

The Citizen

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LOCAL NEWS

Proposal for Rental Units Runs into Trouble

■ A developer trying to bring rental units to Ste. Agathe has run into some controversy with local residents and RM council.

Details on Pages 6-7



LOCAL NEWS

Niverville Group Is Working to Bring a Refugee Family Home

■ Open Doors Niverville is working alongside the MCC to bring to town a Pakistani family seeking to escape Thailand.

Details on Page 11

SPORTS & RECREATION

St. Adolphe Curlers Gear Up for Another Roaring Season

■ The St. Adolphe Curling Club has strong registration, including more young people getting their first taste of the game.

Details on Page 28

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

Regional Festival Touts Its Giant Pumpkins

■ The Roland Pumpkin Fair is on, celebrating some of the biggest pumpkins in the West.

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Construction Underway for Pilot Flying J in Ste. Agathe

➤➤ DETAILS ON PAGES 3

DUSTIN KRAHN

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TEAM NAME:

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- \$20 per entry. Half will be forwarded to Niverville Multiplex.
- Entry cutoff is October 16, 2017 at 5:00 p.m.
- Entry fees can be made at Town of Niverville office, a sealed envelope to the attention of Multiplex by mail, dropped off in the locked drop box outside main door, or in person at the front desk **86 Main Street, PO Box 267, Niverville, MB R0A 1E0**
- Once you have paid, your team will be entered in 2-3 days and posted on www.officepools.com. You will receive a league invite via email.
- Number of entries will be posted on hockey draft website.
- 50% of the pot will go to the fundraising efforts of the Niverville Multiplex, the remaining 50% will be split between 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place winners. 1st-75%, 2nd-15%, 3rd-10%.
- If you have paid funds and name is not registered on the draft website, please contact multiplex@whereyoubelong.ca
- Scoring will be as follows:
Forwards - Goal: 1 point Assist: 1 point
Defence - Goal: 1 point Assist: 1 point
Goalies - Win: 1 point Shutout: 1 point

Questions? Contact Heather at multiplex@whereyoubelong.ca

www.OFFICEPOOLS.com
POOL: NivervillePlex PASSWORD: plexpool

PICK YOUR TEAM

(Showing points per game using stats from NHL 2016/2017 Regular Season)

FORWARD 1 (PICK 1)

- ☐ Backstrom, N (WAS) : 1.05
- ☐ Crosby, S (PIT) : 1.19
- ☐ Kane, P (CHI) : 1.09
- ☐ McDavid, C (EDM) : 1.22
- ☐ Seguin, T (DAL) : 0.88
- ☐ Tavares, J (NYI) : 0.86

FORWARD 4 (PICK 1)

- ☐ Gaudreau, J (CGY) : 0.85
- ☐ Getzlaf, R (ANA) : 0.99
- ☐ Kessel, P (PIT) : 0.85
- ☐ Pastrnak, D (BOS) : 0.93
- ☐ Pavelski, J (SJ) : 0.84
- ☐ Wheeler, B (WPG) : 0.90

FORWARD 7 (PICK 1)

- ☐ Drouin, J (MTL) : 0.73
- ☐ Ehlers, N (WPG) : 0.78
- ☐ Johansen, R (NAS) : 0.74
- ☐ Kopitar, A (LA) : 0.68
- ☐ Monahan, S (CGY) : 0.71
- ☐ Radulov, A (DAL) : 0.71

FORWARD 10 (PICK 1)

- ☐ Couture, L (SJ) : 0.71
- ☐ Duchene, M (COL) : 0.53
- ☐ Rakell, R (ANA) : 0.72
- ☐ Stone, M (OTT) : 0.76
- ☐ Wennberg, A (CBJ) : 0.74
- ☐ Zetterberg, H (DET) : 0.83

FORWARD 13 (PICK 1)

- ☐ Horvat, B (VAN) : 0.64
- ☐ Krejci, D (BOS) : 0.66
- ☐ Sheary, C (PIT) : 0.87
- ☐ Tkachuk, M (CGY) : 0.63
- ☐ van Riemsdyk, J (TOR) : 0.76
- ☐ Zibanejad, M (NYR) : 0.66

FORWARD 16 (PICK 1)

- ☐ Bozak, T (TOR) : 0.71
- ☐ Eberle, J (NYI) : 0.62
- ☐ Hirschier, N (NJ) : 0.00
- ☐ Kane, E (BUF) : 0.61
- ☐ Patrick, N (PHI) : 0.00
- ☐ Spezza, J (DAL) : 0.74

DEFENCE 3 (PICK 1)

- ☐ Ellis, R (NAS) : 0.54
- ☐ Hamilton, D (CGY) : 0.62
- ☐ Krug, T (BOS) : 0.63
- ☐ Pietrangelo, A (STL) : 0.60
- ☐ Schultz, J (PIT) : 0.65
- ☐ Werenski, Z (CBJ) : 0.60

GOALIE 1 (PICK 1)

- ☐ Bobrovsky, S (CBJ) : 0.76
- ☐ Dubnyk, D (MIN) : 0.68
- ☐ Holtby, B (WAS) : 0.81
- ☐ Murray, M (PIT) : 0.73
- ☐ Price, C (MTL) : 0.65
- ☐ Quick, J (LA) : 0.59

FORWARD 2 (PICK 1)

- ☐ Benn, J (DAL) : 0.90
- ☐ Kucherov, N (TB) : 1.15
- ☐ Malkin, E (PIT) : 1.16
- ☐ Marchand, B (BOS) : 1.06
- ☐ Ovechkin, A (WAS) : 0.84
- ☐ Scheifele, M (WPG) : 1.04

FORWARD 5 (PICK 1)

- ☐ Barkov, A (FLA) : 0.85
- ☐ Granlund, M (MIN) : 0.85
- ☐ MacKinnon, N (COL) : 0.65
- ☐ Marner, M (TOR) : 0.79
- ☐ Pacioretty, M (MTL) : 0.83
- ☐ Panarin, A (CBJ) : 0.90

FORWARD 8 (PICK 1)

- ☐ Carter, J (LA) : 0.80
- ☐ Guentzel, J (PIT) : 0.82
- ☐ Hall, T (NJ) : 0.74
- ☐ O'Reilly, R (BUF) : 0.76
- ☐ Voracek, J (PHI) : 0.74
- ☐ Zuccarello, M (NYR) : 0.74

FORWARD 11 (PICK 1)

- ☐ Kadri, N (TOR) : 0.74
- ☐ Koivu, M (MIN) : 0.72
- ☐ Schwartz, J (STL) : 0.71
- ☐ Skinner, J (CAR) : 0.80
- ☐ Staal, E (MIN) : 0.79
- ☐ Johnson, T (TB) : 0.68

FORWARD 14 (PICK 1)

- ☐ Aho, S (CAR) : 0.60
- ☐ Huberdeau, J (FLA) : 0.84
- ☐ Kreider, C (NYR) : 0.71
- ☐ Palmieri, K (NJ) : 0.66
- ☐ Point, B (TB) : 0.59
- ☐ Saad, B (CHI) : 0.65

DEFENCE 1 (PICK 1)

- ☐ Burns, B (SJ) : 0.93
- ☐ Byfuglien, D (WPG) : 0.65
- ☐ Hedman, V (TB) : 0.91
- ☐ Karlsson, E (OTT) : 0.92
- ☐ Shattenkirk, K (NYR) : 0.70
- ☐ Subban, P (NAS) : 0.61

DEFENCE 4 (PICK 1)

- ☐ Ekman-Larsson, O (ARI) : 0.49
- ☐ Giordano, M (CGY) : 0.48
- ☐ Gostisbehere, S (PHI) : 0.51
- ☐ McDonagh, R (NYR) : 0.55
- ☐ Ristolainen, R (BUF) : 0.57
- ☐ Suter, R (MIN) : 0.49

GOALIE 2 (PICK 1)

- ☐ Andersen, F (TOR) : 0.56
- ☐ Crawford, C (CHI) : 0.62
- ☐ Lundqvist, H (NYR) : 0.58
- ☐ Rask, T (BOS) : 0.69
- ☐ Rinne, P (NAS) : 0.56
- ☐ Talbot, C (EDM) : 0.67

FORWARD 3 (PICK 1)

- ☐ Draisaitl, L (EDM) : 0.94
- ☐ Eichel, J (BUF) : 0.93
- ☐ Laine, P (WPG) : 0.88
- ☐ Matthews, A (TOR) : 0.84
- ☐ Stamkos, S (TB) : 1.18
- ☐ Tarasenko, V (STL) : 0.91

FORWARD 6 (PICK 1)

- ☐ Forsberg, F (NAS) : 0.71
- ☐ Giroux, C (PHI) : 0.71
- ☐ Hoffman, M (OTT) : 0.82
- ☐ Kuznetsov, E (WAS) : 0.72
- ☐ Oshie, T (WAS) : 0.82
- ☐ Toews, J (CHI) : 0.81

FORWARD 9 (PICK 1)

- ☐ Atkinson, C (CBJ) : 0.76
- ☐ Bergeron, P (BOS) : 0.67
- ☐ Galchenyuk, A (MTL) : 0.72
- ☐ Nylander, W (TOR) : 0.75
- ☐ Perry, C (ANA) : 0.65
- ☐ Simmonds, W (PHI) : 0.66

FORWARD 12 (PICK 1)

- ☐ Arvidsson, V (NAS) : 0.76
- ☐ Domi, M (ARI) : 0.64
- ☐ Hornqvist, P (PIT) : 0.63
- ☐ Kesler, R (ANA) : 0.71
- ☐ Niederreiter, N (MIN) : 0.70
- ☐ Thornton, J (SJ) : 0.63

FORWARD 15 (PICK 1)

- ☐ Anisimov, A (CHI) : 0.70
- ☐ Marchessault, J (VGK) : 0.68
- ☐ Schenn, B (STL) : 0.70
- ☐ Sedin, D (VAN) : 0.54
- ☐ Sedin, H (VAN) : 0.61
- ☐ Turris, K (OTT) : 0.71

DEFENCE 2 (PICK 1)

- ☐ Doughty, D (LA) : 0.54
- ☐ Josi, R (NAS) : 0.68
- ☐ Keith, D (CHI) : 0.66
- ☐ Klingberg, J (DAL) : 0.61
- ☐ Letang, K (PIT) : 0.83
- ☐ Weber, S (MTL) : 0.54

DEFENCE 5 (PICK 1)

- ☐ Carlson, J (WAS) : 0.51
- ☐ Faulk, J (CAR) : 0.49
- ☐ Fowler, C (ANA) : 0.49
- ☐ Gardiner, J (TOR) : 0.52
- ☐ Jones, S (CBJ) : 0.56
- ☐ Provorov, I (PHI) : 0.37

GOALIE 3 (PICK 1)

- ☐ Allen, J (STL) : 0.61
- ☐ Bishop, B (DAL) : 0.49
- ☐ Gibson, J (ANA) : 0.60
- ☐ Jones, M (SJ) : 0.57
- ☐ Schneider, C (NJ) : 0.37
- ☐ Vasilevskiy, A (TB) : 0.50

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The construction site in Ste. Agathe at the corner of Highways 75 and 305.

RAY DOWSE

Construction Underway for Pilot Flying J in Ste. Agathe

The gas station and truck stop will continue construction throughout the fall and early winter, targeting a January opening.



EVAN BRAUN

editor@nivervillecitizen.com

Rumours have been circulating for years about the possibility of Flying J opening a new location along Highway 75 in Ste. Agathe. Finally, those rumours can be confirmed.

"The deal closed on August 30 after over two years of delay getting the project approved," says Shaun Crew, the Chair-man of the Riel Industrial Park

in Ste. Agathe. He also serves as a volunteer for Ste. Agathe Community Development Inc. "My involvement in this project was making the sale of industrial parkland to the Pilot Flying J."

So what took so long?

"There were a number of issues with the design, but the biggest delay came with getting the provincial MIT [Manitoba Infrastructure and Transportation] to approve a vehicular access off PR 305 into the east end of the proposed

site through a public reserve area that is slated for a future diamond interchange," Crew explains, adding that several traffic studies had to be completed before the site could be approved.

Construction began first thing in September and will continue through the fall and early winter. The Pilot Flying J is currently slated to open in January 2018. There will be a Subway restaurant onsite.

According to Crew, Ste. Agathe is the ideal community

for companies like Pilot and Flying J to put down roots.

"Ste. Agathe is perfectly located along Highway 75," he points out. "[It's] the mid-continental trade corridor between Canada and the U.S.A. and is a major trucking route for trans-border trade. Our proximity to Winnipeg makes it ideal to avoid the higher taxes and traffic congestion found in the city."

In the meantime, Crew adds that there has been a lot of interest in other industrial park

lots. SURCA Transport and Tresun Trucking have located terminals there and Hemp Oil Canada is planning to build a 70,000-square-foot hemp food processing facility in the near future. Delmar Commodities is establishing a new grain packaging terminal, and both Viterra and G3 have recently opened super grain terminals nearby, further increasing local truck traffic.

The future looks bright for this new addition to Ste. Agathe's business landscape.

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IN BRIEF

St. Adolphe Parish to Host Fall Supper

With the trees dropping leaves and a chill in the air, the St. Adolphe Parish is gearing up for their annual fall supper. Fall suppers are a great opportunity to get out into the community and meet your neighbours.

This year's meal will be served at Pioneer Hall, at the St. Adolphe Arena, from 4:00 p.m. until 7:00 p.m. on Sunday, October 15. Dinner includes turkey with all the trimmings, meatballs and gravy, vegetables, mashed potatoes, salads, and coleslaw. Also included are beverages and a variety of desserts.

Tickets for adults are set at \$14, while children between six and 12 eat for \$6. Younger children get in free of charge. All tickets are sold at the door.

Takeout meals are also available for \$15 and can be picked up at 4:30 p.m.

FORMOREINFORMATION

Monica: 299-9396
Roger: 688-3057

As Run Ends, Imagine Looks to the Future

By Brenda Sawatzky

✉ bsawatzky@nivervillecitizen.com

A sunny and temperate September 23 provided the perfect day for this year's mental health awareness run. After ten years, Imagine's last run has come and gone, and its team marked the special day in a fittingly flamboyant fashion: with colour. Lots of colour.

"The colour powder was a total blast," says Jazmin Dobson, event coordinator. "There's something so motivating about getting blasted with colourful powder while running. It's high energy and gives you something to look forward to on the route. The [Imagine team] did get to enjoy the course this year, which was a real treat. Everyone enjoyed themselves, especially the kids."

Following a mid-afternoon yoga session in Hespeler Park, 264 registered runners kicked off the event, winding along the park's paths and up a two-mile stretch of Crown Valley Road, eventually circling back into



Runners get colourful at the 2017 Imagine Colour Run.

PHOTO BY PEDRO BALSEIRO

the park. En route, volunteers lay in wait with dispensers of brightly coloured powder, covering the runners from head to toe. Many of the participants wore white shirts, enhancing the rainbow effect.

The event continued with a barbecue, a glow paint party, face-painting, balloon animals, and a fire show by Spark. As dusk began to settle, a magnificent fireworks display filled the sky above Niverville.

"We tried to really make this entire event unique, but the colour run was the biggest thing that was unique to this year," Dobson says. "The goal was to simplify yet celebrate ten great years."

Though the ten-member Imagine team worked hard to create a fun and memorable event, their goal, as always, was to open the conversation about mental health issues and provide a space where everyone, including children, can recognize the struggle so many face and actively work towards changing the future for mental health sufferers.

Whether a runner or not, everyone was encouraged to walk the Lonely Mile, a stretch of the park's path commemorating those who have died by suicide. Eighty-six signs bordered the Lonely Mile, each bearing the name of someone who'd succumbed in their struggle.

"The sight of them never ceases to give me pause," says Dobson. "It's heartbreaking. Not all are locals, but a good 80 percent of them are."

ONE BIG DAY

Imagine held a separate fundraiser on September 20 called One Big Day for Imagine. The timing of both events is strategic, coinciding with Mental Health Awareness Month.

The One Big Day fundraiser ran from 9:00 a.m. until 3:00 p.m. in the Niverville Credit Union parking lot. A host of people well known to residents of Niverville and Ritchot were hoisted up, individually or in pairs, in a boom. Armed with only their cell phones, each celebrity was given a maximum of a half-hour to contact friends and family, soliciting donations that would bring them back down to ground level.

"[The intent is] to let their personal contacts know that they are [many] feet in the air and they need help, as though they are in crisis," says Mona Dumont, Imagine team member. "They start the conversation by using their personal contacts to call and talk about mental health and suicide. The idea of using one's personal phone is that, if you

were in crisis, you would call someone from your contacts."

Celebrities that day included Carl and Heather Fast of Wm. Dyck and Sons, singer Melanie Bergen, Ritchot mayor Chris Ewen, comedian Matt Falk, Al and Ruby Wiens of Wiens Furniture, Ray and Cara Dowse of The Citizen, among others.

Together, this band of philanthropic individuals raised well over \$27,000. The day's events also included a \$2 barbecue. Former Olympian Michelle Sawatzky Koop, now a broadcaster for CHSM radio, hosted the event.

Mental Health Matters founder Mona Stott says she's taken aback by the transformation that has happened in the region within the last ten years of the organization's mission.

"People are now speaking with ease [about mental health], which would have never happened years ago," says Stott. "I am speechless at the support and generosity. Although the run event is done, I realize that our work and mission will continue through future endeavours."

Stott, the mother of a son lost to suicide ten years ago, remains focused on the goal and says that Imagine will continue to be re-invented in new ways. She wants to spread the word well beyond Niverville's borders, and the mission will always be the same: to erase the stigma surrounding mental health and create suicide-safe communities by giving mental health sufferers the courage to ask for help from those walking the journey with them.

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Main Street Professional Building Nears Completion

By Eric Peterson

Those who feel that Niverville's business sector has lagged behind its population growth are finally getting some good news.

As anybody who's driven through town in the last couple of months has noticed, there's a new addition to the Niverville skyline going up. Although comparisons to Manhattan may be premature, the new office and professional building on Main Street is a welcome addition to the community's growing business sector.

The building is the brainchild of Garry Stratychuk of ITI Financial. He and his wife Denise are spearheading the two-phase project. He says the new space has been in demand.

"On the main floor we have Hub Insurance and Dr. Heather, the chiropractor," says Stratychuk. "On the second floor we have my financial services company and the Rising Above Ministry. We also have 1,500 square feet of office space available on the second floor."

Stratychuk says the project is just what Niverville needs.

"We don't have the businesses and services compared



The new professional building on Main Street Niverville.

RAY DOWSE

to other places our size," he observes. "A thriving community needs to have a business tax base, not just residential tax base."

He adds that he's spoken with some companies in Winnipeg that draw significant clientele from Niverville because the service they offer is just not widely available here. "People are having to go elsewhere to get serviced. Accounting services, legal services, medical services. Even if you drive through a smaller centre like St. Pierre, you see they have more businesses than we do."

Phase one of the project should be completed this fall. Phase two will involve the destruction of the small

building immediately to the west. Stratychuk hopes that construction of a new 3,000-square-foot building will begin shortly and be open by the early summer of 2018.

For Stratychuk and others, the slower rate of growth in Niverville's business sector and a perceived lack of government initiative to spur more business has been a long-term frustration. He feels that this project is a good start toward bringing the business and service sector in town into balance with the residential boom we've seen.

"This is a first-call new office space rather than working with old buildings," he says. "We think it will be a big improvement in the community."

done. is happy to introduce 4 new staff members



Heather St.Cyr

LEAD ESTHETICIAN AND SKIN CARE SPECIALIST

Heather St.Cyr is an experienced Aesthetician and skin care specialist and has been working in this field since 2002.

She won numerous awards early on in her career and was chosen to be one of the few educators at the Giselle's School of Aesthetics. She taught her trade to many students of all ages from 2007-2010.

Heather has been an industry judge for the Manitoba/Canadian Skills Competition since 2013, and has enjoyed watching the newest generation of nail technicians and aestheticians discover the same love and passion for the beauty industry as she has.

Heather resides in Niverville, MB with her husband Jordan and their 3 children, Aidan, Liam, and Willa. Their family enjoys travelling to different cities and towns, finding adventure and building relationships wherever Jordan's music career may take them.



Mikaela Wiebe

JUNIOR HAIRSTYLIST

"You Only live once, so live it BLONDE"

I'm Mikaela Wiebe, you could say I'm a small town girl having grown up in Winkler, MB.

I moved to Winnipeg shortly after high school and went to school for hairstyling. I graduated from the Manitoba Institute of Trades and Technology (MITT). After I graduated I had the privilege of working at two great salons in Winnipeg; Salon Pop and Bob and Page Salon. I had such great experiences at both salons, learning different techniques and skills at both.

My husband and I recently moved to Niverville and we're so happy to call this our forever home. I look forward to establishing a clientele and furthering my career here at Done Salon.



Kelsey Banman

JUNIOR ESTHETICIAN

Kelsey grew up in New Bothwell, Manitoba and has always loved pampering people.

"I love being able to do something for another person that will make them feel good about themselves!"

When Kelsey was younger she would partner up with her sister and they would give their Aunties, Grandma and friend's makeovers; Kelsey doing their nails or makeup and her sister doing their hair. Kelsey loved to impress them with her cool nail art designs or with how good of a massage she could give them. Starting in 2015, Kelsey took the Esthetics course at the Steinbach Regional Secondary School and graduated this June at the top of her class. She was giving the Esthetics award in grade 10 and 11 for having some of the highest marks in her class. Kelsey spent the past 7 months apprenticing with Avenue Hair and Skin Studio.



Laurie Schriemer

JUNIOR ESTHETICIAN

Laurie Schriemer grew up in Otterburne, Manitoba. She has recently graduated from the Esthetics program at MC College, Winnipeg.

She graduated this course with the following degrees; Nail Technician, Skin Care, Lash and Brow Enhancements, Waxing, Lash Extensions, Massage and Spa Treatments, Makeup Artistry.

Laurie has always had a passion to make people feel beautiful and comfortable in their own skin/body. With pursuing her career in this industry she hopes to have each and every one of her clients leaving her room feeling confident and beautiful.

done. hair, skin & nails

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Thanksgiving Blessings

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Ste. Agathe Development Plan Meets Public Criticism



BRENDA SAWATZKY

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On August 16, concerned Ste. Agathe residents gathered at the municipal office, filling the meeting room to capacity. They were there to voice their concerns regarding a local developer's application to build a multi-family rental housing building. Council had received six letters of objection prior to the meeting, and these residents all got their opportunity to publicly relay their concerns to council. The concerns varied from improper drainage to the potential for declining property values and traffic congestion.

Developer Joseph Sharobeem, a Winnipeg resident who purchased the empty lot in question back in March 2017, believes that his proposed rental units would fill a need in the community. He says he is willing to work with neighbouring residents to allay their concerns.

"I am trying to build a development which will help the community to grow," says Sharobeem. He notes that these will be Ste. Agathe's very first rental units, and that they will be in high demand. "[They will] accommodate big companies such as Hemp Oil Canada [and] attract more employees willing to stay in Ste. Agathe instead of commuting every day to Winnipeg."

Sharobeem also notes that the proposed buildings will blend in well with the style and appearance of the surrounding properties.

As of the August 16 meeting, Sharobeem's plan included three separate buildings—two



The Riel Place Condominium in Ste. Agathe.

BRENDA SAWATZKY

seven-plexes and one eight-plex of attached side-by-sides (22 rental units in all)—built in a horseshoe fashion with parking stalls in the centre. This development would face an existing 16-unit single-building condo development built three years earlier.

The short history behind these two adjoining developments is a bit convoluted, taking twists and turns that have left area residents confused and frustrated.

POOR DRAINAGE AND WEEDS

One Ste. Agathe couple, who has asked to remain anonymous, owns a private residence just north of the developments. They claim that when they purchased their property four years ago, realtors and the municipal government assured them that the vacant lot to their south would remain the way it was. At the time, the lot had a natural coulee running through it, providing perfect drainage. The site had a baseball diamond and was used by the community for recreation and gardening.

Although they are not upset by the land sale and proposed

developments, as they understand the natural tendency of communities to expand on their residential housing options, they wish the RM would take more responsibility to hold developers accountable to their development agreements.

According to the couple, the original developer, Martin Ritchot, relandscaped the large lot when he purchased it three and a half years ago, filling in the coulee and blocking a ditch. Ever since, the couple says they have been fighting rising water during the spring thaw and summer's heavy rains. Water has crept dangerously close to their home's foundation on numerous occasions, and they've had to take great pains to protect their investment. A row of mature trees along the south side of their property is perpetually underwater, and the trees are suffering the effects of too much moisture.

The couple adds that the weeds on the undeveloped portion of the neighbouring property have been, for the most part, left unattended. The reeds in the ditch are allowed to grow as high as seven feet

before getting cut. The couple regrets that they've had to nag the developer and the RM to get things done.

"We've had ongoing conversations with the RM and others and nothing's being done," say the couple. "Everyone assured us it's being dealt with. We're not opposed to them doing a development. We're opposed to them doing it without taking care of the problems. And we feel that if they go forward and no one says anything then those problems are never going to be dealt with."

THE ORIGINAL PLAN

When Martin Ritchot originally purchased the vacant lot, he sought council's approval for two identical 16-unit condo buildings, with a shared access and egress and a roadway between parking areas. The first of these structures, the Riel Place Condominium (RPC), was built along with the shared access and roadway. According to one resident living in the RPC, the municipality granted Ritchot permission for an "unphased" development, meaning he could proceed with the second condo building without having to reapply.

This condo owner, who also wishes to remain anonymous, says that all buyers in RPC were required by the developer to sign an agreement stating that they were aware of the "unphased" designation of the development. However, they were reassured that the empty lot would eventually be home to a mirror-image 16-unit condo building.

As is typical in condo developments, the residents formed a condo board to take responsibility for planning and collecting fees to improve and maintain their investment. According to this resident, however, the RPC board has had to take on costs that should have been the developer's responsibility.

RPC, too, has a drainage problem. Every spring and summer, residents are faced with water pooling on their roadway and parking areas. In some instances, this has resulted in large ice patches which pose obvious hazards. They have also experienced water seepage into their building. The resident says that the RM requested the developer to fix the seepage problem, but they seemingly

made no attempt to ensure that the repair was properly carried out to code. According to the residents, it wasn't. This resulted in the RPC board finally taking matters into their own hands, having the water pumped from their property to the nearby ditch at their own expense.

"[The RPC board is] going to do it, because it's not worth going after the RM for," says the anonymous condo resident. "Every time they do, it becomes a legal problem."

THE SUBDIVISION

Sometime after Martin Ritchot completed the first condo phase, the RM granted him permission to subdivide the property, turning the undeveloped second half into a separate lot. In the spring of this year, he sold the undeveloped lot to Sharobeem.

Area residents were not officially notified of the subdivision application. Mitch Duval, the municipality's chief administrative officer (CAO), says that public notification isn't a requirement on subdivision proposals such as this.

According to residents, council put forth a condition earlier this year requiring Mr. Ritchot to address water drainage issues that were created by a soil berm he'd erected on the RPC lot. He followed through by moving the berm to the adjoining undeveloped lot which he'd already sold. This caused further problems for the couple just north of the property.

"I was not aware about the drainage issues," says Sharobeem. "It was all snow-covered when I put my offer to purchase in in February 2017." Regarding weed control, he adds, "There was no

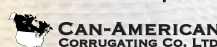


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designated person to maintain the property, so I got a call from the RM and the same day I hired a local company and the lawn was mowed. [The company] started to maintain the property on a regular basis and I have the invoices to support my claim."

SHIFTING RESPONSIBILITY

The anonymous condo resident says that responsibility for these various issues seems to bounce back and forth between the developers, the RM, and the municipality's building inspector. Typically, a request for service from the RM results in months of wait time and a lot of bureaucracy. The last time residents expressed their drainage concerns to the municipality, council responded that they were, in one resident's words, "waiting to find out what happens with the new development."

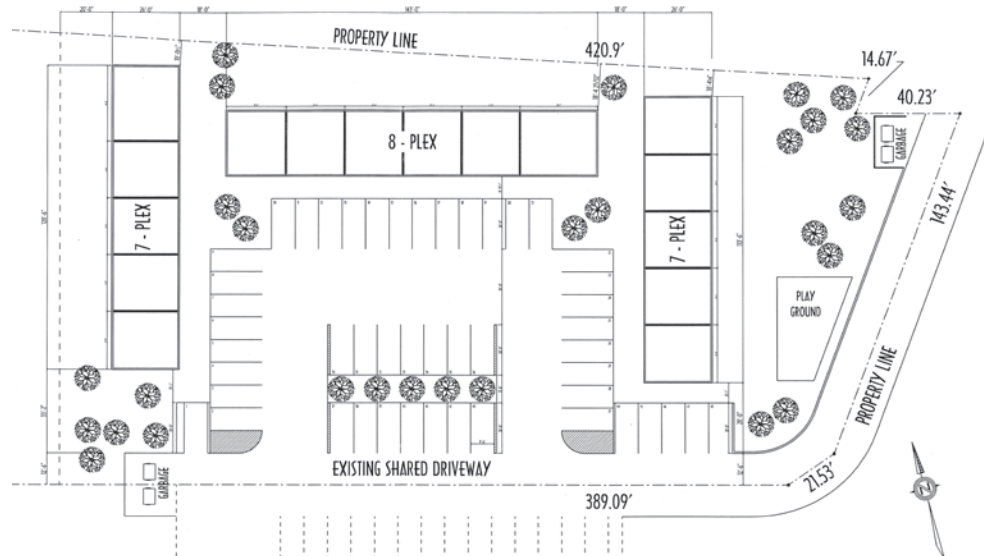
Homeowners in the area have other concerns as well. In their mind, council did not make enough of an effort to make residents aware of Sharobeem's proposed changes to the development plan. Though they did receive letters in their mailboxes, one condo resident says that it didn't arrive within the 14 days required by the Planning Act. Neither, this resident claims, was there a written public notice placed in any local public building or a sign placed on the property in question.

Council disagrees with that claim. According to Duval, the municipality followed the minimum notice requirements as spelled out in the by-laws. This included mailed notices to affected residents within 100 meters of the property. These, he says, were sent on time.

Additionally, Duval says that notices were posted in the Ste. Agathe post office, in the municipal office in St. Adolphe, and on the RM website, all of which are optional according to the RM's understanding of the Planning Act. They have no responsibility to check if notices are inadvertently removed from public buildings before the hearing date.

They admit that a sign was not placed on the site and suggest that this is not a requirement if notices are mailed to affected residents. It's also not their standard practice except in rural areas where affected residents may live beyond the 100-meter parameter.

Regardless, some residents have been left to wonder at the



The proposed rental units for the vacant lot adjacent to the Riel Place Condominium.

RM OF RITCHOT

effectiveness of council's current notice strategy. With the outdoor mailboxes recently introduced in Ste. Agathe, fewer residents go into the post office and so are not likely to see such notices. They also argue that residents cannot be expected to visit the municipal office or its website daily for updates that might directly affect them.

"It's that age-old argument," says Duval. "How do you please everybody?"

"Could we have done more to advertise it?" asks Mayor Chris Ewen. "Probably. But I also think there's a thing about word of mouth. So maybe we need to work together with the residents and say, 'Hey, if you know something's happening, tell your friends and neighbours.' And then we can get the word around. At the end of the day, it's 50/50 [in taking responsibility] to get the word spread."

ADDITIONAL CONCERNS

As for the prospects of a 22-unit rental property being built facing the RPC, one affected resident says they aren't too keen.

"I'm not saying that rental tenants are bad, they just don't take the same responsibility as an owner," says the RPC resident. "And because we are a condo and this is a shared access, I think we should have a lot of say as to what goes next door."

The RPC board has established rules about what kinds of vehicles can park in their lot. But without an agreeable condo board on the second lot, they wonder how rules will be established and maintained between them.

"[The RM] did not take into consideration that the driveway [connecting the two lots] was shared and made no

restrictions on the developer to put a written agreement in place between the owners of the two lots," said the RPC resident in a recent letter to council. "This oversight of the RM cost the Condo Corporation substantial legal fees to remedy."

The same resident told *The Citizen*, "We've been told not to talk to the developer [Sharobeem], even though we have to because we have a shared access agreement. Something's going to go there and we don't really have control over what it is but we need to work together."

Duval says that council makes every attempt to encourage developers to communicate their plans to affected residents before they file an application. Once the application is filed, however, communication is discouraged.

"Once they start communicating between the different parties [after the application is filed] it becomes an unlevel playing field," says Duval. "And that's why you need to stay away and everybody hears everything at the same time [at the public hearing]."

SECOND APPLICATION IN WORKS

On September 6, council held another public meeting, indicating to Sharobeem that they had sought legal counsel and that it would be in his best interest to withdraw the current application and reapply at another date with an application that more closely reflects the public's concerns.

Mayor Ewen anticipates that Sharobeem will come forward with a similar rental unit proposal. "But with some tweaks," he says, "to make sure that not only does the

developer like it but we work with council, the municipality, and the adjacent [residents] to make sure that it all works out to everyone's benefit."

"I am still in talks with the RM and didn't finalize any agreements yet," says Sharobeem. "Depending on what the RM would agree on, I will start a new drawing and put in a new application. I am not frustrated at all. I understand it will take time. I was hoping to start this year but I am not sure at this point if I can do so. I hope that all should be ready next spring."

Once Sharobeem makes a new application to council, he will be required to go through the same conditional use hearing process once again.

DRAINAGE SOLUTIONS

Until that time, council wishes to reassure affected residents that their drainage concerns will be addressed in due time.

"Mike Dumaine [public works coordinator] has been there twice," says councillor Jeannot Robert of the drainage problem affecting residents to the north. "It's on his task list. As soon as he can get there, he's going to clean it up and he's putting in a concrete swale."

As to the perpetual water backing up onto the condo parking lot, Robert says, "The parking lot is well done. It has a nice slope. There's a little issue there that, when the water comes, it's [blocked] by a curb. When Dumaine comes he's going to address that. It's about a 60-second job."

Less than a week after these assurances were made, homeowners to the north of the undeveloped property say that work has begun on a drainage swale for the bordering lot.

CITIZEN POLL

THIS MONTH'S QUESTION:

How does your local council do in terms of communication and public awareness to the residents of your community?

- ☐ Very good. They use a variety of different modes to get messages out and I feel very informed.
- ☐ Good, but they could improve.
- ☐ Communication is poor.

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LAST MONTH'S RESULTS:

Do you believe that Niverville's private-public partnership on a diagnostic centre is a good strategy to address Manitoba's healthcare problems?

YES – Considering the ongoing provincial and federal healthcare cuts, strategies such as this one are a good way to ease an overburdened system without raising taxes.

81%

NO – This offers an unfair advantage to the wealthy and takes the onus off of the government to fix the problem for all of us.

19%

YOUR COMMENTS:

If people pay and get a diagnosis, i.e. for cancer, is their position on the list for i.e. surgeons at the bottom of where the public list would put them? i.e. pay for the test, pay for all the other things that put you ahead in other 'lines'.

This is potentially huge for Niverville and our region as a whole, but also for our province. It makes sense on so many levels, and I hope that we can see this come to fruition.

The bottom line is that everyone's level of service would improve, whether privately or through the public system. The more people that decide to pay privately will only open up more slots and take the burden off of the public system, which would increase the level of service in that sector. I must say, though, they indicate that they expect it to cost \$750 - \$1000 for a test... are we calling anyone who has \$1000 rich now? I personally don't know anyone - "rich" or not - that wouldn't be willing to pay for a test under the right circumstances; for example if it were life and death. It's not only available to the wealthy. It's actually available to anyone who wants to use it. Using the term "wealthy" is a bit of a stretch in this scenario I think. We aren't talking about thousands or hundreds of thousands of dollars. It's less than the cost to change the brakes on your car.



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MP Ted Falk Accepts New Role

By **Evan Braun**

✉ editor@nivervillecitizen.com

Provencher MP Ted Falk has returned to Ottawa this fall in a new role. On Monday, September 25, Falk announced that he had been appointed by new Conservative leader Andrew Scheer to serve as the Deputy Shadow Minister for Employment, Workforce Development, and Labour.

While the Liberals, as the governing party, form cabinet, it is the responsibility of the official opposition Conservatives to form a shadow cabinet, with its members dedicated to keeping an eye on their government counterparts.

"In this new role, I will be working alongside MP Steven Blaney, who has been appointed Shadow Minister for Employment, Workforce Development, and Labour," says Falk. "At the most basic level, this new responsibility is about improving the standard of living and quality of life for all Canadians by promoting an environment amenable to



Ted Falk meets with Conservative leader Andrew Scheer.

TED FALK

the creation of good jobs and ensuring that Canadians have access to the skills training they need to be a part of Canada's modern labour force. Shadow Minister Blaney and I will hold the Liberal government to account to achieve that objective."

Other objectives of the role include ensuring that the government works collaboratively with the provinces, territories, and municipalities, and that

the Canadian job market remains strong, free, and fair.

Falk is also a member of the Standing Committee on Natural Resources, a role in which he participates in the study of bills, government activities and expenditures, and issues related to Canada's energy, forest, minerals and metals, and earth sciences sectors.

"I am committed to doing my best to serve Canadians in these positions," Falk says.

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What a great summer we had. Lots of sunshine and no bugs to speak of made it one of the better ones for sure. I trust you all had the opportunity to spend some time on vacation with family and friends. This summer is one of the busiest I can remember in regards to Town business. Three big announcements including the new school, the new business park, and the new MRI/Diagnostics center meant a lot of time planning and in meetings to move these projects along. I want to give a lot of thanks to our school superintendent, our school trustees, and their entire board who were supposed to be on summer break as of the end of June but toiled well into the summer to get the necessary agreements in place. Also to the land owner, our Town staff, and our lawyer for the extra time put in. Phone calls, emails, and teleconferences found people away from home, but not away from work as we managed to connect no matter what lake, or province, or state some may have been in at the time. Thanks to the hard work of everyone the school project is well on its way to seeing construction begin in March of next year. The industrial park is under construction and the sale of lots is so encouraging that phase two is already in the planning stages. The MRI and diagnostics center is moving along nicely with construction set to begin sometime in November of this year.

As Council moves forward in the months ahead some items already on the docket include completing our zoning bylaw and development plan which must be done every five years and holding our annual planning session. This planning session will be held in early November and it is this weekend of meetings that will serve as the basis for the budget which will be completed in the spring.

I personally had the opportunity to attend an "Infill Housing Policy" seminar together with Winnipeg City Planners, realtors, and builders. While we in Niverville do not have the same issues the City of Winnipeg does, it is good to be part of such discussions as there are often ideas that come from such seminars that are pertinent to our community.

At the beginning of October I will be attending a conference on "Keeping Manitoba Liquid". It will deal with all matters related to water including wastewater, the Lake Winnipeg concern, drainage, and phosphorus management. Two issues that Niverville is dealing with is phosphorus management which a recent CBC article says is having only a 1 percent effect on Lake Winnipeg. Why are we as a community paying \$100,000 each year if it is not helping? A better solution is needed as this is not good return for our money at all. The other topic important to us is the continual loss of agricultural lands to community lagoons as communities in the capital region grow and need more acreage for lagoons as a result. A move to regional mechanized wastewater facilities with government grant assistance is where I believe we need to go as a region in order to preserve our ag lands for food production.

I want to take this opportunity to wish everyone a Happy Thanksgiving!

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Niverville Hires By-Law Enforcement Company

By Evan Braun

✉ editor@nivervillecitizen.com

Niverville's town council has decided to sign a one-year contract with the Commissionaires for by-law enforcement. The contract went into effect September 1 and will continue until August 31, 2018. Four other companies submitted bids.

"By-law enforcement is something that council had a mandate to take care of this term," says Niverville Mayor Myron Dyck. "Maybe it's someone's water draining onto your yard. Say, the sump hose. Maybe you built a backyard shed, or you put in a patio, but because of what you've done it means you are now impacting [your neighbour] negatively in regards to drainage. So before it was council or staff that was dealing with this. That works, but the proper protocol for the municipalities is to bring in by-law enforcement as a third party... It just keeps it non-political, which is what we wanted to do."

The Commissionaires, a 90-year-old private firm, calls itself Canada's premier security company and employs more than 21,000 people, many of whom are former military and RCMP. In addition to serving in Niverville, they are utilized by other neighbouring communities, such as Morris, and they come highly recommended.

"We have noticed a trend in the many communities, cities, towns, and RMs of Manitoba to improve their communities'

appearance and functionalities by strengthening their by-laws and engaging qualified, motivated people to help educate their citizens as well as provide enforcement duties," says Julie Graveline, Client Account Manager for the Commissionaires Manitoba. "This helps the administrative staff focus on other areas of town management, such as development and growth. Commissionaires bring experience and skills to assist the community in their endeavours."

Graveline also notes the Commissionaires have a long and successful track record

penalties are issued. Dyck is careful to note that bringing in this new level of enforcement isn't about generating extra income, but rather to ensure the town's existing laws are being respected. And in most cases, when people learn about a problem, they can take steps to correct it before penalties come into play.

"Council believes in an education process prior to any particular penalties that get applied," he says. "[Issuing penalties] is not what we want. When we have to deal with situations, we would rather try and get it done through educating."

"Council believes in an education process prior to any particular penalties that get applied."

Myron Dyck | Mayor

when it comes to working alongside other law enforcement agencies, such as the RCMP.

"We work within the by-law structure of the community only, whereas the police have a mandate to enforce federal and provincial statutes," she says. "Where there are any personal safety concerns for our by-law officers, we can engage law enforcement or other relevant agencies, and in the past we have found this to work very well."

Council has presented the Commissionaires assigned to Niverville with a clear understanding of their mandate: to give adequate warnings before

"Our approach is friendly and educational," Graveline adds. "In our experience, most people who are breaking by-laws often do not know that there is a by-law in place that affects their behaviour. Once they are made aware, most people are very quick to comply. We want to teach people about the by-laws and engage them in contributing to successful and vibrant communities. Niverville is a really lovely town and we are really looking forward to getting to know the citizens of the town."

Barring that, however, penalties can and will be levied in the case of continued noncompliance, or in cases where there's

an important safety issue.

The role of the Commissionaires will be to enforce town by-laws, but not to play a role in traffic enforcement, except in the case of parking violations. Rather, they will primarily deal with residents who violate town by-laws pertaining to noise, weed control, private infrastructure infractions, etc.

The cost of penalties has been established by town council.

The expense of hiring the company will come out of the town's general coffers, although it is expected to be subsidized by the penalty fees that do end up being charged.

The Commissionaires will be paid by the hour. Eric King, Niverville's business manager, says that the exact hourly rate is variably, depending on where the Commissionaire comes from and whether they are working overtime.

"We have an estimate of \$10,000 for the remainder of the year," says King about the budget. "However, the time this will free up in the office is very beneficial."

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- www.commissionaires.ca/en/manitoba/home
- A complete list of town by-laws and penalties: www.nivervillecitizen.com/assets/generalFiles/2017-Administrative-Penalties.pdf
- The full text of the Town of Niverville's by-law enforcement measure: www.nivervillecitizen.com/assets/generalFiles/BL778-17BylawEnforcement.pdf

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Smoke Alarm Program Aims to Improve Fire Prevention

Starting in October, the Niverville Fire Department will be installing free smoke alarms throughout the community. The goal is to make sure every level of every house has one.

By Evan Braun

editor@nivervillecitizen.com

The second week of October being Fire Safety Week, the Niverville Fire Department is getting the word out about a new program that has the potential to benefit local homeowners. Although the newer homes in town are constructed to the latest codes, with hardwired smoke alarms, many older homes still rely on battery-operated alarms.

"Our goal is to put smoke alarms in every house in our community," says Niverville Fire Chief Keith Bueckert. "So if anybody wants a fire alarm put in their house, what happens is that we come, they sign a waiver, and we put an alarm on each level of the home. We also can do a fire safety check of the house. Then it's [the homeowner's] job to check the alarms on a monthly basis."

The free program is being sponsored by the Manitoba Office of the Fire Commissioner, Red River Mutual, the Firefighters Burn Fund, and the Association of Manitoba Fire Chiefs. So far Niverville has received 100 smoke alarms, but they have the ability to ask for more.

"We're hoping to do this through the winter, so it's not just going to happen in October," Bueckert says. "We wanted to run it from October through March. If people

want this done, we will make it available through that timeline."

A similar program existed last year, too, when Niverville's fire department focussed on some of the community's older apartment blocks.

"We went to the more dated apartments with limited systems, and we ended up installing 88 alarms in Niverville," adds Bueckert. "We found some apartments that had no smoke alarms in them. We even saw some that had smoke alarms but no batteries in them. We really hit it hard on those buildings because we felt that was our most important priority to start with. This year we're working on the residential side."

The new smoke alarms are operated by lithium batteries and have a lifespan of ten years.

Bueckert says that there are few things more important than making sure that you have working fire alarms in your home. In an emergency, it will save your life.

"Your smoke alarm is your eyes and ears when you're either sleeping or you're in another part of the house, and it's going to alert you to a fire, even a small fire. That small fire is going to turn into a big fire. The smoke is the thing that's going to get people long before the heat."

Once a smoke alarm

begins to sound, Bueckert says that most people have only about two minutes to leave a house. In recent years, he says that new construction techniques and modern furniture have caused fire to move more quickly through a home. It used to be that a fire would need to burn for 30 minutes to consume a home, but that number is often as low as seven minutes now, according to recent studies.

"Having a proper working smoke alarm is so vital," he says. "We've seen this with some fires we've had in town in the last couple of years, where smoke alarms woke people up and actually got them out of the house. One example is we had a dehumidifier in a newborn child's room that malfunctioned and melted into the floor and actually burnt the carpet. They had a smoke alarm [and it] alerted the parents, they got in there, they got the baby out, they got themselves out, and we were there within six minutes of the call... Had they not had those detectors in there, the outcome could have been way worse."

As with previous years, firefighters will be visiting students at the Niverville Elementary School on October 11, making classroom presentations. Each student will take home materials to help them talk about fire safety with their parents. To prove

this was done, parents sign a form and send it back to the school. The classroom with the most signed forms will win a free pizza lunch, and one lucky student will win a Nintendo DS.

There are three key points of any fire safety discussion: rehearsing a fire escape plan, checking to make sure all smoke detectors work, and ensuring that every sleeping area in the home has at least two ways out in an emergency.

The department is also hosting an open house at Niverville's fire hall on October 10 from 6:00 p.m. until 8:00 p.m. There will be toonie supper, with all the funds going to support a local family who is raising money to purchase a service dog for their autistic son. They will also be collecting non-perishable food for Helping Hands.

As always, Bueckert wants to remind people that the fire department is looking forward to its annual perogy supper fundraiser at the Golden Friendship Centre on November 11, from 4:30 p.m. until 7:00 p.m.

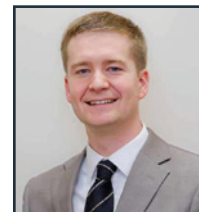
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■ If anyone would like to have free smoke alarms installed in their home, they are invited to contact Keith Bueckert at firechief@whereyoubelong.ca.

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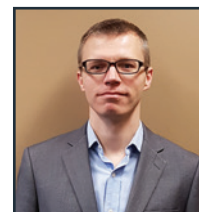
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Doors Open for Refugee Family

By Brenda Sawatzky

bsawatzky@nivervillecitizen.com

A group of compassionate Niverville residents has been working diligently over the past few months to extend a hand of friendship, financial aid, and transportation for a young Pakistani family currently seeking asylum in Thailand. Together with the Mennonite Central Committee (MCC), the group is hopeful that the bureaucratic process will move swiftly and without impediment before it's too late.

"We applied to sponsor seven refugees," says Elaine Kehler, coordinator and spokesperson for Open Doors Niverville (ODN). "But in an effort to catch up to the backlog of sponsorships, [the Canadian government] cut back on allotments and we received only three spots. Through our connections with City Church [in Winnipeg], we received a folder of families desperately waiting for sponsorship. Since we could only sponsor three individuals, it really narrowed down our choices. After reading their stories and making some personal contact, we chose our family."

ODN first organized in 2015 in response to the escalating Syrian refugee crisis. The group gathered in church board rooms and homes, collaborating on the best means to initiate such a process. As the meetings progressed, they quickly established their goals: to provide sponsorship to any refugee in need, as there was a registered list of families and individuals who had been awaiting sponsorship since long before the Syrian crisis began. It was also deemed important to be completely respectful of any sponsored family's right to continue worship according to their own faith, and to relocate, if they wished, after the initial year of sponsorship had been carried out.

After hearing from other refugee sponsorship groups, the evidence was in: this would be a long and tedious process, requiring serious commitment from numerous individuals, both before and after the family's arrival. As is often the case, interest waned after months of discussion and the group eventually disbanded.

In the spring of 2017, Kehler says she and her daughter were moved to action once again when a member of City Church spoke at her church. The representative presented a desperate situation for displaced Pakistani refugees who'd sought asylum



Maegan May, Erica Kehler, Gord May, Sabrina Falk, Matt Falk, Larissa Sandulak, Gerald Loeppky, Alia Kehler, Elaine Kehler, Daryl Kehler, Emily Rempel, and Murray Rempel of the Open Doors Niverville committee.

BRENDA SAWATZKY

in a country unwilling to extend mercy—Thailand.

According to a BBC article from February 2016, there are an estimated 11,500 Pakistani asylum seekers in Thailand. The majority of these have left their home country not due to political unrest but rather the Islamic extremists' forceful response to their Christian faith. In Pakistan, Christians are required to convert back to Islam or risk torture and sometimes death, women and children not excluded.

According to the article, "The Pakistani Christians head to Thailand because it's easy to enter the country on a short-term tourist visa, and in Pakistan's hostile neighbourhood there are few safe options closer to hand."

But Thailand has been anything but welcoming. They aren't interested in asylum seekers and have stepped up strategies to control the masses by sending out immigration police, forcing them from their hovels and charging them with illegal immigration—or worse, terrorism.

Men, women, and children languor in jail cells in inhumane conditions, awaiting someone to post their bail. While many of them are registered with the United Nations Refugee Agency, backlogs create indefinite wait times while people sit in desperate fear, unable to work, feed their families, or see their imprisoned loved ones.

"We began this process in February, just two weeks before the applications had to be submitted for 2017," says Kehler. She invited previous

members of ODN, as well as new ones, to reconvene.

The response was good and a committee of 15 people was immediately established. They met with representatives from City Church and MCC to get the ball rolling.

"Once our family was determined, we began about six weeks of intensive paperwork," Kehler says. "Our refugee family received their file number in July and now we wait. They need to have an interview as well as medical checks. This could take months, or maybe even years as there are thousands of refugees waiting for sponsorship."

Arisnel Mesidor, MCC Manitoba's Migration and Resettlement Program Coordinator, says that without MCC's aid, this sponsorship wouldn't have been possible since the refugees in question don't have official refugee status. To date, MCC has professionally processed the application at no cost to ODN, provided free training and awareness to the group, and they will continue to provide support throughout the process. Because of MCC's involvement, it is expected that the entire process will be expedited by about six months.

"Later, after the family has arrived, if anything that was unforeseen and unplanned happens and [ODR], as a result, ends up having difficulties helping the newcomer family, they can always reach out to MCC for guidance and potential assistance," says Mesidor.

In the past two and a half years, MCC Manitoba has helped 427

displaced persons find a sponsorship group and home in Manitoba. Mesidor states that the Canadian government is considered the official sponsor of refugees. All parameters, such as numbers, countries of focus, and timing, are set by the government.

"Because the government wants to control the number of private sponsorship applications submitted in a given year, every February [organizations] like MCC receive from the government what we call 'allocations,'" Mesidor says. He describes allocations as the number of people who can be sponsored. "In turn, we have to manage the numbers given to us when working with groups or churches that want to sponsor refugees through us."

Tim Nielsen is the pastor of City Church, located at 484 Maryland Street in Winnipeg. He says that their church has many years of sponsorship experience and is excited to offer assistance to Open Doors.

"We are an inner city, evangelical, intercultural church that has a high emphasis on refugee ministry," says Nielsen. "Ninety percent of our 300 members are former refugees. Some of our members are from Pakistan, where Christian persecution is at a very high level. Unfortunately, most Canadians have formed their general views of refugees through popular media sources and they have not been exposed to the heart-breaking stories of people who, for decades, have been in conflict zones. Only one percent of refugees in the world are allowed to immigrate to a third

country like Canada."

Currently, City Church is working to establish Naomi House, a transitional home for incoming refugees located at 700 Ellice Avenue. They intend to provide extensive programming for newcomers, but in the end he sees friendships with established Canadians as the key for them to thrive in this foreign culture.

They have extended a hand to aid ODN once the sponsorship family arrives. Their Pakistani members await to help in practical areas such as translation and transportation needs.

"The biggest difficulty in getting a family here is the waiting and uncertainty," says Kehler of ODN. "I'm in regular, almost daily, contact with the family. As refugees, they are in constant danger of being arrested, jailed, or even deported. They struggle with meeting their daily needs as they can only do occasional piecemeal work."

Though the core ODN committee has been established, Kehler admits that they will need much help from the community, both now and after the family arrives. The group has already located several local housing options. In the meantime, financial resources are their biggest need.

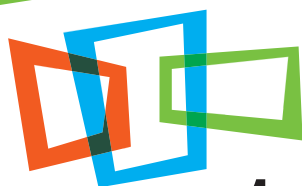
On October 21, ODN will be hosting a fundraiser. This is a full day of events at the Heritage Centre held in two parts. Family Fun will be the theme from 4:00 p.m. until 7:00 p.m. Popular children's entertainer Al Simmons will be performing along with a variety of other activities like bouncy castles, face-painting, and a pizza party. The cost is \$20 per family, regardless of the size of the family. Pizza will be available at \$5 per plate.

An evening Coffee House and Social, hosted by comedian Matt Falk, will begin immediately afterwards from 7:00 p.m. until 1:00 a.m. Attendees can expect live bands, a deejay and dance, a silent auction, and a midnight taco feast. Tickets are on sale for \$10 per person.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

■ For fundraiser tickets, visit: www.eventbrite.ca/e/open-doors-fundraiser-tickets-37844924187

■ Chris Rogers, "The Christians Held in Thailand After Fleeing Pakistan," *BBC News*. February 26, 2016 (<http://www.bbc.com/news/magazine-35654804>).

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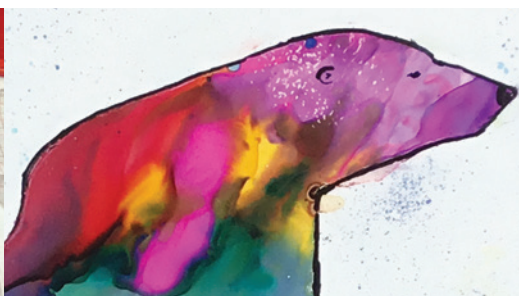
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Community Bus Bringing People Together

By Evan Braun

✉ editor@nivervillecitizen.com

Since late 2013, the Niverville Community Bus has been cruising the highways around Niverville. The idea for the bus was originally birthed by the Maranatha Church in 2012, although the project subsequently took on a life of its own, quickly expanding in scope to benefit not just one church but the entire community. Other congregations joined forces with the local business community and civic-minded individuals to raise almost \$100,000, enough to not only purchase the three-year-old bus, but also to cover the initial taxes and insurance.

Since that time, the bus has been pressed into service on average three or four times a month, and not just by churches. Growing Minds Child Care Centre, local sports teams, Imagine Mental Health, the MCC Grow Hope Project, the Niverville Multiplex fundraising committee, and the Golden Friendship Seniors Group have all taken advantage of the service. Youth groups from Word of Life, the Niverville Community Fellowship, and Maranatha have used it, not to mention Niverville Collegiate's Safe Grad committee.

The bus has even been used by community groups outside of Niverville, such as the Ness Avenue Baptist Church, Youth for Christ Winnipeg, and the St. Pierre Youth for Christ. Students from Providence have boarded the bus weekly in order to commute to and



The Community Bus brings people out to witness the MCC Grow Hope Project.

MCC GROW HOPE PROJECT

from local church services.

The bus was never intended to be a commercial enterprise. Roger Armbruster, one of the project's coordinators, says that people have been encouraged to see the bus as a missionary project. As such, users of the bus have made suggested donations just large enough to ensure the bus remains viable. This has equalled about \$150 for one day of usage, covering up to 150 kilometres—in other words, enough to get to Winnipeg and back. For longer trips, the suggested donation is just \$100 per day.

While the goal is to make sure the bus remains affordable to all who need it, those suggested donations are no longer enough to keep the project afloat.

"The vision is to see the Community Bus Project be self-sustaining for the long-term," says Armbruster. "The present hope is not only to be able to cover current maintenance and insurance costs, but to be in a position to replace the bus whenever it becomes necessary at some point without having to engage in

additional fundraisers in the future."

That said, Armbruster points out that there is no plan to increase the suggested donation, as that would defeat the purpose of having the bus in the first place. Instead of more fundraisers, he says the project needs ongoing community support.

The Niverville Community Bus is a project of Maranatha Niverville, a registered charitable organization, and run as a not-for-profit. Donations can be charitably receipted or used as a tax write-off.

"It is our vision to see the Niverville Community Bus be a support in helping other community initiatives and enterprises succeed," Armbruster says. "Together, we can make a difference in our community as we seek to keep the bus affordable for any enterprise that is contributing to the wellness of our town."

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Niverville Council Hires Economic Development Adviser

By Brenda Sawatzky

bsawatzky@nivervillecitizen.com

On August 15, Niverville's town council passed a resolution to hire Gordon Daman of Red River Group to provide professional services to the town as Economic Development Adviser. Daman has been hired on a retainer basis at the rate of \$150 per hour and is anticipated to provide ten to 15 hours per month of consulting services.

Mayor Myron Dyck chose to remove himself from the vote in order to alleviate any concerns about conflict of interest. Aside from Dyck's responsibilities as town mayor, he and Daman are also colleagues at Red River Group.

"At the [2014] election, we all ran on a platform of economic development and sustainability," says councillor Chris Wiebe. "For the last three years we have struggled with how to accomplish our goals. There are so many different opportunities to explore that we did not have the confidence that hiring one single economic employee could handle the complexity of the job."

Wiebe says that different professionals bring different abilities to the table. Daman will work closely with Eric King, the town's financial administrator, who has also recently been assigned economic development responsibilities for the town. Together, council believes they have a winning team.

"Gord is a unique individual that has worked brilliantly on understanding how governments and industry operate," adds Wiebe. "Gord's ability and passion for our community gives the town the opportunity to use his experience for our benefit without hiring a full-time staff member."

Other town positions are also hired on a retainer basis, such as the town's legal counsel, who is not on full-time payroll but doesn't have to



Gordon Daman. RED RIVER GROUP

be rehired for each and every legal matter the town faces.

Presently, Daman will assist primarily in government relations on projects such as the multiplex and the diagnostic centre.

"It was Daman's qualifications that made it possible for the Town of Niverville to announce the opening of the MRI [centre]," Wiebe says. "We used his experience to negotiate the school and multiplex campus concept with the province and school board."

"We are extremely fortunate to be able to hire someone of this calibre locally."

Chris Wiebe | Councillor

"While I will be assisting on the multiplex and other economic development initiatives as a consultant," says Daman, "I want to make clear that I will not be assisting on any town matters in relation to Niverville Heritage Holdings Inc. That would place me in a conflict as I am on the NHHI board. I have one term left with the NHHI board and, once off the board, if I am still in a contracted position with the town I could then assist at that point."

While Daman's credentials speak for themselves, he has also had great success when it comes to sustainable community economic development.

For years, Daman has provided similar services to other towns, municipalities, and not-for-profit organizations in areas of residential development, business park consulting, seniors housing consulting, land purchase negotiation, intergovernmental project negotiation, sustainability planning, and businesses cases.

Personal care home beds were recently announced for Carman, after Daman was hired as a consultant by that community and the RM of Dufferin. This past summer, Daman attended a conference in Whistler, British Columbia, addressing municipal officials there regarding aging-in-place models such as Niverville's. Immediately afterward, Daman was sought out by these officials, requesting that he move to B.C. to help them with their own administrative processes in creating seniors housing in their communities.

"With my previous municipal experience as well as experience on the Manitoba Municipal Board, I provide a broad understanding of the challenges municipalities face in complex and changing environments," says Daman. "This is supported by my background in real property environments. Having also spent time as a previous Niverville

Chamber of Commerce coordinator, I have a good understanding of local business aspirations. Finally, my academic training and professional memberships support the work I do."

Though Daman has been contracted by the town for a nominal number of hours per month, Daman says he is open to assisting beyond this time limit on a pro bono basis where he can be helpful.

"Societies have always had a natural distrust for home-grown talent," says Wiebe. "In this case, we are extremely fortunate to be able to hire someone of this calibre locally."

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IN BRIEF

Providence Mulls Plans for New Residence

With the new school year underway, Providence University College is facing the challenging task of rejuvenating portions of its campus after a summer fire destroyed Bergen Hall, the men's dormitory. As part of its effort to move forward, President David Johnson has appointed a task force for campus redevelopment.

"Although the Bergen fire was a huge loss to Providence, we are turning it into an opportunity to continue our climb to become one of the leading Canadian Christ-centred universities," says Dr. Johnson.

This fall, Johnson and the task force plan to tour some of North American's most prominent residence facilities. After the tours and a comprehensive consultation process, the task force will make a series of recommendations. In addition, the task force is already working alongside a designer and architect on plans for a new.

Throughout September, campus groups have met with the designer and architect, the goal of which is to identify the key values and facilities that should be incorporated in the plans.

Open Health a Model for Integrated Healthcare

By Brenda Sawatzky

bsawatzky@nivervillecitizen.com

Open Health reopened its doors on September 19 after a quickly orchestrated move from the Heritage Centre's main building into their newly constructed space connected to the life lease complex. Drs. Chris and Mairi Burnett, Regional Health Authority (RHA) workers, and reception staff have settled in and are seeing clients again after a closure of only one business day.

The new facility is bright, comfortable, and well-planned, providing a large reception area which leads to two wings containing clinical rooms and a lab. The solid doors of the clinical rooms are unmarked, creating complete obscurity for patients who may not wish for others to know the purpose of their visit.

In this integrated health model, you can find physicians, public healthcare workers, homecare coordinators, a dietician, a nurse educator, mental health workers, nurse practitioners and a primary health care nurse all in one place.

"All the evidence shows that the best care is given in teams," says Dr. Chris Burnett. "We have a luxury here



Dr. Mairi Burnett in one of the new clinic's rooms.

BRENDA SAWATZKY

that people listened to our ideas and came up with this great idea of a single-stop place for primary care. That's the first level of care which is really 98 percent of all the [medical concerns] that happen."

He says that the benefit to this type of integrated clinic is that referrals can happen under one roof. When a

patient comes to see a physician and is also in need of a diabetic nurse or a dietician, there is an easy referral to another clinician within the same building, without having to go to another location or community.

"Someone coming in and sitting down in a chair will [be guided] into the most appropriate room to see

the most appropriate provider," says Burnett, adding that the separation between physicians and RHA staff has been intentionally blurred. Patients, in his mind, don't care who pays the medical providers' salaries. They just want to be directed to the one who best fits their needs.

Burnett says the intent of all the professionals at Open Health is to work as a team and plan as a team. He foresees taking this one step further in 2018, encouraging all local healthcare providers such as fitness centres, chiropractors, reflexologists, dentists, physiotherapists, and others working in health-related modes within the community to join the team, coordinating their efforts to build on Niverville as a destination for health and wellness.

"We [also] want to challenge the town: when you look at the planning of Main Street, of greenspaces, of cycle paths, think of that as a form of wellness. If you start engraining that at that level, it makes for a very good future for our town."

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Niverville Collegiate to Elect All-New PAC

All members of the previous parent council resigned at first meeting.



BRENDA SAWATZKY

bsawatzky@nivervillecitizen.com

If students were considered the body of a school and administration the legs by which things run, then the Parent Advisory Council (PAC) could be considered the heart, carrying out tasks behind the scenes to make student life beat with a vibrant rhythm.

Last month, the four-member Niverville Collegiate Institute PAC kicked off the year with an organizational meeting on September 12. In attendance were three of the previous year's PAC members, Principal Michael Koester, and six parents. Since the meeting date overlapped with Niverville's Recreation and Wellness Showcase, many parents who wished to attend were unable to.

Though the agenda was, indeed, to organize for the coming year, it resulted in a shock to parents in attendance. All four of the previous members decided to step down. As a result, nominations were held to fill the lead role of PAC chairperson. Parent Tanya Pomaranski was nominated and elected.

Pomaranski admits that this was a disappointment, although she says that she understands their positions, citing reasons of meeting-time conflicts and busy schedules.

"I am excited for an opportunity to work with NCI parents and continue to build on a solid foundation [which was] established and provided by the previous NCI PAC members," says Pomaranski. "There are many dedicated parents in our community. Learning from each other and working towards common goals with NCI

staff and administration is a journey I am looking forward to."

The meeting opened with an address by Koester to those gathered, making introductions and establishing a common time for future meetings. Pomaranski anticipated that the subsequent October 2 meeting would provide an opportunity for nominations and elections for the remaining positions of vice-chairperson, treasurer, and secretary.

Going forward, she says that items on the agenda will include learning the processes and policies required of a middle years

very important to the work of our schools and we appreciate their commitment to the education of our students," says Randy Dueck, Superintendent of the Hanover School Division. "Our schools have regular and ongoing dialogue with PAC members and are always open to discussing ways in which we can improve PAC representation and their voice in the education process. We also encourage PAC, along with any concerned parent, to speak directly with school leadership on any concerns specific to their school community."

School Division does not currently allow the use of PAC-centric Facebook sites, so other means would have to be looked at. They will still make full use of the "Parent" tab on the school's website.

Parent Leslie Bardal is looking forward to some positive engagement with the NCI PAC as her daughter makes the transition to Grade Five this year. As a previous member of the NES PAC for six years, she recognizes the important role PACs play in a school and the community at large.

"PACs have to work alongside the administration and divisional staff on projects involving students and their needs at school," says Bardal. "The student voice can guide them, but divisional and provincial policies are the rudders that steer the ship. I would like to encourage parents to not only become members of the PAC but to receive the minutes and to email PAC executive with their concerns, ideas, and feedback. Attending meetings is not possible for all families, but virtual involvement can be vital to an organization such as a PAC in representing over 400 families and their students attending NCI."

Though none of the outgoing PAC members offered comment to *The Citizen*, Pomaranski anticipates they will continue to provide support where needed.

"They were pleased to see such a turnout for a PAC [meeting] and encouraged us to go forward," says Pomaranski. "While it is unfortunate the previous members are unable to attend new meeting timelines, I am grateful for their dedication and support and look forward to working with them as we move through a transitional year."

"I would like to encourage parents to not only become members of the PAC but to receive the minutes and email with their concerns."

Leslie Bardal / Parent

to senior years PAC, building on the constitution established by the previous PAC, and discussing fundraising approaches they'd like to add to their platform. She adds that they'll continue to carry on previously supported PAC programs such as My Blueprint and graduation scholarships.

In the coming years, Pomaranski anticipates that the PAC's role will evolve as the school evolves. With the expected move of the senior years students to a new school in the fall of 2019, this PAC's responsibility will then scale back to address only middle years needs. In the meantime, the current PAC will embrace their role, working for the benefit of a broad range of students from Grades Five through Twelve.

"Parent Advisory Councils are

Pomaranski wants to remind all parents of NCI students that PAC meetings are public. She anticipates that the new committee will be sensitive to parent volunteer commitments, recognizing that family time, busy home schedules, and work schedules take first priority.

"We are a growing community and with that comes many needs, goals, expectations, and commitments," Pomaranski says. "I expect that many parents will have ideas, concerns, and suggestions, and we'll do our best to build a [list] of items that we can prioritize and work through."

At the top of her list to discuss with the new PAC is her desire for broader communication with parents using electronic modes of communication. The Hanover

IN BRIEF

Ste. Agathe Fire Hall Gets More Expensive

Plans have been underway for some time to build a new fire hall in Ste. Agathe. Last year, Ritchot's council pegged the costs at \$2.25 million, and early recruitment meetings were even held in early 2016. The municipality received authorization to borrow those funds, which would cover the hall itself as well as a new fire truck and fire protection materials. These expenditures were included in the 2017 budget.

Since the budget passed in August, however, the estimated cost of the project has increased by \$600,000, bringing the total cost to \$2.85 million.

Council indicates that they don't intend to borrow more money, although they want to maintain the current scope of the project. Therefore, they propose to withdraw the additional \$600,000 from the municipality's general reserve.

A public hearing in respect to this expenditure has been scheduled for October 12 at 7:00 at the municipal offices in St. Adolphe.



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■ MICHELLE HOMINICK

By Evan Braun

✉ editor@nivervillecitizen.com

Have you ever felt incapacitated by nervousness, apprehension, and worry? It might have been a full-blown panic attack, or it could just be a creeping sense of dread that gets in the way of your everyday life. Whatever form it takes, it falls into the category of anxiety, and millions of people in Canada struggle with it.

Michelle Hominick, a woman from Niverville, knows what it's like to feel this way and she wants people to know that they are not alone. Help is available.

"Anxiety is one of the most common mental illnesses," says Hominick. "It looks different on everyone, although there is a lot of overlap. Essentially, anxiety is an activation of our sympathetic nervous system. We have a running narrative in our head all day long of worst case scenarios. We avoid situations and tasks. It creates negative interpretations of

situations... People with anxiety tend to make more catastrophic interpretations and have a steady flow of negative self-talk."

In Canada, one in five people suffer from a mental illness, and the situation in Manitoba is even worse, with one in four.

"So many people struggle with anxiety, and I feel I can help people who are suffering in silence," says Hominick. Last month, she got on Facebook to advertise a peer support group. They have already held their first meeting, and now she's trying to get the word out to get more people involved. "Peer support groups have the benefit of normalizing what you're going through. When you hear the struggles of others and it sounds like you too, it helps you to feel like you're not an alien from outer space. You're not damaged. You're not weird. Many people are in this boat with you and we can learn from each other about how to deal with it."

Hominick has a master's degree in social work. Her work has focused on cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) intervention and dialectical behaviour therapy. Despite her background, she says that she attends and hosts the group as a peer, not as a clinician.

"I've focused on working in mental health for a decade and I'm currently employed as the clinical social worker for oncology at Grace Hospital," she says. "I provide CBT interventions to cancer patients and their families.

Essentially, I teach people how they have emotions, as in the biological processes, [and] how to process those emotions effectively. And I engage in cognitive restructuring to treat the causes for their anxiety and depression. I teach people how to be more effective communicators, how to manage pain, and how to improve their sleep."

She points out that even if a person doesn't necessarily have the symptoms to meet the criteria for a mental illness diagnosis, anxiety can still have a profound impact on their life.

So far the peer support group has seen a lot of interest, with dozens of people messaging Hominick for details. The group meets at her home every week, on alternating Tuesdays and Wednesdays, and it's open to all adults—men and women, anyone who thinks they struggle with anxiety.

"[The problem] is huge. Enormous," Hominick says. "It can't be overstated. Our culture and society is a stage set for anxiety to thrive. Luckily, there are a lot of ways we can make ourselves better at dealing with that—we just have to be shown how."

FOR MORE INFORMATION

■ For details about Hominick's peer support group, contact her on Facebook: www.facebook.com/michelle.hominick



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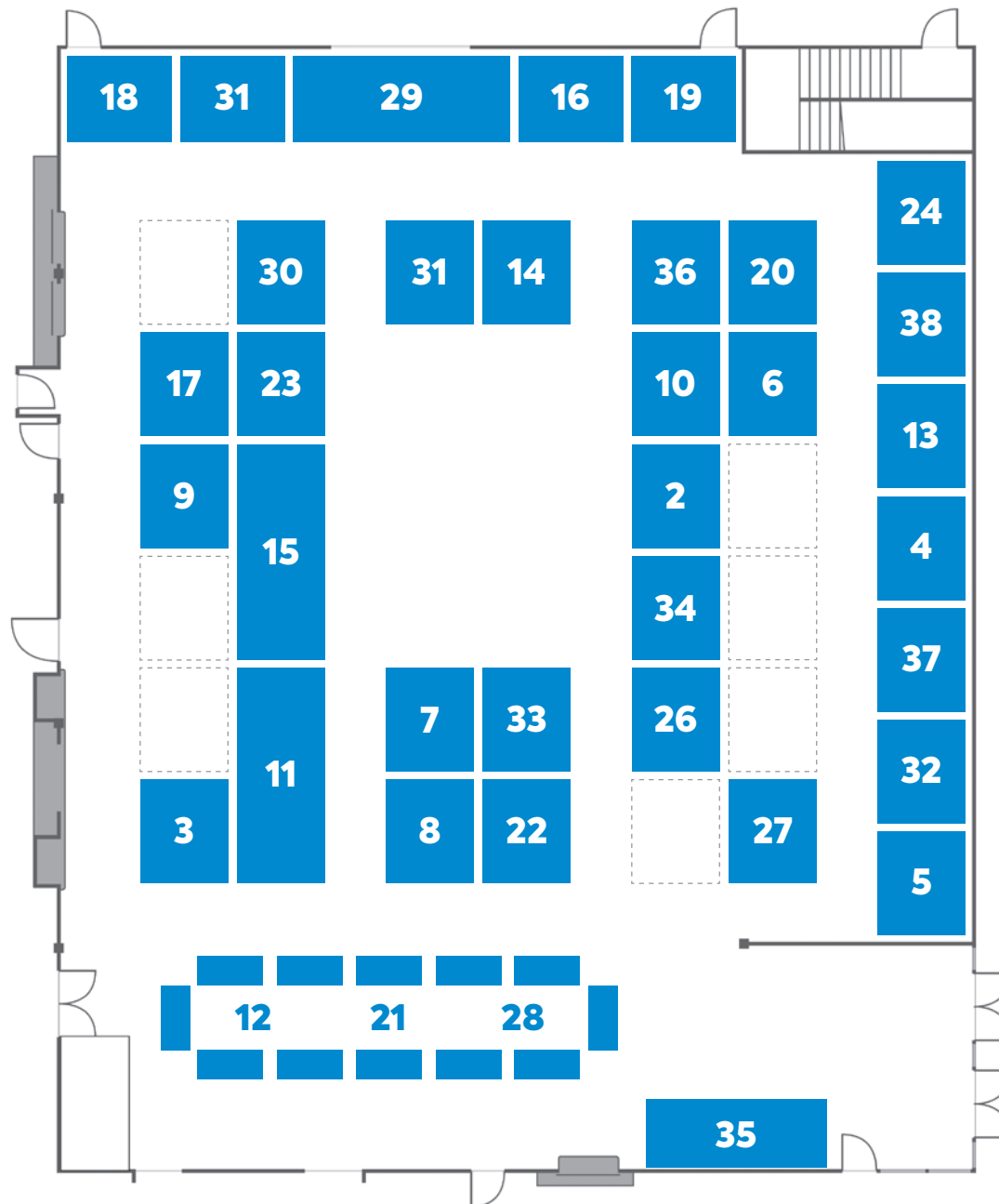
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Register by October 30, 2017
Contact Les: 204.803.2871 or cedo@ritchot.com

TIME	PRESENTER	DESCRIPTION	CAPACITY	COST
7:00pm to 8:00 pm	Stacy Thomas SALON 421	Learn the benefits of healthy products and why they are important, as well as the best application techniques for products and make up.	25	FREE
6:30 pm to 8:30 pm	Louise May AURORA FARMS	Cheese & Cracker Workshop: design, create and bake crackers, as well as savoury Ricotta, Feta, and Chevré cheese to impress your friends	12	\$25
7:00pm to 8:00 pm	Chris Ewen CAPO DI GRANDE	Mixology with Mayor: Come and learn how to mix tasty be vies for your next gathering and have a chat with the Mayor.	15	FREE

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 4 | WORKSHOP SCHEDULE

Register by October 30, 2017
Contact Les: 204.803.2871 or cedo@ritchot.com

TIME	PRESENTER	DESCRIPTION	CAPACITY	COST
10:00am -10:45am	Cassandra Cure FERRUM FITNESS	Group training class: Full body strength and conditioning training for all fitness levels! Please bring clean runners, a water bottle and a yoga mat.	15	FREE
11:00am-12:00pm	Doug Dyck HERITAGE LANE BUILDERS Wes Dowse THE CLARENCE BRAUN & WESLEY DOWSE TEAM Kazwel Levandoski 2K+ VENTURES	Everything you need to know about HOME! Whether you are building, renovating or moving, this panel discussion will tell you what you need to know to make your house, your HOME!	25	FREE

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 5 | WORKSHOP SCHEDULE

Register by October 30, 2017
Contact Les: 204.803.2871 or cedo@ritchot.com

TIME	PRESENTER	DESCRIPTION	CAPACITY	COST
11:00am -12:00pm	Puff and Dee LAUGHTER WITHOUT BORDERS	Balloonology: Learn how to make your favorite balloon characters with clowns Puff and Dee.	25	FREE
12:30pm-1:30pm	Susan Watson A LITTLE NUTRITION Cassandra Cure FERRUM FITNESS Yvette Page NORFOLK CHIROPRACTIC NIVERVILLE Melanie Bonin ATHLETIC THERAPY FERRUM FITNESS	Holistic Health Panel Discussion: Join our panel of registered dieticians, chiropractors and certified personal trainers to discuss the importance of overall physical health. Discussion topics will cover the importance of meal planning and healthy meals, daily physical activity, body alignment and leave you with strategies on how to fit it all into your busy life.	25	FREE
1:00pm-2:00pm	Dawn Schmidt ARTIST	Express your Inner Artist: This workshop is for first time painters who want to create a special piece with some inspiration led by local artist Dawn Schmidt.	15	\$25
1:00pm to 3:30pm	Louise May AURORA FARMS	Artisan Bread-making: If making and eating warm artisan bread fresh out of the oven with melted butter, surrounded with laughter sounds good to you, than this workshop is for you!	12	\$25



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Whitetail Meadow Opens Its Barn Doors

By Brenda Sawatzky

bsawatzky@nivervillecitizen.com

Whitetail Meadow. The place is as bucolic and serene as it sounds. Set against the meandering Red River and bordered by bales of freshly harvested oats, this new wedding and event venue has opened its doors for business. The first big event, a fall wedding, took place September 30.

Joanne Jones, venue manager, says that she has been inundated with curiosity seekers and rental inquiries.

"We have a number of weddings booked this year, as well as Christmas parties and other confirmed events for 2017," says Jones. She adds that the most popular months for weddings are already beginning to fill up for 2018. "Saturdays in July are booked and August and September are filling quickly. We are receiving multiple requests daily. We also have a number of events booked in 2019."

Whitetail Meadow is a thoughtfully planned event centre situated on a piece of pastoral land at the corner of Highways 311 and 200. The venue's features include an 80-year-old

restored hip roof barn, an elegantly refurbished home-turned-honeymoon-suite called Marigold Cottage, and a series of ponds, bridges, and landscape features that beg event-goers to explore the grounds.

"I think everything about Whitetail Meadow and Marigold Cottage is unique and special," says Jones. "I am so thrilled to be part of this amazing project. Dave has built this incredible place, holding on to the rustic elements of the original barn that he loved, and adding to it a simple elegance that will make a beautiful backdrop for any couple's special day."

The dream began with Dave and Lori Neufeld, owners and builders of Whitetail Meadow. Dave is no stranger to recapturing the beauty of once-loved homes. When the old barn and home that would become Marigold Cottage fell into his sight lines, he relocated them to this idyllic spot and began the long and arduous journey of purposeful restoration.

Today, the old barn is almost unrecognizable. Extensions were added for space, along with several verandas and balconies overlooking

the landscaped grounds. Neufeld went to special pains to maintain the rustic appeal while achieving the modern standards of current building codes with Energy Star ratings. This, Jones says, was in itself an enormous feat.

Inside, the great hall features a massive stone fireplace, knotted fir flooring, wrought iron chandeliers, and a grand staircase leading to a loft. The hall includes a fully equipped, commercial grade kitchen with a private entry, expansive washroom areas, and a bar.

Neufeld has used much of the original barn wood and old windows to create special interest areas. Several of the barn's Tudor-style windows are hinged and set into a rustic-wood feature wall, allowing couples the perfect spot for photos. Adding to the venue's antique charm are a host of handmade solid-wood tables and high-backed Chiavari chairs, enough to hold 300 guests in the 6,300-square-foot space. The building is equipped with five air conditioning units, providing 21 tons of cool air during hot summer months as well as a superior

heating source for the winter months.

Outside, large attached balconies provide the perfect locations to enjoy summer breezes while sipping cocktails. The manicured grounds can be strolled along via paths leading to the river and back meadow.

A concrete path and bridge leads to Marigold Cottage, a quaint yellow-sided house with space on the main floor for bridal entourage to groom, relax, and eat. The second level is dedicated as a honeymoon suite and includes a roll top tub, chandelier, fireplace, and private balcony.

Outdoor wedding ceremony options will also be available to couples.

"Our plan is to have a tent in the meadow in case weather is questionable or too sunny," says Jones. "They can choose to have chairs set up ceremony-style and then tables brought back in while guests wait at the bar or on the decks. For a smaller wedding, they could also have the ceremony up in the loft area with the reception set up downstairs. The deck could also accommodate a smaller wedding ceremony."

Caterers are not provided, allowing renters the opportunity to choose from the vast array of caterers already available in the region. Whitetail Meadow does offer beverage service and bartenders as well as setup and takedown services. Down the road, Jones expects that additional décor items may be added. At this stage, renters have other local options if they desire more than the beautiful backdrop the venue already provides.

"We love the Manitoba prairie and feel that there is so much natural beauty here," concludes Jones. "Anything we do [here] will be to enhance the natural state. I envision lots of movement with tall grasses, prairie flowers, and of course Russian Sage. Every [outdoor space] needs Russian Sage."

The Neufelds and Jones are working towards a tentative November 18 grand opening open house. More information will be announced on their website in the coming weeks.

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Breckenridge Rezoning Proposal Denied

By Brenda Sawatzky

✉ bsawatzky@nivervillecitizen.com

A large contingent of homeowners in Niverville are celebrating a victory. On September 19, Niverville's town council held a public hearing to address a rezoning request by developers Fifth Avenue Estates (FAE). The proposal outlined a request to change the zoning of a series of undeveloped lots bordering Breckenridge Drive from R1 Single Family Residential to R2 Two Family Residential.

Around 60 residents attended the meeting, 51 of whom signed in for an opportunity to make their appeal to council. As the developers behind the proposal, Cornell Friesen and Clint Hiebert were also in attendance.

After hearing addresses from Hiebert and 23 affected residents, council held a unanimous vote to defeat the motion.

At the onset of the public hearing, Mayor Myron Dyck indicated that council had three options: one, to table the hearing to another date should council need more time to make a decision; two, if no council member voted for a second reading on the proposal, the motion would be automatically defeated; and three, if council decided to approve the request, objectors would be notified of their rights to take their appeal directly to the Manitoba Municipal Board.

The change to an R2 zoning would have granted the developers the option to build duplexes in an area currently designated for single family dwellings. The duplexes being tendered were to have separate titles and would not have included condominiums or rental units.

Hiebert opened the council hearing by making clear his intention to address only council and not to enter into a debate with objectors. He cited FAE's disappointment with the public's reaction to their proposal.



Map of the proposed rezoned lots along Breckenridge Drive in Niverville.

TOWN OF NIVERVILLE

"To my understanding, this is largely the result of a few individuals who have been spreading misinformation and rumour, and essentially fostering what amounts to hysteria and a mob mentality about what is pure conjecture on their parts," Hiebert told council.

He offered assurances that the duplexes would be subject to high standards of construction and specific design controls, and the price point would make the homes unattractive for rental purposes. The duplexes were to be set back far enough to allow enough parking for two vehicles per unit.

"In many cases, due to Fifth Avenue's stringent design controls, these duplexes will be worth the same and more, per side, than a large majority of the houses in the surrounding areas," said Hiebert. "Fifth Avenue

Estates' goal for this subdivision was and remains to build a community where someone just starting out could [find] affordable housing. Then over time, [they would have the] opportunity to upgrade as their family grows, all within the same development. This is what builds a town and allows citizens to take ownership and pride in their community."

At the closing of Hiebert's address, he and Friesen withdrew from the public meeting, indicating that Hiebert's ongoing recovery from an automobile accident prevented him from staying further.

Council opened the floor to residents in attendance, many of them audibly perturbed by FAE's accusations and quick departure. Residents took to the open mic, one by one, passionately beseeching council to consider the current residents

before drawing in newcomers.

"When we all purchased properties here, there was a zoning map for what the development would [look like] for the future," says a property owner on Breckenridge Drive. "This was R1. We also had to sign 'Design Control Guidelines' to enhance the neighbourhood and therefore promote a growing and profitable venture. This was a stand to protect [the buyer's] investments and further prevent from being undermined by a developer who forgot all the heart that goes into building communities."

This homeowner echoed many objectors' sentiments when he suggested that the proposed change to the development was not what homebuyers had bought into, and that the developers should be held to the same strict standards they themselves require of the area's current residents.

He handed council a petition, signed by 180 homeowners all opposed to the zoning change.

Other residents were concerned with what such a change would do to their current property value and, subsequently, resale value down the road, citing consistency in home styles as the best way to ensure this. While FAE feels that duplexes will not affect single-family home valuations because appraisers look at similar size properties for comparisons, at least two homeowners disagreed. One suggested that she'd been through a similar experience in another community and lost significant value when she sold. Another, himself a real estate appraiser, says that conformity in the neighbourhood helps determine value.

Still others were concerned about the precedent this might set when other developers change their minds about zoning when market demands fluctuate.

"Council, acting as a non-biased body in keeping with a public hearing, listened to both the presenter, those in favour of what the presenter brought forward, and then those that spoke in opposition," says Mayor Dyck. "After carefully weighing both sides, they made their decision based on what they believed to be the best use of land on the lots as listed."

The gathered crowd broke into applause at council's decision.

"Of course, we had people saying this is a done deal and we don't stand a chance, as who are we to fight tooth and nail against a developer?" says the Breckenridge homeowner. "[We wondered], 'Are we just going through the actions to be told this is already a signed deal?' The answer back was positive from council... thank you, council, for standing up for your people. It's not always about money, it's pride and communities banding together to show that we do have a voice in today's society."

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Ritchoy firefighters were honoured at this year's Volunteer Appreciation Event.

LESLEY GAUDRY

Ritchoy Firefighters Honoured at Volunteer Supper

By Lesley Gaudry

On Friday, September 29, a place built by volunteers was filled with volunteers. The Municipality of Ritchoy hosted their fourth annual Volunteer Appreciation Event at Cartier Park in Ste. Agathe. The evening was filled with food, fellowship, and fun, with 147 volunteers coming out to celebrate their commitment to the community.

The volunteers represented 33 different organizations and committees, including people who help Ritchoy Senior Services, park committee members, the daycare board, Brownies and Guide leaders, industrial park volunteers, Chamber representatives, parish board members, youth leaders, Ritchoy CDC (Community Development Corporation) board members, Ste. Agathe CDI (Community Development Inc.) members, and volunteer firefighters from the Ritchoy Fire Department.

The municipal council assisted staff with the evening, doing everything from bartending to greeting and registering visitors.

The evening started with old-fashioned kids games with

potato sack races, three-legged races, and a candy scramble for the wee ones and not-so-wee ones.

Supper was catered by Danny's Whole Hog with pulled pork, beans, coleslaw, homemade buns, and baked potatoes. Each volunteer was given a reusable snack bag donated by Colibri Canada, a We Need S'More Volunteers Like You packet, as well as tickets to the upcoming Southeast Lifestyles Expo scheduled for November 3-5 in Île-des-Chênes. Following supper, a bonfire was lit for folks to enjoy their s'more packets as kids ran around in the park through the grass and trees.

A special part of this year's celebration was the portion honouring the Ritchoy Fire Department, which marks its fiftieth anniversary this year, having been formed in 1967. The department started with local residents volunteering their time to attend to grass and house fires with an old pumper truck that used to be used to spray for grasshoppers.

Fast-forward 50 years and the Ritchoy Fire Department is now comprised of over 45 men and women and two fully

equipped fire halls—soon to be three fire halls, actually, with the one in Ste. Agathe on the cusp of construction.

MLA Bob Lagasse presented Fire Chief Scott Weir with three service certificates, one for each fire hall and its respective firefighters. Following this, a roll call of all current firefighters was read, with those present coming forward to be recognized. Each man and woman received a fiftieth anniversary T-shirt, and a group photo was taken.

The centerpiece of the photo was a commemorative painting completed by local artist Tanya Waddell. The painting celebrates the qualities our firefighters possess—dedication, strength, courage, and commitment. The painting will be digitized and reprinted to serve as an outdoor painting outside each fire hall, to mark the anniversary.

Lagasse and Ritchoy CEDO Lesley Gaudry spoke of the dedication of the volunteer firefighters, as well as their years of service. When most people run away from disaster, our volunteer firefighters run toward it to serve and protect.

Four special awards were

presented to members for their exemplary service, including to Scott Weir for 20 years of service, Mr. Paul Houle for 20 years of service, Mr. Jeff Stefaniuk for 21 years of service, and Mr. Marcel Courchaine of for 37 years of service.

A 12-minute fireworks display lit up the sky at the end of the night. Families, friends, and firefighters stood still in the calm, cool night air to enjoy the spectacle.

And in true volunteer form, what should have been a few hours of clean up and closing was completed in one hour, because our volunteers stepped up and did what they do best: help with a smile.

NOTE

A committee has been organized to host a fiftieth anniversary reunion barbecue in the spring of 2018 for all past and current firefighters. Past members of the Ritchoy Fire Department are encouraged to register with Lesley at cedo@ritchoy.com to ensure that they are on the roster for notification. At this time, thanks must be given to grant funding received from Manitoba's Historic Resources Branch. Also, a fiftieth anniversary commemorative booklet will be published and distributed to all members.

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VOLUNTEER PROFILE | Deidre Perron



DEIDRE PERRON

By Liz Byron

When asked how long she's been a firefighter with the Ritchot Fire Department, Deidre Perron just thinks about how old her youngest child is. That's because she decided to become a volunteer firefighter while she was on maternity leave. With two school-aged children and a baby, she said, "You know, I'll try this out and if it's not for me, when I go back to work I just won't continue."

Fourteen years later, Perron is still a dedicated firefighter.

Speaking with her, it's clear that Perron is passionate about helping others. "It's important to know that there are people who are willing to get up in the dead of night to go help someone," she says.

The 47-year-old doesn't think this is a heroic thing to do, though.

"I don't ever like to use

the word hero," she says. "Because that's not why we're there. We're there to help... If someone fell down in front of you, you'd help them up, and firefighting is just taking that to the next level."

The fact that the "next level" from helping someone who has slipped sometimes is running into a burning building doesn't faze her. In fact, Perron says that some of the most challenging moments as a firefighter aren't the highly dangerous situations others may imagine. Sometimes the challenge is to be on the periphery of the "hot zone."

"Being the guy who is directing traffic around a collision, where you can't see what's happening and you feel like you aren't being useful, that's a challenge," she explains, especially since most firefighters join because they want to offer hands-on

assistance. "But everybody has an important role."

The department, which is celebrating its fiftieth year of existence, feels like Perron is second family. It's cliché, she says, but absolutely true.

"If you're going to go in and potentially risk your life, there has to be a lot of trust between you and the people who have your back," she says, adding that it's a very large and diverse family. "We have some career firefighters and paramedics, teachers, lawyers, electricians, and we all get along great."

Perron herself works in security for her day job, and has been a First Aid & CPR instructor since before she became a volunteer firefighter.

As for her actual family, they have always been supportive, for which she is very thankful. "My husband, when I said I wanted to do this and we had a newborn baby at

home, he said, 'Okay!' and was so great."

As for her kids? When she joined the force, her two oldest kids were school-aged.

"They thought that was pretty cool to say, 'Hey, my mom's a firefighter!'"

Her kids are part of why she keeps answering the calls for help after a long day's work or in the middle of the night. "I always have that little flip in my stomach when I get a call, and I think about where my kids are... But whoever needs help, that's someone's child, and I want to help them."

Not for a moment in 14 years has Perron wavered in her dedication to helping others.

"I can truly say that I haven't had an experience yet that has caused me to question why I'm doing this."

VOLUNTEER PROFILE | Jaren Madden



JAREN MADDEN

By Liz Byron

Jaren Madden is only 23 years old, but he has already been with the Ritchot Fire Department for six years and is now a volunteer firefighter and instructor for new firefighters.

For those of you doing the math, yes, that means Madden has been involved with the fire department since before he finished high school.

"I started through our cadet program," he explains. "If you're under 18 years old, you can't respond to calls, but you can still go to the training, and then you're able to get school credit, too."

So that's what he did, and

the firefighting stuck.

The thing that drew him in the first place was his father. "My dad was in the department, and I would just hang out around the fire hall with him, and go with them when they would do practice, and it just really intrigued me."

Six years later, Madden and his father are still together on the force.

The father-son duo have fun together, although Madden adds, "When it's time to respond to a call, we're on the same page. We set our family relationship aside and we get things done." After a call, though? "That's when it's time for jokes, for sure."

But his father isn't the only one Madden enjoys spending time with. "The whole force is a big family atmosphere. Everybody is looking out for each other, whether it's on a call or just in the community. It's really a great atmosphere."

Madden finds that his relationships with fellow firefighters are invaluable when it's time to respond to a call for help. When his pager goes off, he has to drop everything.

"You give your significant other a kiss and you're out the door," he says. "As you're in your car, you start to get your head in the zone for whatever call it is—equipment you'll need, resources you might

need, what you need to do first. But when you get in the truck, it eases your mind to know you're with your crew, and you look around at everyone and know you're going to be able to handle whatever is going to come at you."

Six years into his service as a firefighter, Madden, who is an electrician by trade, has no regrets. "Honestly, in the grand scheme of things, the department gives me back more than I can ever give to the department. It's just such rewarding work. If you're thinking about doing it, I would definitely advise you to go for it."

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Commentary

Are the Proposed Tax Changes “Fair”

By Greg Fehr

Recently our federal government—and specifically our Finance Minister—has announced that it is time to correct a great injustice.

The creation of corporations through which income flows has done a great injustice to the middle class who cannot take advantage of tax law to filter and screen their income into various streams for tax advantage. We are told it is simply not fair and equity must be brought back into the system.

The official opposition has been quick to point out the flaws in that logic, including rhetoric that this is actually an attack on the middle class due to the number of small corporations that will be affected, producing new inequalities in the system.

Through a combination of an overly complicated tax system and analysis that is wildly exaggerated by both sides, the true impact becomes pretty blurry.

As with most debates, the truth lies somewhere in the middle—or at least, in a

location far from either point of view.

Our current system of taxation is not supposed to be fair. It is, by design, a system that takes into account one’s “ability to pay”—that is, those who have more can pay more. We have accepted this balance, begrudgingly, because a truly fair tax system would lead to collectability problems and ultimately fail to provide the funds needed by government.

Anyone who believes that equity and fairness are factors in tax policy is naïve. Our policy-makers take two factors into account: generating revenue and justifying its impact on the electorate. Fairness is merely the invention of spin doctors.

That’s not to say that the proposed changes may not do some good, and I say this as a corporate entity that will be adversely affected. There are absolutely aspects of income sprinkling, a policy the Liberals would like to eliminate, that while legally correct appear to be unfair. Because our system is based on a person’s ability to pay, distributing income to individuals who appear “less

able” results in tax savings, and there are few checks, if such an arrangement is properly structured, to ensure that these individuals actually earned that income.

Yet in some corporations, including many family-run businesses like farms, these individuals do participate and they are rightfully due their share of the income and the advantage it brings. The challenge is that sometimes this contribution is non-traditional or difficult to measure. As such, the proposed checks and balances may make it tremendously difficult for these people.

But those same checks and balances will help to eliminate income payments to corporate “shareholders” who have no connection to the business and in many cases simply gift the income back to the primary controlling shareholder on a personal level.

Good may also be accomplished by the government by removing some people’s ability to build retained earnings, and essentially transfer their true income to a lower-taxed capital gain—but only if we

can find some way to allow for legitimate transfers of family businesses, which is the reason why the tax code was written this way initially.

Entrepreneurial parents who have built a family business may find themselves unable to reasonably pass on their business to the next generation without significant tax challenges, and due to these challenges the next generation may be unable to complete the purchase due to financial constraints.

Yes, some unintended recipient corporations have taken advantage of this, but we must be sure not to close the door on the deserving parties simply to keep out pure opportunists and abusers.

In the end, while it may seem that fairness is an objective concept, it may be quite subjective. And any changes we make to level the playing field may create unintended inequalities or hardships.

These are potentials, but one thing is without debate: the motivation of government is not about equality, but rather the bottom line and creating revenue.

Giving Thanks for Our Pioneers

By Roger Armbruster

The original pioneers of Niverville, of both British and Mennonite ancestry, inspired many other groups to settle the prairies by demonstrating its enormous agricultural potential. The hardiness and determination of these early settlers, many coming from a harsh environment in Russia, ensured that this unforgiving land would be transformed into a place from which livelihoods could be wrested, in spite of the challenges.

In later years, these generous settlers sent grain in relief to others suffering from famine in Russia. Niverville’s history includes contributions by many groups, including the French settlers, the Métis, and the Scottish in addition to the British and the Mennonites. Niverville today has become a culturally diverse and open community.

We often take for granted that the blessings we enjoy today were made possible by the sacrifices and investments of others. In the words of Benjamin Wallace, from a sermon he delivered at the First Unitarian Church in Omaha five years ago, “We build on foundations we did not lay. We warm ourselves at fires that we did not light. We sit in the shade of trees that we did not plant. We drink from wells that we did not dig. We partake of crops that we did not plant. We profit from persons before us that we have never met. We are ever bound to those who have gone before us.”

Were our ancestors perfect? Not by any means. There is also a dark side to every history. Some have memories of abuse and violence that went on in their homes. Do we deny that those things happened? No, but we deny their right to rule our lives today, or to determine our future.

One of the best ways to be healed of painful memories is to be grateful, to be thankful for the good things we have received from our ancestors. Without them, we would not even be here today, and without them we would not be as

far along on our journey as we presently are.

Thanksgiving focuses our minds upon the true, the lovely, and the praiseworthy. Gratitude is a function of our attention, and can be cultivated through choosing our thoughts and reactions wisely. If we would be more thoughtful, we would be more thankful.

Our deepest sense of gratitude comes through the grace of God, with the awareness that we have not earned, nor do we deserve, all that we have been given. Blaming and complaining keeps us stuck in past offences, and keeps us from moving forward into our future destiny.

So, do we give thanks for some things but complain about others? Or do we give thanks for everything? I am not thankful that my father verbally abused me as a boy, but I am thankful that his verbal attacks only deepened my faith, and strengthened my inner spirit to rise above hurts, insults, and offences. I came to realize that deep down, my father really did love me, even though he didn’t always know how to express it because of the emotional wounds that he himself had received from his alcoholic father.

To break this generational cycle, we must start to be grateful for the good things we have received. Without our parents, we would not even be alive! In our deepest parts, we all have the same longings to love and to be loved, and to be understood in the heart and the mind of another. The truth is that we are loved, and we are destined to return to the Father who loved us from before the beginning of time.

He has a purpose and a plan for our lives to make a difference in this world by transforming ashes into something beautiful, mourning into joy, a spirit of heaviness into a garment of praise and thanksgiving, cursing into blessing, and death into life.

Thanksgiving is a lifestyle that we choose while we learn from the past and yearn for the future!

Look on the Bright Side: The Best Way Out Is Always Through!

By Jan Kendall St. Cyr

My husband and I were into the second day of a weeklong road trip when we encountered an ominous summer storm. As lightning flashed and thunder boomed, I cowered further down in my seat and fearfully asked whether it would be wiser for us to pull over and wait out the bad weather.

“No,” my husband Gerry calmly replied. “The way out of this storm is to go through it.”

This terrified me, yet as we carefully drove on it wasn’t long before the sky began to lighten and the sun’s

comforting rays once again streamed through the clouds.

Going through the storm kept us from becoming stranded. It enabled us to stay the course and arrive at our destination.

Gerry didn’t know that day that he had loosely quoted a line from an inspiring poem from Robert Frost entitled “A Servant to Servants,” which reads, “The best way out is always through!” Regardless of how it was said, the powerful meaning wasn’t lost on me.

This wise adage is one I now practice in my daily life. Growing up with deep insecurities and anxieties,

including a fear of storms, led me to avoid challenges as an adult. I always retreated, denying the need for change and hiding whenever the slightest rumble could be heard on the horizon. This left me emotionally stuck and prevented me from attaining my personal dreams and goals.

I still longed to overcome obstacles and move through the tough times, though. I have been further encouraged by the words of author Hunter S. Thompson: “Who is the happier person? The one who has braved the storms of life and lived, or the one who has stayed securely on the shore

and merely existed?”

I wanted to bravely live and not merely exist, so I learned to walk through conflicts—and I finally began crossing some finish lines.

Storms in nature occur when disparate elements collide, and the same is true for us when we’re confronted with overwhelming and conflicting issues. Storms are an inevitable part of life, but they need not hold us back nor keep us stuck. As we grow in our belief that the best way out is always through, we will confront our storms and bravely walk toward the light.



Tim Harder.

ROSIE HARDER

Community Builders

A Man of Faith and Integrity: Tim Harder

By Clarence Braun

We grew up in the same community, yet I didn't really establish a friendship with Tim until the last ten years of his life. I was aware of Tim at a distance and had known of some of the challenges he had experienced in his teenage and early adult years. What I well remember from even way back was that he was pretty straight about things. His life was lived pretty much with two colors: black and white, and the shade of grey was rarely to be found.

I came to know Tim around the time when I was emerging from a dark hole which had lasted for the better part of ten years. He, too, had faced some dark years and had moved beyond those difficulties by making some choices that brought about a great change in his life. First among those choices was the invitation into his life of a Higher Power. In his case, that meant having an encounter with Jesus. The Jesus he met was the one we read about in the Gospels, the Jesus who came to invade this world to reveal and release his Father's incredible love for people.

The black-and-white part

of Tim's worldview wasn't related to how he saw people. By the evidence of his life, he was a man of true faith. To those who needed a helping hand, Tim was that guy. He always had time for those who were broken, experiencing challenges in life, or simply wanted to talk. And he wasn't about judging people.

Never will I forget the times when I heard Tim share on Sunday mornings at Maranatha. He would step up to the mike and talk about having encounters with people that left an impact. His outward demeanor looked gruff, and he could appear tough, but the heart of this man was so soft when encountering the brokenness of the world he lived in.

I want to mention another word that describes the Tim I came to know: integrity. I have been fortunate to have worked with Linda and Tim in various real estate transactions. One such transaction involved a property that had experienced a significant structural failure. Tim and Linda had purchased the property, made repairs, and some years later decided to sell it. Tim agreed that full disclosure was important, and

he actually suggested that any buyer should obtain a building inspection as a condition of sale.

Tim's interactions with his family were always deep and genuine. He loved from deep within his heart, yet he wasn't the typical warm, fuzzy, or huggy guy. He wasn't necessarily comfortable with those expressions of love. When I would occasionally reach out to give him a hug, he would say, "Do we have to do this?"

Tim didn't live his faith in the comfort of a church building. Those who knew him were aware that he didn't much enjoy reading or sitting in services. That wasn't his cup of tea. However, he had encountered Jesus and it had changed his life.

My life, and many others in our community, has been enriched by knowing Tim. The community will miss the kindness he showed and the care he demonstrated among us. As we celebrate his life, we do so knowing that in the summation of all things, the following realities are meaningful to us: "You are not far away, and we will meet again."

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Sports & Recreation

St. Adolphe Curling Gets Off to Roaring Start

By Eric Peterson

As the leaves hit the ground and the nights get chilly, friends are gathering all across Canada in groups of fours to throw lead rocks on a new curling season. It's no different in our region, where the St. Adolphe Curling Club is ready to rock for another year.

Suzanne Carriere, one of the club's board members, says that registration numbers look strong this year. "Registration went well. Over the last few years, the men's numbers have been slowly but steadily improving. The mixed has been very consistent and the junior programs are very popular."

The lifeblood of any sport is the youth coming into the game, and in recent years curling's governing bodies have put a lot of emphasis on attracting kids to the roaring game. The St. Adolphe Club offers two different Saturday programs for kids. The first is for beginners, usually between eight and 12 years of age. It's a learning-based program with on-ice volunteers teaching the kids the finer points of the game—even if they aren't quite strong enough to get 44 pounds of granite all the way down the ice yet.

The second program is the more traditional youth league. These kids are older, more developed, and play regular matches.

"The junior program had kind of stopped," says Carriere. "We resurrected it about four years ago and now some years we've had waiting lists. Lots of kids sign up. It's very promising in that sense."

Carriere adds some of the youth players spare for their parents' teams, and last year a youth rink even won



Curlers in St. Adolphe are gearing up for another great winter of fun and competition.

DEPOSITPHOTOS

the community's mixed bonspiel. It's the kind of momentum the club would like to build on. They've held early discussions with the Rocks & Rings program, which Carriere hopes will lead to the popular curling education program visiting local schools and introducing the sport to more children.

In recent years, curling on a national level has become big business, with big-name teams vying for ever-increasing cash prizes and

Olympic glory. That's caused a wider separation between top teams and those who play the game seriously but hold regular jobs. Carriere says that despite what you see on TV, at places like the St. Adolphe Curling Club, the game has stayed true to its roots.

"Socializing is an integral part of the game," she says. "Sitting down at the end of the game and having a drink or not having a drink. You can relax and chat. Maybe at the elites it's starting to get more serious, but at

the club level there hasn't been a lot of change."

The club boasts a 100-seat lounge for curlers to unwind after a hard night of sweeping. Carriere reports that the karaoke night held during the mixed bonspiel is a particularly raucous event.

Women's League runs on Tuesdays during the day, Men's League on Tuesday nights, the Mixed League on Friday, and the two junior programs on Saturday.

What Carriere and others love to see most are the new faces. "We always get a few new faces every year, though we don't get as many as we would like. People maybe get intimidated. But this is a very laidback sport. Anybody who's out on the ice is happy to take the time to help new people."

To encourage new curlers, the club holds open houses and puts on learn-to-curl events during the season. Carriere encourages anybody who has considered taking up the sport to visit the club's website or like their Facebook page.

Though the club has been running for more than 50 years, it's still growing and changing every season. Recent luck with obtaining grants has led to some noticeable improvements around the building. In the past few years, that's included new paint and carpeting.

"This year we have new LED lighting in the playing area," reports Carriere. "It really makes a huge difference."

Like most endeavours of this nature, the St. Adolphe Curling Club relies on volunteer hours to make the place run. Volunteers run the leagues and bonspiels, sit on the board, and take care of just about everything but the pebble. The icemaker is the only paid employee.

"Everybody here is very passionate about the sport," Carriere says.

This year's men's bonspiel will be held November 16–19, and the mixed bonspiel will hit the ice February 22–25.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

■ www.curlstadolphe.com

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The Niverville Rush at their final game.

SUE THOMPSON

Niverville Rush Reach Soccer Semifinals

By Jason Thompson

A rewarding inaugural season for the Niverville Rush U15 boys soccer team has come to a close. The 12-game regular season ended with eight wins, two losses, and two ties, which was good enough for a fourth-place finish out of 14 teams and a berth into the top-seeded division for the playoffs.

In the playoffs, the Rush squeaked out two hard-fought

wins against Whyteridge, but then dropped two narrow losses to the talented Valley Gardens squad. Valley Gardens then went on to play the winner of the other pool, Charleswood, in the final.

The Rush added to a successful year with a second-place finish at a tournament in Fargo this past June, and they also had an undefeated run earlier in the season at the Manitoba Soccer Association's festival in Stonewall.

Many players have since turned their attention to hockey and various high school sports, with a few continuing to play indoor soccer through the winter. The team would like to extend a special thanks to Brio Insurance, Niverville Chicken Chef, Sunova Credit Union, and WM Dyck and Sons for their gracious support which helped make the season possible.

New Champions Crowned at ODR Men's League

By Evan Braun

editor@nivervillecitizen.com

The second year of the Old Drover's Run men's league came to a head on September 19, with the team of Matt Exner and Robert Lamont winning the championship.

The pair played their final 18-hole round against Jerry and Jarret Rempel, winning the first seven holes and quickly pulling away. The match was decided after just 12 holes.

To get to the finals, Exner and Lamont had squeaked out narrow victories in the quarterfinals and semifinals, with both matches having to be decided in a playoff. Their quarterfinal match was played against Adam Wiebe and Greg Petrick, leading to a



Matt Exner and Robert Lamont.

ROBERT LAMONT

contentious battle against Travis Mason and Trevor Larade in the semifinals.

The champs, who have

been described by other players as underdogs, say that they look forward to defend their title next season.

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The Chamber corner

We would like to thank all those who braved the cold and rain to attend the chamber's 15th annual golf tournament, held for the first time in Niverville at Old Drover's Run. Our dedicated members, friends, and sponsors are appreciated.

We'd like to thank these supporters plus all those who golfed.

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Tuesdays, Time TBD, \$15.

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Mondays, 7:00–8:00 p.m., \$10 (drop-in).

Kickboxing

Mondays, 8:00–9:00 p.m., \$75.

Vinyasa Yoga

Mondays, 8:00–9:00 p.m., \$10.

Pickleball

Fridays, 7:00–8:30 p.m., Free.

Zumba

Wednesdays, 7:00–8:00 p.m., \$10 (drop-in).

▼ STE. AGATHE COMMUNITY CLUB

Further Your Photography Skills

Wednesdays, Oct. 4–25, 7:00–9:00 p.m., \$175.

▼ RITCHOT SENIOR SERVICES

Yoga

Wednesdays, Oct. 11–25, 1:30 p.m., \$40/10 classes.

Cardio Fit

Mondays, Oct. 2–30, 9:30 a.m., \$40/10 classes.

Chair Fit

Mondays, Oct. 2–30, 11:00 a.m., Free.

Muscle Fit

Thursdays, Oct. 5–26, 9:30 a.m., \$40/10 classes.

Alzheimer Coffee Break

Tuesday, Oct. 31, 10:00 a.m.

Block Therapy

Tuesday, Oct. 3–31, 6:00 p.m., \$64 or \$10 (drop-in).

Bring your Un-Finished Projects

Wednesdays, Oct. 18–25, 9:30–11:30 a.m.

ÎLE-DES-CHÊNES RECREATION

▼ TRANSCANADA CENTRE

Indoor Walking

Mondays/Wednesdays/Fridays in September, 9:00 a.m., Free.

Seniors Yoga

Mondays, September 18 & 25, 10:00 a.m., Free.

Yoga

Tuesdays, September 19 & 26, 6:30 p.m., \$125/10 classes.

Seniors Zumba

Tuesdays, 10:15 a.m., Free.

Zumba

Mondays starting September 25, 7:00 p.m., \$75/10 classes.

Pickle Ball

Tuesdays & Thursdays, 1:00–3:00 p.m., Free.

Pickle Ball

Wednesdays, 7:00–9:00 p.m., Free.

Block Therapy

Wednesdays starting September 27, 6:30 p.m., \$60/6 weeks.

Healthy Baby

Third Tuesday of each month, 10:00 a.m.–12:00 noon, Free.

Shake, Rattle & Role (ages 2–4 years)

Mondays, 5:45–6:45 p.m., Free.

Halloween Dance

Saturday, October 28

▼ ÉCOLE ÎLE-DES-CHÊNES SCHOOL

Taekwondo

Tuesdays/Thursdays, 6:00–7:30 p.m., \$40/month.

Spirals Rhythmic Gymnastics

Mondays, 6:00–8:00 p.m., \$105.

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▼ ÉCOLE ST. ADOLPHE SCHOOL GYM

Find Your Flow Yoga

Tuesdays until Oct. 31, 8:00 p.m., \$12 (drop-in).

Badminton

Mondays, 6:00–8:00 p.m., \$2 (drop-in; bring shoes & racket).

Tabata Fitness Classes

Wednesdays, 7:00–8:00 p.m., \$10 (drop-in).

Kickboxing

Wednesdays, 8:00–9:00 p.m., \$75.

Pickleball (50+)

Thursdays, 6:00–7:30 p.m., Free.

Karate

Tuesdays/Fridays, 6:00–7:30 p.m.

Shake, Rattle & Roll (ages 2–4 years)

Wednesdays, 5:45–6:45 p.m., Free.

▼ ST. ADOLPHE COMMUNITY CLUB

Gymnastics & Stunting (ages 2–8)

Mondays, 6:00–8:30 p.m., costs vary.

St. Adolphe Old Tyme Dance

Saturday, Oct. 14, 7:00–11:00 p.m., \$15.

Halloween Dance

Friday, October 27

The Regular Season Is Here

By Nick Anderson

For hockey fans, the NHL pre-season is a time to rejoice in the return of hockey. It means you're just that much closer to the regular season, and it gives you a chance to view certain players you'd otherwise only get to see in the minors. For those players, the pre-season is a chance to turn the page on their destiny and prove they've got what it takes to stick around with the pros. For those pros, the pre-season is a time to get back into shape, and up to speed, before having to go full throttle for the next seven months.

There was no shortage of this in Winnipeg this September.

From Patrik Laine's incredible five-point burst against the Flames to the battles between youth attempting to step into the bottom six, the Jets pre-season was full of storylines.

But while the quality of entertainment was certainly good, the team will most definitely want to improve on their lacklustre 2–3–1 record, during which they scored just three goals at even strength. In the two games the Jets did win, they went a combined 7 for 12 on the power play, good for a 58 percent conversion rate.

Despite lack of finish at five-on-five, the Jets don't seem to be concerned. And why should they be? If it weren't for hitting the goalpost four times against the Edmonton Oilers, we could be painting a whole different picture. With the talent the Jets have up front, this concern should easily diminish as the

regular season gets underway.

Then there are the penalties.

Heading into this season, referees have begun to crack down on the small slashes on hands. These small slashes became a huge topic of conversation last season after several players found themselves with broken fingers.

Over the past three seasons, the Jets have been the most penalized team in the league. A rise in penalty calls could entail bad news for the fifth worst penalty kill unit of 2016–17.

Two other rules being employed this season will take effect between whistles. Teams who unsuccessfully challenge an offside goal will receive a two-minute bench minor as a consequence. The second rule takes place in the faceoff dot. If a team has two players thrown out of the draw, they receive a two-minute penalty.

Realizing the importance of discipline, head coach Paul Maurice reached out to retired referee Paul Devorski. With 26 years of NHL refereeing experience, Devorski was asked to join the team during camp to provide players with a clearer idea of what's going to be called and how to avoid taking certain penalties. It could also help the team draw more penalties.

The man advantage was huge for the Jets through the pre-season. Led by Patrik Laine's three power play goals, the Jets converted with the man advantage at a better rate than any other team through the pre-season,

scoring on nearly 33 percent of their opportunities. While maintaining that stat would be next to impossible through an 82-game regular season, it's a real possibility for the Jets to remain the top-ranked power play. With two incredibly skilled units, there is no shortage of options for Maurice to turn to.

The trio of Laine, Scheifele, and Wheeler saw plenty of success on the power play, combining for 12 points. But they'll find themselves together outside the power play, too; the three are expected to open the season as a line. Their combination of size and skill creates a lot of chances in the two pre-season games they played together. Spending most of their time in the opposing team's zone, cycling the puck and finding open looks, the three could wreak havoc.

Goaltending will also need to be stellar if the Jets have any hope of making the playoffs. Newcomer Steve Mason was the victim of poor defence through his two starts, during which he went 1–0–1, stopping .904 percent of the shots he faced. Connor Hellybuyck had a very good showing through training camp. With a 1–1–1 record, the 24-year-old looks ready to compete with Mason for the starting job, posting a .922 save percentage with a 1.95 goals-against average in his three starts.

One way or another, BellMTS Place will be rocking when the Toronto Maple Leafs come into town for the season opener on October 4.

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Some Things are Best Left to the Professionals!

Wind and Disc Golf

fitville

By Chantel Todd

ctodd@nivervillecitizen.com

Many of us know how to toss around a Frisbee, whether we learned it at home, played Ultimate in high school, or even tossed a disc for our dog. But have you heard of disc golf?

Disc golf has been around for a while—since the 1970s, to be exact—but it's a still a widely unknown sport. It's a combination of Ultimate Frisbee and golf, and the goal is to throw the disc into a metal basket with the fewest strokes.

I'd heard of disc golf, but I hadn't given it a try until recently. I did some research on courses in southern Manitoba and found quite a few! The closest is in our own backyards, at Parc Cartier Park in Ste. Agathe. There's also the Happyland Disc Golf Course, the Kilcona Lakes Course, and others at La Barriere Park, Portage's Rotary Island Park, and Morden's



Chantel at the Ste. Agathe Parc Cartier Park disc golf course.

CHANTEL TODD

Stanley Park.

I set out for Ste. Agathe, which also happens to be one of the easier courses for beginners like me. It was a nine-hole course—or should I say, nine-basket?

The day was a bit windy when I approached the first basket, a par four. I lined up towards the basket and let my disc fly... well, I failed miserably and had a good laugh. The wind was so strong that

it caught the disc and carried it in the opposite direction! It landed about 50 feet behind me, behind the tee-off.

Boy was I teed off!

I found my disc and went back to the tee box, this time keeping the disc lower to the ground. I watched as it slid through the air. This time it landed in front of me at least. Success! I threw it again, getting closer to the basket. Then again and again and again.

Well, you get my point. It must have taken me seven or nine throws to get it in the basket, and in the last shot I was standing right beside it.

I continued the course and finished all nine holes. I have to say, I had a great time despite the wind. Would I try disc golf again? Of course! It was a fun new activity that anyone can do, plus it's free—and there's no need to book a tee time.

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**ATHLETE
OF
THE MONTH**



Amélie Gobeil

Amélie, 21, started dancing with Le Studio since its opening almost 11 years ago, although she danced for years before that. She is in her third year of university and keeps up a high grade-point average while taking or teaching 12 dance classes a week. Her commitment to dance and her dance family is outstanding. She is a great role model for the younger dancers in our community.

She has earned several gold medals and honours at festivals and competitions, both for herself and with her students. She performed at the San Diego Holiday Bowl Halftime Show in 2015. With the rest of her Le Studio Team, they were the only Canadians invited to perform!

Local Players Make Bantam Selects Cut

By Greg Fast

About 62 players attended this year's tryouts for the Bantam AAA Eastman Selects roster. The tryouts lasted ten days and went through three stages of cuts. At the end, 11 forwards, six defencemen, and two goalies were selected to join this year's team.

Niverville player Hayden Fast made the cut, as well as Matthew Egan from St. Adolphe.

"I am very excited to play with

this group of guys this year, and as well play for the great coaching staff," says Fast.

Practices and team meetings started the day after team selection. The Selects have since been practicing in Landmark, which will also be the location for all home games this season.

The hockey season began quickly with a trip to Thompson, where they played back-to-back league games on September 30 and October 1. This will be

followed by a Bantam Showcase tournament at the MTS Iceplex from October 6–8.

Another tournament comes up on December 7–11 in Prince Albert, Saskatchewan. The team will encounter some stiff competition from a number of teams from the West. Later in the season, the Selects will play two tournaments in February, one being provincials. Some players will also have the opportunity to play in the Manitoba Winter Games.

"There is a great atmosphere on this team," says Fast. "[It's a] very competitive group that wants to achieve a lot of goals and at the same time have a ton of fun doing it! I am very proud to call Niverville my home and to be able to represent my hometown on this team!"

The team is led by Chuck Edwards (head coach), Todd Anderson and Tony Lenchyshyn (assistant coaches), Kate Wiens (trainer), and Roger Storoschuk (goalie coach).



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Arts & Entertainment

From Pumpkin Patch to Pumpkin Match

By Liz Byron

On October 7, hundreds of people will flock to Roland, Manitoba to see a showdown between the province's avid pumpkin growers. The Roland Pumpkin Fair has been around since the 1970s, and this year both the pumpkins and the fair promise to be bigger and better than ever—and that's saying something, given that last year's winning pumpkin was a whopping 1,338 pounds!

"It's definitely very entertaining to watch the competition," says Tom Banman, Chairman of the Board for the fair, noting that the main event is the giant pumpkin weigh-off, which takes place at 10:30 a.m. at the Roland Arena. It's usually standing room only by the time the biggest fruit are weighed, as the event attracts over a thousand spectators.

However, the Pumpkin Fair is more than just the weigh-off.

"It's a full day event," Banman adds. "[There's] a pancake breakfast, crafts and vendors, kids events, and entertainment. Then there's the fall supper in the evening, so it's turned into a full day instead of just an afternoon."

Other events at the fair will include a sandwich, soup, and pie lunch, the Pumpkin Patch Tea Room (featuring pumpkin desserts), and a classic car show. Children's entertainment will be available in the form of face-painting and a bouncy house, while food vendors will be available all day. The beer garden opens at 11:00 a.m. School displays and educational/agricultural exhibitions will



Huge pumpkins draw a crowd at the weigh-off.

LISA PINKERTON-BASCHUK

also be on show for fairgoers. The day wraps up at 5:00 p.m. with the full course Harvest Supper.

Amidst all these activities, the pumpkin weigh-off remains the favourite event. Growers face off in categories for the heaviest pumpkin, tomato, watermelon, and squash. The 2016 and 2015 championship titles were both taken by Milan Lukes of St. Norbert. For two years straight, Lukes grew the fair's largest pumpkins, each over 1,300 pounds.

Lukes won't be competing this year, though.

"He couldn't grow a pumpkin this year because he had to focus on high school," Banman explains with a laugh. Yes, last year's big winner was a teenager. "He's the most

avid pumpkin-grower I've met."

Banman adds that growing giant pumpkins is a large time commitment, requiring approximately 45 minutes a day or more.

So, why giant pumpkins? For gardeners, Banman suggests, it's the competitive aspect. "It puts your skills on the line. You know, what secrets do you know to make a giant fruit?"

Successful growing is generally believed to be a combination of growing techniques and the genetics of pumpkin strains, and some growing techniques are considered standard. Most growers, for example, prune the vines so that each vine has only one blossom on it. In fact, the Roland Pumpkin Fair has a grower's manual and offers a

seminar every spring where people come out and discuss techniques and discoveries

"[But] everyone has their own secrets," Banman acknowledges.

Some of the motivation for growers may be financial. In Roland, the first-place prize for pumpkins is \$1,500 and second-place finish earns \$1,000. There are cash prizes for the top five finishers.

"There are tons of prizes, even for small pumpkins," Banman says, nothing that a "small pumpkin" is considered 150 pounds. However, he doesn't think the top competitors are motivated by money. "It's just their passion for it. I think you do it once, and your goal from there on out is to beat last year's."

Roland is one of only three locations in western Canada that hosts an official weigh-off with the Giant Pumpkin Commonwealth, the international organization responsible for setting standards and regulations for giant pumpkin growing. According to Guinness World Records, the current record for the world's largest pumpkin belongs to Mathias Willems of Belgium, whose pumpkin was weighed in 2016 by the GPC at 2,624 pounds.

While a pumpkin that size makes for almost mind-boggling photos, it doesn't make for great cooking. They have a higher water content than smaller fruit, which makes them very bland. After the competition, most giant pumpkins wind up as deer food.

"There's something for everyone, really," Banman concludes. "It's just a great way to spend the day."

EVENT GUIDE

Île-des-Chênes Halloween Dance
Saturday, October 28, TransCanada Centre

Fairy Sculpting Parti
Friday, October 6, 7:00–9:00 p.m.
South End of Arena, Niverville, \$36.75.

Recovery Through Creative Expressions Exhibit Opening
Friday, October 6, 7:00 p.m.
Steinbach Cultural Arts Centre, \$2.

Quilt Show
October 13–14, 9:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m.
Mennonite Heritage Village, Steinbach

Île-des-Chênes Fall Supper
Sunday, October 15, 3:30–7:00 p.m.
TransCanada Centre

St. Adolphe Fall Supper
Sunday, October 15, 4:00–7:00 p.m.
Pioneer Hall

Operation Christmas Child (Shoebbox Store)
October 17–November 18
Tues.: 3:30–8:30 p.m./Sat.: 10:30 a.m.–2:30 p.m.
Landmark Christian Fellowship, Landmark

Open Doors Fundraiser
Saturday, October 21, 7:00 p.m.
Heritage Centre, Niverville, \$10.

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REPAIRS & PARTS ON ALL MAKES & MODELS

Photographer Captures Life's Little Moments

By Evan Braun

✉ editor@nivervillecitizen.com

A local photography company is offering a fresh take on family photos. The Little Things is owned and operated by Kayla Hoskins from Niverville, although she offers her services to clients in a broad region throughout Winnipeg and the rural southeast.

"My company specializes in capturing everyday family moments and memories through photography and short films," Hoskins says. "Particularly, my style is referred to as documentary, meaning that unlike traditional family photography, where the parents get everyone dressed up and the backdrop is set at a park or location that is unfamiliar to the family, I photograph and film families doing everyday things and activities in environments they are familiar with."

Hoskins often sets sessions in a family's own home, a place where parents and kids are comfortable and at their most natural.

"I may be documenting what the family's morning looks like—waking up, brushing teeth, making breakfast, etc.," she says. "It can include indoor/outdoor playtime, games, activities, walking to the local park, going for ice cream, or attending dance class. During the change of seasons, popular session activities include decorating the Christmas tree, baking cookies, picking a pumpkin and decorating it for example."

She says the most important aspect of her service is that every session is customized to the individual family. "None



Photographer Kayla Hoskins

KAYLA HOSKINS

of my sessions look the same. My clients know that their kids are growing so fast that they can't keep up, and they want to capture what their life looks like right now."

Hoskins, who has always harboured an interest in photography, started The Little Things two years ago. She says that it grew out of the fact that she doesn't have the greatest memory and often tries to document her own memories by taking pictures.

"People saw my work and became interested and started asking me if I could photograph their families," she says of her transition from amateur to professional photographer. At the beginning, she mostly stuck to the tried-and-true approach of posing families and asking them to smile a lot. "I found after a while that this style didn't really work for me, and I realized that I didn't like asking people, particularly

kids, to smile, behave, and look at the camera. So I started experimenting with my style. I wanted to create photography that wasn't just 'pretty' but more importantly was significant, meaningful, and enjoyable to the families I was working with."

Hoskins began seeking more feedback from her clients about what was important to them—how they spent most of their time, what they most wanted to remember about that particular period in their lives. Armed with this feedback, she began directing her photography to capture more emotional, compelling, and relevant snippets of real life.

Although The Little Things caters to families, Hoskins has also worked extensively with couples, weddings, and businesses. More recently, she has expanded to also produce short films. These films are

very short indeed, about two to four minutes long.

"I think people primarily think of films for the really big events in their lives," Hoskins says. "People are always looking for a videographer for weddings, for example. I think people forget about films for the little moments in life—until those moments have passed, when their kids have grown, and people look back and realize they wish they had more videos of their family growing up."

She fondly recalls a favourite client session from last year, with a family with two young children. New to documentary photography, they wanted a photo session that captured their family celebrating Christmas together.

"After chatting with the parents about what they wanted to remember about this time, they decided they would like me to photograph them and the kids decorating the Christmas tree," she remembers. "What I liked about it most was that the family got to spend time together doing something they do traditionally every year, and I was able to work behind the scenes to capture that moment for them."

And that, she says, is the key to what she does: "The thing about documentary photography that I love is it changes how people view their everyday experiences, and allows them to find the beauty in that."

FOR MORE INFORMATION

■ www.thelittle-things.com
 ■ www.facebook.com/thelittlethingsphotosandfilm



RACHEL DRADER

Children's Clothing with a Community Feel

By Sherry Peters

Quinn and Dot offers modern design and comfort in clothing for infants and young children while keeping it local. Its owner, Rachel Drader, lives in Niverville.

"I was looking for modern clothing for my young daughter and couldn't find anything locally that fit with my love of simple, monochrome designs," says Drader. "I started creating basic pieces myself and posting them on my Instagram account and was flooded with orders and requests for other pieces."

Drader, who moved to Niverville about a year ago, says that she and her husband were on the hunt for a family-friendly community to raise their daughters, the kind of community that would also match the philosophy of her business. Run out of her home, each item is lovingly handcrafted by Drader or her husband, mother, or sister-in-law.

Drader has expanded the community aspect of Quinn and Dot by supporting other local and regional businesses. "A lot of my customers value the attention to detail that comes with handmade products and like that their money is going towards a local business. We source almost all of our fabrics, notions [buttons and zippers], tags, shipping supplies, and accessories within Manitoba. If they are not available locally, we source the remaining within Canada wherever possible."

The family-friendly community feel extends beyond the clothing and sourcing of materials. The Quinn and Dot blog offers advice on clean and modern decorating,

photographs, anecdotes of parenthood, and promotes local businesses.

From the early days of slouchy beanies, headbands, and leggings, the business's catalogue of products continues to grow. Quinn and Dot has recently added rompers, raglans, harems, and accessories.

"We currently offer between 10 to 15 items in six or seven different colours and designs depending on the item," says Drader. "This will vary depending on the season."

Their stylish rompers, leggings, and harems are made for comfort and feature cuffs that can be adjusted to suit every child. Currently, each lovingly handcrafted item takes anywhere from 20 to 40 minutes to make.

What's next for this growing business? Branching out beyond clothing for infants and young children may be in Quinn and Dot's future. "I'm always playing with new designs and considering offering product for older children as well as adults," Drader says.

With clothing with such vibrant colours and made of soft cotton and bamboo knits, is it possible to pick a favourite?

"It is very hard to choose one item," she admits, "but I truly love our rompers, as my daughters absolutely love them and they are so comfortable."

These made-to-order items are available in a few boutique stores and sold online (see below).

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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