

The Citizen

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LOCAL NEWS

Ritchot Tense in Aftermath of Council Resignations

■ The future of council is still up in the air as the province appoints an administrator to oversee a by-election on July 19.

Details on Pages 8-9

LOCAL NEWS

Niverville Adopts New Recycling System

■ Bristol Hauling will begin its residential recycling contract on June 1, after the introduction of new, larger carts.

Details on Page 11

SPORTS & RECREATION

Niverville Rush Off to Promising Start

■ In their first full-time season, the Niverville Rush soccer team has been showing a lot of potential.

Details on Page 26

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

Summer Festivals

■ Get ready for summer with fairs and music festivals this June in Niverville, St. Adolphe, and Grande Point.

Details on Pages 29-30 & Niverville Fair Insert



Southeast Anxious Over Rising Crime

» DETAILS ON PAGES 3-5

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Southeast Residents Anxious Over Ongoing Crime

According to RCMP statistics, property crime in Niverville has gone up 45 percent in the first quarter of 2017, since the same period in 2016.



BRENDA
SAWATZKY

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It's been five months since the machete attack in Niverville which sent one man to hospital and the entire town and neighbouring communities into a state of alarm. Since that time, residents in both Niverville and Ritchot have rallied to beef up their communication, crime education, and prevention measures to aid the St. Pierre RCMP detachment in curbing local crime.

After a lengthy hiatus of the Niverville Citizens on Patrol Program (COPP), a new program was founded and called Niverville Crime Prevention Patrol (NCPP). Thirty residents have signed up for this volunteer program, patrolling the streets nightly.

Niverville resident Barry Piasta has made great efforts to complement this program with a separate one called Connected Community. His program has yet to catch on, but its model is a good one: to return us to times past when neighbours looked out for neighbours. Though this modus operandi came more naturally to neighbourhoods in the old days, Piasta's vision is to organize it in such a way that the model can be reintroduced.

"A connected community is about bringing the community together," Piasta says. "This



ISTOCK

idea is more than just security. It's about neighbours knowing neighbours, about knowing the people on your block. Kind of like everyone keeps mentioning, 'Back in the good old days.' Well, we're trying to recreate that in a way. We can look after each other. We can know whose vehicle is whose. It's based on Neighbourhood Watch and Block Parent ideas."

Ritchot, too, has implemented a new COPP program through Manitoba Public Insurance. So far, volunteers have actively been patrolling Île-des-Chênes and Grande Pointe. The group is still seeking volunteers from St.

Adolphe and Ste. Agathe.

Since a big public meeting was orchestrated by Piasta following the machete attack, Niverville's town council has collaborated with the RCMP to reopen its satellite office in Niverville. According to Sgt. Rheal Gravel of the St. Pierre detachment, service delivery to Niverville and the area has increased.

"It... has helped to obtain better and timely information regarding community

policing issues," says Gravel. "Timely information is the key to successful resolution of community concerns. RCMP members from St. Pierre and Traffic Services regularly use the satellite office."

ARE WE DOING ENOUGH?

With all of this change, property crime still takes centre stage on social media platforms. Almost daily, new crimes or suspicious activity is shared. Where last year's on-

line reports focused on thefts of loose change from unlocked vehicles, today the crimes have escalated to smashed car windows, garage break-ins, home invasions, robberies, and in at least one case an armed attack with a dangerous weapon. According to the St. Pierre RCMP, property crime in Niverville has gone up 45 percent in the first quarter of 2017 since the same period in 2016.

(continued on page 4)



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(continued from page 3)

"When I moved to Niverville in 2015, not even two weeks had passed when our cars had been rummaged through in the middle of the night," says one Niverville resident. "I was naive in thinking crime wouldn't happen here. It happens everywhere, no matter where you live."

Earlier this year, this same resident experienced the shock of two attempted home break-ins in one day. First, someone tried to get in through a window while the family was away. Later that night, someone did get in through their garage door while the family was home. Both times the perpetrators were scared off by the family's home alarm system.

"[I was] scared, of course," she says. "Afraid to walk into the house and frightened as I'm watching my husband walk outside in the middle of the night when there could be someone in our garage waiting to hurt us."

Niverville's new Shell station has also fallen victim to two break-ins in recent months.

"We have owned the Shell in St. Pierre for seven years and [have] never been broken into," says Sylvie Forest, co-owner of both stations. "The RCMP have been helpful, but they have been swamped. There's not enough RCMP for [the area]. To be honest, I personally think the first break-in was outsiders but I have reasons to think the second one was someone local. [It] doesn't look like young kids, either. [Based on security camera footage they're] all people over the age of at least 35 or 40. It's very frustrating and I'm not sure what to do or think."

Forest says that her surveillance camera has also indicated a good number of NCPP patrols monitoring their area, for which she is thankful. But the patrols didn't spot the crimes which took place at around 3:00 a.m. and 4:00 a.m. on different nights. So far, the perpetrators have been well-disguised and their



RCMP Sergeant Rheel Gravel.

ST-PIERRE-JOLYS RCMP

targeted items have been cash and cigarettes.

"They are fast because they know they don't have much time," says Forest. "By the time the alarm company makes their calls, it's too late. They are gone."

Since that time, the Forests have installed strobe lights and sirens in the front and rear of their building.

Ritchot COPP coordinator Marianne Curtis says similar incidences are happening regularly in Ritchot as well.

"We have seen an increase of incidents in St. Adolphe, Grande Pointe, and Île-des-Chênes," says Curtis. "It's almost like they go in a loop from Winnipeg, down to Niverville, then back [up Highway 59]."

Curtis notes that their COPP volunteers have already had numerous opportunities to report impending or actual crime. In one case, a resident spotted and photographed a young man in a mask in their neighbour's yard. The man carried a bolt cutter and was rummaging around a tool shed. The neighbour contacted Curtis, who dispatched some available COPP volunteers. With the aid of the photograph, the patrols, and the RCMP, the young man was apprehended.

Curtis adds that mini-storage companies have been hit as well as gas stations in Lorette, Landmark, Île-des-Chênes, Grunthal, and Ste. Anne, all within days of each other.

POPULATION GROWTH AND CRIME

"Population growth in the town of Niverville and surrounding areas have had a direct influence on the increase in property offences," says Sgt. Gravel. "St. Pierre-Jolys RCMP is aware of the impact it has on the community and have made significant arrests and continue to conduct proactive and preventative patrols."

Gravel believes, based on his detachment's findings, that much of the crime seems to be internal and Niverville is not necessarily being targeted by outside criminals.

"Recently, several arrests by the St. Pierre members regarding property crimes have been committed by residents and former residents of Niverville," Gravel says. "Area knowledge by local perpetrators facilitates patterning and targeting of residences."

Gravel also says that they are actively working with the different community programs and that new projects are being developed and

studied for effectiveness. He reminds residents, though, that simple precautionary measures—such as locking doors, removing valuables from sight, and removing garage door openers from vehicles stored outdoors—goes a long way to preventing crime.

"Community awareness and participation is the key to crime prevention," says Gravel.

AWARENESS AND PARTICIPATION

Because of social media, awareness doesn't seem to be a problem. The community Facebook pages have been buzzing. Participation, on the other hand, appears to be more of a concern.

Piasta has been frustrated with the lack of interest in the Connected Community program. He's held three public meetings with a typical showing of three or four people.

"Everybody wants a solution, but they want someone else to [carry it out]," says Piasta. "[The program] is such a simple way, really. You're not committing to any patrols."

Piasta's vision is to section off the Town of Niverville and have one captain per section and a sub-captain per street. The captain's job would be to act as the neighbourhood crime rep, checking in with residents and reminding them to watch out for open garage doors or items left in full view.

Piasta wants to get four or five people like that on a street. "People go to bed at different times. But [let's get] eyes there and to let everybody know that there are eyes there. It's to create a deterrent, not to create vigilantes."

Curtis, too, says Ritchot's COPP has struggled to recruit enough volunteers.

"That is the frustrating part," says Curtis. "Everyone wants someone to do something, but no one actually walks away from the computer to do anything."

Though she had 21 people show an interest after their

initial COPP meeting in Île-des-Chênes, only six volunteers actually patrol the area, including herself.

INDEPENDENT POLICING ALTERNATIVES

One Niverville resident believes that increased policing is still the best strategy and was disheartened by the 2016 census results indicating that Niverville fell just shy of the mark for provincially enforced policing requirements. Lindsay Unrau of Niverville ran in the

"The big myth right now is that the cost of an independent police department is totally unattainable."

Lindsay Unrau

Niverville resident, candidate for councillor in 2014.

2014 election campaign for a town council position. Her platform hinged on curbing crime through increased law enforcement. Before her campaign, Unrau researched the means by which a community can add police services to their area.

She says there are four different approaches to policing a community: contract the services of the local RCMP,

"[According to the census], we are 390 people shy of hitting the 5,000 mark," says Unrau. "Waiting until 2021 to start working on a new plan isn't an option considering the ever-expanding crime rate which we are having to deal with now."

Unrau says that while the RCMP are doing their best, the problem is not with the quality of service but the quantity of officers available to the region. Even with an RCMP satellite station here, there are no guarantees that the police will be in the area when a crime is perpetrated.

While the current strategies of volunteer patrols and installing home security systems are helpful, many

people don't have the luxury of time or additional finances to make this feasible. Increasing a police force also comes at a financial cost, but according to Unrau it becomes much more feasible when the cost is spread out to all taxpayers.

"The big myth right now is that the cost of an independent police department is totally unattainable," says Unrau. "When we consider the cost of



Niverville resident Lindsay Unrau.

LINDSAY UNRAU

contract another community's independent police force, create your own independent police force, or operate a joint regional police force with another community or communities.

this type of system, we need to consider what types of financial options we have available to us. There are provincial grants which are earmarked for police services, such as rural independent police

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departments. The amount of grant money available to a town is based on the size of population. We are double the size of Ste. Anne, who receives annual funding of about \$200,000. Furthermore, all those tickets which will be handed out for speeding, drunk driving, etc. [will] make our town a safer place and result in revenue to our own department, not the RCMP."

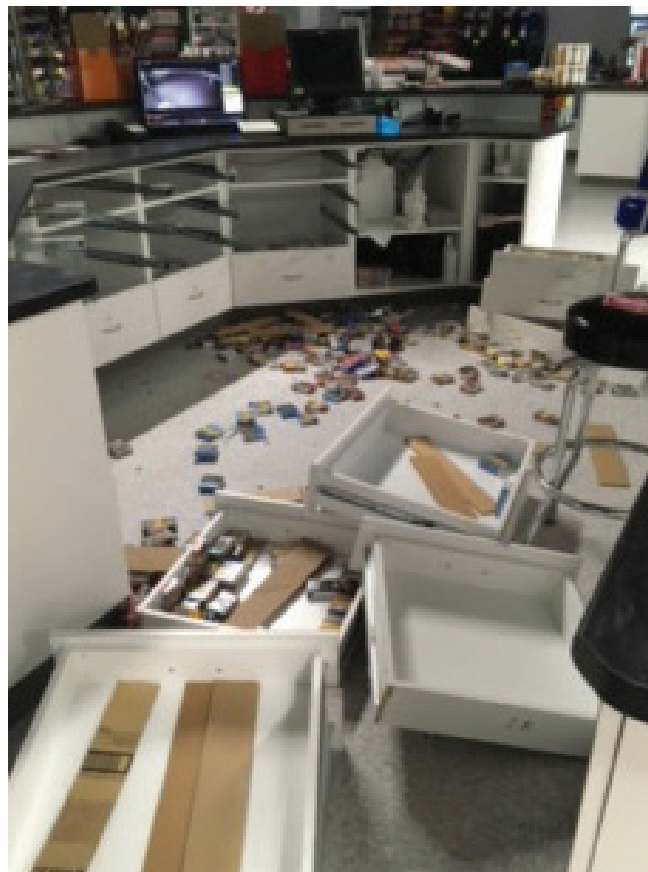
Independent police departments can also contract to neighbouring communities, which brings in additional revenue to cover the costs. Because communities with private policing reduce drain on the RCMP's workforce, the government subsidizes these local police services.

The community of Ste. Anne allocated \$462,000 in tax dollars in 2017 to their police force. After the government subsidy and enforcement revenue is collected, the cost to their taxpayers is nominal.

According to Unrau's research, a number of Manitoba communities have created their own independent police services, including Altona, Brandon, Morden, Victoria Beach, Winkler, Ste. Anne, Rivers, the RM of Springfield, and the RM of Whitehead.

"If we were to shadow the example of Ste. Anne, we would be hiring one full-time police chief, two full-time constables, and two casual constables," Unrau says. "The rest of the team would be volunteer auxiliary members who, while having a certain amount of training, are not full-fledged police officers but who accompany one full-time constable."

With volunteers in such short supply, she adds that individuals working towards becoming police officers or RCMP officers can benefit from the experience derived from this kind of volunteering and may be in a better position to obtain a job in the future. Retired officers, too, are often



Niverville Shell was ransacked in a pair of recent break-ins. **■ NIVERVILLE SHELL**

looking for ways to continue to apply their skills at a reduced level.

"If we can staff a crew of [volunteer] firefighters and EMRs, why does this possibility seem so unattainable?" Unrau asks.

As for finding skilled police or RCMP, Unrau says there are a number of reasons officers would choose such a position, not the least of which is their ability to make a home in a community and stay put, without the risk of being continually reposted to other parts of the country.

Ste. Anne Chief of Police Marc Robichaud says their police department has huge public support in the town and no shortage of staff to fill positions.

"Currently, I have more casual [part-time] police staff than I have hours to give them," says Robichaud. "We have a large

pool of auxiliary cadets that are just waiting for opportunities for employment."

Robichaud adds that average response times for his department is four minutes. He says that property crime in his area is very low. In fact, it's virtually non-existent.

"To get the ball rolling, we really need to put together a formal report regarding what the costs could be if we were to develop an independent police department," says Unrau. "The last time a formal study was conducted was between the years 1998 and 2000 when we had less than 2,000 residents in Niverville. Before we rule out the option, it is imperative that we get all the facts straight. Let's do the work and argue the possibility after all the facts are laid out in front of us."

According to Robichaud, the Ste. Anne police

department and a council representative have met with a member of the Niverville town council in the past and offered assistance should Niverville decide to pursue an independent police force. The assistance could come in a variety of forms, whether establishing our own police detachment or pursuing a joint partnership with Ste. Anne to create a regional service.

WORKING TOGETHER

Though Sgt. Gravel declined comment on the benefits of an independent policing system, he suggests that any and all active participation in crime prevention goes a long way to increasing the wellness and safety of a community.

"Community growth does not come without its challenges," says Gravel. "These challenges are expected and must be met with a measured and appropriate response tailored-made to the community and its issues."

Niverville mayor Myron Dyck says the recent break-ins and thefts are a concern to council as well.

"[Although] I too am not happy about what is occurring... we are not alone, as the news is full of surrounding communities also affected by similar [crimes]," says Dyck. "I wish to assure the residents of Niverville that council is working closely with our local RCMP to bring those involved to justice."

Dyck adds that there has been a noticeable increase in RCMP presence in the community, but that the police continue to need our help with tips and information to be successful. The RCMP do not follow our Facebook pages. He also commends the efforts of residents in the variety of volunteer efforts that are going on, stating that some individuals have already been brought to justice through these collaborative efforts.

CITIZEN POLL

THIS MONTH'S QUESTION:

Would you be willing to pay more in taxes if it meant your community was able to operate its own independent police force?

- ☐ **YES** – A dedicated police force would cut down on response times and provide a much stronger deterrent.
- ☐ **NO** – Taxes are high enough, and the RCMP are fully capable of handling the workload.

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LAST MONTH'S RESULTS:

Do you agree that local public services such as fire, health, and policing should be distributed throughout a region rather than each community funding its own services?

YES – By spreading these services over wider regions, they can be delivered more efficiently.

74%

NO – Keeping services local means they can remain more narrowly focused.

26%

YOUR COMMENTS:

I strongly agree.
-Jacob Giesbrecht

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St. Adolphe Nursing Home Demolition Begins

By Evan Braun

editor@nivervillecitizen.com



The demolition as of May 23.

GORD DAMAN

As of May 23, demolition has begun on the former personal care home in St. Adolphe. The site, which began its life as a convent many decades ago, is being redeveloped by Niverville Heritage Holdings Inc. The proposed facility will see the construction of new housing units for seniors, including life lease and assisted living, as well as additional day-care spots.

Initial reports indicated that the building would come down over a period of two weeks, although based on early progress it seems likely the demolition will be completed ahead of schedule.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

www.nivervillecitizen.com/news/local/daycare-and-seniors-residences-proposed-for-st-adolphe

Touch a Truck for Plex Fundraiser

By Heather Miller

On Saturday, June 24, the Friends of the Plex will be holding a Touch-a-Truck event at the Niverville Arena, in support of the community's multiplex project. This event, which has been in the works for seven months, will provide a day of food and fun experiences for

the whole family.

The arena parking lot will be filled with construction vehicles, emergency vehicles, and farm equipment, among others. There will be both static and interactive displays for guests to enjoy.

Children of all ages will be welcome to climb into and explore the equipment in

ways they wouldn't otherwise have the chance to experience. Some of the confirmed equipment includes a semi-truck, a back hoe, an excavator, a fire truck, and race cars. More exhibitors are stepping up every day.

The event will run from 10:00 a.m. until 3:00 p.m., rain or shine. Admission at the gate

is \$5 per person, and children two and under are free. A barbecue lunch will be served.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Volunteers are needed. If you are able to help out, email multiplex@whereyoubelong.ca.



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Federal Funding Aids GORP in New Product Launch

By Brenda Sawatzky

bsawatzky@nivervillecitizen.com

The Great GORP Project (TGGP) of Niverville is one of three Canadian businesses recently recognized for their innovation and contributions to the Canadian workforce. The funding is being distributed through the Western Innovation Initiative (WINN), a program of the federal government whose mandate it is to provide stimulus loans to western Canadian companies.

The WINN program promotes the development and diversification of the western Canadian economy by assisting qualifying businesses with financial support to help them accelerate the commercialization of innovative products, processes, and services. This, in turn, supports the creation of jobs and growth. According to Western Economic Diversification Canada's (WEDC) website, attracting early-stage capital for technology commercialization has been identified as a key challenge for small- to medium-sized businesses in western Canada.

"I was extremely humbled and honoured to have been chosen to receive this investment from the WEDC program," says Colleen Dyck of TGGP. "The interest-free, repayable loan will help me manage my cashflow at this critical time of innovation and development for my energy bar business."

Dyck says the \$77,500 she received will be used to launch a brand-new product line she



Colleen Dyck, owner of GORP.

KALEB VISRAM

calls the GORP Clean Energy Bar Ready-Mix.

"The energy bar ready-mix is a completely new concept and product... and we are really excited about the splash this is going to make in our retail presence," says Dyck. "This idea came about approximately one year after GORP bars were on the market. I kept hearing from parents that they were buying the bars and hiding them from their kids because, let's face it, at three dollars per bar [in the retail stores] it can add up fast when you have an army of little munchers raiding the pantry."

The new ready-mix product will come in packaging similar to a cake mix and allow GORP bar lovers to make their very own bars at home with the addition of just a few wet ingredients. The mixes will be available in all of the same flavours people have come to love and will even include pre-made bags with re-sealable stickers like the traditional bars.

"This is a great way for

families to experience [making their own] high-quality, functional bars at a fraction of the price," Dyck says. "The ready-mix is designed to be pressed into a traditional cookie pan and will produce 25 to 35 bars for under a dollar per bar."

Due to the volume of ingredients they purchase, TGGP is able to provide the ready-mix at a much lower cost than if people were to source healthy, local ingredients on their own.

"Our customers have told us that the barrier to them making their own bars is the sheer expense and time needed to do it," Dyck adds. "I felt terrible because the bars people most often can afford to give their kids are filled with the cheapest ingredients out there. We provide all the high-quality—and sometimes hard-to-find—ingredients that already go into our GORP bars. The ready-mix is an easy way to provide value and economy of time and money all at once and our customers are excited about it!"



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Ritchot Tense in Aftermath of Council Resignations

Future of disbanded Ritchot council still up in the air as the province appoints an administrator to oversee a full-council by-election on July 19.

By Evan Braun
& Brenda Sawatzky

✉ editor@nivervillecitizen.com

One month after the sudden resignations of three members of the RM of Ritchot's council, including its mayor, broad disagreement remains as to how and why it happened. One way or another, however, Ritchot will soon have a new council in place, with a by-election scheduled to occur on July 19.

With only two councillors remaining, they were unable to form a quorum. Therefore, on May 10, the province appointed an administrator to take care of the municipality's day-to-day operations until a new council could be elected. The province has tapped Roger Bouvier, the former chief administrative office of La Broquerie and a retired municipal services officer with decades of experience, to oversee this contentious period.

In addition to handling day-to-day operations and any emergencies which may arise, Bouvier has said his primary responsibility is to ensure that a by-election is carried out in a timely manner.

Although two councillors remained after the resignations, they will not retain their seats. All five seats—four ward councillors and one mayor—will be up for election on July 19. The former council members are allowed to run again.

The nomination period is currently underway. Candidates who intend to run will have the opportunity to file their nomination papers at the municipal office from June 7–9, and then again from June 12–13. The papers can be filed between 9:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. on those days.



The province recently appointed Roger Bouvier as administrator of Ritchot.

RM OF RITCHOT

WHY DID THIS HAPPEN?

Mayor Jackie Hunt stepped down on Friday, April 28, leading to the further resignations of Councillor Jeannot Robert (who also served as deputy mayor) and Councillor Ron Mamchuk the following Monday. In the aftermath, the public was given little indication of their rationale. On Tuesday, May 2, Hunt released a public statement indicating that bullying played a major role in her decision.

"When a Council cannot function as a group, and when name calling and belligerent behaviour become the norm, it is time to re-evaluate your spot at the table," wrote Hunt, who had been in the midst of her first mayoral term. "If I stayed and did nothing, then I became complicit and accepting of the behaviour. We are

trying to encourage people to run for public office, and we need to ensure they are protected from bullying and inappropriate behaviour while serving their communities."

It has since been publicized that these remarks were, to a large degree, aimed at Councillors Ernie Dumaine and Corinne Webb. Dumaine in particular has been accused of bad behaviour, including derogatory remarks and gestures he was observed to have made during a council meeting on April 19.

Aside from Hunt's May 2 statement, neither she nor Robert or Mamchuk have granted media interviews since stepping down. Dumaine and Webb, however, have presented their side of the story through mailouts to residents throughout the municipality.

"Recently, Jackie Hunt, former Mayor of Ritchot, released a press statement alleging bullying, name calling and belligerent behaviour on Council as reasons for her resigning," a May 11 communication reads. "Nothing could be further from the truth."

In addition to disputing the bullying charge, the mailout goes on to assert that members of council acted improperly regarding a recent park that was built in a new development in St. Adolphe. Their contention is that Garden Ridge Park contains a hockey rink "that was put up illegally next to a house" and that the rink "had no permit and did not meet our Zoning By-Law."

They further claim that some grants and funding received by the park were obtained improperly and

that only Hunt and Mamchuk knew about the hockey rink's development. Indeed, they claim to have only heard about the rink through hearsay in the municipal office.

Regardless of the veracity of these claims, it's indisputable that the clash over Garden Ridge Park led to a major public argument at the April 19 council meeting, during which a conditional use application was sought for the rink. The conditional use application passed by a vote of 3–2. It should be noted that the rink, along with the rest of the park, had already been fully constructed at the time of the meeting.

A homeowner whose property line lies just meters from the hockey rink made numerous complaints about the noise. He, too, alleges that the rink is illegal, that no permit was applied for, and that it was built in contravention of bylaws. He is reportedly in the process of filing a lawsuit against the municipality to protect his home investment, adding that he and his family have been made out to be the bad guys by members of the community who favour the park.

Webb and Dumaine followed up their first mailout with a second, delivered on May 18, encouraging other residents to press the Minister of Indigenous and Municipal Relations, Eileen Clarke, to launch an investigation into the park. This second letter purported further improprieties, including that this is not the first time municipal employees have spent money on projects which were not properly approved.

"We need to hold employees as well as Council accountable for their actions," Webb and Dumaine wrote. "If a legal matter results from such violations the individuals should be liable for their wrongdoings or



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mistakes.”

As of press time, Hunt, Robert, and Mamchuk have not yet answered these claims. Although the claims are serious, none of them have been proven.

FORMER COUNCILLOR SPEAKS OUT ABOUT CONTROVERSY

Elmer Hywarren, who served as a Ritchot councillor from 2010 to 2014, has been watching these proceedings with great interest. He remembers attending the April 19 council meeting, the last time this group of councillors and mayor met in public.

“I went there and reminded council about the zoning by-law and a bit of the history of the community,” says Hywarren. “They were applying for a conditional use [permit] after the fact. This is where the problem was.”

He recalls when Mayor Hunt made a request of the two developers of the adjoining developments to merge their dedicated greenspace into one area. According to the Planning Act, developers must dedicate up to ten percent of their holdings to the municipality for greenspace. The merging of these spaces doubled the park’s size. Hywarren agrees that the mayor made a reasonable request which was beneficial to the residents of both developments and did not require council’s vote on the matter.

The issue, Hywarren believes, boils down to internal accusations of improper protocols regarding a structure—specifically, the hockey rink and its concrete pad—on that greenspace.

“The zoning by-law states that, in order to have a structure, you have to have a building permit,” says Hywarren. “You also have to have sufficient clearances with adjoining properties and the street.” The concrete pad, he says, would have fallen under the same restrictions as a structure.

Another concern appeared to be the questionable allocation of Manitoba Hydro’s Community Development Initiative (CDI) funds designated for the greenspace. In addition, the park recently received \$20,000 from Manitoba Liquor and Lotteries.

“If some of the funding came from CDI and it was [to be] designated for that community greenspace, then it would have



Former Ritchot councillor Elmer Hywarren.

AARON HYWARREN

to be approved by council with a majority vote,” Hywarren says, although he acknowledges that council members need not be specific about the use of the funds within the park.

As for following legal protocols, Hywarren says that every councillor should take responsibility to know and understand legislation before making important decisions.

“To be a councillor you only have to worry about the Municipal Act, the Planning Act, the development plan, and your zoning by-law,” Hywarren says. “Those are the things you should at least have some knowledge of. Most don’t, and they rely on the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) and his staff. [These staff members] have to know the detail. But, as a councillor, you should be aware of detail. Don’t go in and say, ‘I’m not a detail person.’ It is not up to the CAO to tell you that you’re in a conflict of interest. You’re the one that has to make that decision as a councillor. It’s not the responsibility of the administrator. The act doesn’t say that the CAO is supposed to be the keeper of councillors and as a councillor you should not move forward if you don’t understand [the rules].”

“Councillors are required to look after the business of community. And it isn’t Grande Pointe and it isn’t Île-des-Chênes. It is the municipality of Ritchot.”

Elmer Hywarren
Former Ritchot Councillor

Hywarren says that typical punitive measures from the Municipal Board would require a mayor or councillor to be removed from their seat, which has happened before in Ritchot’s history. Since resignations have already occurred, little can be done should the mayor or councillors be found culpable of any charges. On the other hand, legal fees may become a concern. According to Hywarren, at least one councillor in times past had their legal fees paid for by the municipality when faced with a lawsuit. After a resignation occurs, Hywarren believes that the party to which the lawsuit is directed may likely be responsible for their own as well as the complainant’s legal fees.

Hywarren says that this council wasn’t always so acrimonious. Prior to the 2014 election, he recalls that every council member was in favour of Hunt’s run for mayor, including Dumaine. It isn’t unusual, though, for emotions to run high when one community (or ward) appears to get priority over the others.

“Forget about whether the rink is there or not,” says Hywarren. “Councillors are required to look after the business of community. And it isn’t Grande Pointe and it isn’t Île-des-Chênes. It is the

municipality of Ritchot. And that is really where a councillor’s responsibilities [lie]. You are in a ward for electoral purposes only, so the moment that you’re elected, the wards should disappear. But unfortunately, they don’t.”

CONSEQUENCES OF RESIGNATIONS

Though Hywarren is disappointed with the outcome of the park and the distress it’s caused St. Adolphe residents, he is more put out by the mayor’s and councillors’ untimely resignations and what that means for Ritchot as a whole.

Until the July 19 by-election is held, Bouvier has said that some municipal business is necessarily on hold.

The biggest consequence to residents is that all public hearings have to be postponed, including a hearing to review the municipality’s financial plan, which had been in the works prior to the resignations. At the financial plan hearing, council is required to provide public knowledge of the annual financial plan and hear out resident concerns about the plan. Without this hearing, the budget cannot be implemented. Without implementation, property tax mill rates cannot be established and school and property taxes cannot be collected. No school tax collection means no income for the schools within the municipality until a new council is established.

The municipality has hit pause on other projects, too, such as road gravelling and drainage construction, which require council’s approval. Decisions on zoning variances and conditional use permits are also stalled.

Even after the by-election, Bouvier has cautioned that little can be done to prevent this situation from happening again if council continues to have trouble working together.

“There’s nothing that I can do,” Bouvier told the CBC in an interview last month. “We’re going to do everything we can to make sure that everyone is aware of it, and we just run the process. It’s up to the local electors to make sure that they elect a group that’s prepared to work together... Once they get in the same room, there’s difficult decisions to be made and sometimes it works, sometimes it doesn’t.”

IN BRIEF



Hit the Streets for Annual Alzheimer’s Walk

By Evan Braun

✉ editor@nivervillecitizen.com

Niverville Services to Seniors will host the annual Walk for Alzheimer’s on June 13, starting at 10:30 a.m. at the Golden Friendship Centre. The walk will be followed by a \$5 barbecue lunch and entertainment provided by Wildflower. Wildflower is comprised of local artists Melanie Bergen, Wade Kehler, and Carisa Klassen.

The event’s guest speaker is Leona Doerksen, the regional coordinator for the Alzheimer’s Society of Manitoba. The walk is sponsored by Ben Sawatzky Electric and Subway.

The Walk for Alzheimer’s is held in communities all over the province, and helps to bring awareness to the debilitating illness. Last year’s Niverville walk drew more than 50 marchers, including staff from the Heritage Life Personal Care Home and students from the local high school.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

■ To register for this year’s walk, or to donate or sponsor walkers, visit www.alzheimer.mb.ca/wfc2017

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NCI Students Win Woman of Distinction Award

By Sylvia St. Cyr

✉ sscyr@nivervillecitizen.com

Since 1977, the YMCA/YWCA of Winnipeg has handed out the Women of Distinction Awards at a gala in May. This year's gala, held at the RBC Convention Centre, honoured a Grade 12 student from Niverville, Abigail Olfert, with the Prairie Promise Award.

NCI's guidance counsellor Deanna Wiebe, along with teacher Danielle Cadieux, nominated Olfert for the award.

"For the past five years, Ms. Cadieux and I have nominated a young woman in our school who is exceptional," says Wiebe. "We attend the awards ceremony with our nominee and her parents each year if we can."

Olfert is highly involved in school activities and her community at large. She was the editor of the yearbook, a lead in the senior high drama this spring, plays in numerous school bands, including senior jazz and a handbell choir, and also volunteered for a year at This Little Light Artistry, where she is currently employed as an art teacher.

Art has always been important to Olfert. "To me, art is freedom and shelter," Olfert says. "It's a way to remember, a passage of expression, and a voice to speak when your mouth can't."

This is the attitude she brings to her paintings, and also her students.

"This year, because of her strength as a leader and a student advocate, Abby was chosen to represent our school on the Superintendent's Student Voice committee," says Wiebe. "[The committee] meets with the superintendents and other student leaders in the Hanover School Division. She was also recently selected to attend our school division's conference 'Hunger No More' to learn how to tackle food insecurity in our communities."

The Prairie Promise Award had



Deanna Wiebe, Abigail Olfert, and Danielle Cadieux at this year's Women of Distinction Awards Gala.

LEN OLFERT

three nominations in total.

"I was so lucky to get the chance to meet and talk with both of [the other nominees]," Olfert says, "and I will just say that they are incredible young women doing amazing things, and they both deserved an award."

The award came with a \$2,000 scholarship towards post-secondary education. Olfert plans to attend the spring session at Capernwray Hall Bible School in England next year. Afterwards, she adds, she would like to attend university back in Manitoba, but she's unsure which

field she'd like to pursue.

For young people looking to make an impact in the world, Olfert offers her two cents. "In our world today, we can so easily be disheartened by the conflict and tragedies we hear of on the news. It makes us feel small and helpless... and [this] is what I would say for all people: find something that you are passionate about, something that draws at your heartstrings, and work for that cause doing little things every day, because in time you will see that the little things add up."



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Some Things are Best Left to the Professionals!

Niverville Adopts New Recycling System

By Evan Braun

✉ editor@nivervillecitizen.com

Niverville introduced its new recycling carts on June 1, marking the start of a four-year contract with Bristol Hauling. Four other competing bids were reviewing by council. Recycling was previously handled by Eastman Recycling Services.

In addition to the upgrade to carts, which are more than twice as large as the old blue bins, another big change is that recycling services are moving to a biweekly schedule. This means that each household will have their recycling picked up every other week. Households along Fifth Avenue and east of Fifth Avenue are in the green zone, and households west of Fifth Avenue are in the blue zone. Green zone pickup begins on June 1, with blue zone pickup beginning June 8.

Residents in multi-family properties will retain weekly pickup.

A recent Town of Niverville newsletter advises residents of several rules to follow.

"All acceptable recyclable materials must fit into the container and the lid must close or the recycling cart will not be emptied," the notice reads. "No extra material will be collected. Do not jam or pack items into your cart. Items must fall freely from the cart into the truck."

The notice also advises residents to place their cart with the wheels against the curb, with three feet of clearance between the cart and any obstacles. For those without a curb, simply place the cart on the shoulder. The town reminds people to take their recycling to the road by 8:00 a.m. to ensure it gets picked up, and to return the cart to their property by midnight.

OPTIONS FOR EXTRA RECYCLING

Since the announcement of these changes, some residents have ex-



The new recycling carts go into operation June 1.

EVAN BRAUN

pressed concern that they collect too much recycling in a two-week period to fit into a single cart, despite the large size of the carts. For those households who anticipate having extra recyclables on an occasional basis, the town has said they will make arrangements to have it collected.

"By contacting the town office prior to Wednesday noon the day before your scheduled collection and paying a nominal fee of \$2, the contractor will stop at your home and pick up the extra recyclable materials," says Dyck. "For ease of collection, the recyclable materials must be placed either in a clear plastic bag or, if cardboard, compressed and tied."

Other households anticipate having extra recyclables on a regular basis, and have inquired whether it would be possible to acquire a second cart. Dyck says that the town office will provide a second cart on request,

for an annual fee of \$100. He adds that the carts themselves cannot be purchased outright because they are owned and provided to the town by Bristol Hauling as part of their service contract.

A third option would be to upgrade your household to a weekly pickup schedule, which comes with an annual cost of \$270.

"As with any new program, there will be a review of the new recycling collection method to ensure the town's goals are being achieved," says Dyck. "We trust that the new collection service will effectively resolve the challenge of recycling materials being blown around our community."

COMMERCIAL RECYCLING

The new contract with Bristol only applies to residential properties, with commercial properties being subject to a different arrangement. A big rea-

son for the difference is that the province subsidizes the cost of residential recycling, but not commercial.

According to the town's previous contract with Eastman Recycling Services, commercial properties could participate in a cardboard recycling program at no cost. Fourteen businesses had signed up for this service. Nonetheless, it recently came to Eastman's attention that its crews were incorrectly picking up all recyclables from commercial properties, despite not receiving any compensation for doing so. Essentially, businesses were getting their recycling picked up for free.

"To do both mixed recycling and cardboard, Eastman has to send two trucks to town as each is picked up by a different truck," says Dawn Harris, Executive Director of the Niverville Chamber of Commerce. "The town continues to cover the cost of

cardboard recycling, as it has done in the past, but has added all businesses to this service, not just the original 14."

After consultation, the town and the Chamber jointly released a letter to the business community laying out a solution to the problem.

"The Town will continue to offer a commercial cardboard recycling program through Eastman Recycling at no cost to property owners who register with the Town and Eastman," reads the letter. "Eastman Recycling Services is [also] pleased to offer a commercial co-mingled recycling program to all commercial properties within the Town of Niverville for an annual cost of \$260 per business. This program will require a minimum of 40 businesses to register."

The letter further explains that "co-mingled recycling" is the same level of service received by residential properties, except it will be a weekly service and not require the use of the new carts.

"The Town and Chamber feel that this program will allow the business community of Niverville, at a fair cost, to keep the same level of service that it has come to expect," the letter concludes.

Harris says that there is solid support among Chamber members for this cost-effective proposal.

"We also appreciate the town asking the Chamber for its input," Harris adds, "which demonstrates that the town recognizes it should consult with business before making decisions that affect business."

FOR MORE INFORMATION

■ If you are a homeowner in Niverville and would like to take advantage of the augmented recycling options mentioned above, contact the town office in person or by emailing reception@whereyoubelong.ca.

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IN BRIEF

Local Drivers Need to Hit the Brakes

By Evan Braun

✉ editor@nivervillecitizen.com

According to data recently collected by volunteers from Ritchot's Citizens on Patrol Program, drivers in Ritchot, including those who may be passing through from neighbouring towns and municipalities, are among the worst speeders in the province.

Twenty-nine citizen groups across the province participated in the Spotlight on Speed week in early May, each group monitoring traffic to track the percentage of drivers exceeding the speed limit.

"Amazingly, in only six days, the number of vehicles monitored was more than one-third of the total vehicles monitored over the entire 2016 year," says Tracy Douglass, MPI's Citizens on Patrol Program Provincial Coordinator.

With speed readers set up in Ste. Agathe, St. Adolphe, and Île-des-Chênes, volunteers noted that an astounding 78 percent of drivers failed to heed the speed limit. The provincial average was just 26 percent.

"This year is the first time that the Ritchot COPP participated in this event," says Ritchot COPP Coordinator Marianne Curtis. "We will be setting up the [speed reader] throughout Île-des-Chênes, Ste. Agathe, and St. Adolphe over the next few months to get more statistics for the RCMP."

Douglass adds that more than 32,000 vehicles were tracked in this spring's program.

Niverville Council Forms Health Task Force

By Evan Braun

✉ editor@nivervillecitizen.com

On Tuesday, May 30, Niverville's town council announced that it has formed a special task force whose mandate is to find solutions to several large problems facing health services in the community.

Six members comprise the Health Task Force, which will be headed by Norm Klippenstein, who has been appointed by council to act as chairman, and Kathy McPhail, who will act in a facilitator and consulting role. Klippenstein is a former member of the Southern Health board, and McPhail recently retired as the board's CEO. Gordon Daman has been appointed by Niverville Heritage Holdings Inc. and Nathan Dueck has been appointed to represent town council. Two additional members will soon be finalized, one each from Niverville Open Health and the Niverville Health and Community

Foundation.

Mayor Myron Dyck has said that the task force is needed in order to research what measures other municipalities are taking to attract and retain doctors and other medical professionals to their communities. The task force will also determine what measures the province is taking in response to medical staff shortages in rural areas, as well as the measures they may have taken in the past which they are no longer be willing to assume under the new government.

"[We need] to research and determine how best, in relation to health access and long-term care for Niverville and [the] region, the Town of Niverville can encourage and ensure this remains a priority in light of changing provincial dynamics," Dyck says.

Dyck adds that another priority of the task force will be to provide council with recommendations prior to its fall planning sessions.



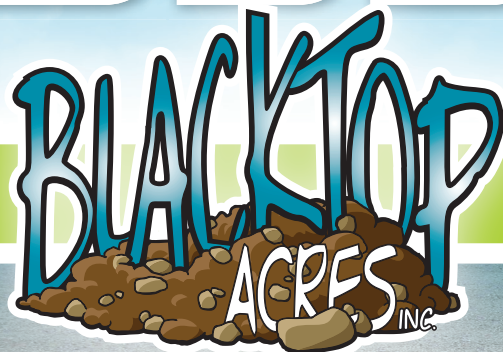
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Ministry's Prayer Shawls Offer Love and Encouragement

By Jacqueline Chartrand

The little white church at the corner of First Street North and Second Avenue in Niverville is a landmark. In fact, it was the first church built in Niverville, dating back to 1907. It became the Niverville United Church in 1925 and is now well-known in recent years for its Prayer Shawl Ministry.

The ministry, in which people donate crocheted or knitted prayer shawls upon request, was started in 2012 by Betty Koop.

A core group of nine ladies produce the shawls, and so far 380 have been distributed to cities as far away as North and South Carolina, including major centres like Chicago, Montreal, Vancouver, and Calgary.

"Our prayer shawls are visible and tangible gifts of love that do wonders for people," says Koop. "One gentleman told us that his wife could not sleep due to her illness, but

when he placed our shawl around her shoulders, she immediately fell asleep."

Indeed, the church's bulletin board currently features thank-you notes including heartfelt sentiments like "We are in awe of how many prayers have been said for our little family" and "It is so kind and touching of you all to think of me after my accident."

The congregation of 120 participates by blessing the shawls at each week's Sunday morning worship service. The shawls are then distributed to persons who are ill, grieving, or in personal crisis. The prayer shawls are also used to celebrate joyous events such as a baptism or marriage.

With the leftover yarn, Koop crochets colourful lap shawls that are also given away. The church has held fundraisers to purchase supplies, such as at soup-and-sandwich events and craft sales.

The shawls are made of variegated (multi-coloured)

and solid-coloured yarn, and each shawl takes three skeins of yarn.

Currently, 15 shawls are packaged and awaiting requests, so the ministry team is well-prepared.

Although the cupboard is currently full, more knitters are most welcome.

Koop has said that she hopes the ministry will continue beyond her own involvement, well into the future. Koop herself says that she was inspired by a former parishioner, long since passed away, who would knit shawls to comfort those who might be in need of encouragement.

"This work is very satisfying, as people feel comfort and the love of God," she says. "After all, that is the bottom line."

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■ www.nivervilleunitedchurch.com/about-us/committees



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Date: November 18. Time: 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

There will be a selection process. Vendors from the region are welcome, but those from Niverville are given priority.

No direct marketers please, as our quota is full.

Don't leave it too long to apply as we will fill up quickly.

For an application or more information, please email Dawn at chamber@niverville.com

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IN BRIEF

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Southeast Lifestyles Expo Gets a November Reboot

By Evan Braun

✉ editor@nivervillecitizen.com

Last year, the Edge Lifestyles Show took place at the TransCanada Centre in Île-des-Chênes from October 23–25. This year, the show is getting a new name, a new date, and an updated concept. The Southeast Lifestyles Expo will take place a week later, on November 3–5.

The event is partnering with the RM of Ritchot and the Ritchot Chamber of Commerce. Lesley Gaudry and Amber Mamchuk will head up a series of workshops, as well as panel discussions with experts of topics relating to the home, health, and hobbies.

The upstairs level of the TransCanada Centre will be transformed into a craft market for local artists and craftspeople to showcase their products. A single artist's booth will cost \$99 for the full weekend.

Organizer John Falk notes that the change of date brings the show closer to Christmas. "Lots of unique products make great gifts and you're supporting local businesses," Falk says.

Many exhibitors have already signed up for booths, including Heritage Lane Builders, The Clarence Braun & Wesley Dowse Team, Ferrum Fitness, Capo Coffee Lounge, Salon 421, Norwex, and Sue's Photography.

The Citizen is proud to be the presenting sponsor of the 2017 Southeast Lifestyles Expo.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

■ Contact John Falk: 204-898-1343, jfalk@edge-businesssolutions.ca

Commuting and the Exurban Neighbourhood: Preliminary Findings

Starting in April, Ellen Enns, a second-year Master of City Planning student at the University of Manitoba, chose to use Niverville as a case study for her thesis. The paper focuses on the relationship between where people choose to live and how they commute to work.

Enns has said that Niverville is a particularly compelling community because of its rapid population growth and the number of its residents who commute. Indeed, part of the reason she chose Niverville is because its residents don't just travel to work in Winnipeg, but to a balance of nearby communities.

Throughout April, Enns visited the community and conducted surveys, both online and in-person. Although her work on the thesis is ongoing, *The Citizen* has invited Enns to share her preliminary findings.

By Ellen Enns

To date, the Niverville Commuting Survey has revealed interesting information about commuters. Of the respondents, 47 percent have a household of four or more people, and within those households, 67 percent of them contain two workers over the age of 18 either in full-time, part-time, temporary, or contract work. When asked how many years people lived in Niverville, 36 percent of respondents said one to five years, followed by five to ten years at 26 percent.

The survey listed several reasons for respondents to choose from to describe why they chose to live in Niverville. Respondents were able to choose as many options that applied to them. Of the options presented, the top three reasons for living in Niverville were "a good place to raise a family" at 50 percent, "housing was affordable" at 47 percent, and "good community atmosphere" at 38 percent (see graph). In addition to these reasons, 54 percent of



Ellen Enns, University of Manitoba student.

ELLEN ENNS

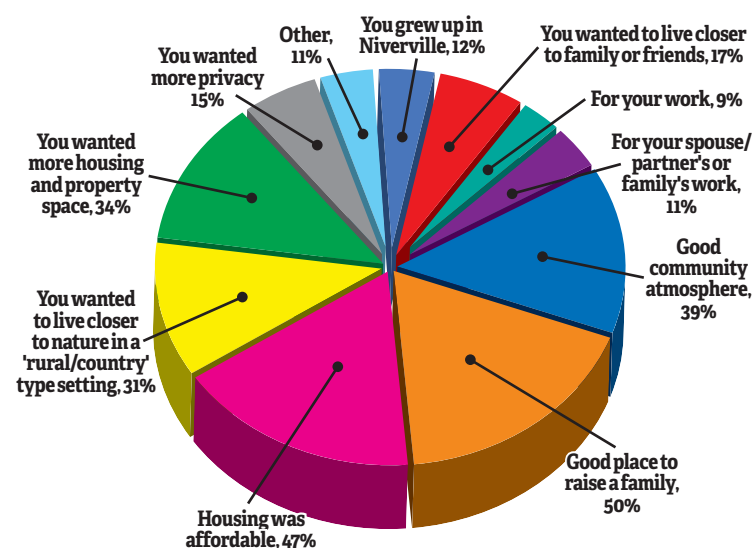
respondents stated that the community equalled the expectations they had before moving there, and 33 percent said it exceeded expectations, showing the high satisfaction amongst residents of the community they chose to live in.

When asked about workplace location, 57 percent of people indicated that they work in Winnipeg, 14 percent work in a town or city other than Winnipeg, and 14 percent work in Niverville. Nine percent of respondents work in a rural area outside of Niverville, and six percent work at home.

Not surprisingly, 84 percent of Niverville residents report travelling to work by car. Seven percent of commuters opt to carpool and five percent have a combination of travel modes; for example, they sometimes walk and sometimes drive to work. Forty percent of respondents have a commute time between 30 and 45 minutes in length, which is not much different from someone living in a suburban area of Winnipeg commuting to work downtown.

As the average commute time for Niverville commuters is similar to Winnipeg commuters and the non-Winnipeg commute locations equate to 43 percent of

Reasons Why People Have Relocated to Niverville



the responses, the data suggests that Niverville may not be a "commuter town," as people often refer to it. Non-Winnipeg workplace locations are almost all located in the southeast region of Manitoba, showing that employment is scattered throughout Manitoba, and people living in Niverville do not always have unusually long commute times.

That being said, 50 percent of respondents reported that their commute has increased since moving to Niverville, while 21 percent reported it decreased and 35 percent reported that it stayed the same. When asked if respondents would ever consider moving closer to where they worked, 56 percent said no and 42 percent said yes. This data shows the satisfaction most people in Niverville have with their community, and seems to imply that lengthening their commute is worth the trade-off.

Lastly, when respondents were asked if they enjoy their commute, 56 percent stated "most of the time," and 20 percent said that they "always" enjoy their commute.

Several respondents described their commutes as "their time" and a "time to decompress from the day." They noted that their home lives are so busy that their commutes give them quiet time to reflect on the day and sometimes enjoy a sunrise or sunset. Many people stated that they enjoy highway driving but dislike city driving.

Finally, the highest recorded negative comment regarding a person's commute was bad weather and road conditions.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

■ This data was collected for the purposes of graduate student research in fulfillment of practicum requirements for a Master's of City Planning Degree at the University of Manitoba. Responses were collected online and in-person, and a total of 180 responses were collected. All responses are from Niverville residents, 18 years and older, working full-time, part-time, temporary, or contract. The findings above are preliminary, and do not cover the scope of the entire project as the research is ongoing. More detailed research may be presented at a later date.

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New Ownership for 295 Main Street

By Trevor Lux

The property at 295 Main Street has a new owner. The Progressive Group officially took possession of the building on May 15, 2017. The deal had been in the works since February, and both parties in the deal said it was a pleasure working with the other.

The Progressive Group is a farm management company that prides itself on offering business management services and livestock production expertise. Their service platform offers access to human resource specialists, payroll, pension and benefit administration, biological expertise (including veterinary services), performance benchmarking with data management, and industry and business management consultation. The management team of the Progressive Group has more than 45 years of operational and management experience in livestock production.

Brock Campbell, Vice President of the Progressive Group, says that Niverville is a great place to continue operating their business. They currently



295 Main Street, Niverville.

RAY DOWSE

operate out of an office at 237 Main Street, a building which they share with Subway.

Campbell notes that goods and services, the central location of the building, and a good community were all factors in their decision to purchase the property.

"The Progressive Group is happy to have a permanent spot in Niverville," says Campbell, "and we hope to stay in the community for years to come."

The 9,119-square-foot building, with a 3,400-square-foot basement, is situated on a 1.4-acre lot. Following the sale, the original ownership group has retained ownership of the 1.45-acre vacant lot directly to the east of the property. That group had owned the entire property since purchasing it

from Maple Leaf in February 2015.

"Over two and a half years, we brought a large number of organizations through the property, all who liked the building very much," says Ray Dowse, spokesperson for the ownership group. "However, the difficulty was getting a commitment from businesses to leave Winnipeg and consider an option outside of the perimeter."

Dowse notes that although they originally purchased the property with the intent of attracting new business to the community, he is pleased that a local organization was able to purchase the building and make a long-term commitment to doing business in Niverville.

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Dave Redl brings his Last Responder campaign to Niverville.

■ BRENDA SAWATZKY

Steinbach Man Drives Home Grave Message

By Brenda Sawatzky

bsawatzky@nivervillecitizen.com

There are few things as iconic to the end of a person's life as a hearse, a casket, and a tombstone. For Steinbach resident Dave Redl, these are the very symbols he needs in order to drive home a bold message he calls The Last Responder Project.

His unique campaign to end texting-while-driving was stimulated in part by his experience as a truck driver. He's seen countless examples of people texting while cruising down the highway, at times using their knee to drive in order to have both hands free for their cell phone.

His experience on the road, coupled with an opportunity to buy a hearse at a rock-bottom price, was the impetus behind his impassioned mission to demonstrate the stark realities behind the phenomena.

"The reason why I chose a hearse is because you can't associate it with anything but death," says Redl. "[I chose to call the campaign] the Last Responder because your first responder is always your fire department, EMS, and RCMP."

Redl adds that the funeral home is typically the last to respond, once it's all over. "We're gonna be your last ride," Redl says of his mock getup. "We're the last guy to respond to a call."

Since its purchase last year, Redl has outfitted the '93 Cadillac hearse with a series of hard-hitting messages. The bold print on the sides of the hearse states, "Dying to send a reply? Stay alive. Don't text and drive." The front license

plate asks, "R U Next." If you're following him from the rear, you'll see the most poignant message of all: "Still texting and driving? C U Soon." The rear window of the hearse carries the vivid image of feet with a toe tag.

"I'm not someone who's afraid to offend. That's where the aggressive approach came in," Redl says.

The decked-out hearse has since become his main ride, and he cruises the streets of Steinbach and other communities in an attempt to send a strong message to other drivers. But Redl has bigger plans for his campaign, taking it to the next level by hosting awareness presentations in high schools, community events, and trade shows.

Redl and his display have already been invited to a school in Virden where he has collaborated with the local fire department and emergency response teams. An outdoor visual display will include a mock car crash with emergency crews attempting to save the lives of a group of high school drama students acting as the dead or injured. A pine box casket, located in the rear of his hearse, will be carried in by a group of six local teens, preferably those recommended by a teacher as typical texting drivers.

Inside the gymnasium, Redl and associates will address students with the casket and gravestone in full display. Redl plans to use real-life stories as told to him by those who've lost loved ones in these preventable tragedies as well as graphic photo images of actual crash scenes. To end,

Redl intends to have a red ink blotter available, requesting that each student leave their thumbprint upon the casket's exterior.

"I'm using [the casket] for what we like to call the Pledge for Life," says Redl. "That symbol [of leaving a thumbprint] is going to burn into your brain. It's going to be something that you remember 30 years from now."

Redl's dream doesn't stop there. He and his cohorts, a retired RCMP staff sergeant and a current RCMP officer, hope to see this campaign go international. Within a few years, Redl says he'd like to see Last Responder chapters in every state and province in North America.

Redl has been invited to present his message in a variety of places, including as far away as Tennessee, but without financial support the cost is prohibitive. Add to that the cost of purchasing a used car for the crash display, he says his full presentation could cost as much as \$1,000 per event. Fire departments and emergency service staff are usually very receptive to participating, he says, as they gain valuable training through the mock presentations.

"I know I'm doing something right when the Canadian Trucking Show has offered me a free booth valued at about \$3,000," says Redl. He also plans to attend parades throughout Manitoba this summer.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

■ www.facebook.com/thelastresponderproject

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Auction Gala Raises Big Bucks for Multiplex

By Evan Braun

✉ editor@nivervillecitizen.com

Hundreds of supporters from Niverville and beyond gathered at Evergreen Village on Friday, May 5, for a community auction and dinner. The Black & Gold Gala, organized by Niverville's Friends of the Plex committee, was held to raise money for the proposed multiplex.

"Overall the evening was a success with good food, good company, and good prizes," says Heather Miller, who sits on the multiplex committee. "The Friends of the Plex raised over \$45,000 at the event towards the building of the multiplex recreational facility in Niverville."

In fact, Miller later upped the final total to \$47,980.09.

Tickets, which began selling in February, sold out in just a few days. Individual tickets were available for \$65, and tables of eight cost \$500.

"A big thanks go out to the volunteers for their hard work in planning the event, to all of the donors and sponsors for their support, and to our guests for the evening," adds Miller. "Without you, the evening would not have been a success!"

The evening, emceed by local comedian Matt Falk, boasted three different kinds of auctions with dozens of prizes from more than 70 different donors. Guests, mostly adorned in black and gold per the evening's theme, dropped bids throughout the evening in the silent and rainbow auctions.

Auction prizes were varied and abundant, with everything from guest passes and monthly gym memberships to gift certificates for zip-lining and hang-gliding. There were Jets tickets and merchandise, signed jerseys, food, wine, clothing,



Guests mingle at the Black & Gold Gala.

HEATHER MILLER

furniture, tools, books, rides in classic cars, a water ski package, a kayak, and a barbecue. McNaughton Mechanical offered one lucky winner free oil changes for a year, and Capo Coffee Lounge offered free coffee for a year.

The live auction, held after dinner, served as the main event and allowed people a chance to win some of the choicest items, including lake country getaways, vacation packages, and catered barbecues.

Niverville mayor Myron Dyck reiterated the need for a new recreation facility, touting the high number of young people in our region and the deteriorating conditions of the current arena, which was built in 1967 from repurposed construction materials.

"I would like to take this opportunity to thank our Friends of the Plex committee for their hard work over the last two years on the multiplex project," Dyck said. "I would like to especially thank the board chair, Clare Braun, for his leadership in bringing the project along to this point—and eventually to completion of construction. And also thank you to the fundraising

chair, Libby Hanna, for her leadership and hard work, especially [in regards to] putting this event together."

The financial plan for the \$16.5-million multiplex is three-pronged and will require \$5 million contributions from each level of government—municipal, provincial, and federal. The Town of Niverville has already committed to their portion, and efforts are underway to secure the provincial and federal portions. The final \$1.5 million will be provided through individual donations and the proceeds from events like the gala itself.

Shannon Martin and Ted Falk, Niverville's provincial and federal elected representatives respectively, were in attendance.

"In 2016, we made our request to the federal government," Dyck said. "Ted Falk is working with us to secure that funding, and I thank him for his efforts. This past winter, I met with provincial representatives about their portion of the funding, and our MLA Shannon Martin is continuing to work with us to bring this message to his

colleagues at the Legislature and also to secure the necessary funds. And I thank him for his work as well."

Dyck adds that the message from the Government of Manitoba is that projects that receive provincial funding must provide a return on investment and be regional in scope. He argues that Niverville, as the second largest community in southeastern Manitoba and fastest growing municipality in the province, is very much a regional hub. Forecasts show that Niverville will be Manitoba's next city.

"We are a hub to the surrounding area as residents from neighbouring municipalities come to our community to work, shop, and utilize our health services," Dyck added. "The message on return in investment, which we're carrying forward to every level of government, is to consider the large budgets they carry in terms of the health department, the justice department, child and family services, and how a community meeting place such as our multiplex can eliminate costs to them in these areas."

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Fundraiser for Wild Animals was a Hoot

By Sylvia St. Cyr

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On April 30, Wildlife Haven in Île-des-Chênes hosted a fundraiser at the TransCanada Centre, packing the building from noon until 4:00 p.m. Every 30 minutes, a bus drove visitors to the site of Wildlife Haven's new animal hospital wing. The hospital will not be open to the public once the facility begins operations, so this represented many people's first and last chance to see it.

The fundraiser had a lot for its visitors to see and do. Winnipeg radio station 99 Bob FM broadcast live, and Buzz and Boomer, the Winnipeg Blue Bombers mascots, gave high-fives to all the kids. There was a kids station, including face-painting, balloon animals, and popcorn.

Adults could partake of free coffee samples, nibble on hors d'oeuvres, and bid in a silent auction that had everything from a barbecue to signed hockey jerseys.

"The fundraiser was successful due to the support of the local communities and surrounding communities," says Anne Wowchuk, Wildlife Haven's coordinator. "It went very well."

The heart behind the fundraiser was to reach Wildlife Haven's goal of opening a new animal hospital and education centre in Île-des-Chênes, the construction of which has



Tara Stokotelný and Joy Kennedy receive a donation cheque.

STEVE LONEY

already started. When they first began fundraising a few years ago, their target was \$2.5 million. Now they only have \$800,000 to go, because of events such as this one and the donations of generous individuals.

Educating the public is a big part of what Wildlife Haven strives to do, whether it's at events, in schools, and even birthday parties. A team of education ambassadors has been travelling around the province for seven years,

taking with them an American kestrel falcon named Cricket. Cricket was once rescued and couldn't be released back into the wild due to being handled by humans. Sadly, many other animals face the same dire situation.

Wildlife Haven's motto is, "If you care, leave it there." When someone finds an injured animal, the best thing to do is call the centre. Why? There are a few reasons, including the fact that when handled improperly, an injured animal

can be injured further, or hurt the person trying to help it. Also, if an animal is cared for too much from a bystander, they can imprint on the human. Once this occurs, the animal can no longer be released due to its dependence on humans.

A date has not been set for the new facility to open, as they have not reached their target.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

www.wildlifehaven.ca



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Learning to Grow and Growing to Learn

By Brenda Sawatzky

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Students at the Ecole St. Adolphe School have dug in to their second year of hands-on learning. With the help of the Little Green Thumbs Program (LGTP), an initiative of the non-profit organization Agriculture in the Classroom-Manitoba (AITC-M), one entire classroom has been outfitted as a greenhouse learning centre. Students from Grades One through Eight have been seeding, watering, and tending a variety of green, edible goodness since January.

Though this year's program is drawing to a close, the teachers and students can't say enough about the value of this unique learning experience.

Grade One teacher Lynn Gobeil is as excited as her students when it comes to spending time in the greenhouse. She and the other teachers have found ways to tie virtually every subject into the growing cycle of plants.

"[The growing program includes] the reading, writing, and speaking components," says Gobeil. "We [also] integrate science. We have a whole unit on living things, so we learn about the plant cycle and we learn how to observe and document. We integrate math, where we come in and measure the plants as they grow. Social Studies has a big unit on the environment. We even do art. The children drew flowerpots where they worked on perspective. Health is included in healthy eating, so all of the courses can be integrated into this."

The LGTP became part of the school curriculum in 2016, after the staff invited AITC-M to demonstrate and prepare a healthy breakfast for the students. The organization strongly recommended the LGTP to the principal and staff.

With their application accepted, AITC-M provided the school with everything they'd need, including an indoor garden grow kit



Lynn Gobeil with students Ben and Graci.

■ BRENDA SAWATZKY

complete with grow lights, fans, pots, seeds for self-pollinating plants, and soil. The package also included a worm-composting kit as well as a plethora of resources for the staff to learn from and Little Green Thumbs T-shirts for the

students.

A spare classroom in the school provided the perfect location for the greenhouse adventure.

When the 2016 growing season proved a hit with students and staff, the principal

decided to expand the growing area in 2017, adding additional equipment at the school's expense. Tomatoes, cucumbers, kale, lettuce, beans, and peppers now creep and blossom from beneath the grow lights.

As the plants grew, the students repotted, moving them to available window sills in other classrooms, spreading the growing experience beyond the greenhouse. On Mother's Day, each student's mom was gifted with potted basil.

"The goal is to connect kids to nature and to show them how to grow their own healthy food," says Gobeil. "We come in once a week, because if you come in too often you don't see the growth. But each time we come in here the kids are just amazed and they like to feel the leaves and smell them."

Gobeil used the opportunity to expand education into entrepreneurship this year.

"Last year we started talking about farmers markets so, out

of playdough, the kids made vegetables and they had their own little farmers markets," Gobeil says. "We incorporated the math of pricing their vegetables and drama and role-playing. So, every year we try and pick different ways to [build on new aspects of the growing project]."

The worm compost has created the perfect object lesson on the life cycle of the worm. Later this year, students will separate the castings from the worms and learn to make fertilizer from the castings in the form of a compost "tea."

But the most exciting aspect of the program is still around the corner. As vegetables take shape and grow, the students will soon be treated to a salad-bration, getting a satisfying taste of their hard work.

At the end of June, the plants will be moved to outdoor planters, giving residents of St. Adolphe a chance to tend, harvest, and enjoy any further fruits of the children's labour.

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Young Families Flock to Southeast

Recent data from the 2016 census shows that the southeast region is one of the youngest in Canada.

By Evan Braun

✉ editor@nivervillecitizen.com

Early in May, Statistics Canada released its new round of data from the 2016 census, bringing with it more good news to residents of the southeast region. Results announced in February reconfirmed that Niverville is still the fastest growing community in Manitoba, and that the RM of Ritchot is growing almost as quickly. The most recent stats show that this region is also among the youngest in the nation.

According to the data, 28.6 percent of Niverville's population is younger than 15, an increase of more than a third since 2011. The number reflects the large number of young families who have moved to the area over the preceding decade.

The population is even younger in the RM of Hanover, where the under-15 set comprises 29.3 percent. In fact, Hanover is the sixth youngest municipality in Canada with a population over 5,000. Although Niverville sits below the threshold to rank in that category, with a population of 4,610, by extension it too must be among the country's youngest communities.

Nationally, the population skews much older, with only 16.6 percent of the population falling into that category, and only 19.1 percent in Manitoba as a whole. Canada has seen a

20 percent increase in those over the age of 65.

Other neighbouring communities in the southeast all have younger than average populations: Ritchot's youth make up 20.5 percent of the total, De Salaberry's youth sit at 22.5 percent, and Tache boasts 25.1 percent young people. At the same time, these same municipalities all report lower than average distributions of people in the 65-plus category.

Further data is expected from Stats Canada in the summer and fall. Information about families, households, marital status, and language will be announced in early August, with income figures following in mid-September. October will bring stats pertaining to immigration and ethnocultural diversity, housing, and aboriginal peoples. The final scheduled release will occur in late November and cover education, labour, journey to work, language of work, and mobility and migration data.

AGRICULTURE NUMBERS

While the southeast draws new residents, it continues to be home to a thriving agriculture industry. The 2016 census reveals that Manitoba's farmers are the youngest in the nation, with the largest proportion of farm operators under the age of 35. The average age of farm operators in Manitoba is 53.8,

second youngest in Canada after Quebec, which sits at 52.9. Those are the only two provinces below the national average.

The number of individual farms, however, has sharply decreased, going down 6.8 percent from five years ago. The number of farming operations has been in steady decline since 1941, and Manitoba's decline is faster than the national average.

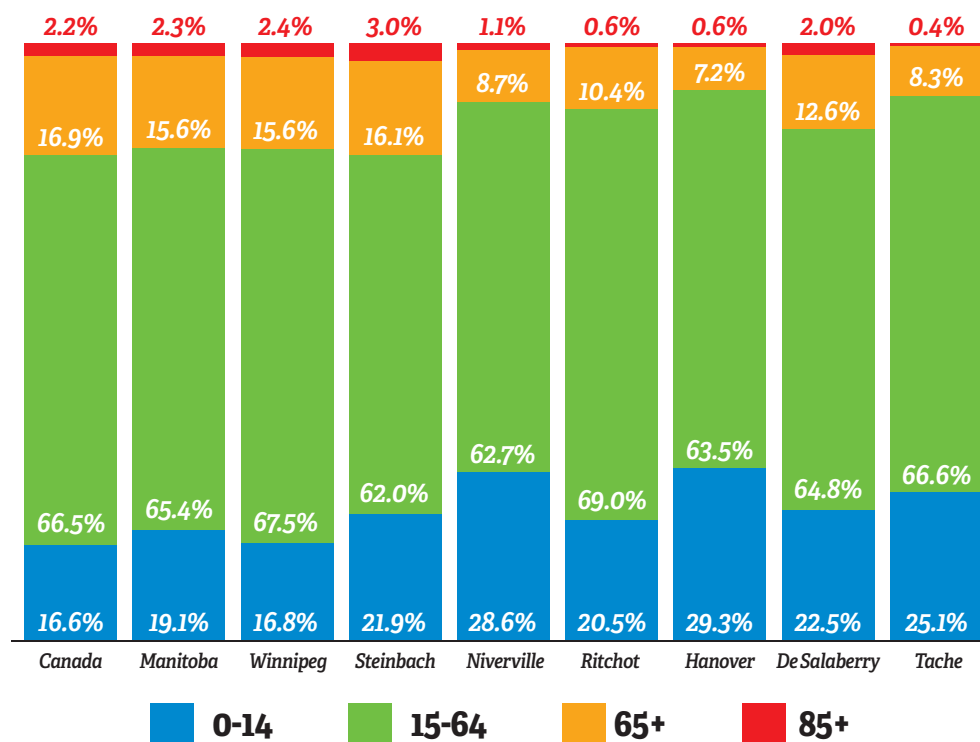
In 2016, agricultural operations in Manitoba employed 20,140 people, only 23.8 percent of whom are women, below the national average of 28.7 percent.

With the age of farm operators increasing steadily over the years, and currently sitting at 55 years, Stats Canada added a new question to the census in 2016: do farm operators have a written succession plan in place for their businesses? Only 8.1 percent of Manitoba operators answered yes, which is in line with operators across the country.

The province's most plentiful crop is canola, the same as in 2011, and the soybean area has more than doubled, accounting for almost a third of the country's total soybean production. Manitoba is home to Canada's largest pig population, and the number of sheep increased by more than 40 percent.

Other highlights: 3.5 percent of Manitoba farms report

Population Breakdown by Age



using renewable energy systems, 1.1 percent produce organic products, and 6.1 percent of farms report selling products directly to consumers. The overall value of agricultural land has increased 64.5 percent since 2011, averaging \$1,919 per acre. Although this may seem high to a layman, it's still substantially below the natural average of \$2,696.

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Commentary

Legislating Decency

By Greg Fehr

The laws of our society are not intended to be applied to the vast majority of citizens. They are, and always have been, created to keep in check those who are slowest, most careless, and show the poorest judgment. In the case of many specific laws, we can see that it's necessary to set the bar low. It's a true testament to how ridiculous human nature can get when our public discourse turns to basic etiquette and respect between people.

Our neighbours in the RM of Ritchot are now living examples of what happens when people don't adhere to basic decency. While some of my libertarian friends may celebrate the successful elimination of another level of government, even the fictional Ron Swanson of *Parks and Recreation* fame would likely find these circumstances distasteful.

Let's call it as it is: our municipal councils are not supposed to agree all the time. If we wanted perfect consensus, we would have a single administrator deciding what to do. By design, a group of five or more individuals have to make decisions by poking at the issues from different angles and perspectives. In theory, and usually in practice, this group engages in respectful discussion and comes up



CARA DOWSE

with the most balanced and prudent approach. Likely, that approach wouldn't be any single person's first preference, but ideally the final result melds the thoughts and ideas of everyone involved. If the electorate has done their job, this group will be representative of all citizens and their decisions will reflect society as a whole.

It's a great system—when we respect each other.

And when we don't? Even on the best of councils, passionate people sometimes cross a line. Ask any current or former municipal leader and they will likely be able to share a time when they needed to apologize or offer forgiveness in the wake of a "robust" comment. As human beings, we make mistakes, but we recognize those mistakes, humble ourselves, and move forward

to the next challenge.

In the wake of the domino resignations in Ritchot, one must wonder what situation exists that would make an elected official think it is acceptable to curse at one of their peers in a public meeting. While lines may be crossed, this is so far over the line that it enters the realm of the ridiculous. It's been said that this is not an isolated incident, bringing into question this council member's ability to serve in the first place. Such remarks disrespect individuals, the office, and the general public as a whole.

The former mayor of Ritchot brought to light the lack of legislation to deal with hostile behaviour on council. Indeed, what reasonable individual in their right mind would even think we would have to deal with such a level

of stupidity? I often wondered during my time on council at what point we started having to legislate what it takes to be good neighbours and human beings. It is a sad commentary on what we have lost as a society that we need to spend time and money writing and implementing laws to cover basic decency. What a waste.

I do not begrudge the resigned council members for utilizing the only mechanism available to them: forcing the dissolution of council to bring the decision back to the people. In fact, I commend it. It is now in the hands of the citizens of Ritchot not only to elect a responsible group of competent individuals, but to produce a slate of candidates through encouragement of their neighbours or by stepping up themselves.

We as a people need strong, diverse, and competent councils who are there for the right reasons. Those in public office should expect a certain level of scrutiny and their behaviour should never become hostile. Differences should focus on the ideas, not the people behind them. Personal attacks are never appropriate in any setting.

How unfortunate that the Golden Rule is too broad a simple to meet the criteria of a law.

Hooked on a Feeling

By Jan Kendall St. Cyr

Communication via social media can be an enjoyable way to stay in touch with family and friends. It's satisfying to see the comments and pictures others have posted, and to share our own as well. I'm sure most would agree that we love the feeling we get when our comments or pictures are rewarded with the coveted like.

As the grandmother of an adolescent who is already quite Internet savvy and on the cusp of entering the cyber world, I wanted to be more informed on the effect social media could have on his young mind.

Through my research, I came to learn that the secretion of the "feel good" hormone dopamine is responsible for those pleasurable feelings we experience when receiving likes or positive text messages. Although usually a mild response in adults, this experience is greatly exaggerated in the brain of an adolescent. Even though their prefrontal cortex is underdeveloped, resulting in poor judgment and decision-making, their nucleus accumbens, or pleasure/reward centre of the brain, is at its most heightened state throughout these teenage years, and therefore is highly subject to thrill-seeking, instant gratification, and impulsive behaviours.

Neuroscientists at UCLA

have found that when scanning an adolescent's brain while on social media, this pleasure/reward centre gets lit up with activity whenever a positive message is received in the form of a like to their posted photos or comments.

This overstimulation of the brain is why many obsessive and addictive behaviour problems occur. The copious amounts of dopamine released during excessive online gaming, Facebook, and cell phone use can alter a child's mood and memory while promoting anxiety, depression, and sleep deprivation. And again, because of a child's limited capacity for self-regulation and susceptibility to peer pressure, the approval of online "friends" can quickly override that of the parents.

Children can be at risk if left alone to navigate and experiment with social media. We can thwart negative experiences by educating them on the hidden dangers of the internet and monitor the sites they visit.

The summer months afford us an excellent opportunity to limit time spent on social media devices and encourage more outdoor physical activity and interaction with others. Bike-riding, camping, part-time work, or participation in the arts will meet their need for social connection and aid in keeping them healthy and safe.



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Niverville Summer Camps

- **Creativity Camp:** July 4-7, 1:00-5:00 pm Ages 6-12 Cost is \$60.
- **Just Girls: Spies:** July 10-14, 9:00-4:00 Girls ages 6-11. Cost is \$150.
- **Olympic Camp:** July 17-21, 9:00-4:00 Ages 8-13. Cost is \$150.
- **Hollywood Acting Camp:** July 24-28, 9:00-4:00. Ages 7-12. Cost is \$150.
- **Kinder Camp:** July 31-August 4, 8:00-12:00. Ages 3-6. Cost is \$75.
- **Holiday Camp:** July 31-August 4, 1:00-4:30 Ages 6-10. Cost is \$50.
- **Amazing Race Camp:** August 8-11, 9:00-4:00 Ages 10-13. Cost is \$150.
- **CSI Detective Camp:** August 21-25, 9:00-4:00 Boys ages 7-12. Cost is \$150.
- **Mini-Explorers:** August 28-Sept. 1, 8:30-12:30 Ages 3-6. Cost is \$75.



Saturday, June 24

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BLACK & GOLD

A big thank you to all the volunteers, donors and all those who attended the Niverville Multiplex Black & Gold Event!

A huge round of applause for the Black & Gold Dinner and Auction volunteers that stepped forward to make this such a huge success:

Gillian Groening
Gillian Potvin
Travis Mason
Vanessa Worrell
Nikki Fixe
Elvin Krahn
Kelsey Kosman
Courtney Demers

Special thanks to volunteer Bus driver Elmer Hiebert for getting everyone home safely!

Thanks to all the others who helped and were not mentioned here!

Thank you to the Special Events Team:
Tanya Pomaranski
Annette Fast
Jamie King
Sabrina Broesky
Nikki Fixe
Travis Mason

Thank you to the Friends of the Plex Committee: Clare Braun, Clayton Smeltz, Libby Hanna, Chris Wiebe, John Funk, Heather Miller and Eric King

We want to especially thank all the generous Donors who donated or sponsored prizes! Without their support, none of this would have been possible!

We are looking for volunteers for future events: Touch a Truck, Niverville Fair licensed area, and operating the Multiplex Food Trailer at evening events such as soccer.

If interested please email multiplex@whereyoubelong.ca

Sports & Recreation

An Early Morning at ShopGym

You don't have to be a morning person to get into the groove at ShopGym's 6:00 a.m. strength and conditioning class. (But it helps.)

fitville

By Chantel Todd

✉ ctodd@nivervillecitizen.com

Do you know the song "Work" by Rihanna? It goes something like this: "Work, work, work, work, work, work." That's all I could think of when my alarm went off at 5:30 a.m. on a lovely Friday morning. I hit snooze, of course! I hit snooze again at 5:45 a.m.

I crawled out of bed at 5:55 a.m., thinking, *Oh crap! My class starts in five minutes!*

I rushed around the house, trying to be as quiet as possible, and headed out. I made it into the gym at 6:04 a.m.—still sleeping, I might add, and totally unaware of what I was getting myself into. As I may have mentioned before, I am not an early morning person, so the task of getting out of bed and hauling myself over to the gym by 6:00 a.m. is almost impossible for me.

But I did it!

I was greeted with a large smile by Sherisse. I'm 99 percent sure she knew who I was, as I looked lost and confused. I was then welcomed by all the participants with big bright smiles, handshakes, and introductions.

Morning people! Who is that cheery that early in the morning? These people.

I felt like a walking zombie, with



ShopGym's 6:00 a.m. strength and conditioning class.

SHOPGYM

sleep in my eyes and a puffy face. But I honestly loved how friendly everyone was.

The class I went to is called Strength and Conditioning, and we started with slow squats to warm up our legs and butts. Then we moved on to lower body prep, sharing the large elastic bands we needed for the exercise. (I should mention there were 11 of us in this class. I didn't realize so many morning people existed in the world.)

After the warmup, I stood helplessly as everyone else got the bars and weights ready. I was just now waking up, and very confused.

We headed over to the racks, with everyone starting in on four-by-four back squats. Sherisse,

sensing my confusion, headed my way and paired me up with another participant.

Away we went! We practiced our form first by squatting the bar, and then we added weight to join the rest of the group. And by the way, it's called four-by-four because you do four back squats, take a two-minute break, then your partner goes... repeat four times.

Sherisse was there the whole time to guide me, reminding me to stick my butt out first and then squat. Why? To keep my feet flat and my core tight! Honestly, it was great. I love the encouragement Sherisse and my partner gave me.

We ended the one-hour workout with Death by Thruster. You

may be wondering what I mean by that. A thruster is a combination of a front squat and an overhead press. Well, we lined up in rows, and everyone had a bar with weights on it. I had dumbbells. Every minute, on the minute, we completed one thruster in one minute. In the second round, we completed two thrusters in one minute. In the third round, three thrusters in one minute, and so on.

Most of the group made it to ten thrusters in one minute, and one extraordinary guy made it to twelve!

It was a great morning workout. I may not be a morning person, but I have to admit I felt great all day.

EVENT GUIDE

Tuff-n-up Bootcamp

Monday/Thursdays until June 22
6:30/6:00 p.m., \$15 (drop-in), Niverville Arena

Spring into Summer Bootcamp

Monday/Wednesday/Friday
6:00 a.m. May 29–June 30, \$15 (drop-in)
Hespeler Park, Niverville

Yoga: Flow & Yin

Mondays, May 1–June 29
Flow, 7:00 p.m.; Yin, 8:15 p.m., \$15 (drop-in)
Niverville Curling Club

Forever Young Dance Club

Saturday, May 10, 7:00–11:00 p.m.
St. Adolphe Pioneer Hall, tickets \$15.
Call Rae 204-883-2440 for tickets.

Ritchot Senior Services

Green Thumb Club: Monday, June 5, 10:00–11:30 a.m.
Frauds & Scams Presentation: Tuesday, June 13 10:00 a.m.
CPR Level C: Thursday, June 22, 9:00 a.m.–4:00 p.m.
Grouille ou Rouille: Wednesday, June 28, 10:00 a.m.–3:00 p.m.
457 Main Street, St. Adolphe, 204-883-2880

Zumba

Mondays 7:00–8:15 p.m., \$75 for 10 sessions.
TransCanada Centre, Ile-des-Chenes

Pickle Ball

Thursdays 6:00–7:30 p.m. until June 15
St. Adolphe School Gym, 204-883-2880

Club Amical Lunches & Bingo (St. Adolphe)

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

New Bothwell Community Garage Sale

June 2–3

Blumenort Community Garage Sale

Saturday, June 3, 9:00 a.m.–4:00 p.m.

Celebration at the Park

June 2–3, Grande Pointe Park
Contact Lynn, 204-293-7473

New Bothwell Cheese & Wine Festival

Saturday, June 3, 7:00–10:00 p.m., \$30.
204.388.4573, www.newbothwell.com

Ile-des-Chenes Garage Sale

Saturday, June 10, 9:00 a.m.–3:00 p.m.

Hanover Ag June Classic Demo Derby

Sunday, June 11, 1:00 p.m.
Tickets: Adult \$10, youth \$6, children under 7 free

Blumenort Summer Fair

June 23–24
www.blumenortfair.wixsite.com/blumenort-fair

New Bothwell Summer Fair

June 23–24

For More Information:

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Send your event listing to:

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Summer Camps Coming Back to Niverville

By Chantel Todd

ctodd@nivervillecitizen.com

After a successful summer in 2016, Niverville Recreation is set to run an even better slate of camps in 2017.

Returning Summer Camp Coordinator Jane Fast is pleased to present many returning and new camps to the agenda.

"I'm back as the summer camp coordinator in Niverville and I could not be more excited," says Fast.

In 2016, the recreation department hired one full-time camp coordinator and one full-time camp leader, thanks to Green Team funding from the province of Manitoba and Canada Summer Jobs. Together, they successfully ran seven camps, and had 106 campers in total. The goals for 2017 is to run eight camps and

have at least 135 campers.

Fast explains that there are four new camps this year: the Olympic Camp, the Just Girls Spies Camp, the Holiday Camp, and the Mini-Explorers Camp. The returning camps are Creativity Camp, Hollywood Acting Camp, Kinder Camp, Amazing Race Camp, and CSI Detective Camp.

"Each of the returning camps is packed with all new activities and games," says Fast, adding that the camps are for children three to 13 years old. "My goal is to give kids an opportunity to get outside and be active."

Fast has a lot to look forward to this year, including securing costumes and making a movie, going to waterparks, building time machines, breaking out of escape rooms, and testing out a few ropes courses.

She highly encourages



Hollywood Acting Camp 2016

NIVERVILLE RECREATION

parents to register their kids early, for two main reasons: to secure their spots, as they are filling up fast, and so that she can plan camps according to group size and make sure there

are enough supplies.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

www.niverrillerecreation.com

IN BRIEF



CARA DOWSE

Highlands Park Enters Second Phase

After a long one and a half years of rough grading, landscaping, seeding, and tree-planting, the Highlands Park in Niverville is in the midst of its second phase.

The finished park will feature a natural playground

with a hill slide, log climber, climbing wall, hills, stump path, and boulders, along with a swing set and benches.

The park also has a walking path connecting with the path on Krahn Road into Tweed Lane.

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2017 Niverville Communities in Bloom Program

Sunday June 4th - "Green Thumb of the Week" and "A Bloomin Business" recognition begins.

New in 2017:

1. For the months of June, July and August, 2 of the green thumb gardens per month will receive a special gift package from Miracle-Gro courtesy of Scotts Canada. 6 prizes in total to be given away.

2. Free Maple Tree - 2017 is Canada's 150th birthday so for the week starting July 02nd - Nominations will be accepted by June 26th for any gardens or part thereof with a "Canada" theme. The most impressive Canada theme garden for that week will receive a free Maple tree.

3. Childrens Category: Children who have a home garden can submit pictures and location details for weekly recognition. 16 Children's gardening prizes to be given away.

Submit all nominations to 0250shi@gmail.com or leave a message at 388.4248. Please include location, resident's name and if possible phone contact.





The Rush, sweeping and cleaning the Wm. Dyck & Sons parking lot in exchange for a donation.

■ SUSAN THOMPSON

Niverville Rush Hit the Soccer Pitch

By Jason Thompson

The Niverville Rush have been playing soccer out of Niverville since last summer, participating in select tournaments with a view to showcase the talents of area youth. The Rush are set to take the field again in 2017 on a full-time basis.

Under Coach Walt McKee, the hard work has paid off. The Rush have enjoyed some success, including a gold medal win at the Boston Pizza Player's Tournament

in 2016. That win came against a Charleswood team that had not lost all season in their Winnipeg league.

Even better, the Rush enabled several players from Niverville to make it onto the Eastman Summer Games team, which went on to win the gold medal in a tense and exciting overtime match versus Westman. All six Niverville Rush players played key roles in that victory.

This success, and the tremendous fun of 2016, left these players

wanting more. The 2017 Rush team has been formed with the help of generous donations from local businesses such as Wm. Dyck & Sons, Chicken Chef, and Brio Insurance/Sunova Credit Union). These sponsorships allowed the team to purchase jerseys and soccer balls, hire refs, and rent field time.

The U15 boys will play this year in the Winnipeg Youth Soccer Association (WYSA). The move brings a higher level of competition, which has already resulted

in a promising 3-1 record through the first four hard-fought games. Upcoming tournaments will be played in Fargo and the MSA (Manitoba Soccer Association) soccer development festival in Stonewall. The next home game takes place June 11 at 6:00 p.m.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- www.facebook.com/groups/226277884518596
- Instagram: @niverrush

IN BRIEF

Panthers Baseball Finishes Debut Season

By Ron Limpricht

This spring, Niverville Collegiate ran its first-ever high school baseball team under the capable guidance of coaches Ken Kwiatkowski and Dwayne Penner. The team entered the Zone 13 High School Baseball League and finished third in its division, defeating St. Joachim from La Broquerie before losing two competitive games to powerhouse teams from the SRSS and Green Valley (Grunthal).

In the zone championships held at Mitchell on May 24, the Panthers played in the consolation side, splitting games with Ste. Anne Collegiate and defeating Lorette to wrap up the short season.

The team and the school looks forward to continuing to establish Niverville as a part of the high school baseball scene.



■ WATERPLAY SOLUTIONS CORP.

Regional Splash Pads Offer Perfect Cooldown

By Chantel Todd

✉ ctodd@nivervillecitizen.com

As warmly as the turn of weather is welcomed here in southeast Manitoba, so are the splash pads. Niverville's splash pad, which opened for the first time last July, is scheduled to begin operations on June 1. The pad is located in Hespeler Park, between Baseball Diamond 4 and Soccer Pitch A. Its hours run from 10:00 a.m. until 8:00 p.m. daily.

The Manitoba Youth Job Centre will staff the adjacent canteen throughout the summer, with workers from the Odd Job Squad selling freebies and possibly doing face-painting. The canteen will also be available on a rental basis, with the Niverville Youth Baseball Club already claiming it for a tournament in the park on Saturday, June 3.

There are many other splash pads throughout the region. The Blumenort Splash Pad has been operational since May long weekend and also stays open from 10:00 a.m. until 8:00 p.m. The Blumenort pad is widely known for its large bucket that dumps gallons of water. You can hear the laughs and screams of joy for blocks in every direction. This pad is located at Blumenort Park on Park Road, right near the school, and is in the midst of its third summer.

The Lorette Spray Park is open from 9:30 a.m. until 8:30 p.m., and is located behind the community's arena on the east side of town. The pad showcases colourful water features, including water cannons, hoops, and a sky umbrella.

Other regional splash pads include one at the St. Norbert Community Centre and two in Steinbach.





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Arts & Entertainment

Eddy Von to Release Debut Album



SYLVIA
ST. CYR

✉ sstcyr@nivervillecitizen.com

As of June 3, 2017, you will be able to purchase new music from Eddy Von, a local artist who is set to release his debut album, *The Frequency of Love*. Eddy has been playing and writing music for 35 years. The album contains 12 original songs and has a very diverse sound, including examples of rock, pop, and even blues.

The album was recorded locally at Arcade Studio in Niverville, run by the father-and-son team of Gerry and Evan St. Cyr.

"It's new and it's different," says Evan, who produced the album. "The best way to put it is song-writing of the past—good lyrics, good intentions, good vibes—[combined] with the sounds of tomorrow."

The album's title is also one of the single tracks, and indeed, *The Frequency of Love* has a story behind it.

"Everything has a tone and can be measured with a meter," says Eddy Von. "If you put two people in a room that are in love, it's 528 hertz, which is the frequency of love."

On May 12, he played a show at Capo Coffee Lounge's new



Eddy Von performs live at the Capo Coffee Lounge in Niverville.

✉ SYLVIA ST. CYR

Niverville location with just a guitar and his voice. Although he played quite a few covers, ranging from Chris Stapleton to Elton John, he included two original songs featured on the upcoming album. The restaurant had every table full for both of his sets.

Music has always been a big part of Eddy's life. "There were always guitars in the house growing up. I have four older brothers and two older sisters. My father is one of the most amazing harmonica players

and he taught me to play when I was seven. He'll be 91 in August and we still play the harp together."

At a young age, he got into the construction business and eventually started his own company. He's been doing construction for 37 years, but this past year he sold the business in the hope of pursuing music full-time.

On top of releasing *The Frequency of Love*, Von is also working on three other projects, each one with a distinct musical flavour. He

has a children's album in the works, called *Animal Sessions*, on which each song refers to a specific animal. Then there's his jazz album, called *Sultry*, and an old-time gospel album that he says has a new feel to it. He writes three to four songs every week.

Eddy Von will be marking the album's release date with two events, including one on Facebook Live. The date is yet to be announced, but the live feed will be broadcast from Arcade Studio and allow listeners around the world to tune in. He has already recruited several top musicians to sit in, playing drums, guitars, and piano to create a full sound.

He would like to continually release singles throughout the year, including a song he wrote for Remembrance Day.

"I regret that I didn't fight for my country," Eddy Von says. "I love my freedom and what we have [here]. It's the most amazing country and it's because people fought for me."

The song is titled "Freedom's Not for Free" and all proceeds will go towards Canadian veterans.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

■ www.facebook.com/evrentertainment

EVENT GUIDE

Celebration at the Park

June 2–3, Grande Pointe Park.
Friday \$12.50, Saturday Free.

Benefit Featuring Johnny Cash (Corny Rempel)

June 6 | 7:00 p.m.
Mennonite Heritage Village, Steinbach. \$25.

Niverville Olde Tyme Country Fair

June 9–10, Main Street, Niverville.
Weekend, \$25 (before June 1); Day, \$15.
Midway Wristband, \$29.99.

Summer in the City

June 16–18, Main Street, Steinbach. Free.

Perron Park Music Festival

June 17 | 12:00–8:00 p.m.
Perron Park, St. Adolphe. Free.

Painting on the Prairies

June 20 | 7:00 p.m.
Hespeler's Cookhouse and Tavern, Niverville. \$35.

Whiskey Talks

June 23, 8:00 p.m.
Cowboys Roadhouse, Winnipeg. \$10.

Send your event listing to:

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

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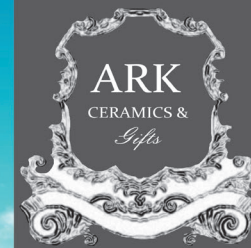
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Mona Gagnon teaches a class at Quantum Dance Academy.

ROYCE OTOOLE

New Dance Studio Opens Two Locations

By Sylvia St. Cyr

✉ sstcyr@nivervillecitizen.com

As of September 2016, Quantum Dance Academy opened two new locations in the southeast. One is located in Île-des-Chênes, at 539 Main Street, and the other is location in Lorette, at 1309 Dawson Road.

Until this point, neither town had a dance studio, so if families decided to enroll their children in dance classes, the choices were Niverville or Winnipeg.

Lee Miazga, Quantum's founder, previously worked with Mona Gagnon, Caryssa Barnabe, Kayla Don Vito, and Dominique Walker at Elite Dance Academy in Niverville (it's now known as Prairie Soul Dance Company).

"After a change in ownership and faculty in 2014, I thought it would be a good idea to start something new with these teachers in Île-des-Chênes in order to serve former students, and add another location in Lorette to acquire new students," says Miazga.

Quantum offers many different classes for all age ranges. For kids two to 18, they teach everything from acro, ballet, Broadway, contemporary, hip-hop, tap, jazz funk, and lyrical. They also offer adult classes in hip-hop, barre fitness, and yoga, in addition to a tone-and-sculpt class.

Acro, a new style, combines classical dance technique with precision acrobatic elements. It is defined by its athletic character, unique choreography, and use of acrobatics in a dance context.

Quantum had their first-ever dance competition this past March in Steinbach and were also involved in the Manitoba Dance Festival in May. The response from the community has been strong, with many students enrolling in their programs.

The classes follow the school year and run from September until June.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

■ www.quantumdance.ca

IN BRIEF



An Outdoor Celebration for the Whole Family

By Sylvia St. Cyr

✉ sstcyr@nivervillecitizen.com

On June 2-3, the Grande Pointe Home-owners Association is hosting a celebration at their community's park at 423 Bernat Road. The outdoor event will be a fun weekend for all ages, and the proceeds will help to continue the park's development.

The weekend will feature a slo-pitch tournament, with accompanying beer gardens. Although the teams have already been selected, there is much more to enjoy. On Friday night, the band The Other Side will play from 9:00-12:30. The six-piece band's music is old-time rock and they'll be playing on a big stage. Fireworks will be set off at 10:30 p.m.

Saturday's festivities start off with a pancake breakfast at 9:00 a.m. A flea market put together by local businesses will run until 3:00 p.m. The 40 booths will feature everything from homemade accessories to baked goods to bath and beauty. Food trucks will be set up in the park throughout the day.

The kids centre will have a craft table for kids to create, Lulu Bell the clown, face-painting, and balloon-making. The car show will showcase old and classic vehicles for auto enthusiasts to come out and admire.

The celebration wouldn't be complete without live entertainment, and that's why The Travis Barre Band will take the stage and perform country covers from 4:00 until 7:00 p.m.

Tickets cost \$12.50 for Friday's festivities and can be purchased at the park. Saturday is free of charge.

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St. Adolphe to Host New Music Festival

By Sylvia St. Cyr

sstcyr@nivervillecitizen.com

Music lovers will be flocking to Perron Park in St. Adolphe on June 17 for the town's music festival, hosted by Roger Brodeur. This free event will run from noon until evening and is for all ages. As of right now, seven local bands are booked.

"I wanted to do something interesting for our neighbourhood and bring awareness to Perron Park," says Brodeur.

The town, located just ten minutes from Winnipeg, has its annual Family Fun Days every September, but this festival will add some summer-time community spirit.

The Krissy Boyd Trio, a three-piece band, will play its blend of progressive folk music at noon. The trio is currently in the process of recording their first album. Later, at 4:00 p.m., The Webster Project will take



The Webster Project.

THE WEBSTER PROJECT

the stage. The Webster Project is a Winnipeg rock n' roll band fronted by lead vocalist Mike Webster.

Kelly Hughes of Winnipeg, most recently known for starting a Community Cupboard for people in need, will play at 6:00 p.m. Hughes' community cupboard idea is simple: if you have extra toiletries or food, you can leave it in the cupboard located on Fountain

Street, and if you need something, you take it. For the music festival, attendees are encouraged to bring non-perishable items to be put in the cupboard afterwards.

A hot dog cart will be set up in the park, and everyone is welcome to bring a blanket or lawn chairs to sit on while enjoying the music. The event is free of charge.



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