of people, especially in the high schools," she said, pointing to the new Teen Talk program the shelter is starting up to educate youth about healthy relationships and the warning signs of abusive ones.

Federated Co-operatives lends a helping hand

By Lorne Stelmach

Co-ops across Canada are lending people a helping hand this Christmas season.

Federated Co-operatives Ltd. recently launched its Holiday Helpers campaign, inviting Canadians to share why they or someone in their lives could use an extra boost of festive spirit.

Throughout December, FCL has been surprising customers across western Canada with everything from toys and food hampers to gift cards to help offset some of the expenses associated with the holiday season.

Among a number of recent recipients was Alice Spence of Morden.

For Spence, who saw a post about the program on the Co-op Facebook page, the \$250 gift card she received was quite welcome as she prepared for the 13-hour drive to Edmonton to visit her daughter for Christmas.

"It was quite a surprise because I

thought some of their prizes were only about \$50. Then they said, 'How does \$250 sound?' So that sounded even better," she said.

"It was a nice surprise, especially coming at Christmastime when you've got lots of other expenses going on and buying gifts."

"There's different items that have been given to different people through the Facebook community on

this initiative as well ... it all depends on what the need is," said Evan Toews, general manager of the Winkler Co-op.

"We've also done our local program where we will randomly will pay for somebody's tankful of gas and also give them a turkey ... we've been doing that over the last number of weeks here as well," he noted.

"This is the time of year that a lot

of people need a little bit of a helping hand ... it's great to be part of an organization that recognizes that and has given out quite a number of gifts."

Spence noted she appreciates how much Co-op gives back to their communities.

"The staff are always so friendly and helpful. We always like to shop locally at the Co-op."

Arts festival registration forms available now

Preparations are underway for the 2020 Morden Festival of the Arts.

The 45th annual festival aims to foster and promote continued interest, growth, and development of local talent within the arts.

Keeping its entry fees as low as possible, the festival provides a venue for student and adult performance, instruction, and adjudication in band,

strings, sacred performance, piano, vocal, choral, and French and English speech arts.

The schedule includes the band sessions in February, the strings, sacred evening, and piano sessions in March, and choral and speech arts in April. It all wraps up in early May with a high-lights concert.

The provincial syllabus is available

at Morden school libraries as well as the Morden branch of the South Central Regional Library. Copies of speech arts selections are also available at school libraries, while piano, sacred, and strings registrations are generally done through private music teachers.

Continued on page 12



RBC supports United Way

The employees of RBC's Morden branch donated \$3,000 to the United Way of Morden and District's campaign in 2019. At left: Some of the employees met with United Way campaign chair Terry Gibson (fifth from left) recently to celebrate the donation.

SUBMITTED PHOTO

Giving Challenge gets extension

The provincial government is extending its commitment to support the annual Endow Manitoba 24-Hour Giving Challenge in partnership with The

Squires. "Year after year, Manitobans have shown they have the ability to give from the heart and the support generated through the 24-Hour Giving Challenge has changed lives and communities."

For every \$5 donation made to a community foundation during the challenge, the Manitoba government and The Winnipeg Foundation also contribute \$1 each to a maximum of \$2,000 per foundation.

With 55 community foundations across the province, Manitoba is home to the most community foundations per capita in the country.

"We are pleased to partner with Manitoba government on this important community-building initiative," says Rick Frost, CEO of The Winnipeg Foundation. "Our province's reputation as being most generous in the country is reinforced by all the great work local community foundations are able to achieve."

The 24-Hour Giving Challenge was first held in 2014, with the province coming on board as a supporter in 2017.

Locally, this fall the challenge helped the foundations in Winkler, Morden, and Plum Coulee raise over \$100,000 for their community endowment funds.

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Winnipeg Foundation until 2026, Municipal Relations Minister Rochelle Squires announced last week.

"We have a great deal to be proud of and much to be thankful for as Manitobans, and one of the most amazing characteristics of our province is our generosity," said

Christian Programs Committee *invites you to a* **Complimentary Continental Prayer Breakfast**

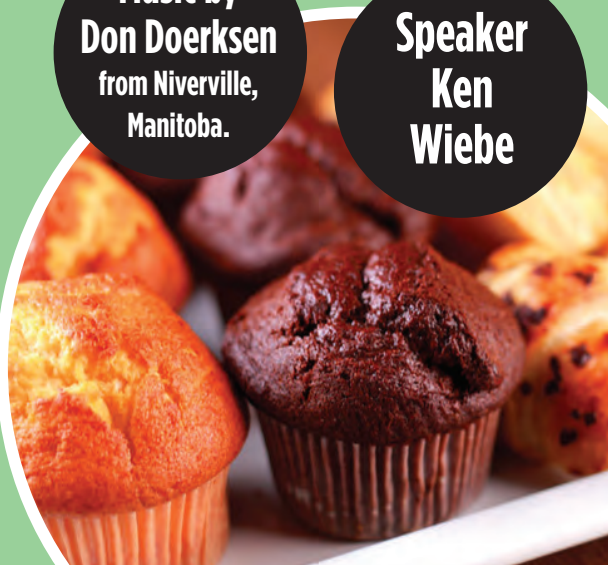
**Wednesday January 1, 2020 at the
Access Events Center 9:30 AM to 11:00 AM
111 Gilmour Ave., Morden, Manitoba.**

The offering will go to the Morden Youth for Christ. We will spend time praying for different areas of leadership in our area here in southern Manitoba. It is a great way to start of the New Year. Everyone is welcome.

The Christian Programs Committee also wants to thank you the sponsors who have given so generously to help us with the cost of the music and speakers at Corn & Apple and other events during the year. We always appreciate the generous offering we receive from you the public.

**Music by
Don Doerksen
from Niverville,
Manitoba.**

**Speaker
Ken
Wiebe**



> FEST, FROM PG. 11

Entry forms are now available at all school offices, the Morden Library, and online at mordenfestivalofthearts.cfsites.org.

Entries by mail must be postmarked no later than Jan. 24.

Volunteers will collect entries at Maple Leaf School Jan. 29 from 10 a.m. to 2:30 p.m., École Morden Middle School Jan. 30 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. for Morden Collegiate students as well, and Minnewasta School Jan. 29-30. The final deadline for all entries is Jan. 30.

The Morden festival is supported by volunteers, and anyone interested in assisting at individual sessions can call volunteer coordinator Marlene Britton at 204-822-5794.

Local couple to receive provincial yard award

By Lorne Stelmach

A Morden couple are being honoured with a provincial award for their beautiful yard.

Max and Doreen Friesen are slated to receive the Manitoba Good Roads Association award for best home grounds in the category for rural Manitoba communities with populations of 7,500 or more.

Nominated by the City of Morden, the Friesens say their yard is very much a labour of love, especially for Doreen.

"It's Doreen who really has the touch," said Max, a former mayor of Morden. "We do both love our yard ... we take great care of it, and we're proud of the yard. Doreen is the one who does most of that work."

"It means a lot to us that people notice the yard and that they notice the improvements that we have made over the years."

"I enjoy the work. I don't look at it maybe in the same light because to me it is a labour of love. I enjoy being out there, and it's therapy for me," said Doreen.

"I study a lot ... because I'm a retired florist ... I've always studied design, colours and nature. I love nature," she continued. "When you put that all together, it becomes a la-

Continued on page 27



Max and Doreen Friesen sit amongst the greenery that makes up their yard, which has been selected to receive a Manitoba Good Roads Association award for best home grounds.

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What's *Your* Christmas Story?

We asked kids to share their best themed holiday stories with us for a chance at a movie prize pack. As always, it was a very difficult decision, but here are the two winning stories and a few other favourites:

The Odd Day Before Christmas

GRAND PRIZE, K-4: JAKOB HARDER,
GR. 4, MINNEWASTA SCHOOL

"Another day of school!" I sighed as I opened my eyes. "Guess I better get up."

I rubbed my eyes. "Kinda chilly."

My parents weren't awake yet. I got Cheerios, Frosted Flakes, Corn Flakes and Mini Wheats. After eating breakfast I looked outside. It was snowing. I turned on the radio. I listened as it said, "Snow storm. No school." Those were the only words I heard and then a big grin grew on my face. I grabbed my controller and pressed the on button. GAME ON.

Two hours later ...

As I was playing it got really dark. I looked at the window. The snow was rising to the window. Suddenly the power went out.

"NOOOOOOOO!!!"

Then my mom and dad got up.

"What is it?"

"The power went out, can't you see?"

"So that means?" my parents asked.

It means NO TV. NO video games. NO lights. NO hot food. NO cold food. WHHHYYYY??

Then I heard a big CRASH! What was that?! We ran to the living room. One of the windows was broken. The snow got so high that it broke a window! Snow started gushing in. We have to stop it! We went outside and shovelled the snow away. When we got inside Mom told us the roof was starting to collapse!

"What are we going to do?"

Dad got the ladder out. We went on the roof and started shovelling. Then I tripped and fell into the chimney.

"AHHHHH!"

I just kept falling until I landed on

something soft. I opened my eyes. I was on a big teddy bear and two eyes were staring at me. There were tons of eyes staring at me.

"Hello!" one said. "I am Jacky the elf."

"I'm Zach. Where are we?" I asked.

"The North Pole, of course."

Then someone else walked in. He was pretty big and was wearing a red coat. It was Santa Claus.

"Kick him out," he said. They threw me out in the freezing cold. Then I woke up. I was in a room with lots of lights. Before it was just a dream, but now I was in a room with lots of lights like a hospital. This one was very colourful. There was another elf!

"SHHHHHH! Don't hurt me, please" I said.

"What?" said the elf. "Why would I hurt you?"

"Well, you did in my dream," I said.

"Don't worry. We are kid-friendly."

"Why am I here?" I asked.

"Well, this is Elf Hospital. You were hurt."

"How did I get here?"

"An elf never reveals his secrets," said the elf.

"Oh, here comes Santa."

"Ho! Ho! Ho! He's awake. I'll take you home on Christmas."

Later that night ...

"Okay. Hop in, buddy."

I got in the sleigh and we zoomed off. When we got to the first city I looked down at all the lights. It was so beautiful. I helped Santa with everything.

Then we finally got to my house. I said goodbye and went inside.

THE END.

The Broken Magi

GRAND PRIZE, GR. 5-8: JONATHON WALDAL,
GR. 6, CRYSTAL CITY

"We three kings of orient are," sang my mother as she carefully set a large cardboard box down beside the bookshelf in the living room. She opened the box and pulled out a porcelain figurine. She pulled out another, and another.

"This Nativity set has been in my family for four generations," she said.

Suddenly, the phone rang. As my mom went to answer it I asked, "Can I finish setting it up?"

"I suppose if you're very careful ..." she hesitated.

"Yay! Thanks, Mom!"

I stuck my hand into the box and pulled out a shepherd. Then another. I plunged my arm back into the box and when it was again in view it was holding a short man with a long robe and tall turban. He was holding a box.

I stared at him, wondering which magi he was. In the Bible it doesn't say what the three magi's names were, but traditionally they were Balthazar, Melchior, and Gaspar. I decided that the one in my hand was Gaspar, although I really had no clue.

As looked down at the wise man, my mom suddenly shouted, still on the phone, "What!?"

Her sudden cry caused me to jump a little, and as I jumped I loosened my grip on Gaspar, causing him to fly through the air. He landed with a horrifying "CRACK!"

I was in trouble now. I glanced up at mom, who was still on the phone. She hadn't noticed. I picked up Gaspar and his detached gift and tried to act casual as I nervously headed for my bedroom.

I laid the wise man on the bed and sighed. Mom would be furious when she found out. I was thinking of how to present the broken antique in a way that would cause as little anger as possible when I heard a twinkling noise. Then a strange, blue light surrounded me. I was growing very uneasy about this unknown phenomenon, as it grew louder and brighter, when I abruptly fell out of the light and onto a camel's back.

After I finally accepted that I was magically somewhere in a remote desert, riding on a camel and wearing strange clothes, two more camel riders came into view. Then I figured it out: I was now one of the three magi.

I looked at the tallest magi and guessed, "Balthazar?"

"Yeah, Gaspar?"

I'm Gaspar. But then an uncomfortable thought came into my mind: Gaspar was the one I broke. I shook off this lingering discomfort, and turned to my other companion.

"Melchior?"



Continued on page 19

BOXING WEEK

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Christmas Reflections
G.D. Klassen 1989

T'was sitting in the living room
And watching my T.V.
When I heard the telephone ring,
And sure, it was for me.

A Committee Member on the line
With a question - and you know what it was?
"Could have a poem at our Social?"
But then there was a pause.

There's very little time left;
That was my first reaction;
And what should I write about
To make the right connection?
I hesitated for a minute,
And then I said "Why not?"
I'll try and think of something,
And give it my best shot."

The cash registers are clinging,
And Santa says "Ho Ho!"
There's so much out there waiting
That I just got to go.

I have no time for Christmas.
There's business to be done
There's Socials, gatherings, presents
And we got to have some fun.

The tree is hung with glitter.
The lights are shining bright.
Are we really celebrating Christmas
Like on that Holy Night?

'Tis Christmastime they tell us
You hear it everywhere.
But if we ask our own heart -
How does it feel in there?

Are we ready for the Season.
The laughter and the trim,
Or are there other problems
That keep us away from Him?

Christ came to us, we know it;
But what about our brother?
Do we take time to tell him
Or is that too much bother?

Christmas is the Season
When lots of people wait
To see their loved ones one more time
Before it is too late.

There's Grandma in her little room
Thinking of days done by
When children came quite often
To taste her apple pie.

But now there's little time for her
As she is old and grey;
Even if we go to see her,
How much time have we to stay?

What if God had been too busy
To send His only Son;
There would be no Church Social
And no sinner could be won.

But Thank God, "He did His Best for us
Two thousand years ago.
Angels sing and Christ was born
For all the world to know.

Shop small businesses to improve the holiday experience

It's the time of year when newspapers thicken with sales circulars and holiday advertisements. Consumers looking to beat the hustle and bustle and steer clear of the crowds this year may want to pay attention to local businesses in lieu of trekking to nearby shopping malls.

Every time consumers visit local coffee shops to grab a latte, pick up a dress at a nearby boutique or patronize a farmer's market down the street, they are supporting a small business.

Shopping small businesses helps give back to the community directly. On average 48 percent of each purchase made at independent businesses is re-circulated locally through tax money and other support.

Small business owners often strive to provide personalized, hands-on customer service. Repeat business is key to their survival, so they want to ensure shoppers are happy.

Small businesses, since they are not beholden to corporate oversight in terms of what they sell, have greater flexibility. That allows them to offer a diverse product selection.

Small business owners often live nearby, and they're the people you see in town, schools and elsewhere in the local community. Many consumers are comforted to know they're supporting their neighbors, especially during the holiday season.

Supporting local businesses is easy. And shoppers who like what they see can share the good news with others on social media.

BOXING WEEK SALE

GREAT CHRISTMAS GIFTS - 20%-40% OFF

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What's *Your* Christmas Story?

HONOURABLE MENTIONS

CANDY'S NEW JOB

I woke up one brisk Monday morning and the delightful aroma of homemade gingerbread cookies, and peppermint sticks filled my nostrils. I walked swiftly down the stairs trying not to wake anyone up.

To my delight, everyone was already seated quietly at the huge dining table. I walked to my seat casually, trying to figure out what I'd done wrong,

because for some suspicious reason everyone was looking directly at me.

I grabbed a freshly baked Christmas cookie with red and green icing on it. Suddenly, Mr. Claus said in a very gentle but jolly voice, "I have an announcement to make."

"In this room there is one elf that is always here when I need her and is always the first one up and ready to work. That elf is ... Candy Blossom," Mr. Claus said in a deep and proud voice. He was wearing a smile that stretched from ear to ear. Then he said in a cheerful voice, "I am going to give Candy a promotion!"

I looked up in disbelief as streaks of fear and excitement exploded through my body all at once.

Santa walked to the door noiselessly and signaled for me to come with him. I got up from my tiny stool and quickly jogged through the huge door that led outside to the blistering cold weather.

We had been hiking for five minutes when I asked in a happy voice, "Where are we going?"

He replied in a very gentle voice with a little grin, "You'll see very soon, Candy."

We walked for a few more minutes until we came to an old rickety shed that looked like it had been there for centuries. Mr. Claus slowly opened the old rustic door and cautiously walked in, then told me to follow.

It was dark and dusty with only a little light. Mr. Claus clapped his big, old hands and everything began to beam with light.

What I saw made my mouth drop and my breathing heavy. I saw a cherry red sleigh and eight tiny reindeer.

I looked up in disbelief. I said to him excitedly, "I'm the

reindeer keeper?"

He looked at me happily and said in a very gentle but sweet voice, "Yes, you are, and you are going to ride in my sleigh tonight."

—Emily Blatz, Gr. 7,
Plum Coulee Elementary School

> BROKEN MAGI, FROM PG. 14

"What?" he replied.

"This may sound strange, but where are we in our journey?"

Balthasar frowned. "What do you mean?"

"I mean, how long have we been travelling?"

"We've been travelling for two years. But why are you asking such weird questions?"

"Well," I said, not sure how to put it, "I'm not actually Gaspar. My name is Jack and I don't know how I got here."

Melchior rolled his eyes. "Not in the mood, Gaspar."

Eventually I gave up on convincing the other wise men of my true identity. After all, I probably wouldn't believe myself if I was in their position.

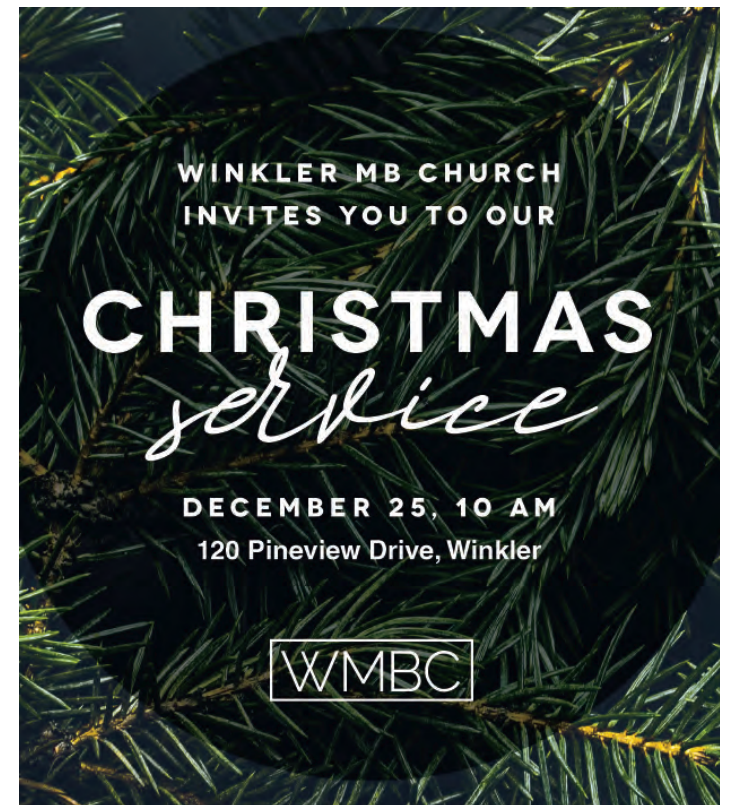
I had been travelling with my new companions just over a week when the moment I had been waiting for arrived.

We climbed off our camels and hurried to where we found Mary, Joseph, and Jesus, who was now about two years old.

As I stared at him I became sad, knowing that this little boy would die as a young man. But then I brightened, remembering that He would rise again to make possible forgiveness of our sins.

Then the issue of forgiveness flooded my mind, and I remembered my guilt of breaking my mom's porcelain figurine. As I thought about these things I decided to ask her for forgiveness. I couldn't control whether or not she would forgive me, but I was pretty sure she would.

Now I just had to get out of this desert ...



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HONOURABLE MENTIONS

THE FEELING OF TRUE JOY

I jerk awake at the feeling of two hands rocking me back and forth. I open my eyes, giving into whoever is trying to wake me.

"What do you want?" I ask groggily, wiping a drop of sweat from my forehead. The dessert we currently camp in is full of humid air, hot wind, and clingy bugs. Not my type of climate.

"Look Micha!" Amul says, shaking me even harder. My eyes follow his

gaze and my heart stops. There, shining in the sky, is the biggest, most beautiful star I've ever seen. The light from the star alone is almost as bright as the sun. I shield my eyes.

"Could this be ...?" I whisper, trying to put my thoughts into words.

"The star," Amul finishes for me. We stand there for awhile just staring at it, unable to move. I lift myself up from the sandy ground and walk over to Leo, curious as to his understanding of the star.

"Hey Leo, do you think—" I start to ask, but he interrupts me, his weak voice carrying through the empty night.

"It's the star they told us about in prophet school."

"Do you really think it is?" I ask

again, still hesitant. I'd heard legends about the star that would someday shine above Bethlehem. A star that would be a sign to all people that a king was to be born. A king sent from God himself. A messiah. I look over and watch Amul unravel a dusty scroll, his eyes still wide in shock.

"Mhmm," he says nodding to himself. "That's definitely the star."

I smile and walk over to our tent, then slowly begin to disassemble it. For the first time in weeks I feel really, truly, happy.

"Woo hoo!" Leo hoots, and I look up from my half asleep position. Did they see those shepherds and angels again? Or ...

What I once thought was a pitch black sky is now a blinding abyss of beautiful bright light.

"We made it!" I happily exclaim, my heart picking up speed.

"You bet," says Amul, slowly climbing off his camel.

"What are you doing?" I ask confused as to why he's getting off. I look around. There's nothing but an old, run-down stable and a donkey.

"That's it," he says, pointing at the stable. I look at it, completely dumbstruck. How could such an important baby be born in ... well ... that.

"You're sure?" I ask, slowly beginning to climb off my camel as well. Amul doesn't say anything but instead begins to walk to the small stable. I look over at Leo and watch as he unhesitantly follows. I slowly begin to walk, my legs shaking. Finally we reach the door of the stable, the faint sound of voices coming from within. Amul reaches out his hand and knocks. The sound of footsteps echo from within and the door begins to open. A tall man with a long beard opens the door. His face is laced with nothing but genuine happiness and his smile covers ever inch of his face.

"Hello?"

"Hello," Amul replies, his voice kind. "May we come in?"

"Of course," he replies stepping aside. We all walk into the warm stable, and the first thing I see is the little baby laying in a manger. His face looks like that of a sleeping angel and an instant feeling of calm washes over me. I bow down on my knees and lay my gift on the ground, then watch as Leo and Amul do the same.

"His name is Jesus," says the woman sitting in the corner. Her face is gentle and kind.

"I'm Mary and this is Joseph," she says pointing at the man. "And this is our little messiah."


"May I hold him?" I ask, nodding at

the baby.


She smiles and nods her head. I walk over to the manger and gently pick up the baby, his eyes slowly opening. I stare down into them and a feeling of absolute joy pours over me. The feeling of love and Christmas. The feeling of God.

—Angelica Goertzen,
Gr. 8, Reinland





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JÓLABÓKAFLÓÐIÐ

My family has a lot of traditions that we utilize during Christmas season, like our Elf on the Shelf, new pajamas on Christmas Eve, or opening stockings at 8 a.m. sharp on Christmas. One newer family tradition, though, is a less known tradition in our region of Canada.

It originated in Iceland during World War Two. Harsh currency restrictions arose during that time, causing the amount of imported giftware to lower. Icelandic people found a way around the barriers, however. The limitations of imported paper were more lenient, causing many children to be gifted books instead of traditional toys. There was a higher stock of books than any other present.

It soon became a custom over the six years of war for children to read their new books on Christmas, rather than play around with toys. The mass popularity of books as presents in turn brought forth a name for the traditional book-giving. In Icelandic, it is called Jólabókaflóðið, (pronounced yoh-la-boka-flowed), meaning 'Christmas Book Flood.' The 'Flood' fragment refers to the sheer number of books that would arrive year after year for the children of Iceland.

My dad read about this tradition a couple of years ago and was instantly enthralled by this custom and its interesting backstory. That same year, my family began celebrating the Christmas Book Flood. On Christmas Eve each year, we all curl up around our warm living room, the fireplace ablaze and the lights of the Christmas tree decorating the pale-blue room with small stars of light dancing back and forth. My brothers and I each receive a new pair of pajamas and slippers. We all dash as fast as we can out of the living room trying to be the first one changed into PJs, but as time wears on we all become less excited by the prospect of being the winner.

Nonetheless, we eventually all change into the cozy pajamas and take our seats on the various gray couches about the room. We all are then gifted a small package contain-

Continued on page 22

VISITING SENIORS DURING THE HOLIDAYS: 5 ISSUES TO LOOK OUT FOR



2. MEMORY LOSS

Forgetfulness itself isn't a concern. However, signs of serious memory loss such as placing items in unusual places, repeating the same thing over and over, mixing up words, and getting lost in familiar areas may warrant a trip to the doctor.

3. MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES

Depression among seniors is on the rise and those who are socially isolated are at an increased risk. Worrisome signs include withdrawal from social activities, insomnia (or oversleeping), loss of interest in hobbies, loss of appetite and changes in personality and mood.

4. MOBILITY ISSUES

A senior's level of mobility can change drastically in a short period of time. Such a change can sometimes present a danger. It's therefore a good idea to ensure that the seniors you visit during the holidays have homes that match their current level of mobility. Uncompleted household chores may indicate an issue.

5. SOCIAL ISOLATION

Helping seniors combat social isolation is important, as doing so has been shown to reduce the likelihood of them experiencing depression and other mental health issues. What's more, by remaining socially active seniors can prevent or mitigate cognitive impairments. If the senior you're visiting is isolated, help them come up with a plan to make new friends in the new year.

While holiday visits are welcome, it's just as important to visit the seniors you care about throughout the year. Regular visits will keep you abreast of their health and overall condition and help stave off social isolation to boot.



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What's *Your* Christmas Story?

HONOURABLE MENTIONS

From Pg. 20

ing a book that we had expressed interest in at some point earlier that year.

One at a time, we each unwrap the book our parents have bought for us. Excitedly, we settle into our seats. Sometimes we retrieve blankets from our own rooms. For the next 30-60 minutes, we all read our new books together. My parents buy the books for my two brothers and I, while they exchange books with one another.

Despite being a newer practise for my family, I think it might be my favourite one. It feels very calm, being curled up with my family, wearing soft PJs and reading an interesting book. The excitement for the upcoming day, Christmas, always looms over the peaceful atmosphere, bringing forth a childlike giddiness from

even my parents.

In that little room with our books, it feels like nothing can disrupt the serenity. Call it God, divine intervention, blessings, or just plain luck, Christmas always brings out happiness from even the most desolate or solemn people. It has a way of filling everyone to the brim with euphoria; joy that comes from the celebration of something that is important to everyone: family.

Whether you are thinking of your parents, children, distant relatives, church congregation, friends, co-workers, or even pets, it has the same effect. They are the people who are most important to you: your family. The people who you love. That's what Christmas is about anyway, isn't it? Love. The love of Christ, the love for those closest to you, even the love for those who aren't close. The love for those who don't love you. I guess that's what they call the spirit of Christmas, isn't it? Giving back to those whom you appreciate.

Something always changes the world around Christmas, bringing people together and closer. That's what I think love is like. Christmas isn't about the presents, or the food, or the snow. Christmas is really about love. Love, like giving back to the community, or going sledding with family and friends, or hosting a dinner party for others. Like buying a child a book when you can barely get anything for them at all.

—Jade Hart, Gr. 8,
Prairie Dale Middle School

MY NEW JOB AS AN ELF

My new job as an Elf working for Santa is as a Tour Director. Now, people are wondering where exactly does Santa Claus live. Well, before you go looking for Santa there is one thing you should know: if you are an elf you have to be on the Discovery North Pole Adventures Tour Guide Team. And if you are a human you can't go on these adventures alone because it's freezing at the North Pole. Elves can live there because they are just used to the cold, just like the polar bears and the killer whales!

So, if you want to find where Santa lives, you will have to go on the adventure with an elf like me and find clues and dress like the elves do. Even though some elves wear shorts at the

North Pole they can stay really warm because they use Lunar Power Heaters in their shorts. This keeps them very, very warm!

So here I am! I will show you the way!

First we have to start in the reindeer room and look for clues. Here are the first clues:

Clue #1: Look which way the reindeer are pointing.

Clue #2: Look for a trail of treats.

Clue #3: Look for footprints in the snow.

But don't walk in the small footprints because that would be the elf prints. Be careful not to go in circles back to the reindeer. They might be hungry!

Now we look where the reindeer are pointing and follow the treats and the footprints. This will lead you to the workshop and into the Naughty & Nice Room.

When you get there we will have to wait 'til the big door opens. Past this door is Santa's room. No one goes in there, but we can wait for him to come out!

Oh look! Here comes Santa Claus!

Oh no! One of the elves has just been picked up by a toy pterodactyl! Let's hope he doesn't drop him and surprise Santa!

Hope you enjoyed the tour! Come again!

—Dante Nestrovich, Gr. 4, Morden

ONE SNOWY DAY

It is a very snowy day and it is a day off of school. I am going to the Christmas shop to buy presents for my brothers. I want them to feel awesome at Christmas. I will give my two brothers something special that they will love. Kolby, Luke, my dad and I will give my mom a gift. I will give my dad a gift, too.

I love Christmas and my brothers love, love, love Christmas too. I build snowmen with my brothers. It is fun building snowmen at Christmas. It's the best time ever!

It is my favourite time to hang out with my friends. I love, love, love Christmas, too!

—Taliya Penner, Gr. 2,
Maple Leaf School

ME & THE WISE MEN

I came out of my house and then I saw a star. Then I told the other wise

men. They knew the star meant a king was born. So me and the wise men gathered spices and gold fit for a king.

They got their camels ready and I got my camel ready too. Then we set off for Bethlehem. We knew it was going to be a long journey. Our camels started to move.

A couple days later we checked the map. We were almost there. We got one more day left.

When we finally got there we gave Jesus our gifts and bowed down. Baby Jesus looked at us and smiled at us. The smile changed into giggles. The giggles changed into laughter. The wise men and me smiled at baby Jesus.

—Bentley Froese, Gr. 2,
J.R. Walkof School

A FAVOURITE HOLIDAY TRADITION

One of my favourite holiday traditions is Nikolaustag. I always leave my boot outside before I go to bed on December 5th. Then I go to bed.

In the morning my boot is filled with toys and candy that Nikolaus brought. I play with them. I would love to see Nikolaus one day!

—Niall Fehr, 5, Winkler

BRENNA'S CHRISTMAS JOB

I am going to have a job at the North Pole. I will work at wrapping presents in wrapping paper and making toys for Santa. My dress will be red and green and I will wear a pointy hat. I will see Santa every day.

—Brenna McPhail, Gr. 3,
Maple Leaf School

HOT COCOA FOR SANTA

I always wanted a job, but no one thought I was old enough yet (I'm only seven). One day in the newspaper it said there was a spot for a job at Santa's workshop. The next morning I got up and bought an elf suit at Superstore. I got on my tricycle and went to the North Pole (it only took me 8,000 years).

I was very surprised when I saw Santa in pajamas. He said that my job was to go to the kitchen and make

Continued on page 23



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HONOURABLE MENTIONS

From Pg. 22

him hot cocoa.

I couldn't find the kitchen and I ended up in Santa's pajama closet. When I got out of his room and closet I asked an elf to show me where the kitchen was. Then I started making hot cocoa, but I accidentally used brown sugar instead of cocoa.

I brought it to Santa. I was wondering if Santa lost an elf, or what! I asked Santa what happened that he needed a new elf. He said that the one he had was not doing very good so he sent him to the South Pole.

Then I realized that I had put brown sugar in his drink instead of cocoa. I needed to create a distraction, so I whispered in Rudolph's ear to eat the decorations on the Christmas tree.

Santa put his cup down and I quickly took it and made more hot cocoa. Santa didn't even notice and I didn't get sent to the South Pole!

—Lexi Teichroeb, Gr. 2, Reinfeld

ELFY SAVES THE DAY

One upon a time, there was an elf named Elfy. Elfy just had been given a new job. Elfy worked for Santa. Elfy just loved to make toys. Elfy was at the North Pole and was making toys, but it wasn't going well. He was getting into too much trouble. Elfy was breaking everything, including the toy maker machine.

Just then Santa came through the door. He told Elfy that he was in big trouble. He needed to fix the toy machine as soon as possible or there

wouldn't be any toys for kids for Christmas!

Elfy worked hard! *Smash! Bam! Boom!* Finally it was fixed, but it was almost morning! How would all the toys get to the kids on Christmas morning? Maybe Elfy could ask Santa to be his helper. Elfy asked Santa and he said YES! All the toys were delivered on time. Both Elfy and Santa were so happy and they enjoyed a wonderful Christmas together!

—Hope Landry, Gr. 4,
Emerado Centennial School

THE NOT SO GREAT FIRST DAY

I hear the faint whisper of "Winter Wonderland" by Bing Crosby. It was my alarm! I sprang out of bed. I didn't want to be late, not on my first day as one of Santa Clause's elves. If I was, oh, I would be so embarrassed, I would be as red as the poinsettias strung from the main tree here in the North Pole.

We take Christmas seriously here—we don't mess around with fake Christmas trees and cheap store-bought fruit cake. The reason so many people hate fruit cake is because they buy the lumps of reindeer poo they sell at the store!

Sorry, I got a bit off topic, but anyways, I hop into my brand new, crisp, green and red elf suit, I make sure the jingle in my jingle bells are just right, and then I hop downstairs for a couple sugar cookies and drink a cup of fresh hot cocoa. I run to the bus stop

like how children run for the present on Christmas morning.

Once I have arrived, the head elf put me in the stuffed bear section. Stuffed bear is a bit of an understatement. We did way more than bears—we did cats, chickens, turtles, and dogs as well.

I was so busy using the fluff machine I didn't even notice Kris Kringle coming down the candy cane staircase. But I hear his jolly "Ho Ho Ho" and I immediately turn off the Turbo Fluff 3000.

Suddenly I hear snickering coming from behind me and, to my shock, all the new elves were crowded around the bottom of the staircase, ready to listen to Santa.

I scurry along the workshop floor, but on my way I trip over a stuffed Pomeranian dog. Which only made the other elves laugh louder and harder.

Once I managed to pick myself up off the floor, I started towards the staircase again but to get there I had to go through the wooden toys part of the shop.

Suddenly my foot feels wet and I hear a gush. I look down and I had stepped in a bucket of yellow paint.

But I couldn't let that stop me. I kept on my way. The laughter was loud, but that didn't matter. I had to prove to Santa I can react well in a bad situation.

I got to the staircase and Santa was laughing, and his belly was jiggling like a bowl full of jelly.

"Young man, are you all right? You took quite a few spills there, and um, your foot is in the bucket of red paint?" Santa said with a hint of con-

cern.

"Yellow, actually," I said.

"Well, we were almost out of that colour anyway, but the reason why I came down to the workshop today was to let all the new elves know I will be sending out letters at 4 o'clock today," he said.

"What is the reason for these letters?" one of the elves asked.

"In the letter you will find out which one of you will come with me on my annual Christmas Eve trip," he said with a smile.

All the elves parted ways and went back to their work, and I pretended that my horrible first impression on Santa never happened.

The day went quick. Sew ... stuff ... wrap ... sew ... stuff .. wrap. I got the routine down fast.

When work let out at three-thirty, I rushed home so I could be there when the letter came. I waited and waited and then it came. I ripped it open and read the letter, knowing it would say, "We regret to inform you ..."

Dear Mr. Evergreen,

We are excited to inform you that you will be accompanying Santa on his Christmas Eve trip to the real world.

I was ecstatic. I called my ma and pa in New York and in 30 days I set off with Santa on the adventure that starts all adventures.

"And that's it, young elves, that was my first day as an elf!" I said.

"Really, Santa? That's amazing,"

—Caitlyn Bjornson,
Gr. 8, Winkler

THE DIKE

I was greeted harshly by the unwanted morning sunlight streaming into my room. I blinked the sleep out of my eyes and stretched the knots out of my back.

Groggily, I reached out to my alarm clock to check the time and stared at it in confusion. I blinked, then blinked again and shot out of my bed! It had to be wrong! The clock read 9:30 a.m., which meant I had missed my bus by almost an hour! Thoughts streamed through my head: Why didn't anyone wake me up? Why was the house so quiet? What was that good smell?

As I bounded up the stairs from my room in the basement, I slowed, looked out the front door and realized it was covered in tons of SNOW! My hopes started to slowly creep up. Maybe there would be no school! I continued walking up the rest of the stairs, where I found the rest of my family eating pancakes.

"Is school canceled?" I asked hopefully,

"Why else do you think we let you sleep this long?" my dad replied. "Otherwise I would already be teaching art to the grade sixes."

My dad goes at the same school as me, except he's a teacher instead of a student, so I knew he wasn't try-

ing to trick me.

I took my share of pancakes and scarfed them down, got all my snow protection to keep my human skin from freezing off, and headed outside.

First, I headed to my dog's kennel and took him out. I let him run around a bit and then leashed him up and headed to my friend Jason's house. He only lived a few houses down the road, so I didn't have to trudge too far. He answered gleefully when I knocked on the door and asked me, "What took so long!?"

He was already ready to head out against the cold abyss of winter's wrath, so we headed to the back of his house to get his dog and hooked both of them to his snowboards and headed out to the distant friend we called the dike.

While weaving through the unknown number of trees, we met my friends Lucas and Matthew. We unleashed the dogs to run around while we spent the short hours living to the greatest, like falling through the ice and making a safe haven from the uncomfortable cold winds. But time flies fast when you want it to least and, before we knew it, we couldn't see our own hands in front of us.

The dogs knew the way back, so we had no problem making it home. I invited everyone to come and



have some hot chocolate at my house while I started a movie in the living room. Eventually everyone fell asleep either on the couch or on the inflatable mattress on the floor, knowing that the following Saturday morning was going to be an even better day on the dike.

—Santi Bergen, Gr. 8, Winkler



Christmas cheer was in full swing at the Morden Adult Education Centre last week as students baked and decorated cookies to deliver to a few of Morden's crucial community services. Receiving goodies in thanks for all they do was the Agassiz Medical Centre, the Morden police and fire departments, and the Morden Library.

SUBMITTED PHOTOS



Delivering treats for Christmas

An unsettling childhood visit to the dentist

On a recent visit to my dentist I was greeted by his soft-spoken receptionist: "Good morning, Mrs. Dyck. How are you today? Have a seat. The hygienist will be with you shortly."

Everyone speaks quietly in this office. Music plays softly in all the treatment rooms. The reception area, the office, and the cubicles have all been designed to help you relax and, perhaps, forget any unpleasant child-



By Florence Dyck

hood memories of your first visit to the dentist.

When the hygienist came to get me, she smiled and said, "Good morning, Mrs. Dyck. How are you today? Please follow me." She directed me to a room and ushered me to a chair. Then she took my purse and glasses. She proceeded to tell me what would be done that day, as if I had not visited many times before.

"I will be doing your cleaning today," she said. "When I am finished, the dentist will come to check your teeth to make sure no further work is required."

She adjusted the chair and turned on the television so that I could see. I almost fell asleep before she returned.

She started working on my teeth and told me she was applying the numbing substance to my gums where my teeth were sensitive.

"Please tell me by raising your hand," she said, "if you feel any pain whatsoever."

I thought it odd she was talking to me as though I were a child because she could tell by the chart how old I was. But, no, that's how they talk to all their patients.

When she finished, the dentist came in and, again, explained what he was doing. He found a broken filling and another tooth that needed to be repaired.

My thoughts went back to my first visit to a dentist in Morden. Dr. Fred Ollinik opened his office in 1955. This was around the same time as Social Services issued cards to their clients allowing them free medical and dental care.

I was 12 years old when Mom sent me to the dentist alone. Clutching my S. S. card in my hand, I reluctantly

walked through the back door of Ridley's Drug Store where Dr. Ollinik was located. Slowly, I made my way to the room with his name on the door. There was no one to greet me and no one to reassure me with their soft words.

I can't remember if I had any work done that day or if I was given an appointment to come in on a later date. I do remember the moving chair and the noisy drill at my first appointment. I had no idea of what to expect and nothing was explained!

A large needle appeared with no pretense of hiding it. It was stuck into my gums without benefit of any numbing substance. I can still hear the loud buzz of that ancient drill. I can still smell that distinctive burning bone smell that assaulted my nostrils as bits of teeth flew around in my mouth. I'm sure my cavities weren't too large as we didn't get a lot of sugary treats. We brushed our teeth once a week after our Saturday evening bath. Mom put some baking soda on our left palm, told us to wet it with our toothbrush and then brush with that pasty mixture.

The drilling seemed to go on forever. When it finally stopped, I was given a glass of water. I was told to take a drink, swish it around and spit it out in a tray attached to the chair. Dentists did not wear gloves or goggles for protection against HIV/AIDS. Nor did they wear the funny frog-eyed magnifying glasses they wear today. I know because I remember seeing Dr. Ollinik's dark brown eyes. I don't remember him talking to me, though. If

he did, his hands were in my mouth and I couldn't speak. I was too shy to answer in anything but monosyllables anyway.

When I asked my sister Jeanne about her first visit to Dr. Ollinik, she said she had no memories about anything particularly painful or frightening. But then she remembered why! Mom and Dad had taken her to see a Hutterite dentist earlier. She had an extremely painful abscessed tooth and they did not know where else to go. She thinks

he must have pulled her tooth without giving her anesthesia. Her entire jaw was sore and swollen after this so-called dentist tugged and pulled before finally wrenching her tooth out with his pliar-like instrument.

She suffered severe pain at the time and

later. Whatever methods Dr. Ollinik used seemed gentle and humane to her after that horrendous experience.

Even though I was always a little apprehensive and frightened about visiting the dentist, I never balked at going. Mom encouraged me by telling me we were fortunate to be getting dental care, as most of our friends' parents could not afford to take their children to a dentist.

Years later at another dentist's office in a larger city, I was told I must have gone to a good dentist as my fillings were done well and my teeth were in excellent condition.

Florence Dyck is a former Mordenite now living in the Okanagan

"I REMEMBER THE MOVING CHAIR AND THE NOISY DRILL ..."

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INSIDE > OUTSIDE > UPSIDE DOWN

Redskins down Royals 6-5 in OT

By Ashleigh Viveiros

The Winkler Royals and the Morden Redskins squared off in South Eastern Manitoba Hockey League action last week.

The Dec. 12 game in Morden was a hard-fought affair between the teams who inhabit the last two places in the league standings.

Tied at 1-1 after 20 minutes (Jason Peters scored for Winkler five minutes in while Matt Sibbald did the honours for Morden in the 12th minute), the game tipped Morden's way after a three-goal second period courtesy of Mike Rey, Tyler Grove, and Juha Keinanen. Scoring for Winkler was Marlin Froese and Michael Moore.

Grove widened the gap to 5-3 at the 3:31 mark of the final period. That was it for the Redskins in regulation, while Winkler's Brett Harder successfully chipped away at Morden's lead with goals at 13:52 and 19:58 to force overtime.

There, Grove got the game winner for Morden four minutes in.

Travis Klassen made 31 saves in net for Winkler in the 6-5 OT loss. Across the ice, Reed Peters had 37 saves.

Both local teams found themselves on the losing side of things a few nights later.

Morden fell to Carman 4-0 on Saturday while Winkler bowed to War-



PHOTO BY RICK HIEBERT/VOICE

Morden's Tyler Grove scores on the breakaway early in the third period to give the Redskins a two goal lead en route to their 6-5 OT win against the Winkler Royals last week Thursday.

ren 6-4 Sunday night.

Michael St Croix had two goals for Winkler in the Mercks-Royals match, which also had goals from Remi Laurencelle and Austin Wiebe. Devon Wiebe made 41 saves for the Royals.

Morden's scoreless game against

the Beavers saw Peters make 36 saves as Carman outshot Morden 40-22.

With that, Morden's record improves to 2-8-1 for five points and seventh and last place. Winkler is at 2-5-2 for six points and sixth place.

Coming up, the Royals close out

2019 with an away game against Carman this Thursday and a home game against Notre Dame Saturday.

The Redskins, meanwhile, host Notre Dame on Thursday.

Hawks win streak ends at six thanks to Cougars

By Lorne Stelmach

The male Pembina Valley Hawks saw their winning streak halted at six games, though they still picked up three of a possible four points last weekend.

The Hawks handed the Wheat Kings in Brandon a 5-1 loss on Friday but then fell themselves 4-3 in overtime to the Southwest Cougars in Souris

on Saturday.

Pembina Valley took period leads of 1-0 and 3-1 against Brandon. Brock Moroz made 26 saves as the Hawks outshot the Wheat Kings 38-27.

Michael Hlady had a pair of third period goals including a powerplay marker. The Hawks also got goals from Mitchell Hlady, Daniel Isaak, and Justin Keck.

Saturday saw a much tighter game,

with the Cougars taking 2-1 and 3-2 leads to the intermissions before Trevor Hunt's second of the game won it 4:26 into overtime.

Scoring for Pembina Valley were Isaak and Trent Penner with a pair, while Reid Dyck made 22 saves as Southwest won the shot battle 26-21.

Pembina Valley remains ensconced in fourth place on a record of 18-4-4-0 for 40 points. They trail the Winnipeg

Thrashers at 43, Yellowhead Chiefs at 44 and Winnipeg Wild at 50 points.

The Hawks will aim to tame the Wild for a second time this season when they host Winnipeg in Morden Friday. They then head to Teulon to take on Interlake Saturday before going into their Christmas break.



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Local curlers make cut for Viterra championship

Two local youth curlers will step out on the ice at the 2020 Viterra Men's Provincial Championship.

Lead and Winkler native Reece Hamm and Manitou skip Josh Friesen will compete at the event in Winnipeg Feb. 4-9.

Their team went 3-0 last weekend in Selkirk to win a berth at the provincial competition, the winner of which will represent Manitoba at the Tim Hortons Brier, the Canadian Men's Championship, in Kingston, Ontario Feb. 29 to March 8.

They beat Steen Sigurdson in the round robin 7-5 and Kyle Foster 6-3.

They then went on to win the A and B sides, besting Foster again 6-5.

In addition to Hamm and Friesen, the team also includes third Emerson Klimpke of Stonewall and second Troy Kemball from Winnipeg. They're coached by Ron Westcott.

Earning a spot at the championship caps off what has been a stellar season for the Klimpke and Hamm, who earlier this month won the Manitoba Junior Curling Tour Championship. They will next compete at the Telus Junior Provincials in Dauphin in a few weeks.

Flyers dethrone Kings, fall to Wolverines

The Winkler Flyers handed Dauphin two losses last week before heading north to play and lose to Waywayseecappo Sunday night.

The Friday and Saturday night home games against the Kings saw Winkler come out ahead 5-2 and 8-2.

Griffin Leonard and Ian Tookenay had two-goal nights in the Friday game, while Jackson Aprin contributed one.

Dorrian Luding gave up goals to the Kings early in the first and third periods, but otherwise denied all comers, making 32 saves as Dauphin outshot Winkler 34-28. Winkler went 1-for-2 on the power-play and a perfect 4-for-4 on the penalty-kill.

The next night the Kings once again got two goals and no more as Luding made 20 saves in net.

This time around the Flyers outshot the Kings 42-22 and made good on eight of those chances, mainly in the third period.

The two teams were tied at 1-1 heading into the final 20 minutes, the Kings having scored late in the first while Leonard got Winkler on the board midway through the second.

Period three saw Dauphin take the lead briefly with a goal scored at 6:27,

but then Alex Cattani scored 30 seconds later and the floodgates opened for Winkler's offensive lines.

Cattani would go on to score once more, Leonard added two more goals for a hat trick, and Jayden McCarthy, Garrett Szeremley, and Eric Fawkes also scored to get the win.

Winkler went 1-for-4 on the power-play and 1-for-2 on the penalty-kill this game.

Finally, the team headed north to play the Wolverines in a game that was originally planned for Oct. 12 but

had to be rescheduled due to poor road conditions.

Things got off to a nice start for Winkler, who were up 3-1 after 20 minutes thanks to goals from Jaden Townsend, McCarthy, and Drake Burgin.

Burgin's goal late in the opening period was the last time the Flyers would find the back of the net, though, while the home team added two in the second and three more goals in the third to take the game 6-3.

Dylan Meilun was in net this time for Winkler, making 23 saves as the

Wolverines outshot the Flyers 29-23.

Winkler went 1-for-6 on the power-play and 2-for-4 on the penalty-kill.

The Flyers' record of 19-9-2-2 is good for 42 points and fifth place in the MJHL standings. They trail Steinbach (50 points), Portage (47), Swan Valley (47) and Waywayseecappo (46 points).

This week Winkler was slated to play in Portage Wednesday and then to host Steinbach on Friday. They then host Winnipeg Sunday before breaking for the holidays.

Female Hawks split weekend games

By Lorne Stelmach

The female Pembina Valley Hawks split their two games on the road this past weekend.

The Hawks were edged 3-2 by the Yellowhead Chiefs Saturday afternoon in Shoal Lake but then rebounded for a 1-0 victory over the Westman Wildcats Sunday afternoon in Hartney.

Against Yellowhead, Pembina Valley

fell behind 3-1 in the first period and could only manage one more goal in the second.

Annika Braun and Quinn McLaren scored for the Hawks, while Tria Enns made 16 saves as her teammates outshot their opponents 29-19.

On Sunday, Enns picked up a 23 save shutout as the Hawks were outshot 23-17.

McLaren got the only goal that the Hawks needed in the first period.

The victory boosted the team's record to 4-10-0 for eight points. They remain well back of the top five in the league while just ahead of the Central Plains Capitals at 3-11-2 for eight points and the Interlake Lightning at 1-11-2 for four points.

The Hawks have a pair of home games this weekend before going into the Christmas break. They play Central Plains Saturday and the Eastman Selects Sunday.

Twisters post two wins to retain hold on first

By Lorne Stelmach

The Pembina Valley Twisters are working on another winning streak after a pair of weekend wins stretched their current run to four in a row.

Victories of 4-2 over Stonewall Friday and 3-2 over the Raiders Sunday continue what has been an impressive first half of the season for the team in the MMJHL.

They have posted 20 wins and only one regulation loss and two overtime defeats so far this season, giving them 42 points and a firm hold on the league's first place spot in the standings. Their nearest competitor, St. Vital, are a full seven points behind them in second place.

In doubling up the Jets Friday in Stonewall, the Twisters took period

leads of 1-0 and 3-0 and then focused on holding off Stonewall, which got back into the game in the third period with two goals in just five seconds.

Wyatt Sabourin scored a pair for Pembina Valley with other goals coming in from Travis Penner and Elijah Carels.

Martin Gagnon had a busy night in net with 43 saves as the Twisters outshot the Jets 48-45.

On Sunday, Brendan Keck opened scoring for Pembina Valley in the first period, and that lead held up until early in the third when the Raiders pocketed a pair in 37 seconds.

Gagnon allowed two goals on 16 shots before Luke Zacharias came in and stopped all nine shots the rest of the way.

Offensively, the Twisters rebounded



Trinke headed to provincials

SUBMITTED PHOTO

Team Bijl are provincials-bound this month. The team—made up of local curler John Trinke, Matt Bijl, Liam Wachal, Elias Huminicki, and coach Darrel Argan—have earned a berth at the TELUS junior men's U21 curling provincials being held in Dauphin Dec. 31 to Jan. 5. The team curls out of the Stonewall Curling Club.

with Jeremie Goderis connecting on a powerplay at 7:21 to tie it and Carels scoring his 21st of the season at 9:30 for the win.

In their final game before the holidays, the Twisters host the Charleswood Hawks on Saturday.

> YARD AWARD, FROM PG. 13

bour of love. You just do it day in and day out.

"It's all fun for me. I go out in the morning and I spend hours out there. I forget that I need to go in and make meals ... so the time just goes by, and it's all just fun for me."

"We always appreciate it when people come around to look and see what

we've done," said Max, who noted they have made a lot of changes including using more landscape fabric and river rock as well as utilizing an increasing number of pots.

"We do have a large yard ... so it is a lot of work, and we've made improvements on it so it's less work," he said. "We've cut back a bit now, but [one

"IT IS A LABOUR OF LOVE."

Team Krahn comes close



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Last weekend the Landon Krahn team lost to Team Jordan McDonald from Winnipeg in the A side finals of the Jonathan Watson Memorial Junior Bonspiel in Teulon, MB. The Winkler team includes, from left, Landon Krahn, Luke Trinke, and Jace Zacharias. They're coached by Derek Trinke (not shown).

year] there were 62 pots, so that's a lot of different kinds of flowers."

"One thing I really do enjoy is planning for the seasons," noted Doreen.

"I will plan my spring and am already thinking for fall; I will arrange my colours so that when the summer flowers are done, then fall ones come out and it is just as pretty. Then when that is done, I'm already planning

into Christmas and decorating outside," she said, noting she also takes lots of photos which in turn helps her assess and plan for next year.

"I always see different things in it when I study the pictures."

The award will be presented at the annual meeting of the Manitoba Good Roads Association next spring.

The Funnies



Agriculture

New entrant program pays off for Elm Creek family

By Harry Siemens

The Dairy Farmers of Manitoba uses the new entrant program to assist Manitobans with a keen interest in dairy farming to enter the industry, granting one successful applicant annually with 20 kg of daily butterfat quota at no cost.

In a recent interview at the Manitoba Dairy convention in Winnipeg, Morley Jones of Elm Creek said his family was fortunate to get into the program back in 2010.

"A year and a half ago in May, we expanded through the program where the DFM accepted us to go beyond the 60 kgs," he said. "Now we run 116 kgs, milk 90 cows, and yeah, we got ourselves as a full-time dairy farm."

His application a decade ago included an interview process, lots of financial preparation, and some planning.

Passing the test made them eligible to purchase their first 20 kgs of milk quota and expanded to max out at 60 kgs within the program until they changed the rules again and allowed producers after three years to expand beyond the 60 kgs once again with a plan, approval, and an interview process.

Jones worked as a nutritionist dairy consultant but was raised on a dairy farm.

"I always say that my dad needed to retire worse than I needed to farm. There was no way for us to roll the family farm over. Dad sold the cows and quota, kept the farm," he said. "And three years later, my wife and

I, when we started having a family, were eligible to buy the home quarter from Mom and Dad, and they continued with their retirement, and we had a clean start within the new entrance program."

Jones and his father had renovated a tie-stall barn into a parlour years before, then built a new loafing barn and recently added onto the old tie-stall barn more calving facilities and fresh cow facilities.

Today, Jones and his wife Meaghen operate the dairy full-time.

Jones described his milking system as automation from the '80s, which includes a Swing-over herringbone parlour automatic take-offs, but very, very basic.

"I don't know if I'll ever be of the size to make a future for all four kids if they chose that, but that's the goal ... to get to the 160 kgs in the next few years and then catch up after that," said Jones.

"Once we get to the 160 kgs, we might start with a new facility and robots. The kids, they'd be okay with that. But they're learning the hard work now."

David Wiens, a dairy farmer at Grunthal and chair of the DFM, describes what Jones had to do to qualify for the new entrant program.

"We expect the applicants to develop a business plan and able to buy the 20 kgs of quota, and we will allocate 20 kgs of quota on a lifetime basis," he said. "So they can use that as long as they farm. In addition to that, we allow another 10 kgs of quota if they



PHOTOS BY HARRY SIEMENS/VOICE

Dairy Farmers of Manitoba chair David Wiens (left) explains that the new entrant program is designed to help get producers like Morley Jones (right) get into dairy farming.

meet certain milk quality requirements, be enrolled in milk recording, and so on.

"Mentorship is important, if they have some form of mentorship, those are important things that the committee really looks at," Wiens said. "And so you score a certain number of points, you're eligible for the 10 kgs or a percentage of it depending on how you've scored. I think most of our entrants are eligible for the full amount, so they can use those 10 kgs for 10 years. And then after that, one kg comes off every year."

He said making this evolving program the best it can be is their intent.

"We've listened to the applicants, bankers and just getting advice to

ensure it, so we could continue to evolve the program in such a way that it is sustainable," said Wiens. "There's nothing worse than to bring in someone, and then have the program fail, or the farm fails."

"And yet for the new entrants, hats off to them. It means that they are really investing themselves completely in it. It takes some capital, but it certainly takes a lot of hard work, dedication, passion."

The selection committee's makeup consists of dairy farmers, bankers, and dairy specialists from the provincial government to get a broad range of expertise sitting around the table, Wiens said.



Coffee with the MLA

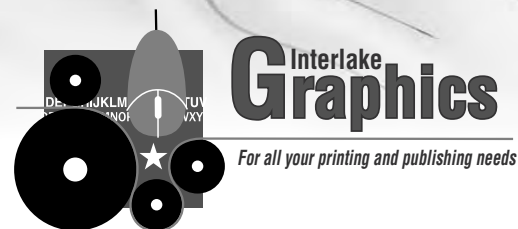
Morden-Winkler MLA Cameron Friesen took time to meet with his constituents Friday in Morden. Friesen said his annual Christmas coffee open house offers a nice break from the challenging duties of being the province's health minister and also gives him the opportunity to meet informally with area residents to discuss their concerns.

PHOTO BY LORNE STELMACH/VOICE



Season's Readings!

As we turn the page to another holiday season, we'd like to take a moment to thank you, our loyal readers, for your trust and support. We hope this Christmas delivers all the good news you've been hoping for and more. Happy Holidays!



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Ph. 325-6888 Winkler



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COMING EVENTS

Thousand Oaks Ministries Inc.

ANNUAL CHRISTMAS MUSIC NIGHT
Sat., Jan. 4, 2020
7:30 pm at the P.W. Enns Centennial Concert Hall Winkler, MB
 Featuring: **The Unrau Brothers** Austin, MB
Faith in Redemption Grunthal, MB
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PUBLIC NOTICE

Public Notice Regarding Auditor's Report

Pursuant to Section 194 of The Municipal Act, notice is given that the Financial Statements and Auditor's Report for the City of Winkler for the year 2018 are available for inspection by any person at the City of Winkler office during regular office hours.

David Martens
 Director of Finance



City of Winkler
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Qualified applicants may e-mail their resume to info@winklerplumbing.ca, or drop off in person at Winkler Plumbing at 329 Manitoba Road in Winkler. Thank you to those who apply, but only those considered will be contacted.

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MISCELLANEOUS

Lean, organic grass-fed beef; flash-frozen. Hamburger in 1.5 lb packs at \$12/kg; blade roast, round roast, cross-rib roast, stewing beef at \$13/kg; Tenderloin at \$45/kg; New York steak at \$39/kg. From late November 2019. Call Jake at 204-829-7800.

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MISCELLANEOUS

Anyone interested in joining a study group focusing on books by Gary Renard and A Course in Miracles call 204-829-7800 or jake@jakethesculptor.com

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The new year is coming! We are now booking ads for January 2020. The classifieds reach over 400,000 Manitoba readers weekly. Get results in 2020! For as little as \$189 + GST, you could book your ad across the province now! Don't miss out! People rely on these classifieds to find what they need in your area and across Manitoba. Catch them looking at your material in our 48 weekly community newspapers. Call 204-467-5836 to book now or email classified@mcna.com for details.

IN MEMORIAM



In Loving Memory of Russ Friesen 1980 - 2018

-Lovingly remembered and dearly missed, Mom and Dad, Rick and Gloria, sisters Colleen and Tracey and their families, and friends

HEALTH

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COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENT

Boundary Trails Health Auxiliary
 Thanks everyone who supported our

November Cash Calendar Fundraiser!

These funds will be used to purchase equipment at BTHC.

CASH CALENDAR WINNERS FOR NOVEMBER 2019

\$20 Winners	Doreen Cox	Rob Fleming
Myrna Mayor	Emily Blair	MaryAnne Derksen
Emily Blair	Crystal Dyck	Jan Stow
Joyce Fehr	Bev Murray	Oddney Sager
Diane Dunn	Angela Wattman	Faye Carruthers
Dorothy Penner	Len Mackling	Angela Wattman
Fran Einarson	Janet Nedohin	Rogan Titchkosky
Nyomi Sawatzky	Ray Halabicki	
JoAnne Robbins	Angela Sawatzky	\$150 Winner
Arlene Young		Riley Olafson
Esther Rothenburger	\$30 Winners	\$350 Winner
	Yvonne Webb	Doreen Dudgeon
	Richard Devison	

NOTICES

UNDER THE AUTHORITY OF THE PLANNING ACT NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

On the date, time and location shown below, a **PUBLIC HEARING** will be held to receive representations from any persons who wish to make them in respect to the following matter:

THE R.M. OF THOMPSON BY-LAW NO. 7-2019 being an amendment to the R.M. of Thompson Zoning By-law 3-08, as amended.

HEARING: RURAL MUNICIPALITY OF THOMPSON
 COUNCIL CHAMBERS
 530 NORTON AVENUE MIAMI, MB

DATE AND TIME: Thursday, January 23, 2020 5:30 p.m.

INTENT: To rezone a parcel of land
 From "RR" Rural Residential
 To "CH" Commercial Highway
 S.S. Plan 2141 in the SW ¼ 8-5-W, Roll# 19700
 Location of property - Rosebank, MB

AREA:

FOR INFORMATION CONTACT:

Nicole Enns
 Chief Administrative Officer
 Rural Municipality of Thompson
 204-435-2114



OBITUARY



Raymond Giesbrecht

Peacefully on Monday, December 2, 2019 at the Altona Memorial Health Care Centre, Ray Giesbrecht 73 years of age of Altona won eternal life by the grace of God through his persistent and relentless faith in his Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. He fought the good fight and finished his journey, and will now receive his reward in heaven.

Dad leaves to mourn his four loving daughters, Andrea and Brian Wiebe of Altona (Justin and Karlee), Melissa and Steve Friesen of Blumenfeld (Brooklyn, Taylor, and Brielle), Melanie Giesbrecht of Winnipeg and Allison and Harv Rempel of Neunberg (Jackson, Delilah, Logan and Isabella). He is also survived by two brothers Lawrence and Susan Giesbrecht, Marvin and Henrietta Giesbrecht and one sister Verna and Jake Martens. He is also survived by his three step children Dwain and Cindy Heinrichs of Gretna, Mike and

Kari Heinrichs of Altona, Trish Heinrichs of Winnipeg, and their families.

He was predeceased by his parents Bernhard and Anna (Sawatzky) Giesbrecht, two brothers, two sisters-in-law, and one great-nephew.

A celebration of Ray's life was held on Saturday, December 7, 2019 at the Altona EMM Church. Interment followed at the Altona Cemetery.

Our family wishes to express their heartfelt thanks to Dr. Rimmer, Dr. Brown, Boundary Trails Cancer Care staff, Dr. Winning and the staff at the Altona Hospital, Pastor David Friesen, the food committee and for all of you that have given prayers and encouragement by sending flowers, dropping off food, visits and phone calls. We would also like to give our gratitude to Pastor Al and Anita Kehler for your guidance and care at this time. -The Family

Donations in memory of Ray may be made to Altona and District Palliative Care.

To view the full length obituary visit www.wiebefhaltona.com

Wiebe Funeral Home Altona
in care of arrangements

Announcements The Winkler Morden Voice

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OBITUARY



Kathleen Patricia Menzies
(nee Klimchuk)

January 13, 1942 – December 7, 2019

Suddenly on Saturday, December 7, 2019 at the age of 77, mom left us to meet her heavenly Father.

She was predeceased by her first husband, Thomas Brien and ex-husband, Rick Menzies. She was also predeceased by her parents, Bill and Anne Klimchuk, one twin sister in infancy and one brother.

She leaves to mourn her three children, Kelvin Menzies, Brenda (Fred) Pohl and Brent (Linda) Menzies; 11 grandchildren; 10 great-grandchildren; three brothers; three sisters and their families.

Funeral service was held at 11:00 a.m. on Friday, December 13, 2019 at St. John the Evangelist Roman Catholic Church in Morden with interment at Chapel Cemetery.

Donations may be made to St. John the Evangelist Roman Catholic Church Building Fund, Morden.

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



take a break > GAMES

SUDOKU

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

Level: Intermediate

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!

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!

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

Sudoku Answer

D	E	P	S				S	I	N	V	
D	T	I	V	S			E	T	O	I	R
E	N	I	T	R	I	V	S	N	O	I	P
G	B			H	T	O	G	T	N	O	D
A	V	A	S	E	R	E	M		O	T	O
E	T	E	R	E	V	I	S	H	N	R	U
	S		S	E	S		S	E	O	N	F
	S		S	E	S		R	I	O	T	
	S		S	I	R	V			I	O	C
N	U	T		S	E	R	V		S	T	I
T	E	B		E	A	V	N		S	T	E
E	V	I	T	V	R	P	E	O	N	I	O
V	E	N	I	R	E	P	I	V	U	M	V
G	N	I	M	O	H		L	V	E	S	N
M	U	O	B				D	T	O	S	

Crossword Answer

X CROSSWORD

CLUES ACROSS

- 1. No longer on the market
- 5. W. African language
- 9. A way to open
- 11. A type of pigeon
- 13. Japanese warrior
- 15. Pelvic areas
- 16. No seats available
- 17. Not working
- 19. In a way, soaks
- 21. Growing outward
- 22. Ritzy local _ Air
- 23. Telegraphic signals
- 25. Metric units
- 26. Large wine cask
- 27. Fiber from the husk of a coconut
- 29. Gets up
- 31. French river
- 33. Witnesses
- 34. They make great neighbors
- 36. The sun does it
- 38. Used to store ashes
- 39. First Chinese dynasty
- 41. Network of nerves
- 43. Word element meaning ear
- 44. Metric unit of length (Brit.)
- 46. Tributary of the Danube
- 48. Off-limits
- 52. Appeal earnestly
- 53. It's good to have them
- 54. Commercial flying company
- 56. Acted out in protest
- 57. Took to the sea
- 58. Cuckoos
- 59. Drove fast

CLUES DOWN

- 1. Trapped
- 2. About osmosis

	1	2	3	4			5	6	7	8	
9					10			11			12
13					14		15				
16				17			18				
19			20		21					22	
	23			24		25				26	
		27			28		29		30		
			31			32		33			
		34					35		36		37
	38				39			40		41	42
43					44			45		46	47
48			49	50					51		52
53							54			55	
56								57			
	58								59		

- 3. Romanian monetary unit
- 4. Form of Persian
- 5. Cold wind
- 6. Leave out
- 7. Small vehicle
- 8. A little off
- 9. Soviet Union
- 10. A narrow path or road
- 11. Contrary beliefs
- 12. One who speaks Gaelic
- 14. Private school in New York
- 15. Jackson and Townshend are two
- 18. Soldier in an airborne unit
- 20. Taken illegally
- 24. Capital of Valais
- 26. Male reproductive organs
- 28. State capital
- 30. One with supernatural insight
- 32. Starts all over again
- 34. Jai alai arena
- 35. Star Wars antagonist
- 37. Freestanding structure
- 38. The ideal place
- 40. The extended location of something
- 42. Made level
- 43. Distinctive smell
- 45. Greek goddess of discord
- 47. Got older
- 49. Type of monkey
- 50. Travels to
- 51. Geological times
- 55. Edge

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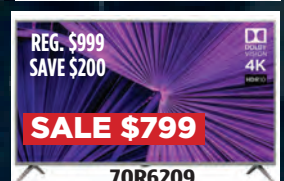
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