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LOCAL NEWS

High School Program Helps Students Excel

■ NCI's Turning Point program is designed to help students who struggle in the traditional classroom setting. And it's paying off.

Details on Pages 6-7



LOCAL NEWS

Capo di Grande Is Coming to Niverville in April

■ The popular Île-des-Chênes coffee shop has taken over the former Slice of Life location in Niverville and is in the midst of renovations.

Details on Page 12

LOCAL NEWS

Niverville Amends Water/Sewer Policy

■ Niverville property owners are now financially responsible for their water and sewer connecting lines.

Details on Pages 20-21

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

Big-Budget Movie Magic, Locally

■ Chroma Ranch, north of Île-des-Chênes, is in the business of making big-budget films.

Details on Page 29



Southwest Is Manitoba's Fastest Growing Region

» DETAILS ON PAGE 5

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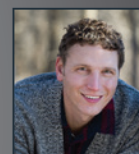
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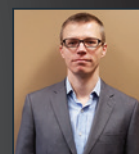
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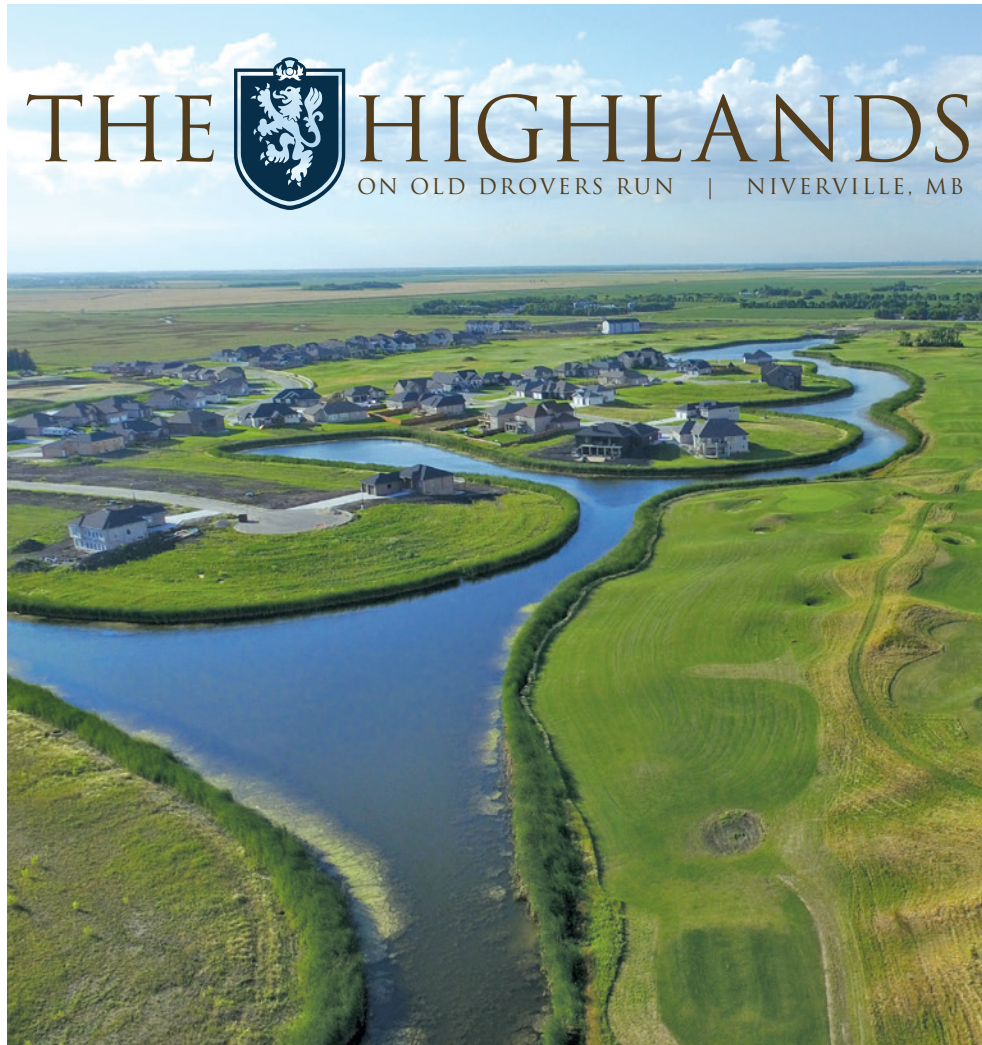
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The Citizen

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Citizen Patrols Serve as Niverville's Eyes and Ears

The Town of Niverville is taking further steps to deter crime through citizen patrol, neighbourhood watches, and increased surveillance.



TREVOR LUX

info@nivervillecitizen.com

Concern surrounding safety has been growing since a string of thefts, break-ins, and a violent attack shook the Town of Niverville earlier this year. As a result, several new programs have been implemented through the efforts of both town council and private citizens.

CITIZENS ON PATROL

The Niverville Crime Prevention Program (NCPP) is a revision to the previous Citizens on Patrol Program and has come together quite well according to Jim Buys, Niverville's chief administrative officer.

"The NCPP follows the principles contained within the original COPP that was first introduced to the community by former councillor Fred Kaita," Buys says.

The NCPP offers citizens the opportunity to get directly involved with the safety of their community. Essentially, volunteers work a number of evening hours as often as they choose, serving as the eyes and ears of the community. Volunteers are tasked with surveillance, while the municipal office provides those volunteers with the use of the town truck, which is equipped with a dash camera, a reporting file, and an instructions binder. The information collected is forwarded to the RCMP for their records and follow-up as needed.

"[The volunteers'] training is to see suspicious activity and report it," says Mayor



Design of the upcoming neighbourhood watch signs in Niverville.

BARRY PIASTA

Myron Dyck. "The training involves filling out the necessary information that is beneficial to police and not become involved with anyone, in any way. The job is to report."

Training sessions are provided. Dyck is quick to point out that privacy and safety are a high priority when it comes to the identity of volunteers who participate in the program. Anyone interested in volunteering with the program is encouraged to contact the town office.

Meanwhile, the communities of Ritchot have implemented their own volunteer program in response to spiking crime. The Ritchot Citizens on

Patrol Program (COPP) is operated by volunteers in the communities of St. Adolphe, Ste. Agathe, Grande Pointe, and Île-des-Chênes. The group patrols on foot, bicycle, or other means as required for surveillance and report efforts.

NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH

Following a meeting with Niverville's town council on February 7, local resident Barry Piasta spearheaded the Neighbourhood Watch Program. The program consists of signage on both residential properties as well as signs throughout the community in order to deter criminals. The program splits the town into regions—north,

south, east, and west. Each region is to be monitored on a volunteer basis by residents. So far, the program has 10 volunteer participants. Piasta says that they are working closely alongside town council regarding further safety and surveillance efforts.

Piasta has also enlisted the help of Adam Jakab from Guardian Advanced Solutions. They hope that a Community Connectivity website can be set up in the future, allowing users to share information regarding

suspicious activity. This may include camera feeds for those on the system. The website will be the first of its kind.

Piasta also hopes that the Community Connectivity program will expand to include other towns in the surrounding area.

SURVEILLANCE GRANTS

According to Mayor Dyck, Niverville has a three-part approach to policing. First, the town has made a formal request for a greater police presence in the community. The second part is the ongoing call for volunteers in the NCPP. The third part is a new surveillance camera policy recently passed by town council.

Council will offer grants to as many as 50 businesses, churches, and schools to install cameras on their properties, as long as those cameras meet police specifications. The \$200 annual grants will be renewable up to five years, for a total of \$1,000.

Dyck has noted that the possibility still exists for a dedicated town police force in the future, but that the population will need to exceed 5,000 residents first.

Piasta says that he feels Niverville is a great place to live, and that the town is always striving for the best. He notes that the steps already in motion serve to solidify that ideal when it comes to safety in the community.



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Bothwell Cheese Unveils Non-GMO Products

By Brenda Sawatzky

bsawatzky@nivervillecitizen.com

Though the question of GMO (genetically modified organism) food safety is a topic of hot debate, there continues to be growing demand from the Canadian public for food labelling, allowing the consumer to make informed choices about what they eat.

According to a 2015 Ipsos Reid Poll, 88 percent of Canadians believe that our government should make GMO labelling mandatory. The Canadian government has yet to comply, but some food manufacturers are taking the lead anyway.

Bothwell Cheese, an award-winning cheese producer located in New Bothwell, is the first Canadian cheese manufacturer to receive Non-GMO Project status.

"We are excited to kick off the launch of our Non-GMO Project verified product line with two delicious flavours of the cheddar we know Canadians love: medium white cheddar and medium coloured cheddar," says Mike Raftis, Vice President of Sales and Marketing for Bothwell Cheese. "We have a strong tradition of meeting the needs of Canadians by offering a



The cheese shop at Bothwell Cheese in New Bothwell.

JOEY VILLANUEVA

variety of different product options to choose from, including traditional, flavoured, kosher, and vegetarian-friendly cheeses. We also believe in transparency in our food supply and this is one way for us to offer consumers a product they've been asking for."

According to Raftis, the Non-GMO Project is the fastest growing label in the natural products industry, representing \$19.2 billion in annual sales and more than 39,000 verified products. The Non-GMO Project verified seal is the most trusted non-GMO label among consumers.

"It's important for people to know that the Non-GMO Project verified seal is not a GMO-free claim," says Raftis. "Instead, it provides an assurance that a product and its ingredients have completed comprehensive third-party testing to verify that they have a GMO presence below 0.9 percent. For our products, we are verifying that the cheese is made with milk from dairy cows fed a diet of non-GMO crops."

Bothwell Cheese's compliance with this program requires adherence to strict regulations. Milk will be sourced from Non-GMO Project verified farms

in Manitoba, transporting it directly to their plant and placing it into silos specially designated for verified products only. Production is carefully controlled and monitored in order to meet the approval of Non-GMO Project technical administrators who evaluate the ingredients, milk segregation, and testing methods. Farms falling under these criteria are monitored in much the same manner, testing crops at harvest time and testing again upon delivery to its end destination.

"We have been making natural cheese for 80 years, becoming one of

Canada's largest independent cheesemakers through our commitment to producing a diverse portfolio of high-quality cheese products made from only 100 percent fresh local milk and responding quickly to meet the needs of our customers," says Raftis. "It is very challenging for cheese manufacturers to produce a portfolio as diverse as ours, and we are very proud to have such an experienced team and commitment to provide Canadians with wholesome options."

Raftis adds that the launch of their new product line in no way represents the validity of claims made for or against GMO safety. Bothwell Cheese's regular products are sourced from the milk of Canadian dairy cattle fed genetically modified feed approved by Health Canada and the Canadian Food Inspection Agency.

"Bothwell Cheese and dairy farmers of Manitoba have a shared interest in ensuring the long-term sustainability of our industry," says Raftis. "Product development and innovation is a key part of that."

Bothwell Cheese is projecting a mid-summer launch for their new product line.

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Southeast Is Manitoba's Fastest Growing Region

Results have started to come in from the 2016 census, showing significant regional growth.



EVAN
BRAUN

editor@nivervillecitizen.com

Niverville and the RM of Ritchot are growing by leaps by bounds, according to the first wave of data released from the 2016 census. Statistics Canada shows that this region, which was the fastest growing five years ago, has retained that distinction.

Indeed, Ritchot is the eighteenth fastest growing municipality in Canada with a population over 5,000. Its population grew by 21.9 percent. Niverville's population is slightly too low to be included in this category, but its rate of growth is even higher, at 30.2 percent.

Niverville's population climbed from 3,540 to 4,610, whereas Ritchot increased from 5,478 residents to 6,679. They rank thirty-first and twentieth respectively in terms of their share of Manitoba's overall population. Niverville has 1,555 dwellings and Ritchot has 2,437.

Adjacent regions in the southeast have also experienced considerable growth, well beyond the provincial average of 5.8 percent and the national average of five percent.

Steinbach added 2,305



The town of Niverville remains the fastest growing population centre in the region.

PEDRO BALSEIRO

residents, growing by 17 percent. The RM of La Broquerie grew almost as much, by 16.9 percent and 878 residents. The RM of Tache reached 11,568 residents, an increase of 12.5 percent. The RM of Hanover grew by 12.2 percent to hit 15,733. To the west, the population in the RM of Macdonald expanded by 14 percent.

The City of Winnipeg recorded its largest population bump since the 1970s, growing by 6.3 percent and more than 41,000 residents since 2011.

While Statistics Canada has released data about population and dwelling counts, a great deal more information is set to be unveiled in the coming

months which will shine a light on how our country, province, and region is changing. Future releases will include age and sex, language, family information (size of households and marital status), income, immigration and ethno-

cultural diversity, housing, and education.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/dp-pd/index-eng.cfm

AREA	POPULATION	CHANGE %
Niverville	4,610	30.2%
RM of Ritchot	6,679	21.9%
Steinbach	15,829	17.0%
RM of La Broquerie	6,076	16.9%
RM of Macdonald	7,162	14.0%
RM of Tache	11,568	12.5%
RM of Hanover	15,733	12.2%
Winnipeg	41,627	6.3%
Province of Manitoba	1,278,365	5.8%
Canada	35,151,728	5.0%

CITIZEN POLL

THIS MONTH'S QUESTION:

Do you expect Niverville and Ritchot to continue to grow at the current pace, or a greater pace, in the future?

- ☐ **YES** – This region has a lot to draw people to it, and I expect it will continue to experience strong growth for some time to come.
- ☐ **NO** – I expect that the current pace of growth is not sustainable.

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LAST MONTH'S RESULTS:

Do you feel your community's Main Street currently reflects well on its residents and evokes a sense of pride?



YOUR COMMENTS:

Establish a town square greenspace bordered by 2nd and 3rd south of main street.

It's really a very unattractive Main St. Buildings mostly look old and worn. If I was a tourist driving through this town, there is nothing that would draw me in to stop. I would just drive on.

I think the face of Main Street needs some improvement. It is looking tired and drab. Needs some prettiness brought to it. How about adding some greenspace? More trees? Some of the buildings along Main Street are looking shabby too.

Niverville Main Street could use a facelift. The signs entering the community on each side of town could be upgraded, many of the businesses down the old part of Main Street could use a facelift - maybe we need an incentive for curbside appeal improvements? The hydro wires lining the road are not really pleasing, and there is no area on Main Street with a culture or draw in the community where people are drawn to come together. The sidewalk improvements are a good idea, but a lot more could be done.

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High School Learning Program Helps Students Excel

The Turning Point program at NCI is all about finding alternative ways of learning—and finding a better life.

By Eric Peterson

For years, Bonny Martens' son Barrett had been plagued by stomachaches. Not the kind you get from a disease or virus. The kind you get when you never feel at ease, when you're nervous, scared, or unhappy. When you can't stand the idea of getting out of bed and going to school.

Even in this so-called gentler age we live in, the odds are stacked against a kid like Barrett Martens in the schoolyard. He has Asberger's Syndrome, he suffers from ADHD, and his mom says he was being victimized by bullies. It got so bad that Bonny and her husband Jeff made the decision to pull Barrett out of school for a while in Grade Eight.

"I just felt he needed a mental break," says Bonny. "He missed about four to six months."

She worried her son wouldn't make it through school, that she would never see him in a cap and gown smiling for her camera with a high school diploma in his hands.

"When we came to the end of Grade Ten, we knew we had to try something different," she says.

That something different was the Turning Point Learning Program Alternative Education



Students get down to work in the Alt Ed classroom.

SUSANNE KWIATKOWSKI

Classroom at Niverville Collegiate Institute. If you know of the program, you've probably heard it referred to as "Alt Ed." And it's a big part of the reason Barrett Martens' stomach doesn't hurt anymore.

The Turning Point Learning Program (TPLP) is in its fifth year at NCI. The program is designed to help Grades 11 and 12 students who are struggling to varying degrees in the traditional classroom setting. Alt Ed offers a more individualized approach to learning, with a far lower student-to-teacher ratio and a lot more hands-on learning.

Susanne Kwiatkowski teaches the TPLP class in Niverville, and she's been spearheading the program since day one.

"The idea came out of the States," says Kwiatkowski. "We thought it was something that was worthwhile."

The program had humble beginnings. The first year, their classroom was a corner of the library and they had trouble finding kids to be part of the program.

"In the early years we were tapping shoulders," Kwiatkowski says. But word quickly spread that this program could help students who were having trouble finding their academic footing.

Bethany Visser was doing okay. She wasn't a troubled kid. Her teachers liked her, she had friends, and she was pulling in perfectly mediocre marks. Just the kind of kid who could slide through her school years relatively unnoticed. Except one day, her Grade Ten class was herded into the band room. At the front of the room was Susanne Kwiatkowski, and she was there to talk about the Alt Ed program. After that day, school would never be the

same for her.

"After hearing Mrs. Kwiatkowski talk, I knew it was something I wanted to be a part of," says Visser.

After convincing her sceptical parents that Alt Ed was her best chance at academic success, Visser was ready to join NCI's second Turning Point class.

"The biggest thing is they took us through tests to determine our learning styles," Visser adds. "Turns out I'm a kinesthetic learner." In layman's terms, this means that she learns best by doing something rather than seeing it or hearing about it. It's a common trait of kids who excel in Alt Ed.

The students even spend part of their time working at local businesses or volunteering in the community. They gain hands-on rather than theoretical experience.

"They're learning the same



Bethany Visser celebrates her graduation with Alt Ed teacher Susanne Kwiatkowski.

BETHANY VISSER

stuff, just presenting it in a different way," says Bonny Martens. "Not trying to make him learn the way everyone else does. Meeting them where they're at."

Kwiatkowski agrees. "This program is about alternative ways of learning," she says. "Not an alternative curriculum. We do the same curriculum, we just get there differently."

The other big advantage is the amount of time the teachers can spend with individual

students. Visser says that she went from a class of 30 students to a class of three when she joined the program.

Martens says that the kids can't help but learn. "Barrett takes math with three kids. They just keep going till you get it," she says.

All involved say that students in Alt Ed have sometimes faced a stigma in school caused by a lack of understanding about how the program works. Bonny Martens says that



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her son “catches a lot of flak,” because some kids believe the Alt Ed program is an easier academic ride.

Kwiatkowski credits the bravery of the kids who participated in the program in the early years for putting themselves out there.

Visser says she just worked through any doubts people had about the TPLP. “I just worked really hard to prove I wasn’t a troubled kid.”

Everybody involved in the program—except Susanne Kwiatkowski—will tell you that Susanne Kwiatkowski is the hero of this story.

“Absolutely,” says Visser. “Mrs. K cared so genuinely for each of us. Not just academically, but about your home life too. She was constantly calling your parents. Seeing how that relationship is going.”

“They all have a common love for the teacher,” adds Martens. “Everybody loves Mrs. K.”

Martens tells the story of a couple of kids who were going to skip their graduation ceremony. Mrs K would have none of it.

“We worked too hard to get you here,” Kwiatkowski told the students. In the end, they

attended the ceremony of course.

Martens says that some of these kids might not have finished school if it wasn’t for her.

For her part, Kwiatkowski says that’s it the relationships with her students that bring her the most satisfaction. “I see a huge amount of impact. Kids seeing they have academic value again. They had pigeon-holed themselves. ‘I’m not a good student. I’m not smart.’ This program really can change their perspective.”

When Kwiatkowski speaks, you can tell just how proud she is of her students. “I love this job so completely. We get to see them grow. They stay in touch with me. I get to be able to be part of their lives. They’ll pop in, shoot me a text. They have a connection to the school, to me, to the program. What more could you want?”

One day, Barrett Martens will be one of those kids texting. He’s finishing Grade 11 now and will be graduating next year. His mother is more than a little pleased. You can hardly blame her for bragging a bit.

“We went from just trying to get him to pass to he’s getting

70s and 80s in everything,” Martens says. “There have been times when I wondered if he was going to get through school.”

Her son is more social now. He’s formed friendships he didn’t have before. He doesn’t sleep as much and his stomach aches are a thing of the past.

Bethany Visser graduated from the TPLP and Niverville Collegiate in 2015. She’s currently taking a four-year sociology program at Providence University College. At her graduation, she won awards for math and English, something she couldn’t have imagined when she was bringing home 60s in Grade Ten.

“I’m so grateful for the program” Visser says.

What Visser really wants to do with her life is become an author. She says that Susanne Kwiatkowski knew this and always made time for Bethany to work on her book in class. Though Visser has put that project on hold to concentrate on her studies, she remembers clearly what the book was about.

“A girl who wasn’t doing so well,” she explains, “going out and finding a better life.”

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IN BRIEF



PEDRO BALSEIRO

Shell and Tims to Throw Grand Opening

Niverville's new Shell station and Tim Hortons will be holding a grand opening on March 25, from 10:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m.

To commemorate the occasion, Shell will have face-painting and a gift for every child you comes into the store. In addition, they'll host a gas giveaway, with customers earning one ballot for every purchase of 25 litres of gas or more. Draws will also be held for a Rockstar Edition BMX, a Rockstar Edition skateboard, various gift baskets, and 500 bonus Air Miles certificates.

Tim Hortons will be giving away gift cards and serving a giant cake. They'll also hold a ribbon-cutting ceremony. The store's manager has teased that other treats and surprises are in store for customers that day.

Both businesses have been open since late December.

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Ritchot Projects Receive Manitoba Hydro Funding

By Evan Braun

✉ editor@nivervillecitizen.com

In December, the RM of Ritchot made several funding requests from the Manitoba Hydro Community Development Initiatives Funding Program. The successful applicants were announced in February, including several from Ritchot totalling \$137,000.

"This is a community funding intake program that the Economic Development Office administers to support not-for-profit organizations [and] community-based projects," says Lesley Gaudry, Ritchot's Community Economic Development Officer. "The deadline for applications is December 23. The committee meets in January, and funding announcements [are] in February."

In St. Adolphe, the new Garden Ridge Park will be granted \$3,000 for trees and shrubs. Ecole St. Adolphe School's new playground will receive \$1,000 worth of vegetation. Upgrades to the ice area lighting system at the St. Adolphe Curling Club were approved for \$24,000. Finally, the St. Adolphe Heritage Mural, which is slated to be erected this spring, received \$2,000 in funding. Gaudry says the mural will feature natural and built heritage icons and be surrounded in a timber-frame structure.

In Ste. Agathe, the outdoor rink has been approved for a \$20,000 upgrade. An additional \$20,000 has been earmarked for the Ste. Agathe Hall's commercial kitchen.

The Garderie IDC Daycare Expansion Project in Île-des-Chênes will be the recipient of



The TransCanada Centre in Île-des-Chênes.

R.M. OF RITCHOT

a \$25,000 grant. Also in Île-des-Chênes, the TransCanada Centre was granted \$10,000 for wall coverings to protect the bottom four feet of the walls in the grand area and hallways, which will help preserve the walls from wear and tear and alleviate the need to frequently repaint. At last, the Vintage Club will receive \$4,000 for Pickleball equipment. The club hosts matches Tuesdays and Thursdays at 1:00 p.m.

A grant of \$10,000 will go to the

Grande Pointe Homeowners Association for work to be completed on phase two of its new garage and community clubhouse. This four-season facility at Grande Point Park will provide users of the outdoor rink with a place to warm up, as well as access to bathrooms.

Next winter, the municipality is planning to launch its Ski the RM cross-country skiing program. Gaudry says that the exact trail locations will be developed this summer, and that they're hoping

to have a loop trail in each community. The program is slated to collect \$11,000 for the purchase of a ski trail groomer.

Finally, the Ritchot Chamber of Commerce has been approved \$7,000 for their Safety and Health Awareness Program. The money is earmarked to help provide health and safety training for businesses in the region, as well as first aid training for individuals.

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Community Builders: Tom and Bonnie Schmitke

A Gift to Our Community

By Clarence Braun

I well remember the first time I met Tom Schmitke. This was some time after he had made his first trip to Niverville back in the spring of 1999. He and his wife Bonnie had come from Oakville, Manitoba to take a look at an opportunity which The Grocery People, the parent company for the Bigway chain, had drawn his attention to.

The Schmitkes walked through the old grocery store located at the corner of Prairie Trail (then known as First Avenue North) and Main Street, on the property where the car wash presently sits. As Tom drove out of Niverville that day, he told Bonnie, "I will never buy that store."

Fast-forward several weeks later, when the CEO of The Grocery People called Tom personally and asked him to go back to Niverville and take

another look. Tom was adamant that he had seen enough, but he finally agreed to go back.

This time, their drive included a trip into the residential part of the community. When they returned to Oakville that day, the atmosphere in the car was different. Tom and Bonnie had realized that an opportunity existed here, and they wanted to be a part of it.

Within a few weeks, they purchased the store and made plans to move to Niverville.

Tom was born in Snowflake, Manitoba, but raised in Portage la Prairie and had been involved in retail his whole life. Bonnie was born in Wainwright, Alberta, and had also been in retail. In fact, she had been working in the town's theatre when she caught Tom's eye. They started dating and eventually moved to Fort McMurray in 1984 where they married and had two children,



Tom and Bonnie Schmitke.

■ TOM SCHMITKE

John and Crystal. A move back to Portage la Prairie in 1987 provided them with their first experience with grocery retail, which grew into a passion that continues to this day.

Their move to Niverville coincided with the start of the town's population growth. I was mayor at the time, and together with council we met Tom after he purchased the store. We saw something in

him and felt he would be a really good fit for Niverville. Our community needed someone who was passionate about the grocery business and wanted to expand to create a better shopping experience here. Council then presented to Tom an opportunity that led to the new store being built at the corner of Fifth Avenue and Main Street in 2003.

Within two years of living

here, both Bonnie and Tom became active in the Olde Tyme Country Fair. Bonnie decided to take responsibility for all the food on Friday nights, with crowds numbering into the thousands. She and Tom felt a great sense of fulfillment being on the street and mingling with the people.

Around that time, Tom agreed to sit on the board of the Niverville Heritage Centre, a position which he still serves in today. He mentions the incredible circumstances and sense of community that came with the building of the Heritage Life Personal Care Home.

Tom and Bonnie say that Niverville taught them what real community is all about. They speak about the gift that this community had been to them as a family. Indeed, the community has seen this in the way they have lived their lives. Countless organizations and

people have been the beneficiaries of their generosity. They have always been there to support community causes, to support charity fundraisers, and to reach out to families in need with money or groceries.

When I asked them if I could write this story, their response was typical of people who give of themselves for the right reasons. They said they would rather not be written about, as there are so many others who are worthy of being honoured.

That's at the heart of what it means to be a community builder. When you live your life to be recognized, you're never satisfied and every slight can become an offence. However, when you give without the need for recognition, you demonstrate a servant's heart.

Thank you, Tom and Bonnie, for your generosity. It has been such a gift to our community.



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Upgrades Coming this Summer to Niverville Public Gardens

By Brenda Sawatzky

bsawatzky@nivervillecitizen.com

In this fast-paced world of electronics, technology, and instant messaging, some of us have forgotten how to slow down and breathe. There are few better remedies than the solace of a beautifully orchestrated garden. They are places of serenity, joy, and fascination for the earth's beauty.

Niverville Communities in Bloom (NCIB) has been actively working towards creating more such natural panoramas for residents and visitors of all ages. In 2016, together with the Remembrance Day Committee, NCIB developed the Cenotaph Poppy Garden to enhance the visual appeal of Main Street's Heritage Cemetery. The garden has since been featured in *Manitoba Gardener* and was one of six recipients awarded honours by the Home Hardware Gardens of Remembrance Program. The garden will also be featured in the spring edition of the national *Communities in Bloom* magazine.

In 2017, NCIB will work with the community to enhance the existing Niverville Heritage Gardens in the outdoor courtyard of the Heritage Centre. NCIB is anticipating a fairly major expansion of the gardens to include more extensive pathways and flower gardens, native plants, butterfly gardens, and a community orchard. More garden beds will be added to complement the previously built Junior Gardener vegetable beds, providing raised garden bed options for seniors. Nearby, a composting area



Proposed pavilion for the Niverville Heritage Gardens.

SHIRLEY HOULT

will be created to support the 2017 Business Composting Initiative.

"The intergenerational aspect and historical importance of the Heritage Gardens makes it unique," says Shirley Hoult of NCIB. "Located on the Crow Wing Trail, the volunteer-run Norman Wittick Memorial Rose Gardens and Botanical Pioneer Gardens are unique, but the additional gardens will create a larger welcoming space for Niverville residents and visitors to enjoy. The expanded gardens will include mobility-friendly pathways, lighting, and access to the gardens. A community orchard will give availability of fresh fruits."

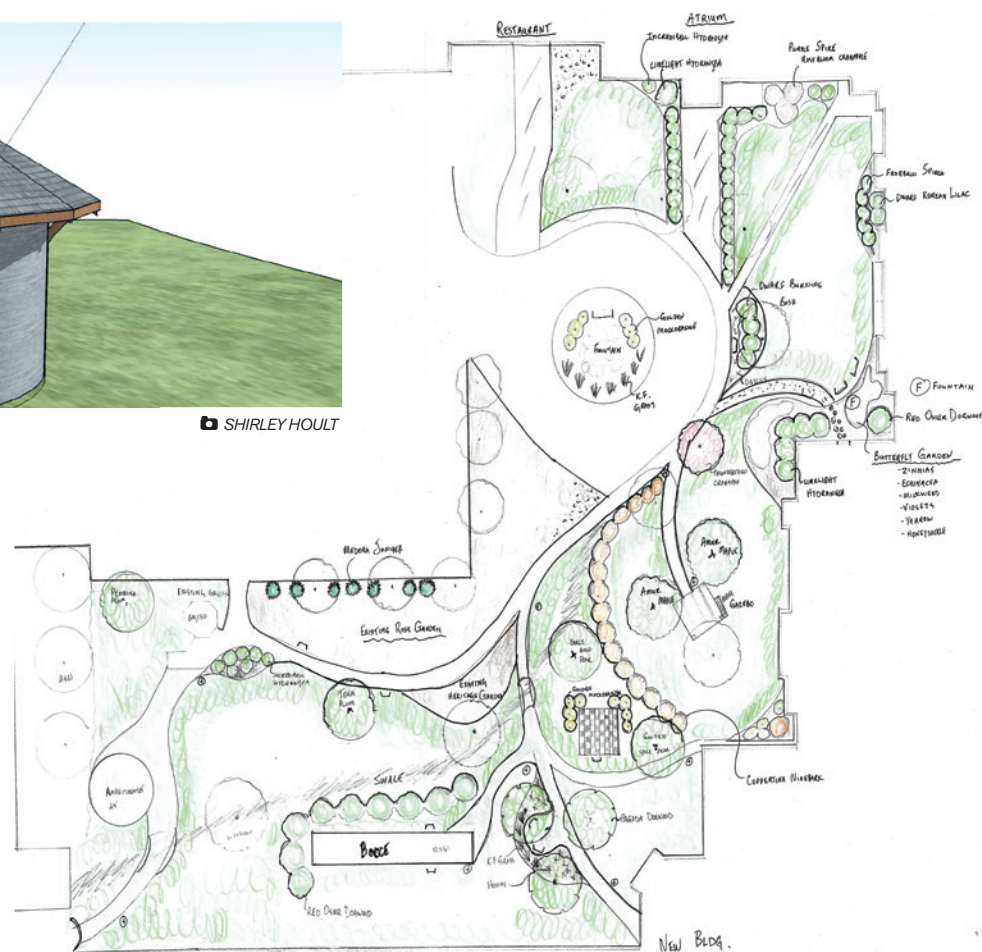
An interactive component is also in the works for summer. The committee will oversee the installation of a bocce ball court, a lawn chess game, mini libraries throughout the gardens, a pergola, and a barbecue pit for families and visitors to use, as well as a pavilion.

"The Heritage Pavilion will be 26 feet in diameter and reflect the original design of the first grain elevator built in 1879,"

says Hoult, referring to Western Canada's very first grain elevator, built in Niverville. "It will contain some of the original wood used and stained-glass windows depicting the early pioneers to Niverville. It is hoped we can also include some story boards depicting heritage pictures."

Hoult says that funding will come from a number of sources for this lofty garden project. NCIB was the recipient of generous community donations through the 2014 Heritage Centre gala and some of the life lease landscape funds are being funnelled into this project as well. The NCIB committee has made numerous grant applications for the creation of the pavilion and plans to host a variety of fundraising events this summer, providing opportunities for the community to participate in donating benches, lights, trees, and Celebration of Life plaques.

These items will be available for sponsorship and create opportunities to commemorate life celebrations like births, marriages, and the memories of loved ones who have passed on.



Layout of proposed garden expansion at the Heritage Centre.

SHIRLEY HOULT

"Gardens and greenspace support a healthier community," says Hoult. "Art and music events will continue to be offered in the gardens. We are considering participation in a 2018 southeast Cool Gardens exhibition and tour which will draw additional visitors to town."

Cool Gardens is a public exhibition of contemporary garden and art installations in Manitoba, presented by StorefrontMB and The Forks.



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IN BRIEF

Niverville Introduces Waste Levy

Niverville residents will have a slight increase this year to their garbage collection services. A new waste levy has been introduced, which Mayor Myron Dyck says is necessary to account for an unexpected rise in landfill fees. The increase adds up to \$7.81 per household for the whole year.

Dyck adds that he hopes the introduction of recycling carts this summer will reduce landfill expenses in the long run.



MLA Shannon Martin reads to students at Niverville Elementary School. NES

Martin Reads to Elementary Students

Shannon Martin, MLA for Morris, has been on a mission this month to visit all the elementary schools in the Morris constituency as a guest reader. By the end of February, Martin will have visited ten schools and read to more than 25 classes. On February 22, he read to students in Niverville.

February is "I Love to Read" month and seeks to encourage reading, writing, and sharing in the joy of literacy. This year's theme is "Literacy for Joy and Justice."



Keith Jordan, Ray Dowse, and Cam Dueck.

MIKAYLA HUNTER

HUB Insurance Brokerage Heading to Niverville

By Evan Braun

✉ editor@nivervillecitizen.com

HUB International has announced that they are committed to opening a new, full-service insurance brokerage in Niverville later this year.

"Niverville is very much a growing location," says Keith Jordan, CEO of HUB International Manitoba, a branch of the company that oversees the region including Manitoba, Saskatchewan, northwestern Ontario, and Nunavut. "It's a great community that has a great number of opportunities there for us in terms of both commercial and residential, and also Autopac. So there's a lot of appeal to us."

To open the Niverville branch, HUB has hired Cam Dueck and Ray

Dowse, both of whom boast many years of experience in the local insurance market.

"I am excited to be serving in the community where I live and my kids attend school," says Dueck, who will assume the role of Branch and Commercial Account Manager. "HUB is a global organization whose strength lies in their commitment to the communities in which they live and do business. This global size gives us unmatched resources to tailor coverage to all insurance needs. I believe that the foundations of insurance are advice, choice, and price. I am excited to assemble a team of like-minded individuals and to yet again serve in Niverville."

Dowse, who has previously owned a brokerage in Niverville

and served as a senior executive of BSI Insurance, will work in a regional business development role.

HUB International, which began in 1998, is now one of the largest and fastest growing insurance brokerage networks in North America. Jordan points to the company's recent acquisition of 16 branches in Saskatchewan. In total, HUB is a network of 400 integrated brokerages.

"We have the international capability, but we also have the local presence," says Jordan. "We are frontline with the consumer, so we have the opportunity to serve the customer no matter whether it's Autopac or [residential accounts]. At the same time, we also have the opportunity to serve a customer

who has worldwide sales. We can do either one."

Jordan adds that HUB has an expansive line of independent insurance products geared towards all types of clients, although the company's greatest strength is serving the mid-sized commercial market.

Although a physical location has not yet been determined for the Niverville branch, Jordan expects the office to open within four to six months.

DISCLOSURE

■ Ray Dowse is part of the ownership group for *The Citizen*.



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Capo di Grande Coming to Niverville in April

By Eric Peterson

After more than a year of rumours and anticipation, a popular regional coffee shop is set to finally open a Niverville location.

Capo di Grande has been making fans in Île-des-Chênes for a couple of years with its unique blend of premium coffee, fresh baked treats, and trendy atmosphere. While the IDC location continues to build its reputation and customer base, Capo's owner and operator Chris Ewen has been casting an eye Niverville's way. After a few starts and stops, Capo is set to open in the old Slice of Life location at 290 Main Street some time in the first part of April.

For Ewen, moving into Niverville has always made sense.

"I heard it's the fastest growing community in Manitoba," points out Ewen. "It's a place we've always wanted to be a part of."

Ewen adds that when they first announced the new location on their Facebook page, they had 240 people come see them in Île-des-Chênes to say thanks or to make a purchase.

"The response has been insane," he says.

For those wondering, Ewen says that

the new location will be similar to the Île-des-Chênes shop, but at the same time have its own feel.

"Is it going to be the same as Île-des-Chênes? We will have some of the same elements. Homemade desserts, fresh baked cinnamon buns." But he adds that the Niverville location will seek to establish its own more metropolitan feel in an area that sometimes lacks for those sorts of options.

Renovations are already well underway. Once completed, the new Capo will have more seating in the downstairs area than Slice of Life featured. Meanwhile, Ewen has big plans for the upstairs area, calling the new décor "bold and sexy." He adds that the area will become more of a lounge during night-time hours.

"We want people to have fun," says Ewen. "People can have red wine with their chocolate cake. We'll have traditional cocktails, manhattans, martinis, more artisan pizzas and breads. It's something different and new and we hope people will like it."

As for the other new coffee shop that's recently opened in Niverville, Ewen says this town is big enough for the both of them.

"Nothing against Tim Hortons,"

says Ewen, "but you go there for convenience. You come to us for a quality atmosphere. To be relaxed and feel part of something. We want you to love being here."

Capo di Grande has always been known for their unique promotional ideas. They were doing paint nights before they were cool and Ewen plans to bring his popular Cocktail Courses to the Niverville location. They've already launched a new lunch menu in anticipation of the expansion, and some new dinner ideas are in the works too.

If all goes well with finalizing their liquor licence and renos, Ewen hopes to be open in early April and plans to launch big with live music at the grand opening.

"You just feel thankful and blessed to have a community like [Niverville] to come to," says Ewen. "We're hoping to help people fall in love with the concept of Capo. I'm really excited to be part of the community."

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Chris Ewen outside Capo di Grande in Île-des-Chênes.

RAY DOWSE



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Niverville Elementary Principal Retires

By Jan Kendall St. Cyr

After a long and successful career, Principal Judy Hiebert of Niverville Elementary School will retire in June at the end of the school year.

In her career, Hiebert has worked in five different schools, holding a variety of positions, including teaching in K-4 classrooms, resource, vice-principal, and principal.

"My mother encouraged each of her daughters to have a career," Hiebert says of choosing to become a teacher in 1975. "I chose teaching and began in a Grade Two classroom. There is something about sharing and learning with others and seeing their 'aha' moments that is so rewarding."

After several years of teaching, Hiebert took a few years off to raise her children, citing the importance of her being home for her two sons while they were young. All told, she has spent 33 years on the job, all in the Hanover School Division.

When looking back at her career, Hiebert remembers many of the challenges.

"Finding a balance between my personal and professional life has been my biggest challenge," she says. "It is also challenging in meeting the particular needs of students. There is no formula. The team tries some strategies, and if some don't work, you keep at it until you find the right fit for the child."

Her philosophy is that all children are capable of learning, and that they learn best in a safe and respectful environment. "Educators are responsible to activate learning as much as possible, ensuring that the children are successful," Hiebert elaborates. "We do that best when we work as a team, bringing our roles and skills together. For the last number of years, we at Niverville Elementary have practiced... problem-solving together and encouraging children



Judy Hiebert.

■ NIVERVILLE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

to make responsible choices in their interactions with others."

Hiebert has implemented a simple motto throughout her career: care, share, and dare.

"Care about the children in your classroom and their families. Care about the colleagues that you work with. Care about yourself," she says. "Share. Learn alongside your students and colleagues. Be a team player. Sharing is a big part of education now. Dare. Continue to learn, explore, and surprise yourself with the possibilities of what you and the students can do."

One of her fondest memories involves a Grade One student who profoundly told her one day, "I don't have to fight anymore, because I know how to read!"

"His new identity as a learner was powerful," Hiebert recalls.


Niverville Elementary's fiftieth

anniversary was another highlight. "After reviewing the school's history, we were ready to move forward with a new motto, logo, pride wear, and school song. Our gym was packed that evening. There was so much positive energy. We then developed our mission statement and formulated our beliefs. It was a defining time for us as a school."

In the coming years, Hiebert plans to explore contacts in the area of global education, connect with family and friends, and take time to pursue health and wellness. She adds that she has many hobbies to keep her busy.

"It has been a privilege to have been at Niverville Elementary for the past 11 years," she concludes. "I have learned so much working alongside the staff and teaming with parents and the community."

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What Are LIDs and How Do they Affect Your Tax Bill?

By Brenda Sawatzky

bsawatzky@nivervillecitizen.com

For many community residents, the unpleasant and often unwelcome property tax bill is like taking bad medicine. You gulp it down quickly and put the bottle out of sight, mov-

ing on to more palatable things. Unfortunately, the bad taste often lingers, rising to the surface when you compare your property tax total with the guy down the street or the community up the road.

Understanding your property tax bill means recognizing

that there's more to it than just an assessment, a mill rate, and a final tally based on those numbers. A variety of other items affect the outcome, including school taxes, special services, and local improvement district fees

(LIDs). LIDs are probably the most misunderstood, and apply only to a small portion of the community.

"[LIDs] are projects which will either benefit a segment of town or the entire town in some instances," says Eric King, Finance Administrative Officer for the Town of Niverville. "In most projects, the Town is borrowing money and the LID covers the cost of servicing the debt for the specific project. LIDs are added to property taxes as only a certain segment of the population receives a benefit."

One example of an LID might be paving a street to service a few homes. Because this is beneficial to only a few, the cost is shared by those residents rather than distributing the cost to everyone. LIDs are added to a small segment of tax bills. Adding these fees to tax bills is approved by the Manitoba Municipal Board (a board that governs municipalities) while the provincial government tracks each

community's debt repayments.

Currently, paving and water are the only LIDs on Niverville's tax bills. Mostly, these are applicable to residents who purchased properties in new developments before 2008. After that date, council eliminated the need to charge certain LIDs on property taxes by passing these costs on to developers. These costs, essentially, were then factored into the resale value of the lot or home when the buyer made the purchase.

"Water is an LID for those original properties in The Highlands where they ran on a different water system which the developer used and has since been decommissioned," says King. "[Those homebuyers] didn't pay hook-up fees or capital cost fees as a part of the purchase of their lot when they originally built."

It can be safely assumed that residents to whom these LIDs apply will have paid less for their property or home than someone who purchased after

2008 when the same costs were built right into the sale price of the property. Therefore, the LIDs merely represent a cost transference.

According to King, these LIDs will affect some property owners from 20 years to 25 years, depending on the length of time the Town was able to finance the projects in question. The end year for those LIDs, the last year in which they will be charged, is clearly marked on an individual's property tax bill.

"If you asked today, we try to avoid anything longer than five or ten years to avoid accumulating interest," says King. "But for the right project, longer periods are considered to minimize the shock to a person's property tax bill from one year to the next."

FOR MORE INFORMATION

■ For more information on property tax bills, visit www.nivervillecitizen.com/news/local/how-do-nivilles-taxes-stack-up

GORP Takes on Hollywood

By Evan Braun

editor@nivervillecitizen.com

Niverville-based entrepreneur Colleen Dyck has been busily expanding the GORP Clean Energy brand for years, slowly but surely getting her locally sourced energy bars into hundreds of retailers across Canada. Now Dyck, energy bars in hand, is poised to hit the big time—in Los Angeles. At the Oscars.

Dyck and Manitoba Chef

Peter Fehr of Gourmet Inspirations have joined forces to take their wares to one of the world's biggest venues. The two had side-by-side displays in the Luxury Gifting Suite the day before this year's awards. More than 150 celebrities were expected to be on-hand to sample Dyck's bars, representing a huge opportunity.

But big opportunities also come with a price tag. Dyck says that she had to devote a significant chunk of her

operating budget to cover the entry fee, although she decided it was worth the risk.

The Luxury Gifting Suite provides opportunities for photos and potential collaborations. In total, 50 companies have booths, all seeking the chance of a lifetime.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

■ www.gorptest.com



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Welcome!



My name is Elena. My family and I are new to Niverville and so far we have really enjoyed living here. Starting on March 1, you can find me at DONE. hair skin & nails. I am an aesthetician with over 12 years of experience. My last workplace was the Edward Carriere Salon in Winnipeg. I specialize in facial and body treatments as well as waxing and nails.



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Niverville Amends Water and Sewer Policy

How will recent changes to policies in Niverville affect businesses and residents?



BRENDA
SAWATZKY

bsawatzky@nivervillecitizen.com

Niverville's town council recently reassessed their sewer and water policy, amending it to shift the financial burden of repairing and replacing connecting lines into the hands of property owners.

Sewer and water mains run throughout town. In the case of water, many of the businesses, homes, schools, and churches in newer developments, along Main Street, and along Fifth Avenue South are joined to the water main via connecting pipes. In the case of sewer, everyone in Niverville has connecting lines that link to the sewer mains.

It is these connecting lines, the ones running from the property owner's structure to the sewer or water main, at which the amended policy is directed. As of April 1, the property owner will assume financial responsibility for all portions of the connecting lines, even the portions that run under public land.

As before, the town will continue to assume responsibility for all maintenance and repairs to the water and sewer mains.

These two separate utilities have not always been combined under one policy, as sewer was introduced to Niverville's infrastructure long before water.

UNDERSTANDING NIVERVILLE'S SEWER POLICY

Niverville's initial sewer lines were installed in 1971 follow-



Excavation underway on Main Street to repair a sewer connecting line.

RAY DOWSE

ing the town's incorporation, allowing residents to upgrade from the septic fields and tanks located on their individual properties. During this time, a sewer line policy was created whereby the property owner accepted full responsibility for the installation, maintenance, and repair of their new connecting lines.

In the late 1990s, council was faced with at least one resident who experienced issues with their connecting line beneath the town's asphalted street. The council of the day

reassessed the community's sewer line policy and amended it, shifting financial responsibility back to the town for connecting line repairs located on public property. Maintenance costs, such as blockages, remained the responsibility of the property owner.

That revised policy stood until now.

Since the initial sewer line installation in 1971, sidewalks and streets have been paved ubiquitously across town, and many connecting lines run beneath this infrastructure.

With the change in policy reverting to its original intent, property owners should now expect that they will also be responsible for damage to ditches, sidewalks, and streets resulting from digging down to access their connecting lines should those lines require repair or replacement.

Two Main Street businesses have undergone major repairs to their sewer connecting lines in the past several years. In November 2014, tenants of 226 Main Street (the location of Anya's Hair Studio) discovered

sewer backups in their building, requiring their landlord to investigate the cause. After several attempts by a plumber to eliminate the blockage, a fracture was identified in the line near the point of connection to the sewer main beneath Main Street. Main Street underwent excavation in front of the building and the town repaired the fracture.

The same building underwent a nearly identical scenario just two years later, causing tenants to evacuate, or operate their business at a minimal

level, until access to the sewer was restored. The landlord once again hired a plumber, who came to the same conclusion: there was another break in the line. Once again, the town excavated Main Street, and this time they replaced the connecting line right to the edge of the property.

In November 2016, the MCC Thrift Store, situated next door to 226 Main, experienced the very same issue. After MCC's manager performed his due diligence to determine the cause, the town was made aware of the concern. Main Street was once again dug up and numerous fractures were located near the sewer main. The entire portion of the line beneath public property was replaced at the town's cost.

JDX Construction, the company hired to conduct the repairs in all three of these instances, is no stranger to these issues, having repaired and replaced compromised sewer lines in communities across Manitoba.

"The Town of Niverville has sewer services from the 70s, and perhaps earlier, that are comprised of pipe made of asbestos concrete (AC)," says John Dyck of JDX Construction. "Some of these service pipes seem to be disintegrating, and quite rapidly. These concrete pipes are typically quite hard and dense, but in several repairs undertaken by myself in recent months, I've seen pipes that have the consistency of soft mush and are no longer able to withstand the pressure of the load they need to bear and [so they] simply

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collapse or are eaten away from the inside.”

John says that these AC sewer pipes are common in nearby towns. He has also encountered problems with pipes composed of clay tile and a heavily tarred pipe known as “no corrode.” These pipes, manufactured from the 50s to the 70s, are no longer used. Most communities have switched to relatively trouble-free PVC pipes. Therefore, structures erected after the 1970s are less likely to experience the kind of collapse John describes.

Many properties now have sturdier lines running from their building to the curb stop, located at the boundary of private and public property, but the original AC connecting lines often remain from the curb stop to the sewer main. Such was the case with the MCC Thrift Store, which had a cast iron line from the building to the curb stop and an AC line from the curb stop to the sewer main. It was in the AC line where their fractures occurred.

Many Manitoba cities or municipalities have long had sewer line policies that match Niverville’s newly amended policy. John Dyck notes that towns in the RM of Ritchot (St. Adolphe, Ste. Agathe, and Île-des-Chênes) are the exception rather than the rule, and they still run according to Niverville’s previous policy, with the municipality assuming responsibility for connecting lines that run beneath public property.

UNDERSTANDING NIVERVILLE’S WATER POLICY

Like the sewer lines, the Town of Niverville will soon no longer cover the cost of repairs or replacement to connecting water lines on public property, regardless of the reason for the issue. This is where Niverville’s amended policy will diverge from the norm in Manitoba. According to John Dyck, the majority of municipalities and towns do assume responsibility for the water service located on public property.

John speculates that there is a reason most communities have different policies with respect to water and sewer connecting lines. He points out that the public utilities control the flow of water to homes and business, which is perhaps why they usually cover the costs of repairing or replacing those lines.

“[But] the public utilities have no control over what



The point where a new connecting line, once installed, will feed into Main Street’s sewer main.

RAY DOWSE

private individuals discharge into their own sewers,” John says, suggesting that there is thus some logic to passing on sewer line costs to property owners.

SERVICE LINE INSURANCE

In a recent town newsletter, Niverville’s council suggested that property owners might mitigate these risks by discussing water and sewer line insurance with their respective insurance agents.

“Within the past few years, most home insurance providers have started offering service line coverage to protect against this risk,” says Kris Moffat, an insurance broker with HUB International. “It’s a fairly minor fee that will cover repairs to a service line. Individuals should also carry sewer lines backup coverage to cover any resulting backup that occurs. Fees and charges vary amongst insurers.”

However, Moffat adds that this insurance is intended to cover unforeseen risks and losses. In cases where there appears to be a known problem or the use of obsolete materials, insurance is difficult to obtain.

For businesses, the likelihood of obtaining service line insurance is further reduced.

“For commercial insurance, I checked with a couple of our key markets and they do not offer [service line] coverage to businesses,” says Moffat.

With the recent sewer line collapses on Main Street, and with council’s amended policy following quickly in their

wake, there is some concern that other properties may be affected by aging AC lines in the near future, and that property owners must now bear

pipe,” says Julio Sylvestri of Mr. Rooter. “The relining alleviates future risk of roots, cracks, and possible collapse of the pipe.”

Sylvestri estimates that the

“I’ve seen pipes that have the consistency of soft mush and are no longer able to withstand the pressure of the load they need to bear”

John Dyck, JDX Construction

the financial responsibility for them.

Mr. Rooter, a Winnipeg-based plumbing and drain-cleaning service, says that sewer lines need not be dug up and replaced if the problem is caught in time. For homes or businesses with older sewer lines, options are available to shore up the line at a fraction of the cost.

Mr. Rooter uses a process called Cured In Place Pipe (CIPP). This involves a two-part epoxy resin which is attached to the inner wall of the original pipe, creating a seamless sleeve. It can be applied to a predetermined length of pipe. Though it does nominally decrease the diameter of the pipe, it’s not enough to affect the load capacity. On the contrary, flow is often improved because of its slick finish. While there are many factors to consider, it has been suggested that CIPP liners should last for decades.

“After a successful relining is done, our clients essentially have a brand-new sewer

average cost to reline a pipe is \$7,000, which includes digging, concrete, piping, and liner up to about 30 feet. Compare this to the \$15,000 that John Dyck estimates a sewer replacement can cost if asphalt or sidewalk restoration is required.

Town council has been in ongoing communication with the Chamber of Commerce about the issue.



The excavated remains of a disintegrated sewer connecting line.

RAY DOWSE

“Discussions between Chamber [of Commerce] and council are ongoing,” says Mayor Myron Dyck, who adds that the Chamber has requested for the town to learn the full scope of the potential problem. Council has advised its staff to conduct further research. “This is somewhat reactive. We had these situations [and] we are trying to get a handle on what is going on. We’re trying to determine if this is local and a one-off, or do we have something that’s larger in scope?”

Mayor Dyck says that the town would like to bring up the subject with water line contractors to determine if there are any unique soil conditions on Main Street that have contributed to the recent cases of line collapse.

“We [used a camera in] a lot of the lines on the north side of the street,” Mayor Dyck says. “We’ve asked our operations manager to review those tapes so we can at least give some idea of probability.”

Ultimately, the town may

not be in a position to finance a complete renewal of Main Street’s aging sewer lines, even if council changed its mind and decided not to amend their policy.

“There are finance constraints council has that are set out by the Public Utilities Board,” says Mayor Dyck. “They tell us that our utilities are self-serving entities and must function independently from the town’s general operating funds. Thus, the issue is one of finance. The pot of money that is to be used for sewer line replacement... would need to come from a sewer replacement reserve. Unfortunately, this fund has not been established and, as such, there is no money to pay [out].”

As for the three Main Street incidents that have already occurred, the town covered the cost by dipping into their sewer operating budget reserve. This reserve is intended for infrastructure such as sewer mains and phosphorus management of the lagoon.

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Fifth Home Inspirations Show Focuses on Local Vendors

By Sylvia St. Cyr

✉ sstcyr@nivervillecitizen.com

With spring in the air, you may find your thoughts drifting to renovations and home improvements. If so, you're not alone. From March 31 until April 2, the Home Inspirations Show in Niverville will showcase what our many local companies have to offer. The show will take place at the Niverville Heritage Centre.

This is the show's fifth year, and once again it's hosted by Group Edge Business Solutions and run by John Falk.

The Niverville Credit Union (NCU) is once again this year's biggest sponsor. Each of the vendors who set up a booth pay to be part of the show, but NCU helps some organizations who wouldn't otherwise be able to participate.

"NCU provides ten booths at no charge for non-profit groups in the region," Falk says.



The Home Inspirations Show at The Heritage Centre.

STUDIO 479

This year will feature quite a few new businesses. Anya's Hair Studio, which has been in business on Main Street Niverville for eight years, will have their first booth at this event.

"My passion is to inspire women, men, and children to feel beautiful inside and out," says Anna Sawatzky, the salon's owner. "Being a part of this show allows us to reach out to customers that have not heard of us

before."

Another business new to the show is 2K Ventures. The company is owned and operated by Kazwel Levandoski and his wife. "We are an outdoor renovation company," Levandoski says. "We specialize in sunrooms, patio covers, and decks. Our roof system is unique in that it is made to offer the maximum amount of comfort underneath, without sacrificing strength and

durability. Being a part of the show allows us to connect with our existing customers in the southeast area, while promoting to new customers."

On top of being able to see what southeastern Manitoba has to offer homeowners, the event will also feature demonstrations and lifestyle booths. There will also be a kids area, so guests can bring the whole family.

"Most exhibitors will have their own prizes," says Falk. "However, the big prize is the \$5,000 creative cash draw which is open to anyone attending [18 years and older]. This needs to be spent at one, or many, of the exhibitors in 2017. The winner will be announced live on air on Mix 96.7 the Monday morning after at 8:00 am."

A batch of 150 tickets is available for free at NCU, or you can pay \$5 at the door. Youth fourteen and under are free.

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Commentary

No Simple Solutions

By Greg Fehr

It would be nice if solving the problems we see around us were as simple as some would have us believe. It seems there is true bliss in ignorance, in believing that we can find solutions by ignoring complexity and failing to consider all the facts.

The challenge of the day is dealing with those who cross our borders, seeking refuge in our fair country. Are they refugees or border-jumping criminals? It seems simple enough, straightforward even. By listening to watercooler banter, you would think there's no real question: "It's illegal. Just enforce the law. Send them back across the border." Or alternatively: "Have you no compassion? We must welcome them all and cancel the Safe Third Country Agreement." Simple, right?

These are oversimplifications. Complex problems seldom have simple solutions, and what seems like a simple solution often has unintended long-term effects. It may seem simple to amend or suspend the Safe Third Country Agreement, for example, except that doing so would have consequences on our existing immigration partnerships. Even if the agreement were suspended temporarily, that could cause a mass influx that is difficult to control. But

just enforcing the law likely would have unintended consequences too. One consequence might be that closing or discouraging heavy crossing areas such as Emerson and southern Quebec may actually spread the crossings to a wider area, compromising our security even further.

It's like choosing between a bucket of water with two large holes or a bucket with a hundred pinholes; neither buckets will contain the water.

As ordinary Joes and Janes, we have the tendency (and luxury) of simplifying situations to make them easy for us to understand. Ultimately, we're able to spout whatever nonsense comes into our heads, whether verbally or on social media. And we are not required to educate ourselves before commenting, although that would be a good practice. Perhaps we should heed Abraham Lincoln's advice, that it is better to remain silent and be thought a fool than to speak out and remove all doubt.

Simply put (or not so simply), our leaders don't have this luxury. We should expect them to educate themselves, to consider all the factors and make decisions that lead towards the best possible solutions for today and which don't create new problems for tomorrow. This is their role, plain and simple, although it's not easy.

I do believe that our federal, provincial, and municipal leaders see the complexity of the situation, although it may not always look like it. Most of what we see is politicking, which is a bit distasteful considering that we're talking about human lives, whether those of the border-crossers themselves or the public officials and private citizens who are impacted.

The Honourable Ralph Goodale, Minister of Immigration, talks about a "monitor and prepare" strategy; this non-answer is typical of sitting government ministers, even though in reality there may be a certain pragmatism in watching the situation unfold a little further rather than succumbing to kneejerk reactions.

The Honourable Tony Clement, Official Opposition Critic for Public Safety, says we need to "simply enforce the law," supposedly without any inkling of what this looks like. Remember, this is just the opposition blindly opposing sitting government in the name of political points.

And I'm quite sure that the Honourable Ted Falk doesn't truly believe that all the law enforcement allocations to Provencher will now be parked in Emerson to the chagrin of the remaining parts of the riding.

These statements are politics, plain and simple, and continue to fuel simplicity in the discussion. These coffee-shop

solutions fail to delve into the depths of the problem to explore real solutions.

The recent uncontrolled crossings put a strain on the resources of small communities like Emerson, yet crossings at other points that are even less populated (and the border has a lot of these) would create still greater challenges and likely result in more medical emergencies, or deaths.

The immigration agreements in place, including the Safe Third Country Agreement, have been vetted and remain good policy. The truth is that geography creates challenges. Those trying to escape bad situations in Africa are often forced to travel north through Central America, taking them through the U.S. even if their goal is Canada. Many of these border-crossers never had any intention of making a refugee claim in America.

All people can agree that the current situation is far from ideal. In a perfect world, no one would need to escape their homeland. In a perfect world, everyone who seeks a new home here would be greeted with a sincere "Bienvenue au Canada" at an official port of entry. But that is not our world, and while perfect solutions are a nice dream, we must live in reality and accept that sometimes we must choose from a host of imperfect solutions.

Look on the Bright Side: Stepping Out of the Boat

By Jan Kendall St. Cyr

Comfort zones—we all have them. Those safe and familiar places we retreat to when we feel overwhelmed or afraid. Comfort zones are necessary for rest and relaxation. They're healing places to recuperate and regain our balance.

But these rest stops along life's highway aren't meant to become our permanent residence. With all the upset in the world, it's tempting to regress, to shrink back into the familiar and simply close up shop. Yet hiding our light under this proverbial bushel only ensures that we miss out on the incredible blessings that come from helping others.

Many years ago, I was secure in my boat, my comfort zone, when I was asked to step out into some very tumultuous and uncharted waters. Our one-year-old niece Cassandra, whom we had never met, was abruptly rescued from her drug- and alcohol-addicted parents and placed in emergency foster care. We learned that if we didn't immediately take her, she would most likely remain in the foster care system until she was 18.

I knew that this would

completely change our lives. My husband and I were already raising three active little boys, and now we would be challenged with Cassandra's past, the financial commitment of raising her, and the legal fees needed to secure her future with us.

Feeling stuck, we sought the counsel of a trusted friend and pastor. Needless to say, we were shocked when he simply said, "If you think you can at all do this, just do it. The steps and resources you'll need will follow."

To make a very long story short, we stepped out of the boat that day, trusting that the love we claimed to believe in would lead us, guide us, and provide for us. And boy, did it ever! The miraculous happened, and 24 years later this beautiful daughter of ours is a testament to love's great overcoming power.

Faith always requires an action to prove it true. This isn't a test of loyalty, but rather an invitation for us to travel beyond our so-called limitations. Only when we step out of the boat can we realize that we might actually walk on water.



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Sports & Recreation



Kids climb the toboggan hill at Niverville's Family Fun Day.

■ NIVERVILLE RECREATION

A Warm, Wet Day for Family Fun



**CHANTEL
TODD**

✉ ctodd@nivervillecitizen.com

February's warm weather made for a fun but wet Family Fun Day at the Niverville Arena on Saturday, February 18. The Town of Niverville had built a toboggan hill that boasts plenty of angles for down-hill sledding. More than 60 people came out to toboggan, snow paint,

and snowshoe.

Unfortunately, the quinzee building had to be cancelled due to the high temperatures. The texture of the snow wasn't prime for building. Some snowmen were built, but they later melted and fell over in the heat of the sun.

The Niverville Fire Department was kind enough to show off their fire truck, letting children sit inside and take pictures. Members of the department volunteered their time,

as did many other volunteers who helped with snowshoeing and snow-painting.

As tobogganers headed down the hill, Actif Epica racers began to bike in around 12:30 p.m. The racers either started their long 120-kilometre trek in St. Malo, or a much longer 200-kilometre trek from Emerson. Runners began in Ridgeville (162 kilometres) or St. Malo (120 kilometres). All groups eventually ended up at The Forks

in Winnipeg. The fastest time was seven hours, 51 minutes (fastest time).

This year, 65 bikers and runners were registered. Many came from outside the province, including North Dakota, Minnesota, and Wisconsin. Indeed, some brave souls came from as far away as Brazil and India.

EVENT GUIDE

Tuff-n-up Bootcamp

Monday/Wednesdays until March 29, 6:30 p.m.
South End of Arena, Niverville, \$15 (drop-in)

Yoga: Flow & Yin

Mondays, March 6–April 24
Flow, 7:00 p.m.; Yin, 8:15 p.m.
Curling Rink Basement, Niverville, \$15 (drop-in)

Baby & Tot Gymnastics

Thursdays until March 23
Tot Gymnastic (18 mos. to 3 yrs), 11:15 a.m., \$12 (drop-in)
Kinder Gymnastic (3–5 yrs), 12:15 p.m., \$12 (drop-in)
South End of Arena, Niverville

Niverville Spring Registration

Thursday, March 9, 7:00–8:30 p.m.
South End of Arena, Niverville
Register online: www.nivervillerecreation.com

St. Adolphe Recreational

March 21–23, 6:00–8:00 p.m.
St. Adolphe Community Club
Register online: <https://goo.gl/xuEjc4>

Ritchot Senior Services

Cardio Fit: Mondays, March 6–27, 9:30 a.m.
Chair Fit: Mondays, March 6–27, 11:00 a.m.
Yoga: Wednesdays, March 1–22, 1:00 p.m.
Muscle Fit: Thursdays, March 2–29, 9:30 a.m.
Alzheimer Touch Quilt Project: Tues, March 21, 10:00 a.m.
457 Main Street, St. Adolphe, 204-883-2880

Île-des-Chênes Recreation

Zumba: Mondays, 7:00–8:15 p.m., \$75 for 10 sessions
Pickle Ball: Tuesdays/Thursdays, 1:00 p.m.
Indoor Walking: Wednesdays, 9:00 a.m.

Seniors Indoor Walking

Tuesdays, 7:30–8:30; Wednesdays, 6:45–7:45
St. Adolphe School Gym

St. Adolphe Pickle Ball

Thursdays, 6:00–7:30 p.m.
St. Adolphe School Gym, 204-883-2880

Club Amical Lunches & Bingo

Thursdays, 11:30 a.m.
St. Adolphe, 204-883-2491

Niverville Bench League (18+)

Wednesdays, January 4–March 15, 9:30 p.m.
Niverville Arena, \$8 (drop-in)

Ste. Agathe Ladies Rec Hockey

Ste. Agathe Arena, Sundays, 6:45 p.m.

Athena Women's Hockey–St. Adolphe

St. Adolphe Arena, Sundays, 7:45 p.m.

Public Skating

Niverville: Fridays, 4:15–5:15; Saturdays & Sundays, 11:00–12:00
St. Adolphe: Sundays, 5:30–6:15 p.m.
Île-des-Chênes: Sun 12:45–1:45; Weds, 3:30–4:45
Ste. Agathe: Tues: 4:15–5:15 p.m.; Fri: 8:00–9:00 p.m.

Sticks & Pucks

Niverville: Fridays 3:30–4:15; Saturdays & Sundays, 12:15–1:00

Shinny

Île-des-Chênes: Mondays, 3:30–4:15 p.m.; Tuesdays, 3:30–4:45 p.m.

For More Information:

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The Toby Enstrom Controversy: Better With or Without?

Winnipeg Jets fans are deeply divided over Toby Enstrom's value to the team. But no matter how you feel, he's still got another year on his contract.

By Tim Hiebert

I've had many discussions over the past few years with Winnipeg Jets fans regarding Toby Enstrom. The Swedish defenseman is probably one of the most divisive players on the team. Some think he's invaluable while others would like to see him shipped out of town for nothing more than a bag of pucks.

Enstrom has spent his entire career with the same franchise, having been selected with the 239th overall pick in the 2003 NHL Entry Draft by the Atlanta Thrashers. At a height of 5'10" and weighing roughly 180 pounds, Enstrom is one of the smallest defensemen to ever play at the NHL level. He's currently in his tenth season and has surpassed all expectations for an eighth round pick. Jets management obviously liked what they saw after his first season in Winnipeg, as they signed him to a five-year extension in the summer of 2012. It was a bit of a surprise at the time;

he still had one year left on his contract. Regardless, the Jets gave him a \$2 million raise and even included a no-movement clause, giving Enstrom control of his own future.

Enstrom put up back-to-back 50-point seasons in his final two seasons in Atlanta, but he hasn't topped the 33 points he got in his first season in Winnipeg. He's missed significant time to injury in every season but one, with over 80 games missed since 2011. He logs a lot of ice time and takes a beating from big opposing forwards.

Despite being an easy target, Enstrom has always done a terrific job of moving the puck and finding his teammates. He has great vision and is very intelligent on the ice. The downside is that he's not a physical defenseman and, despite using an extra long stick, he's always at a disadvantage when trying to defend bigger and stronger players. The long stick often comes in handy, but it also results in a lot of hooking penalties as he doesn't

have the ability to be physically aggressive.

So would the Jets be better off without Enstrom in the lineup? The numbers this year suggest they can do just fine without him. At the time of this writing, the Jets are 5-1-2 on the season when Enstrom is not in the lineup and 23-28-4 when he does play. Is this just a coincidence, or could it mean something? The Jets are usually at their best when they're playing a physical game and delivering big hits and pushing their opponent around. Enstrom certainly doesn't fit this style of play.

Early in his career, he racked up points as a power play specialist, but he hasn't had the same success in Winnipeg in that role. The truth is that he's not often used that way anymore. In his first four seasons in Winnipeg, he averaged just over three minutes of power play time per game, and in the last two seasons he's down to only one and half minutes. He's now being primarily used as a penalty killer and seeing

about three minutes per game while shorthanded. Using a small defenseman on the penalty kill is certainly a questionable move, but with Tyler Myers injured for most of the season, it's the role he's been assigned.

A lot of Jets fans see the positives in his game, but it's the high cap hit that really irritates people. He's one of the most overpaid defensemen in the league, and even if the Jets could trade him, they most likely would have a hard time finding a team willing to take on his contract. Enstrom's current contract will expire at the end of next season, when he'll be almost 34 years old. It seems highly unlikely that general manager Kevin Cheveldayoff will sign him to another extension. Enstrom will most likely sign a one- or two-year deal elsewhere for much less than he's making now. But until then, Jets fans will have to endure at least one more season of Toby Enstrom... whether they like it or not.

It's Time for Spring Sport Registration

By Chantel Todd

✉ ctodd@nivervillecitizen.com

Put your skates and winter jackets away, and get your soccer cleats and baseball bats ready! Spring Sport Registration is happening in Niverville on Thursday, March 9, at the south end of the arena from 7:00-8:30 p.m.

Sports will include youth baseball for ages four to 18, youth soccer for ages five to 17, and youth rugby for ages four to 16. Also, adult slo-pitch is back this year. Fees range

from \$40 to \$125, depending on age group and sport.

New this year, Niverville Recreation is starting up a Little League soccer program for two- to four-year-olds. The program will help teach young children to get active in a team setting, learn the fundamentals of soccer, and develop skills such as running, kicking, dribbling, shooting, and passing. The program will be six weeks long and run from May through June. Parent volunteers are needed to help with the program.

Registration night will also include an opportunity to register for Niverville's spring break day camps, along with Rhythmic Gymnastics for ages four through six. Rhythmic Gymnastics is a ten-week program where children develop flexibility, strength, grace, endurance, rhythm, coordination, musical awareness, and creativity. Space is limited.

Also new is Move N Groove, a group that aims to provide physical activity opportunities for children who live with disabilities. Move

N Groove is a volunteer-based group that currently runs monthly evening events. See below for more information.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- Move N Groove: www.facebook.com/groups/210246392735922
- www.nivervillecreation.com. All youth sports will have online registration this year.

IN BRIEF



Playing ball hockey at the Winter Classic in Ste. Agathe.

SHAUN CREW

Warm Weather Can't Spoil Winter Classic

By Chantel Todd

✉ ctodd@nivervillecitizen.com

On Saturday, February 18, Ste. Agathe held their second annual Winter Classic. About 400 people showed up in the afternoon for a day of playing hockey, making maple syrup on a stick, roasting wieners and smores, and enjoying sleigh rides. The Ste. Agathe school and local daycare got involved by providing treats and planning children's activities throughout the day.

"The Winter Classic was a success, even though the weather didn't cooperate as well as we would have hoped," says organizer Marc Robert. "The above-zero temperatures required the teams to play ball hockey with shoes rather than skates, but overall [the] games were well-received."

The committee is pleased with this year's event, especially having more volunteers and welcoming the participation of the school and daycare.

Robert says his only regret was that they couldn't play on the ice. "It was great to see the community families come out and enjoy themselves, even though games weren't on ice. Everyone seemed to make the best of the conditions and still have fun."

Annual Winter Party in Grande Pointe

The Grande Point Homeowners Association will host their annual Winter Party on Sunday, March 5. The event, which is set to take place at Grande Pointe Park and run from noon until 4:00 p.m., will include skating, a candy scramble, outdoor play in the park, horse sleigh rides, food, and free hot chocolate and coffee.



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STANDINGS

HYJHL Regular Season Standings

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Red River	24	18	6	0	0	36
Springfield	24	17	7	0	0	34
Steinbach	24	13	8	2	1	29
St. Adolphe	24	13	10	1	0	27
Lorette	24	11	10	3	0	25
Grunthal	24	7	15	2	0	16
Mitchell	24	5	16	2	1	13



13 Ashcroft Cove, Niverville

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ROYAL LEPAGE
Riverbend Realty

St. Adolphe Hawks Back in Action

By Chantel Todd

✉ ctodd@nivervillecitizen.com

It has been several years since the St. Adolphe Hawks had a team in the Hanover Tache Junior Hockey League. They're back now, looking to advance to the finals.

"The town of St. Adolphe has really rallied behind our first year back," says Team Manager Connor Forrester. "I've had many people come up to me, thanking me for having the team back in town."

Forrester notes many special moments from the new season.

"First of all, on January 21, the captain of our team, Eric Lebrun, had quite a game," Forrester says. "In just 58 seconds... he scored three goals, starting off the game with a record. Secondly, this is a close group of kids. A really tight unit that laughs, plays, and spends time with one another before and after games."

Coach Chad Stewart can attest to the connectivity of the players, coaches, management, and even fans. "[It is a] very tight group where every player or coach has each other's back. Hawks fly together!"



Eric Lebrun, Adam Huberdeau, and Brett Rey.

✉ CONNOR FORRESTER

The Hawks finished the regular season in fourth place out of seven teams, with 27 points. First place belonged to the Red River Mudbugs, with 36 points.

On March 1, the Hawks will begin their best-of-seven semifinal battle with the Mudbugs. The first

game takes place at 8:00 p.m. at the St. Adolphe Arena. They beat the Lorette Comets in the quarter-finals to advance.

The Hawks have two forwards among the league's top-ten scorers. Eric Lebrun is fourth, with 31 points, and Curtis Metzler is

eighth, with 29 points. The team also boasts two leading goalies, with Steven Bleue in first spot and Eric Trudeau in eighth.

FOR MORE INFORMATION
■ www.htjhl.com

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Public Notice 2017 Financial Plan

On March 7th, 2017 at 7:00 p.m. Town Council will hold their regular Council meeting at the Niverville Heritage Centre, West Ballroom. Following the meeting, the preliminary aspirations of Council for the 2017 Financial Plan will be displayed for review. Residents are encouraged to attend, interact and discuss their community priorities with Council members. This opportunity is being provided to ensure all concerns and projects have been brought forward to Town Council.

Public Notice is hereby given pursuant to subsection 162(2) of The Municipal Act that the Council of the Town of Niverville intends to present its Financial Plan for the fiscal year 2017 at a Public Hearing at the Niverville Heritage Centre, West Ballroom on the 18th day of April, 2017 at 7:05 p.m. Council will hear any person who would like to make a presentation, ask questions or register an objection to the financial plan as provided.

A copy of the Financial Plan will be available for review after March 22nd and may be examined by any person during regular office hours at the Town Office, located at 86 Main Street, Niverville.

Eric King, CPA, CGA
Finance Administration Manager

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Niverville Curling Club playoff action in Otterburne.

JOEL MARTENS

Early Melt Forces Niverville Curling Playoffs out of Town

By Evan Braun

editor@nivervillecitizen.com

The warm weather in February has wreaked havoc on the Niverville Curling Club's schedule. The club, which has one of the province's few remaining natural ice surfaces, is always dependent on weather, but this year was worse than normal.

When the temperature climbed above freezing for a week, the ice surface basically disintegrated.

Former club president Dustin Krahn says that this year's season was had to end earlier than ever before, forcing the club to make changes to its schedule and move its playoffs to other communities.

"Curling playoffs were held in

Otterburne this past weekend," says Krahn, referring to the last weekend in February. "Everything but the final game was played."

The final, which will be played in St. Adolphe in the next week or two, will pit the Hiebert brothers (Larry, Wes, Stanley, and Stanford) against Brad Wasilinchuk, Dave Aitkin, Marc Loeppky, and John Schmitke.

Krahn notes that many players who have grown accustomed to Niverville's unusual natural ice conditions were taken aback by the ice in Otterburne. "Lots of people were in awe of what curling on consistent ice is really like!"

Skaters Raise Cash for Multiplex, Skating Club

By Leslie Bardal

The Niverville Skating Club had a great skate-a-thon in February, with 20 skaters raising \$1,174 during the two-hour event. This means that \$587 each will go to the Niverville Skating Club and the future multiplex. Skaters had fun on the

ice sporting their superhero costumes.

The top pledges came from skaters Jake Dodge, Chase Leah, and Zoe Bardal. Zoe Bardal and Stewart Huddleston won for best costumes. Prizes included cash, Cineplex movie passes, munchies, and a Toys R Us gift card. Free GORP bars and

bottles of multiplex-branded water were given to each skater.

Sponsors included Sparkline, GORP, Ivivva, Chicken Chef, Valley West Landscaping, real estate agent Benny Woligroski, Gym Kids, BSI Insurance, Friends of the Plex, the Steinbach Family Resource Centre, and Bigway.

The organizers wish to thank Crystal Woligroski, Elissa Leah, Tara McGimpsey, and Leslie Bardal, as well as Chantel Todd from Niverville Recreation and Heather Miller from the multiplex fundraising effort.

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OF
THE MONTH**



**Peyton
Johnson**

Peyton has been in the CanSkate program since October and has been a dedicated athlete all season. Peyton loves speed and skating on the Niverville Skating Club's fast track. He is always eager to make improvements to improve his technique, and that has shown in his progress this year. He shows up every session in his Jets gear and we love seeing his enthusiasm for sport.

Coach Meghan Rafferty says, "Thanks for a great year, Peyton! I have really enjoyed coaching you. Keep up the great work."

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Arts & Entertainment

Local Musician Nominated for Covenant Award

By Sylvia St. Cyr

✉ sstcyr@nivervillecitizen.com

The musical stylings of Jordan St. Cyr have become well known in the Christian music industry recently, especially with the release of his first single across Canada last year, "I Look to Jesus." The song got him a Covenant Award nomination for Pop Song of the Year.

The awards, which highlight the best in Canadian Christian music, took place in Edmonton during the last week of January. Although St. Cyr didn't win, he calls attending the event a great experience.

"Ultimately, it's an opportunity to get all these artists that share the same purpose and heart in one room," he says. "To me, award or no award, that's a win."

2016 proved to be busy and productive for the artist. St. Cyr visited Nashville many times, and one of those trips brought him to a conference hosted by Full Circle Music. After a mentoring session with Ben Calhoun, the lead singer of Citizen Way, doors began opening.

"I played him a few songs, and they were all right," St. Cyr says. "Then I play him the song 'Lay It Down,' and he said, 'That's the song!'"

From that point, Calhoun helped him form a new production team with Micah Kuiper, from the band Hawk Nelson, who engineers



Jordan St. Cyr.

JOEY SENIFT

the sound. Together, the team is working with St. Cyr to write new material.

"It's been a privilege and honour to work with these guys who are at the top of their game," says St. Cyr. "Since heading down to Nashville a few years ago, I think I've written one song by myself. The weight of a good song is too heavy to bear alone. It's so fun to write together."

As of last fall, St. Cyr has also taken on the position of Music Pastor at Oasis Community Church

in Winnipeg. With a team of musicians, St. Cyr runs the worship service each Sunday.

With three kids under seven and a wife at home, life is busy for the musician.

"I knew this was a possibility when I married him, that Jordan could be gone a lot," says his wife Heather. "This is our normal. The kids find it exciting and we've found a way to make it work without it being a strain. We've got such a good support here too, with family

and friends being close."

Jordan's new sound, although it's still heavily influenced by folk roots, has a pop dimension. He's heading back to Nashville this month to record a few songs with his production team. The plan is to pitch some of these songs to a label. He's also going to release a new single shortly, called "Victory."

FOR MORE INFORMATION

■ www.jordanstcyr.com

EVENT GUIDE

Creativi (Tea Time)

March 8 | 6:30–8:30 p.m.
Jake Epp Library, Steinbach. Free.

Craft and Bake Sale Fundraiser

March 11 | 10:00 a.m.–3:00 p.m.
Young at Hearts Community Centre, Richer. Free.

19th Annual Southeast Art Exhibit

March 17 | 7:00–8:00 p.m.
Steinbach Cultural Arts Center, Steinbach. Free.

Painting on the Prairies

March 21 | 7:00 p.m.
Hespeler's Cookhouse and Tavern, Niverville. \$35.

"Knit-Wits" Fiber Craft Club

March 27 | 6:00–9:00 p.m.
Jake Epp Library, Steinbach. Free.

Send your event listing to:

■ [sstcyr@nivervillecitizen.com](mailto:sscyr@nivervillecitizen.com)

\$339,900



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Katie Knebel

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Movie Magic, Right Next Door

By Sylvia St. Cyr

✉ sstcyr@nivervillecitizen.com

If you drive down Highway 59 towards Winnipeg, you may have noticed a property with bright green paint on all the buildings, and a huge green wall. This is Chroma Ranch, and it's owned by John Mysyk, who has been working in the film industry for 20 years. Mysyk is in the business of creating movie magic, and films have been shooting here for about 15 years.

Even though it may seem like the property, just outside Île-des-Chênes, is in the middle of nowhere by Hollywood standards, it has a lot to offer.

"It's nice because I'm not in a residential area and I've got distance around me," says Mysyk. "It's easier to do drone shots. There is more code when you're around airports, and in fact you can't fly a drone anywhere near them. I've done some disaster movies here and we've done a bunch of special effects like blowing stuff up."

Many different types of projects have been filmed at Chroma Ranch, everything from commercials to documentaries, high-budget films, and TV series.

"I coordinated a TV series called *Guinea Pig*," Mysyk says. "It was a guy who would test products. On one episode, he tested a biker jacket that was hooked up to a dead-man switch, so that when you fall off the machine it would deploy airbags around your neck and inflate. He purposely crashed a motorcycle in front of my place on the old Highway 59."

Mysyk is affiliated with IATSE 856, a union representing freelance specialty artists, technicians, and craft workers in the Manitoba Motion Picture Industry. He also works in conjunction with the Screen Actors Guild (SAG) and DGC, which deals with producers and directors.

"I facilitate Manitoba and have



Filming takes place at Chroma Ranch.

JOHN MYSYK

personally coordinated 75 to 80 movies," Mysyk says. "As transport coordinator, anything that goes through a movie goes through me. I'm responsible for the actors being where they're supposed to be on the set, for the crew, and I'm the guy who has to make sure all the equipment is good so that they can shoot that day."

Mysyk has worked with many known actors, including Brad Pitt, Casey Affleck, and Robin Williams. "We shot *Capote* here, starring Philip Seymour Hoffman, which won Academy Awards. I've worked on movies in the Caribbean all the way to Alaska, and they're all done through the Manitoba film industry." He even shot part of a movie right outside Niverville, called *The Lookout*, which starred Joseph Gordon Levitt and Jeff Bridges.

Green screens were originally designed to mitigate risks to actors and stunt people. The technology has come a long way, so it doesn't usually look cheesy anymore. Before the advent of the green screen, however, the industry had a whole other bag of tricks.

"Before green screen, I did all the travelling shots," Mysyk says. "This is

where you rack a vehicle on a trailer and the actor sits inside and acts like they're driving. I'm actually the guy that's driving and making the vehicle go forward. The director would give me cues if they wanted me to swerve or break. Now, because of the green screen, you can do that shot without the vehicle ever moving."

Mysyk says that Manitoba's film industry is growing.

"Back when I started, we were doing \$14 million movies, and [some] over \$200 million. Everything was going good," Mysyk says that's when SAG went on strike for 18 months. "It really hurt the industry and we lost all of our U.S. feature films. We basically lived on the Canadian production side of things, which are really low-budget projects. We're recovering from that now and it's getting better. That's one of the reasons why I built this [green] wall. Toronto doesn't have anything like it, nor does Vancouver."

In fact, he says the only other wall like this can be found at Universal Studios in California, but that one is only used on one side. Mysyk's wall is double-sided.

The green screen wall on Mysyk's

property was designed by engineers to a very specific code and built last summer. The ten-foot beams sink 15 feet into the ground and are the same beams that bridges are built with. The wall is 11,000 square feet and is painted Chroma-3 green on both sides.

"The wall is made so that these guys can rig and hang equipment over the top," Mysyk says. "They can use rain towers if they need a scene to have rain, hang lights, use decelerators, which allow stunt people to look like they're falling, and even have people repel off of the wall."

Chroma Ranch has many different areas that can be used for filming. Mysyk painted the interior of one of the barns from floor to ceiling so that it forms a green screen tube that runs 200 feet long and 50 feet wide.

"The bigger budget movies cost \$1,000 per minute to operate, so you want to have an alternative area to shoot," he points out. "One of the reasons the wall is double-sided is so that you can have two different sets being set up, and all you have to do is worry about moving your camera gear around. The barn is for when you're shooting a particular movie that can't

have rain. At least the crew can shoot a secondary scene inside. I even have a rustic attic and space around outside with bulrushes and a tree line."

The movie *A Dog's Purpose* was coordinated by Mysyk. The film, which faced controversy earlier this year when allegations were made about animal cruelty, took a year to shoot and had a budget of \$50 million. "Alan Bloomquist, the producer on this movie, was one of the best men I've ever worked with. I dealt with the animal trainers and had to haul the dogs, so I know how they were handled. I can tell you that no dog was harmed during the making of this film. The footage shown on TMZ was edited and staged. We were in Brandon, Manitoba for a month during production, and the dogs stayed in a hotel room just below me. They were fed organic chicken and got treated better than the crew."

Mysyk says he is always looking to expand his property for more creative filming opportunities. He has a pond on the property that he'd like to expand into a blue screen (the industry prefers blue when dealing with water and snow). The pond set would be equivalent to one at Universal Studio, except Mysyk's screen would be curved, allowing it to seem more infinite.

He also just finished production on *Chucky 7*, starring Jennifer Tilly, which is to be released later this year.

"I'm starting another movie right away," he finishes. "The working title is *Break My Heart 1000 Times*. It's a post-apocalyptic-type movie, so for that we'll have to shut down roads and bridges. I'll have to bring in the fuselage of a plane, and two tanks, which will be used for all the water shots."

FOR MORE INFORMATION

■ www.chromaranch.com

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Paint night participants show off their art.

DEB BRISSETTE

Finding My Inner Artist

fitville

By Chantel Todd

ctodd@nivervillecitizen.com

This month, I'm taking a different spin on Fitville and talking about getting creative and finding my inner artist. I had to dig deep to find it, but it was there hiding in the corner of my body, shaking as I grabbed it and dusted it off.

What I'm trying to say here is that I don't consider myself an artist. Creative, yes. Artist, no.

So here's how it started: I convinced my husband to join me at a paint night because I didn't want to go alone. I told him the night before, and it did take a few minutes for him to approve, but I managed to convince him.

We got ready and headed out for the two-hour event, not knowing what to expect. We began at 7:00 p.m. sharp and started by wetting about three to four inches of canvas. Then the instructor, Deb Brissette,

told us to dip into the blue paint and brush it on the canvas in an X motion.

I can do this, I thought to myself, still with no idea what we were painting. *This is easy*.

Next we added some purple, brushed that on in the X motion, then some dark blue.

Now came the scary part. Deb wanted us to add black to the beautiful blue sky. I hesitated, looked to my left, and saw that my husband had completely covered his blue sky in black. We had a chuckle and then he added more blue to lighten it. I proceeded to add black, very cautiously, around the edges and then blend it in.

Up next was snow, caking on the white and layering it. That was easy, but there was more. Deb then showed us how to shade the white to create hills and rocks.

Don't screw this up, I kept telling myself.

Now we had to do trees. Big trees, right in the foreground.

Deb showed us how to make pine trees and birch trees. I again cautiously added black lines up my painting, worried that I was going to mess it up. But it turned out looking just fine.

After stepping back and analyzing my painting, I thought it was missing a little something. So I decided to add a fence—and that's when I finally let loose and freely drew fence posts and the wire crossing them. I have to admit, it was fun. Then I figured the scene could use a pond in the distance. Easy peasy. Add some blue and white, a dash of black around the edges, perfect!

At the end of the night, we were both laughing and giggling at each other's paintings. A successful night it was!

My husband is actually interested in coming to another paint night. Who knew?

Get creative this spring and have fun doing it.

Manitoba Theatre for Young People Performs in Niverville

By Sylvia St. Cyr

sstcyr@nivervillecitizen.com

February in Canada is "I Love to Read" month. To start off the month right, Niverville Elementary School's Literacy Committee invited the crew from the Manitoba Theatre for Young People (MTYP) to perform for the students.

The MTYP is touring schools across Manitoba from February 6 until May 5 this year. The play they're performing,

Dib and Dob: The Journey Home, has won the Chalmers New Play Award, as well as the Dora Mavor Moore Award. It's about two brothers who have gotten lost for so long that they've made up their own language. They work together to find their way home.

"It was enjoyed! We really appreciated the question and conversation time at the end," says Leslie Bardal, a teacher at NES who sat in on the play. "Students were able

to share their thoughts about the physical drama and use of creative language."

The crew came to the school on February 9 and performed in the morning. "With NES having a large population, we were limited to an audience of 300 students," says Bardal, who adds that only Grades Two to Four were able to attend. The younger classes were treated to dramatic readings by people in the community.

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JOB POSTINGS



We're Hiring

- ◆ Prior construction experience a plus
- ◆ but willing to train the right person.

Resume can be e-mailed to:
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Regular Mail or Drop off in person to:
IN-EX Plastering & Stucco
Box 1168 - 349 Bronstone Drive
Niverville, MB
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Join Our News Team!

The Niverville Citizen is seeking candidates for TWO writing positions: **NEWS WRITER** and **SPORTS WRITER**. Looking for candidates who write cleanly and clearly, are able to meet tight deadlines, and are willing to attend news events or sports games. May require travel to local communities. Previous publishing experience an asset, but not required. Candidates will be asked to provide samples of their writing. Inquire at editor@nivervillecitizen.com for more information and payment rates.

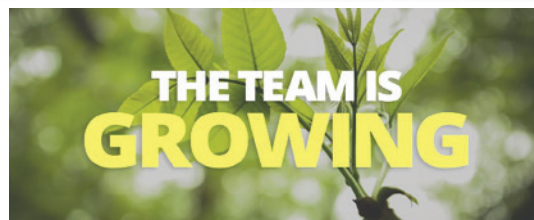
The **Citizen**



Colouring Contest

Colouring Contest Winner

Abigail McLendon
Age: 7



Niverville Heritage Centre is please to announce we are now accepting applications for the following positions:

Hespeler's Cookhouse & Tavern – Serving Staff
Hespeler's Cookhouse & Tavern – Bartender
Event Centre – Server
Event Centre – Bartender
Event Centre – Hostess

It is important that you indicate which position(s) you are applying for on your cover letter.

Resumes with references
will be accepted by email only to:
jobs@heritagecentre.ca

Only successful applicants chosen for an interview will be contacted.



CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

The Board of Directors for Niverville Heritage Holdings Inc. are seeking qualified individuals to serve on the various boards under their purview including Niverville Heritage PCH Inc. and Heritage Life Retirement Living Inc.

An independent Nomination Committee has been established to guide the selection process of qualified candidates for recommendation for 2-3 available board positions. The board positions are exciting and challenging as they deal with the complexities of operating a multifaceted, not for profit social enterprise campus with a staff of over 200 team members. Human Resource and Business Development experience are desired skill sets. This is a volunteer position with no remuneration

If you have questions, or you are interested in serving in this capacity or would like to recommend an individual for consideration please email andynhhi2017@gmail.com

Thank you

Ken Rempel — Committee Chair
On behalf of the Nomination Committee
Andy Anderson, Peter Braun and Aaron Redekop

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Niverville Co-Op Preschool Registration



Registration for 2017-2018 School Year

Date: April 11, 2017 - 7:00pm - 8:00pm
Location: Preschool Classroom, at South end of Niverville Elementary School.
Your child must be born in 2013-2014 to sign up and must be potty trained. (no pull ups)

The Preschool Program runs Monday to Thursday, half days, morning or afternoon. The morning sessions are from 9:00am - 11:30am and afternoons are from 1:00pm - 3:20pm. Sign up sheets will be available, please come with a few days in mind as spaces fill up quickly and are on a first come, first serve basis.

You may choose 1 OR 2 sessions per week.
\$20/month for 1 session a week
\$40/month for 2 sessions a week

Please bring a post-dated cheque with you.
Made out to: NCP
Date: June 20, 2017
Memo: Clearly write your child's full name in the memo
(This cheque is non-refundable)

More info to come at Registration night. Should you have any questions, please email Irene Falk at ncpreschool@gmail.com

SPACE FOR RENT/LEASE



295 Main Street - Niverville

9119 Sq Ft of office / professional space available on a beautiful treed lot that offers great visibility on main traffic route, lit parking lot, vehicle plug in's, high-end finishing throughout, back patio, and more. Space to be split into sections to suit your business needs! Call Ray for details or to arrange a viewing: (204) 346-3041



970 Sq Ft Commercial Space for Lease – Niverville

Highly visible building at 349 Bronstone Drive in Niverville offers a beautifully finished 2nd floor commercial space for lease, available immediately. Main area is an open 25' x 38' space with warming kitchen for lunch & coffee, plus entrance area. Access to common bathrooms. Gross lease is \$1000/month.

Call 204-346-3041 or e-mail raydowse@icloud.com for more information or to schedule a viewing

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