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LOCAL NEWS

Niverville Man Recovering After Stabbing Incident

■ After confronting an intruder in his garage, a local man was stabbed in the early morning hours of June 15.

Details on Page 3

LOCAL NEWS

Niverville Council Pursues High School-Multiplex Campus

■ Council seeks to locate new high school alongside proposed recreation multiplex.

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SPORTS & RECREATION

Local Golfer Wins Big Manitoba Tournament

■ 20-year-old Colwyn Abgrall recently won the Manitoba Match Play Championship at Winnipeg golf club.

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ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

St. Cyr Wins Rising Star Event in U.S.

■ This month, Jordan St. Cyr won a major talent competition in Nashville, Tennessee.

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Ritchot Goes to the Polls

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JOEY VILLANUEVA

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Niverville Man in Custody After Stabbing



Twenty-year-old Niverville resident Will Nepinak Funk is in police custody after an early morning break-and-enter resulted in the stabbing of a second Niverville man.

At approximately 12:30 a.m. on June 15, Mitch Dux was awoken by his step-daughter Dokiah who'd witnessed noises and movement coming from the detached garage in their backyard. Initially the intruder fled the yard, possibly alarmed by the flashlight Dokiah had used while navigating the house in the dark, but he returned minutes later, entering the garage's side door.

Dux admits that little forethought went into his decision to confront the intruder. The garage had been broken into five or six times before, and he and his wife Brenda were already suspicious of the identity of the person responsible for those break-ins. This time, Dux says, he wanted to catch him in the act.

"I went out to the garage and [my step-son] was behind me," says Dux. "The door was open, so I said, 'You've been caught. Might as well come out. There's no use hiding. I've called the cops.'"

Dux says it took a few moments for the prowler to make an appearance but when he exited the garage Dux caught hold of his sweater, attempting to detain him until the police arrived. Scared, the young man reacted, winding up for what Dux thought was a punch to his abdomen. The man wriggled free only to be wrestled down by Dux's step-son, Rory. Only then did Dux stop to register the abdominal pain and blood stain on his shirt.

"I was on the deck talking to 911 and that's when he realized he was stabbed," says Brenda.

Dux recalls ordering his step-son to let the young man go, lest he also fall victim to

the same violence. The man fled, taking the weapon with him but dropping his cell phone en route, its flashlight app still beaming in the grass.

The couple were amazed at the RCMP's quick response, on scene within approximately ten minutes of the call. Moments later, paramedics arrived who quickly called in the STARS air ambulance, unsure of the severity of Dux's injury. He was transported by air to the Health Sciences Centre where he underwent a CT scan which indicated internal bleeding, a graze to his lower ribcage, and a torn stomach muscle, but no damage to vital organs. A screwdriver is suspected as the weapon.

During this time, the RCMP brought in the K9 unit. The abandoned cell phone was all the trained dog needed to catch a scent and trace Nepinak back to his home just blocks away.

The Duxes say they were correct in their assumption of the thief's identity and saddened all the same. Mitch had worked with the young man years earlier and remembers him as a quiet and likeable kid. In their mind, the man thought highly of Mitch and wouldn't have attempted the break-ins had he known the Duxes resided there.

"[It's rumoured that] the previous tenant here was dealing drugs," says Mitch. "So maybe he thought that he still lived here."

Just two weeks later, Dux was cautiously back at work, taking it slow and careful. Brenda and her daughter have suffered emotionally, dealing with occasional nightmares and anxiety.

"I'm totally paranoid," says Brenda. "I hear every little noise [at night and wonder] if I should even go check."

Mitch also confesses that he was spooked by the incident and visually scans the garage now before entering.

The couple recognizes that there is more to the young man than the crime he is responsible for and hope that



Brenda and Mitch Dux with their daughter Dokiah.

BRENDA SAWATZKY

he receives the help he needs to get back on track.

"I don't hold any grudge against him," says Mitch.

Since Dux's release from hospital, the family has been inundated with responses from neighbours and the community, receiving gifts of meals and well-wishes from complete strangers.

When asked what he'd do differently, Dux says, "I would stay in the house and call the RCMP."

Nepinak's mother says she was shocked at the discovery of her son's crime. She recognizes that he's in need of professional intervention but is concerned that little is available.

"He wishes he could redo that day," she says. "He is waiting to hear about treatment, but it takes a long time. Sadly, our system works on reactive and not proactive [responses] and I was told, because he is a very well-behaved person, he does not qualify for some programming. The programs are geared more for the hardened [criminals]. We love him dearly and will walk alongside him through this."

Sgt. Gravel of the St. Pierre RCMP was unavailable for comment.

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Breaking the Silence: Ritchot's Former Mayor and Councillors Speak Out

Jackie Hunt: "You need someone with experience leading people."



BRENDA SAWATZKY

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The end of April 2017 marked a significant moment in Ritchot's municipal affairs with the sudden resignation of Mayor Jackie Hunt, followed in quick succession by two councillors. The result was the dissolution of the entire council and the calling of a by-election to open up all five seats for re-election.

Since that time, the previous mayor and all four councillors have decided to run again. Many other residents have stepped forward, looking to bring change to what many see as a faulty system.

Apart from a press release by Jackie Hunt, the recently resigned mayor and two of her colleagues, Jeannot Robert and Ron Mamchuk, chose to remain silent while residents reeled in disbelief and confusion. Few were aware of the full scope of the issues that led to the implosion of their elected council until letters began to circulate in the following weeks. These letters, issued by the two remaining councillors, Corinne Webb and Ernie Dumaine, offered a partisan look at the dysfunction and deceit they say took place during the past two and a half years of their council tenure.

According to Hunt, Robert, and Mamchuk, their silence in the midst of these allegations was for the most part intentional: simply refusing to participate in smear tactics and public shaming. With a new election on the horizon, all have decided it's time to clear the air with full disclosure in order to give residents an

opportunity to make informed votes on election day.

JACKIE HUNT

Looking back on her resignation, Hunt still firmly believes she made the only decision she could have under the circumstances.

"I don't think I did it out of a position of weakness," says Hunt. "I did it out of a position of strength. I was the head of that council, we had been struggling for a very long time, and we were broken. Absolutely broken to the point where we couldn't have a simple conversation about a simple item without it escalating. The last conversation I had with that council is that we need to go home and think about what we're doing in this council. That was the day I resigned. I thought, 'If I remove myself from that equation, maybe they'll find a way to work together.' Something had to happen. It was a tough decision and a horrible [realization] that I wouldn't be able to finish what I started. Something I loved so much."

Hunt says that during the past two and a half years, they've endured a split council. Many decisions throughout the period had been stalled or completely road-blocked by their inability to come to a consensus. Typically, issues came down to a two-way split with Hunt, Robert, and Mamchuk on one side and Webb and Dumaine on the other. Over the years, Hunt says, the split escalated into disrespectful finger-pointing and standoffs that made council gatherings unbearable.

"[Ritchot residents] need to know who [was] sitting



Jackie Hunt.

JACKIE HUNT

around that table," says Hunt. "They need to know that government was not functioning. Every decision was being micromanaged [and] turning into an argument. There was no consensus. No common ground. It also felt to me that it was no longer about the best interest of the municipality but a personal vendetta against other councillors. We weren't moving forward and decisions weren't being made in good faith. There was zero trust around that table."

Recognizing early in her term that council needed outside help, Hunt sought advice from Mitch Duvall, Ritchot's Chief Administrative Officer,

and searched through The Municipal Act, a set of laws and statutes concerning municipal affairs. According to the former mayor, the province provided no mechanisms to aid them in working through the dysfunction they faced. A year into her tenure as mayor, Hunt recommended to council that an independent mediator be brought in. Council agreed to the process.

Each councillor met with the mediator individually, but when it came time to meet with the mediator as a council body, one member declined to participate. Hunt was disappointed but not surprised. Though the process

was helpful, it didn't equip them to move forward.

The internal discord finally came to a head when a St. Adolphe resident approached council over concerns regarding the development of an outdoor rink in Garden Ridge Park that bordered his property. Internal allegations later surfaced that accused Hunt, Robert, and Mamchuk of secrecy, conflict of interest, and misallocated funds.

Hunt calls these allegations unfounded. She says that the two councillors making the claims were privy to and participated in all of the decisions regarding the park, including the rink.

A deeper investigation into Ritchot's council minutes, which are available to the public, appears to confirm this. Resolution #2016-01-17, dated January 5, 2016, reads, "Whereas the Garden Ridge Greenspace Committee will be developing into greenspace two lots in the Forest Ridge/Garden View developments in the spring of 2016; and whereas, in the meantime, the Garden Ridge Greenspace Committee has built a temporary outdoor community rink... therefore be it resolved that council approves the community outdoor rink in Garden Ridge Park."

Council minutes further indicate that all of the council members participated in the vote and none stood against the motion. The motion was carried.

Many of the council minutes dating back to the park's conception in 2015 reference specific allocations of funds from Manitoba Hydro's Community Development

Initiative (CDI), from the municipality, and from private donations. These minutes indicate the full disclosure of funding to council as a whole.

As to the conflict-of-interest allegations against Hunt, while she admits that she lives in the development where the park is located, she insists that she cast her vote with the entire municipality in mind.

According to Hunt, a conditional use permit for a park isn't something council has deemed necessary in the past. Once the resident's complaint surfaced, she sought advice from the municipal lawyer, who advised council to make an exception in this case and hold a conditional use hearing, giving the community an opportunity to respond.

"[For] a black-and-white thinker [it's], 'This is what the letter of the law is, this is what we have to do,'" says Hunt. "Municipal law doesn't work that way. There's a lot of 'shoulds' and 'coulds' and 'mays.' It's broad because every situation is unique. If every decision was the same, you wouldn't need a council."

Nearly 100 residents showed up for the meeting on April 19 where the permit was discussed. The homeowner who originally filed the complaint did not attend the meeting or issue a formal complaint in writing. There were no objections from the crowd gathered in the standing-room-only meeting.

Sue Carriere, a representative for the Garden Ridge Greenspace Committee, made a presentation at that meeting.

"The two lots are zoned Residential General, just like every other greenspace in the

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RM," Carriere's statement says. "The same [stands true] for the other outdoor rinks in the RM. Grande Pointe and Ste. Agathe do not have conditional use permits. Clearly, whether a permit is required or not, the RM has never enforced that. We're in the same boat as other greenspaces and rinks in the RM... [We] understand that there is some opposition to our park, based mostly on noise, more specifically the noise created by the boards that surround our multi-use pad."

The outdoor multi-use pad, erected in the fall of 2016 as part of the park's second phase, was always intended as a four-season play area. The committee made a recommendation to council to allow them to introduce boards around the concrete pad to provide an element of safety, preventing children from chasing balls and pucks into street traffic. These boards would also aid in damage-prevention to neighbouring property. According to Hunt, the second phase also included a six-foot fence and a closer look at noise reduction options. These were slated to begin in spring of 2017.

Hunt wants to make it clear that on-council bullying and belligerent behaviour were the sole reasons she chose to step down. Many were witness to Councillor Dumaine's use of inappropriate language around the council table at the April 19 public meeting. That same behaviour, she says, had been directed at other councillors, staff, and ratepayers over the years.

According to a May 2012 article in the *Dawson Trail Dispatch*, Dumaine was required to appear before a provincial court for uttering a death threat to a staff member of Ritchot's Public Works Department. He was ordered to pay a fine and issue an apology to the accuser.

"In any workplace, there is a need for respectful workplace policy," says Hunt. "How are we going to get people to run? If you want people to step up to the plate, you have an obligation to protect them and right now there is no way to protect them. Sometimes you have to take a hard line and make a negative impact in the short-term that will make a positive impact in the long-term. I think that this is [not only] going to benefit us as a municipality, but other municipalities and the province."



Jeannot Robert.

Hunt has now formally decided to re-run for the position of Ritchot mayor.

"We are going to be getting back into a very heavy work period and there's been a lot of things halfway through," says Hunt. "You need someone with experience leading people. There's a huge learning curve to being mayor. I have that history, so we can kind of pick up and move as seamlessly as possible."

She concludes that, whether she wins the seat back or not, she feels she's won. The conversation and dialogue on workplace respect and safety has begun.

The office of the Honourable Eileen Clark, Minister of Indigenous and Municipal Affairs, responded to *The Citizen's* request for comment.

"A Workplace Health and Safety Harassment Resolution is to be discussed at the upcoming local AMM (Association of Manitoba Municipalities) district meeting," reads a statement from Clark's office. "We are interested in exploring how we can work together with AMM on this issue. Those discussions are ongoing. The situation in Ritchot triggered action, by way of The Municipal Act, which puts the decision about the future makeup of council into the hands of its constituents. Letting the residents of Ritchot decide who should lead their community is the right thing to do."

JEANNOT ROBERT

Resigned councillor Jeannot Robert shares Hunt's sentiments and is hopeful that his decision to step away from council will bring about posi-

tive change.

"I would like to make it perfectly clear that the only reason I resigned from council was due to the abuse by some councillors towards our mayor," says Robert in a recent press release. "It was horrific and degrading to our Ms. Hunt and for all women. No woman in public office should be subject to such vulgar language as witnessed by so many at a public hearing. Some have lost the vision as to why we serve on council. Personal agendas and character bashing have no place at the table. We are there

"We have many projects to finalize in our remaining term and need a leader with vision and stability."

Jeannot Robert
Candidate for Ritchot council

for our ratepayers."

In an interview with *The Citizen*, Robert says that he sat beside Dumaine at the final public council meeting when the vulgar comments were directed at Hunt. He says that, had he not supported her by stepping down, he would have felt like he was supporting the councillor's behaviour.

Robert is no stranger to Ritchot politics and land permit requirements. Now a semi-retired land developer and project manager in Ste. Agathe, he began his work with the municipality as the Water and Waste Water Superintendent in 1978. He has been involved with the municipality in one aspect or another ever since.

Regardless of any



Ronald Mamchuk.

accusations made to date, he maintains that there was no foul play involved with the Garden Ridge Park and that absolute transparency was present throughout the process. He indicates that it was not an uncommon occurrence on council in recent years for unanimity to be expressed around the board table during private sessions, only to devolve into opposition in public a few days later.

Though he benefited in no way from the Garden Ridge Park, he was in favour of the decisions made on the com-

variations are guidelines that we use for decision-making and that we have to use our judgement in many cases to advance projects. Otherwise, why are we there?"

He advises voters to refer to public council minutes on the municipality's website, specifically resolutions #2015-01-11 and #2016-10-17, indicating how funds were to be allocated to the park. He says that the Garden Ridge Greenspace Committee did a great job of polling the public for their desires, informing them of the process, and encouraging residents to participate in fundraising efforts.

"Our mayor, Jackie Hunt, is extremely dedicated to the RM as a whole and has worked persistently in the many projects and developments through the last seven years," Robert's statement concludes.

Upon encouragement from residents within his ward, Robert has decided to allow his name to stand for the upcoming July by-election. By virtue of being the only candidate in the running, he will win his seat by acclamation.

"I want to state that I support our Ms. Hunt 100 percent and hope that if we are re-elected I can continue to work with her leading council," says Robert. "We have many projects to finalize in our remaining term and need a leader with vision and stability."

RONALD MAMCHUK

Mamchuk also stands by his original decision, although he regrets that it ended the way it did.

"Resigning was not something that I wanted or

planned to do, but I felt that it was the right decision in the circumstances," he wrote in a press release. "I fully support Mayor Jackie Hunt and Deputy Mayor/Councillor Jeannot Robert's decision to resign as the environment in which we were working became toxic and I believed that there was no other option other than submitting my own resignation."

In conversation with *The Citizen*, he agrees that this council struggled from the beginning. He believes a personality clash was likely at the core of the problems. Council, he says, had become known to the public as the "three-to-two council" due to their regularly occurring vote split.

In Mamchuk's opinion, animosity from the other two councillors probably stems in part from what they felt was an inequality in fiscal spending between communities in the municipality, deeming it necessary to demonstrate absolute equality at all times. But that's not how it works, he says, stating that communities will have different needs at different times and some may grow at a more rapid rate than others.

As for the public letters from Webb and Dumaine, Mamchuk says he was shocked by the allegations, as they had never come to light while council was still performing its duties.

"They voted on the very things that they [accused us later of hiding], and so that's why I can't see how it [came to this]," says Mamchuk. "Why would they vote on it and then six months later come back and say, 'That's not right'? To me, if there's an issue, act at the time, not after the fact."

Regarding Garden Ridge Park, Mamchuk is confident that council and the park committee did everything possible to create public awareness and later appease the homeowner who claimed the rink was too noisy.

"The municipality and the Garden Ridge committee were so obliging to him and tried to work with him," Mamchuk says. "I understand that he works shift work. I've worked shift work too. But I'm not going to blame my neighbour for cutting grass at 3:00 in the afternoon. You've just got to adapt."

Mamchuk has also placed his name in the ring for re-election.

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Chris Ewen: "I'm hoping for a fresh start."

By Eric Peterson

Chris Ewen, well known as the proprietor of the popular Capo Coffee Lounge locations in Île-des-Chênes and Niverville, recently announced that he will seek the Ritchot mayor's chair in the July 19 by-election.

"I've always wanted to get into politics," says Ewen. "And when I saw what was happening, it really hit me that now was the time."

What was happening was the ugly dissolution of the RM's last council. The upcoming by-election was necessitated when former mayor Jackie Hunt and two councillors abruptly resigned at the end of April, citing bullying from the two remaining members of Council. It's a mess that Ewen says inspired him to run for mayor rather than scare him off.

"I really believe that to function in business, or as a municipality, you have to have teamwork," says Ewen. "I look at it like my business. There are a bunch of people that have helped make Capo a successful brand."

As for other issues Ewen wants to address if elected, he says there's a lot of untapped potential in the region and he would like to see a better job done promoting tourism and culture. Like many, he's also concerned about the perceived upswing in crime in the area.

"I see the rise in crime and theft," says Ewen. "It's a chance to come together to build a stronger and safer place."



Chris Ewen.

CHRIS EWEN

Hunt has decided to run for her old job and she and Ewen are joined in the race by Marianne Curtis and Gene Whitney. Ewen hopes that voters are eager to turn the page from the divisiveness of the past.

"I'm hoping for a new council, a fresh start," Ewen says. "I'm hoping for new people and new ideas. It's time to move on from what happened and build the community better and stronger."

Ewen is pleased with his campaign so far. He's always enjoyed a strong social media presence from his businesses and he's looking forward to knocking on doors and getting to meet more residents further away from his home base.

His campaign will be holding a barbecue at the Capo in Île-des-Chênes on July 8. He also says that he will step back from his business interests if elected and treat the mayor's position as a full-time job. Ultimately he's hoping his profile and reputation as a community-minded individual will convince voters to give him a chance.

"People are very familiar with the work I do around here with boards, charities, and youth groups. It's my chance to show I'm there for everyone."

Lastly, Ewen says he wants to see residents of the RM involved in the electoral process, whoever they vote for.

"Just get out and vote," he concludes.

Jeannot Robert

To the residents of Ward 3, THANK YOU for your confidence in me as your councillor. You have re-acclaimed me once again and I will continue to work diligently on your behalf and on behalf of the entire municipality. I will continue to work on the important projects that I began on council and to move new ones forward that will benefit all of the residents in the Ritchot district.

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Marianne Curtis: "I have the tools to make a difference."

By Brenda Sawatzky

✉ bsawatzky@nivervillecitizen.com

Mayor hopeful Marianne Curtis believes that, though she's never held a council seat, she has more than enough experience to bring to the position. Curtis has been a long-time writer for the *Dawson Trail Dispatch*, which has provided her with insight that comes from years spent in the political arena.

"I feel I have a lot to bring to the table," says Curtis, who adds that she has an insider's grasp on the affairs that affect the communities she covers. "As a journalist, I've been sitting in council chambers in [many] of the municipalities around here. I'm well versed in what the issues are. I see the bigger picture. I know what people are struggling with and I believe I

have the tools to make a difference. I've got support from surrounding reeves, mayors, and councillors, and that's huge to me."

Curtis says that connections are important when you're in a position of influence. She has attained many over the years, not only as a journalist, but as a board member of the Ritchot Regional Chamber of Commerce, coordinator of the Citizens on Patrol Program, and through the many volunteer positions she's filled.

Curtis has a keen understanding of emergency medical services, having served as a paramedic and 911 dispatcher in years past and by way of her marriage to a firefighter. She believes that her experience with a previous divorce has supplied her with creative mediation skills, and her background as a single mom of four



Marianne Curtis.

■ MARIANNE CURTIS

helped her develop strong financial budgeting skills that would aid in fiscal management.

She demonstrates a strong passion

for justice and fairness, having been a vocal advocate for human rights and anti-bullying for many years. In 2013, Curtis was nominated for the prestigious Women of Distinction award.

One of her goals as mayor would be to encourage regionalization of public services, inviting Tache and other neighbouring municipalities to round-table discussions about working together towards improved policing and medical and emergency services.

Council's connectivity with Ritchot's constituents is an area, in her mind, that could be bettered through broader communication methods and more public engagement.

Curtis made the decision to run for mayor after recognizing that there were plenty of great candidates from her ward already nominated for the

councillor position. She felt strongly that the mayoral seat should not go unchallenged.

Though there are many items that need to be addressed immediately when the new council begins session, Curtis wants to make sure the previous council's issues are not swept under the rug.

"I don't think we should put that all behind us," says Curtis. "I believe it should be investigated. That's why we have the Auditor General and the Ombudsman. That avenue should be followed, but right now we've got to concentrate on getting the budget done. We've lost all of this time and that's what really bothers me as a resident."

Gene Whitney: "There's something that doesn't measure up here."



Gene Whitney.

■ GENE WHITNEY

By Evan Braun

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Gene Whitney of Ste. Agathe began contemplating a run for mayor of Ritchot following the council resignations this spring. As soon as the by-election was called, the former Ritchot councillor sprang into action.

"I guess the easiest way to explain why I'm running is that the reason for those people resigning, from my perspective, doesn't pass the smell test," says Whitney. "I spent most of my life doing investigative work, and there's something that doesn't measure up here."

Before living in the area, Whitney spent seven years with the Ontario Provincial Police as a special investigator for employment insurance cases. He then worked as a wildlife investigator for Environment Canada. Whitney lives by the motto that there's three sides to every story—your side, my side, and the truth.

"We've heard Ms. Hunt's side, and we've heard the alleged bullies' side," Whitney says. "To me, it hardly seems that [the bullying] required that kind of drastic action... When the mayor resigned, there was no budget passed. So I should have gotten a tax bill at the end of May or early in June. I don't have it yet. And from what I understand, it'll be the seventh wonder of the world if I get it by September. The municipality can't do anything. Public Works can't do anything. The school boards aren't getting their taxes. There's going to be a backlog in front of council, I would imagine, of variances, zoning, lots of things. And what if we get the same five people back? You know, problem not solved."

Whitney previously served two terms as councillor for Ward 4, from 1995 until 2002. When he was first elected in 1995, the new council was an entirely clean slate.

"It was five new people, and none of us had met each other before. The first time we met was at the municipal office after we were elected," Whitney adds that the previous council had been highly dysfunctional, with a lot of "personal executions" in the council chamber. "I wasn't a witness to any of that, but we agreed that if we had any problems, we'd go to the back room and sort it out. But not in the council chamber."

He points out that the situation back then isn't much different than the situation now.

"One of the things I'm still pretty proud of in that term is that we said, and we were all new, that if we made a mistake, let's make it right and move on. Let's not try to defend stupidity. And we made mistakes, but we corrected them and we moved on."

Although these were challenging years, especially in terms of dealing with the aftermath of the Flood of 1997,

Whitney remembers them as a great opportunity to serve the community and effect positive change.

"It was almost a full-time job, because we built the dike in Ste. Agathe," Whitney said. "And then during that time we put water [services] in from Ste. Agathe to St. Adolphe and Île-des-Chênes, and I oversaw that. I was the chairman of Public Works for the seven years that I was on council."

Whitney adds that he personally wrote the current zoning by-law that is still in effect, and which has recently been questioned in terms of the controversy over Garden Ridge Park. "In that case there, by approving that [park], what little I know about it, you're saying to people, 'Well, the zoning by-law is not really relevant here. Just do what you want to do.' But then why do you have a zoning by-law? It's a real mess."

According to Whitney, the timing of the council resignations, regardless of what led to them, was irresponsible.

"If the bullying had been going on, as they say it was, for two years or longer, well, what if they had passed the budget?"

Whitney says in conclusion. "Sixteen more days wouldn't have made a difference. Pass the budget, and then at least allow [the municipality] to go on. Then they would at least

have funds for their public works to operate, for school boards to get their money, and people can get their tax bills."

On July 19

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WARD 2 – RM of Ritchot

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Candidates for Councillor Speak Out

The Citizen reached out to every candidate running for council and asked them a series of questions about their background, qualifications, and priorities.

With four candidates running for mayor and another 11 running for council seats, residents face some big choices. To help make the selection process a little easier, The Citizen has reached out to every nominated individual and asked them about their candidacy.

Ward 1 (Île-des-Chênes)



ERNIE DUMAINE (INCUMBENT)

Q: Why have you decided to run for council?

A: I never quit. I was acclaimed [won the seat uncontested] two and a half years ago and I would like to finish off my term.

Q: If elected, what do you feel you can bring to the table?

A: Honesty and fairness to the people of Ritchot. I will continue to follow the rules and by-laws of the RM of Ritchot.

Q: What are the most important things you would like to get done?

A: I will work hard to improve the four-way stop at Dumaine Road and the Old Highway 59. We need to pave Meadowlark and Quest Boulevard, as well as redo Bay Notre Dame West and the sidewalks throughout town.

Q: What previous jobs or experiences have you had that qualify you for public office?

A: I worked for the municipality as a Public Works heavy equipment operator for more than 17 years. I know the municipality inside and out—all the ditches, culverts, bridges, roads, and water flow (drainage). I have also been through the Flood of '97. I've been a councillor for six and a half years and enjoy meeting

and working with people.

Q: Are there any other details about yourself that you'd like voters to know about?

A: I care very much for the people of the RM of Ritchot and would like to finish my term because I did not resign. I am honest and this re-election is not any of my doing.



PHIL McDONALD

Q: Why have you decided to run for council?

A: I have the opportunity now, which I never had before, to dedicate the time necessary to serve the people of Ward 1. Honestly, I am disappointed with the performance of the previous councils and think that I could provide more time and effort to produce more positive results.

Q: If elected, what do you feel you can bring to the table?

A: What I bring to the table is time. I am retired from my previous career and I have time to invest in the concerns of constituents, and the energy and commitment to find solutions that will properly serve our community.

Q: What are the most important things you would like to get done?

A: Investment in infrastructure. I think paving Meadowlark Road would provide a better environment for the businesses that have invested in our community. We have to look at how our roads are used and re-route and restrict access to heavy vehicles in order to protect our infrastructure. For example, Leclaire Road is being ruined by heavy truck traffic.

I have concerns about making

sure we have community-based programs that prevent crime and encourage a healthy and prosperous community. We need planned development so that we build a community that people enjoy living in and feel safe living in. How am I going to do this? By making sure we develop community living space, a good RCMP presence, and an active community crime watch program.

Q: What previous jobs or experiences have you had that qualify you for public office?

A: I have been a member of this community for 39 years. I have built several homes, so I know the challenges the average person in this community faces trying to build a home and raise a family.

Q: Are there any other details about yourself that you'd like voters to know about?

A: Île-des-Chênes has been good to me. I have spent 39 years investing and raising a family in this community. I have reached a point in my life where I would like to give back. I have time to listen to people's concerns and figure out solutions to issues for the betterment of our community. Whereas for others this is a part-time commitment, for me it is a full-time challenge that I can give back.



LARRY NIEBEL

Q: Why have you decided to run for council?

A: It has been something I have thought about for a while. Owning a business (LDN Auto Service) in Île-des-Chênes gave me a chance to meet a lot of people in my community and to see how friendly and supportive they are to the local businesses. When we moved here ten

years ago, it was easy to fit right in, so I just want to give back to my community.

Q: If elected, what do you feel you can bring to the table?

A: I feel that my business experience is one of the biggest assets I can bring to the table. As a business owner, you are constantly dealing with different issues and need to figure them out. Dealing with customers on a daily basis also helps give you that experience you will need as a councillor.

Q: What are the most important things you would like to get done?

A: Every day I look across Main Street from my shop, I see the vacant lot where the medical center for Île-des-Chênes is to be built—and it is still tied up with red tape from the RM. The previous councillor for this area was against it from day one, even though the whole community wants to see it built. This would be one of the first things I would like to get rolling if elected.

Other projects I would like to see in Île-des-Chênes is the revitalization of Main Street and the Old 59, as well as sidewalks and bike paths for school kids, the expansion of parks and recreation facilities, the addition of retirement and assisted living spaces/homes on Main Street, and better dust control and road sealing.

Q: What previous jobs or experiences have you had that qualify you for public office?

A: I have been a business owner almost all my life. I owned a garage in Winnipeg for ten years, owned and managed Victory Lane Speedway (by St. Adolphe) for nine years, and worked with the City of Winnipeg Public Works as a subcontractor. Currently, I am the President of the Ritchot Regional Chamber of Commerce, and I have worked with the RM on economic development, the Main Street revitalization project, and recreation development.

Q: Are there any other details about yourself that you'd like voters to know about?

A: I'm an easygoing person who can deal with people and come up with solutions. I work hard to get the job done, but I like to look at all the options before I make a decision. I believe the best way to get things done is to work as a team, make your decision, and get on with the project.

I believe in keeping taxes down and not wasting tax dollars. If I'm elected, I will do my best to serve my community.

In closing, I just want to thank all the candidates for stepping up to the plate to run in this great country we live in and wish them all the best.



SHANE PELLETIER

Q: Why have you decided to run for council?

A: I've been involved with the RM for many years now and I believe it's time for a new type of councillor—one who realizes they are part of a team put together to do great things for the region. We live in one of the fastest growing municipalities in Canada and its leaders should be able to keep up with that growth.

Q: If elected, what do you feel you can bring to the table?

A: I've got a good history of dealing with the last three councils, as well as a range of experiences with community-led organizations and working for the betterment of communities. I'm always open to new ideas and new ways to accomplish goals. I'm very passionate about our diverse municipality and believe it's time that council shows its constituents what a great place we live, work, and play in.

Q: What are the most important things you would like to get done?

A: The timing on the dissolution of council was, unfortunately, untimely. The first thing we will need to get done is to pass the budget so we can get the RM working again. Then my goal would be to take care of any

other outstanding resolutions that require our attention. One of the items I would consider important would be the municipality's Main Street revitalization project that has been started, because I would hate to see it lose any momentum.

Q: What previous jobs or experiences have you had that qualify you for public office?

A: My strength would fall on the recreation side. I've held various positions on volunteer boards in the RM, including the Île-des-Chênes Arena (six years as Club President, 12 years total), the TransCanada Centre (one year as President, five total), the RM Recreational Steering Committee (five years), and the Ritchot Community Development Corporation (one year as board member).

With that being said, I am also familiar with finances. The arena's operating budget is around \$250,000 annually. Last year, we had a capital project that added another \$97,000.

Q: Are there any other details about yourself that you'd like voters to know about?

A: I've spent most of my life in Île-des-Chênes, although the first house I remember was our little house on Hince Road in Grande Pointe. On my mom's side of the family, we had a lot of relatives in Grande Pointe. (We even have a street named after us: Berard Bay!) We moved to Île-des-Chênes when I was about four, and I attended school at École Île-des-Chênes School until Grade Nine, and then I graduated from Collège Régional Gabrielle-Roy.

I stayed in Île-des-Chênes until my late twenties when I moved to Winnipeg. After a couple of years, I met an amazing woman from Steinbach, whom I married, and we made our way back to rural Manitoba where we've lived ever since. We have two wonderful children.

I've been heavily involved in the community since returning and I am passionate and committed to giving back.

Ward 2 (St. Adolphe)



JEFF EGAN

Q: Why have you decided to run for council?

A: I am running for council to become more involved in our communities.

Q: If elected, what do you feel you can bring to the table?

A: If elected, I will bring hard work, leadership, teamwork, transparency, and an open line of communication to council for the residents of Ritchot.

Q: What are the most important things you would like to get done?

A: The most important thing I would like to do for our communities is to work together with the residents and council. All of our communities continue to grow, so we must have strong leadership and the ability to work cohesively as a team. This is important for our current residents and businesses, including to attract business to our communities and new residents who will call Ritchot home.

Q: What previous jobs or experiences have you had that qualify you for public office?

A: I have volunteered for a number of years in the community, holding different roles and portfolios with minor hockey and minor baseball. I can think on my feet, make correct decisions under stressful situations, and

I am not one to shy away from hard work. I work in an industry that is customer-service-driven and have the ability to help people while they are at their worst.

Q: Are there any other details about yourself that you'd like voters to know about?

A: I am passionate about the communities we live in. I want to bring a strong work ethic to council and the residents of Ritchot, as well as lead by example.



ROBERT DOIRON

Q: Why have you decided to run for council?

A: I think it is time for a change! It is time to bring back business expertise, fiscal responsibility, and integrity to the position of councillor for Ward 2. There are many important decisions to be made in the next year, including the review and approval of the 2017 budget. We cannot afford to have another dysfunctional council with the inability to work together and the lack of expertise and experience to complete the essential work ahead.

I want to represent the citizens in Ward 2 as councillor so that I can contribute my considerable business experience and communication skills to make our council work, and work effectively, for their benefit.

I have lived and raised a family in St. Adolphe, and I would like to

give back to the community I have enjoyed so much for the last 32 years. We have a great place to live, and I want to make it even better.

Q: If elected, what do you feel you can bring to the table?

A: I bring financial knowledge and management expertise to the position. My time on the Optician Association of Manitoba Council, and my extensive business background, gives me the experience necessary to effectively perform the work of a councillor.

I believe in government transparency. Citizens have the right to know how and where their hard-earned tax money is spent. I will actively seek the taxpayers' advice, listen to their concerns, and keep them informed about our council through social media, email, or direct mail.

I will not quit—I will just work harder. If issues become contentious, I will find a way to work with the mayor and others on council using the communications skills I have acquired through my years in business.

Q: What are the most important things you would like to get done?

A: The very first thing is to change the acrimonious and dysfunctional atmosphere of the last council to one of cooperation, professionalism, and respectful dialogue. There is important work to be done, and time should not be wasted with partisan politics. Without that change, very little will be accomplished.

Immediately after the election, the council must deal with a number of important issues, none more important than the review and approval of the 2017 operating budget. The budget needs to be carefully reviewed, as property tax bills will be calculated using this budget.

In Ward 2, there are a number of issues that citizens have put forward to me. Our recreational facilities need to be upgraded and improved throughout the ward. In many areas, the roads are in very poor condition. There is a great deal of concern about

the speed of motorists approaching the intersection of Highway 200 and Highway 210. Some drainage ditches have to be completed, and the overall condition of our boulevards and parks has deteriorated.

I would really like to see our community spirit improve. Council can lead by sponsoring events that get the entire ward involved. Look for more information about my positions and ideas on my Facebook page.

Q: What previous jobs or experiences have you had that qualify you for public office?

A: I am a retired licensed optician and optical industry executive. Early in my career, I was elected to the Opticians of Manitoba Council as treasurer, and then as president. In that capacity, I worked with the provincial government concerning our Optician Association of Manitoba Act.

For the last 20 years of my working life, I was a regional manager of retail optical stores in Western Canada. I was responsible for the complete operation of the stores. My territory consistently exceeded sales and profit expectations. I am very experienced in reading and evaluating operating budgets.

I also have the expertise to evaluate projects and their potential for success. In the opening and constructing of new stores, I negotiated with suppliers, trades, and developers.

In retirement, I actively manage my investment portfolio. This requires that I keep up with the latest in technology and innovation as I research companies to invest in.

Q: Are there any other details about yourself that you'd like voters to know about?

A: I have two great sons, a wonderful daughter-in-law, and two beautiful grandchildren. I also have a terrific extended family and many good friends. To me, family and friends are the really important things in life!

(continued on page 10)

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Ron MAMCHUK

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(continued from page 9)

**KAREN JORGENSON**

Q: Why have you decided to run for council?

A: I want to serve my community. That is the most important reason I am running for council. I have lived in this friendly-community of St. Adolphe for 20 years and have watched this town and municipality grow by leaps and bounds.

Q: If elected, what do you feel you can bring to the table?

A: There are many outstanding issues that still need to be addressed and brought to council. I will bring my strong work ethics and passion when given a task or project. I will stay on top of it until I can see the end results and I am satisfied that those results will benefit everyone.

Q: What are the most important things you would like to get done?

A: Seniors in our communities are a top priority to me. We must find a way to keep our seniors close to home, as so many were born and raised here. For example, a shuttle service needs to be addressed for their appointments or shopping needs in the city. Many don't drive or are unable to drive due to their health or poor road conditions (specifically during the winter). I also would like to see a much larger seniors facility to accommodate their activities and programs.

Safety is another major concern of mine. We need to address the speeding through St. Adolphe. I have witnessed this on many occasions on my daily walks. We need to work closely with the local RCMP detachment and work towards a

heightened police presence. Also the speed limit needs to be addressed on Highway 210. I believe it has to be reduced back to its original speed of 60 kilometres per hour due to the growing population—before someone seriously gets injured.

Q: What previous jobs or experiences have you had that qualify you for public office?

A: I have been in the marketing/advertising field for more than 20 years and enjoy meeting and talking with people. I am a very outgoing, honest person who will tell it to you in black and white.

Q: Are there any other details about yourself that you'd like voters to know about?

A: My final word to the voters of this community is this: we must work together in order to grow together.

**RONALD MAMCHUK
(INCUMBENT)**

Q: Why have you decided to run for council?

A: I want to finish all the projects and business that I did not get a chance to complete in my two-and-a-half-year term.

Q: If elected, what do you feel you can bring to the table?

A: I want to try and get more commercial business in St. Adolphe. The Tourond Estates development has to be done, seniors housing is important, and daycare is a big issue. Also, with the recent changes at Manitoba Health, we hopefully would like to have a satellite medical office in our community. Some of these are projects I've already started working on.

Q: What are the most important things you would like to get done?

A: The number one thing is that daycare is an issue in St. Adolphe, and the entire RM of Ritchot. Hopefully we can build a nice facility for seniors similar to the one in Niverville.

Q: What previous jobs or experiences have you had that qualify you for public office?

A: I've been here for 41 years. I was involved with the St. Adolphe park and arena. I've been involved with the church and coaching sports. I want to give back to the community. The community has been good to me and my family.

Q: Are there any other details about yourself that you'd like voters to know about?

A: We have three children, and out of the three, two of them live in St. Adolphe. It just shows that the roots are here, and I think many other families can say the same. It shows that the RM of Ritchot is a good place to raise families. We have a very good potential to expand, not only St. Adolphe but the whole municipality.

My favourite quote applies to communities and councils alike: "Our family is like the branches of a tree. We may grow in different directions, yet our roots remain as one."

Ward 3 (Ste. Agathe)

**JEANNOT ROBERT (INCUMBENT)**

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Ward 4 (Grande Pointe)



JANINE BOULANGER

Q: Why have you decided to run for council?

A: I am running so that I can provide a voice to council for Ward 4 and ensure equality within the four different wards.

Q: If elected, what do you feel you can bring to the table?

A: I would see to it that the residents' wishes are heard at council and that they have a fair chance of being carried through.

Q: What are the most important things you would like to get done?

A: As the Grande Pointe area expands, the need for a safe bike and walking path should be a priority. However, Bernat Road is still owned by the Department of Highways and therefore nothing can be done until it is turned over to the municipality. The process was started 12 years ago, and my goal is to finish this task. Once we have control of this road, we will be able to start planning and developing as required.

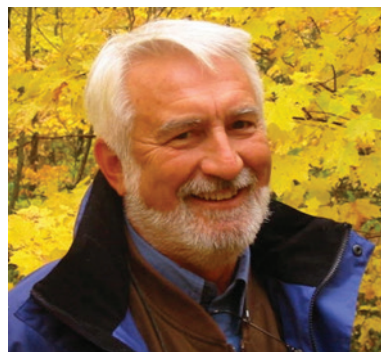
Q: What previous jobs or experiences have you had that qualify you for public office?

A: I have been President of the Grande Pointe Homeowners Association (GPHA) for the past seven years, during which time I have gained a tremendous amount of community awareness and an understanding of the residents' desires and wishes. I have attended many council meetings to carry out requests brought for-

ward by the GPHA. I have also held the position of secretary for the former Aerials Elite Gymnastics Club.

Q: Are there any other details about yourself that you'd like voters to know about?

A: I have been an architectural designer for the past 33 years. I also helped coach my daughter's soccer team for several years. I have lived in Grande Pointe for 15 years with my husband and two daughters.



ELMER HYWARREN

Q: Why have you decided to run for council?

A: In 1979, I became resident and landowner in Grande Pointe. Over those past 38 years, there have been some very questionable decision made by the RM of Ritchot's council—most notably, the recent decision by some members of council to resign and leave the municipality without a financial plan for 2017, handcuffing local government from moving forward on new projects. Their decision did a disservice to those who elected them and restricted all residents of Ritchot from getting access to all facets of municipal services.

All municipal councils needs to be reminded—whether it's a councillor, mayor, or reeve—that regulation and legislation must be the bedrock of all of their decisions. Those elected are to serve the whole municipality and not regional parochialism.

Q: If elected, what do you feel you can bring to the table?

A: My past experiences will bring a

higher level of maturity, civility, and of course stability. Although I do not have a complete knowledge of all governing legislation, I do have a solid understanding of the Provincial, Municipal, and Planning Acts, the Macdonald Ritchot Planning District, and the municipality's development plan and zoning by-law. It is important to understand and apply these legislated instruments. But most important, council's only employee, the Chief Executive Officer (CAO), is essential for guidance in all aspects of municipal governance.

Q: What are the most important things you would like to get done?

A: I previously served as councillor for Ritchot from 2010 to 2014. This entailed membership on a myriad of committees and boards. Further, and most important, in the past I have been a conduit between all Ritchot constituents and the council.

I was a school board trustee from 1998 to 2002. Trusteeship provides insight into school board governance and the interaction of the parents, their children, school teachers, administration, and the board. School boards are intermunicipal, and as a trustee we worked with those local governments within the school division.

In the early 1990s, I helped organize community support to oppose LADCO, owners of Borland Construction, in their attempt to move their Lagimodiere Blvd. contractors yard to Grande Pointe. The site would have potentially included an asphalt plant, concrete batch plant, and all of their heavy construction equipment and ancillary building material. The Macdonald-Ritchot Planning District Board supported our concerns; they did not approve the amendment to the development plan, thereby denying the application.

After the 1997 flood, through the efforts of faceless volunteers, my home was saved from the floodwaters. This allowed me to spend more time working for our community. I was a member of the North Ritchot Restoration Committee. In the early

2000s, the role of this committee had diminished and was disbanded. We used surplus resources from this committee to start the Grande Pointe Homeowners Association.

I served as the RM of Ritchot's Grande Pointe representative on the Provincial Water Resources "Dykes South of the Floodway" committee. Through these efforts, and especially those of our local government, Grande Pointe now has a community dyke. Further, this resulted in the flood-proofing caveats being removed from most properties within the Grande Pointe community dyke.

In October 2006, I organized community opposition to the application of the Newalta Corporation, an industrial waste collection facility, to build a facility at 580 Bernat Road. Our community won and Newalta withdrew their application.

Q: What previous jobs or experiences have you had that qualify you for public office?

A: Professionally, I have seven combined years at CKSO TV in Sudbury and CFTO TV in Toronto.

In my 33 years at the University of Manitoba, I developed various methods of using television to deliver classroom teaching aids. I worked with most faculties, utilizing different forms of nonverbal communication. I also co-authored a technical paper with a professor from the Department of Physics. My time at the university gave me the ability to engage in critical thinking and problem solving.

I taught a television production summer course at Red River Community College.

Q: Are there any other details about yourself that you'd like voters to know about?

A: The new council will have only 15 months to ensure the constituents of Ritchot with stability in local government. First and foremost, the 2017 Financial Plan must be legislated. Before this plan can be approved, a public hearing must be held. This will delay approval until mid-August. The result is a shortened construction sea-

son.

The current zoning by-law must be replaced, as it is more than 15 years old. When a new development plan is replaced, a new zoning by-law is required to reflect the new plan. The current development plan was given final reading in September 2011, thus it is now more than five years old. The Planning Act indicates that a review is required after five years.

According to the preliminary 2017 Financial Plan, this municipality's finances are based on \$445 million of property assessment, generating over \$13 million dollars of revenue. As councillor, we must ensure these funds are used prudently and not squandered on special interest groups.



CORINNE WEBB (INCUMBENT)

Q: Why have you decided to run for council?

A: I am very passionate about my neighbourhood and our community, and I care about the residents who live here. I am running for re-election for all the right reasons. I have no personal agenda, no alternative motive, or any hidden interests. I am genuine and honest. I want to be the voice of the residents on council. I want to make sure that there is public awareness and input on any significant changes affecting our municipality. I was elected two and a half years ago by the residents of Ward 4 and I would like to finish the mandate that was entrusted to me by them.

(continued on page 12)



Married



Resident of Ste Agathe since 1986



8 Years with the Royal Canadian Air Force



7 Years with the Ontario Provincial Police



25 Years with the Government of Canada



7 Years with the RM of Ritchot Council



Economic development diploma From University of Waterloo



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(continued from page 11)

Q: If elected, what do you feel you can bring to the table?

A: If re-elected, I commit to continue to serve with integrity, respect, and creditability; promote transparency in council's initiatives; make fair, objective decisions based on our legislation, including our development plan by-law, zoning by-law, and any secondary plan by-law; keep taxes as low as possible but still provide good services; and ensure that the residents of this community are represented to the best of my ability.

I also believe that it is important to be engaged with community members so that I understand their concerns and needs. If re-elected, I will continue to be visible and accessible by attending committee meetings, public consultations, open houses, celebrations, and assisting residents with their concerns and issues whenever I can.

Q: What are the most important things you would like to get done?

A: As a retired Canada Revenue Agency employee and auditor, I know how important

it is to follow rules, regulations, and policies. Also in this capacity, I sustained a high value of integrity, respect, and professionalism. I also bring two and a half years of councillor experience, and as a consequence I know the municipality's strengths and weaknesses. I would like the opportunity to finish what I was initially elected to do.

Q: What previous jobs or experiences have you had that qualify you for public office?

A: My priorities are to finalize our financial plan and ensure that our municipal spending is in line with the mill rate necessary to pay for that spending while also being mindful of the impact the burden of taxes will have on the residents.

We also need to update our zoning by-law, address and move forward with the slope stability analysis regarding Red River Drive, work with Manitoba Infrastructure to have all of the old highways transferred to our municipality, explore alternative solutions regarding some of the compliance issues we are faced with in our communities, reduce municipal spending by streamlining and managing

our resources more effectively and efficiently, and ensure that input from residents are part of the plan regarding growth in our communities.

Q: Are there any other details about yourself that you'd like voters to know about?

A: The last two and a half months have been very difficult for me as the past councillor of Ward 4. I did not resign and this by-election is not a result of any of my doing. I've done nothing but follow all of the rules and legislation. Sometimes that translates into pointing out that an issue before council hasn't followed proper protocol or procedure and should be considered and reviewed. I have always done this in a respectful and professional manner.

As a councillor, it is my mandate to ensure that we follow our municipal by-laws and procedures. Rules are essential to good governance as they promote trust, fairness, accountability, equity, and consistency. For these reasons, if re-elected, I will continue to encourage core principles and values in our decision-making process.



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Wiens Furniture Unveils New Appliance Showroom



Ruby, Dylan, and Al Wiens at the sneak preview of their new appliance showroom.

BY BRENDA SAWATZKY

By Brenda Sawatzky

bsawatzky@nivervillecitizen.com

The name Wiens Furniture has been on the tongues of Manitobans for generations. Four generations, to be exact. On June 20, the Wiens family invited special guests for a sneak preview of the new 5,000-square-foot addition which has been a year and a half in the making.

"It's an expanded, state-of-the-art appliance area," says Al Wiens. "Our business in the premium brands has been growing and we didn't have room in the existing appliance area to showcase [them]."

The family has been working hard to design and create a unique appliance showroom, turning displays into full-on, home-inspired experiences. The large showroom is sectioned off, giving customers the feel of meandering through a beautifully designed home. Appliances are built into cabinets and countertops, offering a living concept of what your kitchen or laundry could look like.

"A unique feature we have is that 80 percent of our appliances are in some way powered-up," adds Wiens. "What this means is that our clients can visualize not just how they would look in the home but also experience how they would function. It was important that we design a space that was welcoming and inspiring."

The new showroom features brands such as Bosch, KitchenAid, and Whirlpool, among others. Live steam ovens, gas cooktops, and speed ovens will be used for demonstrations. Eventually the family hopes to offer cooking presentations to showcase the capabilities of these high-end appliances.

The Wiens Furniture legacy began almost 80 years ago. Al's grandfather, J.S. Wiens, was the first to open a hardware and appliance store in Niverville called the Red & White Store, located where the pharmacy is today. Son Jake succeeded his father in the business in 1963. Jake was the epitome of entrepreneurship, known for peddling appliances from his

half-ton truck. He built a strong customer base by connecting with the southeast's farming community while at the same time reaching out to city folk with a listing in the Winnipeg phone book. His philosophy was that if he could get them to call, he could convince them to make the drive to rural Manitoba.

Jake Wiens had a remarkable style of marketing that was ahead of his time. Many of the slogans he coined—"Twenty money-saving minutes from Winnipeg"—are still fondly remembered by older-generation Manitobans today. During those years, Wiens relocated and renamed the business Wiens Furniture Village, strategizing his retail focus on furniture and appliances.

Keeping the vast Mennonite influence of the area ever in mind, Wiens was known for his low-German CFAM radio ads, and soon much of the southeast began to refer to the company as Wiens Meebel Darp, the low-German equivalent of the company name. Mennonites from across Manitoba

and even into Ontario flocked to Niverville, driven by catchy slogans such as "Vo de pries fa yunt es enyaschtalt" (Where the price is in your favour).

His wife Rita brought a feminine touch to the store by including sewing machine and drapery sales. When microwaves came into vogue, she offered microwave cooking classes.

In 1989, the family business burned to the ground. Wiens wasted no time in rebuilding and, two years later, sold his hard-earned investment to sons Al and Paul. Today, Al Wiens carries on his father's legacy along with his wife and two sons. The ongoing family succession plan will eventually see Dylan Wiens take the lead. The fourth generation Wiens has been active in the business for the past ten years and has completed his business degree.

"I am very grateful for the chance to bring our family business into the fourth generation," say Dylan. "There is always going to be pressure associated with succession,

but I am looking forward to the challenge and growing the business into the future."

Apart from the recent introduction of the new appliance showroom, Dylan says he hopes to build on a stronger online presence as well as complete the store's contemporary appeal with a total redesign of the original showroom area.

"We grew the business through hard work and personalized customer service, making special effort to get the customers what they needed," says Al Wiens. "Everyday we try to ask ourselves what we can do to make our business better. Being a small business, we're able to provide the personal touch that big box stores cannot. Even back in the day, we had some formidable big box competitors, but our own small business still continued to grow."

Though they continue to advertise to the local and Winnipeg market, Wiens says much of their success can be attributed to the word-of-mouth testimonies gleaned

from 80 years of satisfied clients.

"This relationship we've built with our customers means if they're looking for something we don't carry, they'll give us the opportunity to acquire it for them, at the end of the day saving them money," says Al.

He adds that Niverville's growing community has been incredibly supportive, and he feels that the relationship with the community is symbiotic.

"A store our size in a community the size of Niverville is somewhat of an anomaly," he concludes. "We've definitely capitalized on the destination aspect. We know that if people make the effort to drive out to our store, they're not just looking. Our clients from out of town really enjoy coming out to Niverville and, while here, will often visit Wm. Dyck & Sons and enjoy lunch at our restaurants here in town. People love the more relaxed aspect of the small-town shopping experience."

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Niverville Council Advocates for School-Multiplex Campus

The Town of Niverville is actively lobbying the government and the Hanover School Division to consider coordinating plans for the new school with the proposed recreation multiplex.



EVAN
BRAUN

✉ editor@nivervillecitizen.com

Years of anxiety about Niverville's school overcrowding problems are finally being put to rest. Although the province made it clear a month ago that Niverville was a high priority for a new high school, the official announcement came on June 16 when the Honourable Ian Wishart, Manitoba's Education and Training Minister, issued a request for proposals from architectural firms, with architects to be interviewed by the end of June.

"That process has been completed," says Randy Dueck, Superintendent of the Hanover School Division (HSD). He notes that MCM Architects Inc. has been selected to handle the project.

MCM Architects Inc. is a Winnipeg-based firm with extensive experience in academic building projects.

With the design team in place and the project being expedited by the province, Dueck expects that a decision about the future school's location will be made "very shortly." This is in keeping with previous reports indicating that construction will need to begin by March 2018 in order to be ready for the fall of 2019.

The new school will be built to initially accommodate 450 students from Grades 9 to 12. However, the 66,700-square-foot building will also have the capacity to expand to serve 550 students with the later construction of a four-classroom addition.

The school will include classrooms, science labs, an art room, a large library, computer rooms, resource teaching and guidance areas, a life-skills suite, a multipurpose room, a band room, a drama room, a large gymnasium, fitness

facilities, and other specialized spaces. An integrated childcare centre is also part of the plan.

"It is very encouraging for the school community, as well as the wider Niverville community, to see the province take note of their rapidly growing community and the resulting space pressure in their schools," says Ron Falk, HSD Board Chair.

Dueck echoes this sentiment, adding, "We will do our best to ensure that the end result is an amazing school for Niverville, and that it opens for the fall of 2019."

LOCATION, LOCATION, LOCATION

The Town of Niverville has some definite ideas as to where the new school should be built. Council has hired Gord Daman, of Daman Consulting, on a pro bono basis to advocate on behalf of the town with senior levels of government. Their goal is to persuade the province to place the new school adjacent to the proposed multiplex.

"Gordon is the best person for the job [and] will give us the best opportunity to secure financing to see this project built," says Niverville mayor Myron Dyck. "The relationships he already has with the province and the feds helps us in determining possible savings and synergies as we explore the concept of a school and multiplex in a campus setting."

One of the challenges of securing public funds, Daman says, is bringing the various government departments together to see the shared benefits of integrated infrastructure projects.

"The challenge with most publicly funded projects is that there is a 'silo' effect that develops, because departments are understandably focussed on their area of

responsibility," says Daman. "The difficulty with this is that when various departments are not communicating fully, it has the tendency to create unnecessary, if not fatal, delays and often has the impact of higher costs. So my most significant responsibility is to ensure the various stakeholders are staying connected and understanding the larger goals that have been set. Thankfully, the current provincial government understands this and they have reorganized departments that oversee community/public investment through infrastructure programs to ensure there are internal discussions. Understandably, smaller local governments don't apply for these projects all the time, so they lack this level of sophistication. As such,

model provides for this."

Daman notes many significant advantages to bringing the two undertakings together. Number one, co-locating the multiplex and school would reduce the overall footprint of both, bringing down capital costs and introducing numerous environmental and operational savings.

"There can be shared parking, savings on shared drainage requirements, lighting, municipal services like water and sewer, shared greenspace like a shared soccer pitch or diamond, as well as shared landscaping for trees," Daman says, noting that this is an incomplete list of the potential benefits. For example, the school's onsite daycare centre could take advantage of the multiplex's recreation facilities.

"This benefits everyone in the community either directly, through income and employment, or indirectly, through overall economic growth."

Gord Daman

consultants like myself bridge that gap."

Daman then points out that the campus model makes sense on a number of different levels, not the least of which is financial.

"I can't stress this enough," says Daman. "The current provincial government is faced with a very real fiscal deficit with many, many good and reasonable requests for additional capital and operational supports. With this being the case, it is very challenging to be successful in securing funding, so [the town's] application for this funding has to be creative and sustainable, exhibit significant value for money, and include innovation that provides a best practice for other communities. The campus

Daman also points to a measurable economic impact for the town, as such a facility will retain current citizens and draw more people to the community, both as residents and visitors.

"Public infrastructure has a spinoff effect for private business, particularly the service sector," says Daman. The facilities also would encourage other businesses to locate here, thus making the town more of a destination. "This benefits everyone in the community either directly, through income and employment, or indirectly, through overall economic growth that helps to sustain property values and spread the property tax load over new homes and business who choose to call Niverville

home."

The town is proposing not only to locate the two facilities adjacent to each other, but to link them in some fashion.

"This allows for each building to be completely independent through secured doors that are lockable to either building. But for combined events like grad, large tournaments, etc., the two buildings can be converted into one large building," Daman says. "This of course brings huge benefit to the school, but also the community as a whole. The hosting of large tournaments is now possible."

TIME IS A FACTOR

With the province moving so quickly to get the school built, the town faces a daunting challenge: they have a very small window of time to get the province on board with the various interdepartmental savings and benefits that could result from merging the projects.

"Putting aside the many unconventional things Niverville has accomplished in the past, such as the PCH and Open Health, this undertaking is no easy task due to the time and fiscal limitations involved," Daman concedes. "So I want to be clear: no matter how well the town presents this material to the province, there is a very high mountain to scale here."

A group of stakeholders is responsible to allocate provincial dollars, and Daman is well versed through years of experience working with them. For one, project applications are reviewed at the civil service level, to ensure that those applications meet the province's criteria. From there, the Planning and Priorities Secretariat provides advice to the government about which projects are most worthy of funding. Finally, all recommendations must be reviewed by the Treasury

Board, which is made up of cabinet ministers.

"The Treasury Board is charged with making the most difficult of decisions," Daman says of this final step in the process. "Even if the project has passed the first two steps and is more than worthy of public investment, they have to decide, based on fiscal realities, whether the province can afford it. As you can appreciate these days, they say no a lot more than yes. It's a very tough role to have."

Currently, the Town of Niverville is also in consultation with the Hanover School Division. Daman says that school divisions typically make these sorts of decisions, about where to locate a school, alone.

"Even having the town involved is unique, if not unconventional," Daman concludes. "But I am pleased to share that the town and HSD have a good working partnership in this situation. The decision itself will have to be made very soon, as the design for the school has to start immediately to have the tender package ready for early 2018 so that the construction can begin in early spring of 2018."

Morris MLA Shannon Martin, who represents Niverville in the Manitoba Legislature, is upbeat about the school announcement and negotiations about where it will go.

"This is obviously an exciting and long overdue announcement, especially in light of the most recent census numbers," Martin says. "I am optimistic that the community, school division, and province can come to an agreement that will ensure Niverville remains a community 'where you belong.'"

FOR MORE INFORMATION

■ www.mcmarchitects.ca



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CITIZEN POLL

THIS MONTH'S QUESTION:

What do you think about the proposal from Niverville's town council to build the new high school and the multiplex on the same site?

- ☐ **A** – The campus model for the school and multiplex makes perfect sense.
- ☐ **B** – I have reservations about this proposal. (Leave a comment and tell us why.)

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LAST MONTH'S RESULTS:

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

NO	YES
55%	45%

YOUR COMMENTS:

"If there are too few RCMP for such a large area, why is the Provincial government not addressing the problem?"

"One has to wonder: how large of an area would one... two... officers have to enforce? What is their level of authority? What level of crime would they be responsible for and what can they do about it? To ask if I'd pay to have my neighborhood safer? YES, but the detail would have a heavy impact on my vote."

"These crimes are going to start driving down property values and turn families and businesses away from joining our community. It is time to have our own police force so that residents can feel safe again. If criminals knew that the police 911 response time was local, it would likely make all the difference needed to curb the crime. Who's going to want to invest in Niverville if our taxes continue to rise but our conveniences and safety are lacking?"

"People have very little clue how much a municipal police force would cost. It would need 6-8 staff at \$100,000. Along with support staff and clerks. The would need 2-3 cruisers [at a] rate of \$300,000 a piece. You would need a 2-3 million dollar building with state-of-the-art technology. Along with \$1,000,000 of equipment. Then we would need a board to run it and have massive liability. What [would] happen when an officer shoots someone? What happens when the officer themselves break the law? That would be mud in everyone's face. Does the town pay for the lawsuit? The defence lawyer? The 3 million settlement? All this to literally pay \$500-1000 more in taxes a year to have 2 officers on duty at all times with 1 cruiser on the road. Guess what, they still will be tied up doing paperwork and response time will still be 10 minutes. No thank you, the RCMP is the way to go."

The training, equipment, salary and all costs associated with a dedicated police force is exorbitant and in the long run is not affordable for a town this size. The priority seems to be water and a sporting complex!

Private policing is no different than RCMP. Policing catches crimes after they occur. It is up to residents to care for and protect their homes and assets to the level of comfort they deem necessary.

Considering there was a stabbing in town today, this is needed. It might be time for the mayor to step up and address this problem or to step down and let some one else do it.



Students celebrate the completion of the Canada 150 mural at Ecole St. Adolphe School.

AMBER MAMCHUK

Active Living Mural Unveiled at St. Adolphe School

By Lesley Gaudry

Ecole St. Adolphe School students had one more reason to celebrate on June 29. Not only was it their last day of school, but they hosted a Canada 150 celebration and ceremony to commemorate the unveiling of the new mural painted on the east wall of the school.

Students, staff, and community residents participated in festivities during the noon hour, including a lunch of pizza, chips, carrots, water, and ice cream and tunes from local musician Rheanne Gagnon. MP Ted Falk and MLA Bob Lagasse greeted the crowd, and the students received a warm send-off from Principal Laird Laluk.

The finale included a singing of "Happy Birthday" for Canada and a group photo showcasing the new mural.

The St. Adolphe Subcommittee, of the Ritchot Community Development Corporation, had applied for Canada 150 funding to undertake the mural project. Patrimoine Canada/Canadian Heritage funded the project with \$6,000 and required youth engagement. With the assistance of mural artists Mandy van Leeuwen and Michel Saint Hilaire, and local artist Tanya Waddell, the subcommittee coordinated the sketching of ideas and painting the final product.

Teachers provided classroom flexibility so that over

100 students could provide input and assistance with the actual painting, which is titled "Active Living in St. Adolphe."

Notably, all the imagery within the white banner portion of the mural was painted by the students themselves. The sky showcases black birds (Chimney Swifts), as St. Adolphe is the Manitoba nesting capital for Chimney Swifts, an at-risk species. The words in the cloud resonate the school motto: "Be responsible, be respectful, be encouraging, and be safe"—all qualities that we as Canadians strive for.

Overall, the mural took eight days to sketch and paint.

The colourful wallscape, visible from St. Adolphe Road, provides the finishing

touches to a new community recreation space that has been several years in development. Local volunteers from the St. Adolphe Community Green-space Committee have also planted a myriad of flowers, perennials, and shrubs to further beautify the space.

With teamwork from the students and assistance from artist Mandy van Leeuwen, who just returned from working on the Churchill Sea Wall Project, residents of St. Adolphe now have a piece of history to commemorate active living and Canada's anniversary.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

www.mandyvanleeuwen.com

Government Announces Accessibility Funding

By Evan Braun

editor@nivervillecitizen.com

Last month, the Government of Canada announced the Enabling Accessibility Fund's (EAF) 2017 call for proposals, an opportunity for businesses, community organizations, for-profit and not-for-profit organizations, school boards, and small municipalities to apply for federal funding to facilitate the hiring of Canadians with disabilities which may prevent them from fully participating in their communities.

In related news, and in celebration of Canada 150, a portion of the EAF budget this year will be dedicated to 150 youth-driven projects across the country that aim to increase accessibility to community facilities and workplaces. These projects will be funded up to a maximum of \$10,000 each.

"Working in politics is challenging and often negative and divisive," says Provencher MP Ted Falk. "That's why it is so encouraging when a common-sense program comes along that everyone

can get behind, regardless of party affiliation or ideology. As a largely rural riding, Provencher poses some unique challenges, one of which is accessibility."

Examples of projects that would qualify for funding, according to Falk, include the capital costs of renovation, construction, and retrofit activities. He adds that the fund can also allow organizations to upgrade to accessibility technologies in workplaces and communities.

Since the creation of the EAF, the federal government

has funded more than 2,890 different projects.

"I encourage businesses and organizations in our riding to apply for funding and help make Provencher a better, more accessible, community for us all," Falk says.

Eligible businesses and organizations have until Wednesday, July 26 to submit their applications to the EAF.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/services/funding/enabling-accessibility-fund.html

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Gab-Roy, NCI Release Grads into the Wild

By Evan Braun

✉ editor@nivervillecitizen.com

This June, 88 students graduated from our region's two local high schools—43 from Gabrielle-Roy in Île-des-Chênes, and 45 from Niverville Collegiate.

GABRIELLE-ROY

Gabrielle-Roy held their convocation on Thursday, June 22 at the Prairie Rose Evangelical Mennonite Church in Landmark, followed the next evening by a banquet at the Victoria Inn in Winnipeg.

The graduating class selected two valedictorians to represent them this year: Andréa Espenell and Danielle Desharnais.

"This evening celebrates our journey from Kindergarten to Grade 12, and it is also the first time in our high school careers that we are all getting 100 percent for participation and attendance, so congratulations to everybody," the pair said. "Danielle and I would like to conclude by wishing our entire class all the success imaginable. No matter where life takes you, savour every situation presented to you and achieve your dreams."

The next portion of the ceremony turned to the giving of awards.

"Collectively, our graduation class earned upwards of \$45,000 in scholarships and bursaries, whether it be for university, college, or trades," says Vice Principal Joel Mangin. "We had five students graduate with a vocational diploma, meaning they earned eight credits in a specific trades program. These included electrical trades and welding."



Danielle Desharnais and Andréa Espenell, Gabrielle-Roy valedictorians.

ROGER VERMETTE

The Governor General's Medal went to Mya Kryschuk, who also won the prestigious University of Manitoba's Chown Centennial Scholarship for \$1,000. Only one Chown scholarship recipient is selected per school throughout Manitoba and northwestern Ontario. The Governor General's Medal is awarded to the graduating student with the highest grade point average. One medal is presented at every high school, college, and university program in Canada.

NIVERVILLE COLLEGIATE

Niverville's graduates made their debut a week later, at a convocation ceremony held at the Fourth Avenue Bible Church. The banquet followed immediately afterward in the Heritage Centre atrium.

Abigail Olfert was selected by her peers to serve as valedictorian, presenting a speech that reminisced fondly on the class's shared experiences even as they prepare to go their separate ways.

"When I was told that I was going to be valedictorian I was 100 percent honored, 50 percent freaking out and 50 percent wondering how on earth I could represent 40-some one-of-a-kind people," said Olfert. "Well, I figured out the answer: it can't be done. And maybe that's okay, because we shouldn't be the just one thing."

Olfert ended on a note of celebration and encouragement. "We may not be the next Einstein or Armstrong or Oprah, but the world needs so much more than the famous. So graduates, whether you're broke in college or university,

an up-and-coming musician, a sports broadcaster, an engineer, a director, a daycare worker, a conservation officer, or still working at Co-op, Abraham Lincoln once said, 'Whatever you are, be a good one.'"

Olfert was also the recipient of this year's Governor General's Medal. Niverville's Chown Centennial Scholarship was given to Rebecka Lemire.

For the first time this year, *The Citizen* presented a \$1,000 bursary to promote community engagement and encourage students to think openly and critically about issues of the day that affect us all. The award was given to Riley Hiebert, whose article appears in this month's Commentary section.

Several further academic awards were presented at the evening banquet, presented by the NCI faculty. Three students—Abigail Olfert, Rebecka Lemire, and Makenna Woytowich—graduated with honours for achieving Grade 12 averages over 90 percent. Nicholas Tunny received the Growth and Advancement Award, Devon Schepp was given Citizenship Award, and the General Proficiency Award went to Abigail Olfert.

Other awards were presented for Band (Karsten Dueck), and Best Actor and Actress (Ben Driedger and Abigail Olfert) in the senior high drama. Additionally, honours were given out for students with the top grades in each subject area.

A full list of all graduates and bursary winners from both schools is printed on pages 32-34.

Congratulations Class of 2017!

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Fire Consumes Providence Dormitory

By Trevor Lux

Bergen Hall, the men's dormitory at Providence University College in Otterburne, was tragically consumed by flames on Thursday, June 1.

The fire began at approximately 4:45 p.m. and is presumed to have started on the roof of the dormitory. Supported by the RCMP, the fire departments of Niverville, St. Malo, and St-Pierre-Jolys were dispatched and responded to contain the blaze. No one was inside the building at the time and there were no injuries to report. Although the cause of the fire is still undetermined, the fire commissioner has deemed it as accidental. The total cost of the damage is estimated to be around \$4 million.

"We are thankful that no one was hurt as a result of the fire, and we welcome the prayers of our friends and supporters as we determine what our next steps will be," reads a statement by Cherry Wiebe, Providence's Vice President for Marketing and Communications.

Wiebe adds that the university would like to extend their gratitude and commend the efforts of Andy Martin and Randy Bechard, both of whom are maintenance employees at Providence. As well, Wiebe's statement recognizes the efforts of a neighbour to the campus, Emile Morin, who supplied additional water to help extinguish the fire.

Providence was founded in 1925 as Winnipeg Bible Training School and moved to its current location in Otterburne in 1970. Bergen Hall, which was built as part of the Forward Free Capital Campaign in 1984, is named after



An early June fire blazes at the Providence campus.

PROVIDENCE

Martin Bergen, who contributed the original \$1.1 million needed for its construction. Bergen also oversaw the build as project manager and was personally invested in the job. It is said that he often enjoyed participating in hands-on labour.

In addition to serving as Providence's primary men's residence during the school year, Bergen Hall has also housed summer students, attendees for sports camps, and various groups and organizations that visit the college from time to time.

Plans for constructing a new dormitory are currently underway. However, project details have yet to be finalized.

Despite the setback, the fire has not slowed down activity at the bustling college. Sports camps will continue as scheduled and programs for summer students will not be affected.

"Providence has a plan in place for temporary housing for Fall 2017 while a new dormitory is constructed," says Wiebe. "We have other residence buildings on campus

which are sufficient for our summer events."

Jerrad Peters, Creative Content Specialist at Providence, says, "We have been able, and will be able, to meet all our housing requirements for the summer. Our Summer TESOL program (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages) is currently ongoing, and all students requiring accommodation are being comfortably housed. Additionally, all students attending Providence during the upcoming school year will be comfortably housed. As it happens, our enrolment numbers for the fall are looking tremendous."

He adds, "We're extremely grateful that no one was hurt in the fire and we're also thankful that we're in a position to build a brand-new, state-of-the-art, environmentally friendly residence. We've received considerable support from friends both near and far, and while Bergen Hall was the setting of many Providence memories we're looking forward to constructing a new building that will host even more memories in the future."



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Stay-at-Home Dads Unite!

As one Niverville man proves, stay-at-home parenting isn't just for moms.

By Eric Peterson

A Niverville man is looking to connect with other stay-at-home dads in the region while at the same time changing the conversation around men who choose to be the primary in-home caregiver during their children's formative years.

For Damien Delfino, choosing to stay at home when his daughter Aria was born fit his life. He had recently left the Armed Forces and his partner Joanne Fullerton was working for the Canada Revenue Agency. Although the decision made all the sense in the world, Delfino says he still felt uneasy about it.

"It just became part of the conversation that I was going to be staying home for a while," Delfino recalls. "As an ex-solider, I knew I would get a lot of flak for being a stay-at-home dad. Part of that gets in your head. Feeling like you have to explain yourself."

As time went on, Delfino became more comfortable with his new role and came to embrace the unique difficulty of being a stay-at-home parent.

"It really challenged me in ways I hadn't been challenged before," he says. "It took me out of my comfort zone and I knew I had to be at my best."

Two years after Aria was born, Damien and Joanne welcomed their son Daxton. By this point, Damien staying home just felt natural. And he says he has noticed attitudes about his choice have changed as well. "People saw how busy I was. Doing the cooking



Damien and the kids.

DAMIAN DELFINO

and cleaning. Organizing play dates, dance practice, soccer. I think my family was impressed."

Delfino gives Joanne a lot of credit for his own evolution. She has two children from a previous relationship—20-year-old Tristan and 18-year-old Devon—so she was a great guide and partner as Damien struggled with the typical first-time parent challenges.

Damien's and Joanne's story is not as unique as it once was. According to Statistics Canada, there has been a significant increase in the number of dads staying home in recent years. In 1976, households where one dad stays home represented just two percent of all families. Today, that number is 11 percent.

Even though the stay-at-home dad is becoming a more regular feature in Canada's demographic landscape, Delfino knows his ilk are still in the minority. That's why he's looking to organize the stay-at-home dads of Niverville to lend each other support.

"Being a stay-at-home dad

is different from the moms," he explains. "You can feel alone."

A couple of months ago, Delfino reached out on Facebook, looking for other men in his situation. His idea isn't too fancy. It can be as simple as play dates for the kids. Maybe the dads could chuck around a football. Men being men, nobody is expecting a deep discussion of feelings—just a chance to connect and share some parenting stories and advice.

After all, stay-at-home moms have been doing it forever. Though mom groups have always welcomed Delfino, he thinks dads could benefit from the same sort of supportive approach.

A few dads have reached out to him so far and he's hoping more will take the step in the coming months.

"If it were just normal, that would be great. It really shouldn't be that big of a deal," he concludes. "I want my kids to grow up in a world of dads doing mom stuff and moms doing dad stuff."



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Hog Barn Blaze Still a Mystery

By Brenda Sawatzky

bsawatzky@nivervillecitizen.com

The cause of the June 8 inferno that levelled two connecting New Bothwell hog barns remains a mystery. Though investigations have come to a close, investigators from the Office of the Fire Commissioner are suspicious that electrical issues are to blame.

Jason Falk of Hespeler Hog Farms lost more than 4,000 hogs in the harrowing fire that razed two of the five barns onsite. The loss is estimated at over \$2 million.

Falk was the first on the scene and called 911 after a neighbour spotted the fire. The New Bothwell Fire Department arrived at around 9:30 p.m. and quickly called in backup from Kleefeld, Grunthal, and Niverville. The crews managed to contain the fire but were unable to save the barns or their inhabitants.

Hanover Fire Chief Paul Wiebe says that his crew has attended similar fires before, but barn fires of this magnitude don't occur often. In his mind, it's not likely the flames will have killed the hogs inside.

"Early in a fire like this, there's a lot of smoke and they usually don't survive that," said Wiebe in an interview with CBC. "So, thankfully they probably didn't suffer too long. Hopefully it was quick for them."

Falk says that fire prevention is always on his mind. "No one wants to see something like this occur," says Falk.

He indicates that built-in sprinkler systems have been tried before in barns with little success. Debris build-up and



Barns burn at Hespeler Hog Farms near New Bothwell.

CORBIS CHIPILSKI

corrosion of the sprinkler nozzles makes them unreliable and extremely high maintenance. Further, the costs of putting in water lines to provide sufficient pressure for such a system is unsustainable when considering the distance most farm properties are from main water line sources.

Shortly after news of the fire was released, social media users began to post online animal rights articles, asserting that hog containment in unprotected barns is a form of abuse.

"For them to call this loss inhumane suggests they know something of the condition of my heart or motivation," says Falk. "Oxford [Dictionary] defines inhuman as 'without compassion for misery or suffering. Cruel.' Was this an accident? Yes. Was this tragic? Yes. Do I lack compassion for misery or suffering? I guess they would need to get to know me to find out. No animal rights activists have spoken to me to discover that."

The recent fire is only one of the difficult trials the farm has faced this year. All of Falk's barns onsite tested positive for porcine epidemic diarrhea (PED) virus, which can be fatal for young pigs. Older ones can recover. Labour-intensive practices are required to eradicate the virus from infected barns, and strict protocols are needed to prevent its spread.

"The minute a farm discovers they are positive for PED, all traffic on and off the site must be stopped," says Falk. "Certain traffic must continue after that point, but it is all very closely monitored and limited to only the absolute minimum."

He adds that the virus can be transferred to other barns via vehicles or people that have inadvertently carried it with them.

"One infected farm can easily impact, but not necessarily infect, more than 20 other farms without their knowledge."

Ongoing washing, cleansing, and testing must take

place until tests indicate the virus is gone. The addition of emergency crew traffic on the night of the fire will have brought with it concerns of the potential transfer of the PED virus.

Since the fire, Falk says he's been busy reorganizing his employees in order to keep them on payroll and taking the time to work through the many new questions and challenges.

"Financially, we expect that insurance will come through and carry us through this," says Falk. "However, there are often some unrelated costs to events like this, so I cannot say for certain the financial impact this will have just yet."

Falk says he's deeply grateful to the business associates, friends, and family who have been there to assist and encourage his family.

"Just knowing you have the support and love of the people around you can make such a difference," says Falk.



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IN BRIEF



The RCMP Tactical Unit.

HEATHER MILLER

Visitors to Touch-a-Truck Brave Wind and Rain

By Heather Miller

The first-ever Niverville Touch-a-Truck event took place on Saturday, June 24. Despite the cool temperatures, rain, and wind, more than 240 people stopped by to check out the 30 exhibitors set up around the area with vehicles ranging from construction equipment to emergency vehicles to race cars.

Children of all ages were awed by the RCMP Tactical Unit, a drag car engine, a combine, and a rock-hauling truck. Individuals were able to climb into the vehicles for a chance to get a view from the driver's seat. Some even tried their hand at dumping the new recycling bins—a task which may not be as easy as one thinks.

Thanks to the volunteers

and exhibitors for braving the cool, wet day to make this event a success for the community.

The block party wagon will be set up around town for several summer fundraisers. The next barbecue is scheduled for July 5 at Wm. Dyck & Sons, followed by July 19 at the Niverville Credit Union. On both days, lunch will be served from 11:30 a.m. until 1:30 p.m., weather permitting.

For \$6, you can have your choice of meat, a bag of chips, and a drink. Food is provided by Winkler Meats, including True North Hot Dogs—the same as are served at the Bell MTS Centre—and farmer sausage patties. All proceeds from the barbecues go the multiplex fundraising effort.



Ste. Anne Co-op presents Wildlife Haven a cheque for \$125,000.

RAY DOWSE

Co-op Donates \$125K to Wildlife Haven

By Evan Braun

editor@nivervillecitizen.com

Co-op has partnered with Wildlife Haven Rehabilitation Centre to help bring their new facility to fruition, donating \$125,000 towards their \$2.5 million combined animal hospital and education centre, which has been a few years in the making. The centre will teach visitors about the importance of wildlife preservation, conservation, and nature in general. In addition to onsite education tools, the site will broadcast its programs to remote schools and communities.

The large donation was presented at a barbecue lunch on Tuesday, June 27, followed by guided tours through the construction site. Local politicians and dignitaries were on hand for the presentation.

"This generous gift from Co-op puts us a step closer to realizing our dream of a permanent facility to help rescue, rehabilitate, and release more injured and orphaned wildlife," says Judy Robertson, President of Wildlife Haven. "It will also help us educate more people about safe and healthy wildlife interaction through a classroom or distance learning setting."

The donation is part of the Co-op Community Spaces program, which first launched in 2015. This year, the company has supported 27 community organizations in British Columbia, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta with a total of \$2 million.

"Co-op Community Spaces is an exciting program that is making a difference across Western Canada and we're delighted to see it come to Ile-des-Chênes," said Henry Nickel, General Manager of Ste. Anne Co-op, in a statement. "Ste. Anne Co-op is supported and owned by members and customers throughout

southeast Manitoba, so it's important that we give back and make investments in our community and people, which is what Co-op Community Spaces is all about."

Wildlife Haven is a registered non-profit and run by volunteers. Its mandate is to receive and care for injured and orphaned wildlife for release back into the wild. The organization operates strictly on donations and receives no government funding.

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Geography Whiz Competes in Ottawa

By Brenda Sawatzky

✉ bsawatzky@nivervillecitizen.com

In today's world, having a good grasp on geography is becoming increasingly important. Douglas Richardson, executive director of the Association of American Geographers, says that geographic knowledge is essential for survival in our rapidly globalizing world. The Royal Canadian Geographic Society recognizes that too and sets out to provide an educational basis by which young Canadians can build on their knowledge.

For the twenty-second year running, the Canadian Geography Challenge has showcased high-achieving middle years students from across the nation to compete for esteemed titles and compelling prizes. Niverville's own Rhyanne Pauls was the only student from Manitoba to be selected to compete at this year's challenge in Ottawa.

On June 3, sixteen-year-old Pauls took her first-ever solo flight to the nation's capital, competing against 19 other Canadian students during the three-day event. The Challenge, hosted by Canadian Space Agency astronaut David Saint-Jacques, was held at the Canadian War Museum. Finalists were awarded prizes of \$5,000, \$3,000, and \$2,000, presented by Alex Trebek of *Jeopardy!* fame.

The top five were also awarded a ten-day Canadian east coast cruise expedition accompanied by Canadian Geographic Education's program coordinator, Sara Black.

Though Pauls didn't make it to the top five, her efforts are no less impressive. Over 22,000 students from 650 different schools across Canada participated. Pauls was selected based on the results from two qualifying online tests. As one of the top 20, she received an all-expense-paid pass that included



The top twenty students at this year's Canadian Geographic Challenge. Rhyanne Pauls, from Niverville, is the redhead on the far right. **MATT ZAMBONIN, CANADIAN GEOGRAPHIC**

flights, accommodations, meals, and excursions around Ottawa's landmarks and historic sights.

Pauls' mother, Robyne, says that her daughter has always had a remarkable memory and took a keen interest in geography from a very young age.

"Years ago, there was an online app called Stack the Countries," says Robyne Pauls. "It had a map of, let's say Europe, and the app would pop up a country and she'd touch where it was supposed to go. She could do all of Europe, all of North America, and South America. It was ridiculous. She was in Grade Four or Five [at the time]."

Though the young Pauls doesn't see herself as a high-achiever, she humbly admits that she has a grade average of between 96 to 97 percent in all of her classes. Grade Ten is the first year that she's taken a formal geography class at NCI. She can't put a solid finger on why her skills and interest in geography are at such a high level.

She was first encouraged to participate in the Challenge by NCI teacher Pat Fast. The initial step was an online test which ranked her alongside other students in the school. Pauls says that Mr. Fast warned her about the difficulty level of the test, remarking that the average score at NCI was about 13 percent. Pauls scored 57 percent.

"It was crazy questions about different wars in Belgium and stuff like that," says Pauls.

"I usually tell students that the test is so diversified—human geography, physical geography, politics, current events, etc.—that it is really difficult to study for it," says Fast. "Typically, a student just has a natural interest in the subject area and that tends to help the most."

From there, Pauls performed a second online test, pitting her against students from across the province. She recalls answering about 200 questions, with 30 seconds to answer each one. No scores were available upon completion of this test. At the end of May, however, Pauls received a formal letter inviting her to join 19 other top performing students in Ottawa for the nationwide challenge.

"At first she had to decide if she was even going," says Robyne Pauls. "This was a big thing [for her]."

Her concern about flying alone, with connecting flights in international airports, comprised only a small part of her unease. Rhyanne is a self-professed introvert. Crowds, mingling with strangers, and being in the limelight are among her greatest anxieties. She pressed forward, recognizing that she had an opportunity few could

ever experience, and it was worth facing the overwhelming nature of her fear.

In the capital, the students were billeted to the University of Ottawa. Pauls recalls students of all ages trickling in from across the country and as far away as the Northwest Territories and Nunavut. The youngest competitor was 12 years old.

Most of the students dug right in, cramming for the following day's tests. Pauls hadn't studied until now and didn't see the need. Her mother speculates that Pauls was not particularly interested in the spotlight that the top five would bring. Instead, she spent her time studying for the upcoming geography test awaiting her when she returned to school back home.

The next day, students were taken out for fieldwork and tested on their observations. Then all 20 students sat down for the big one-hour exam.

"It was really hard," says Pauls. "Sara Black said that it was one of the hardest. As I was writing the test, I thought, 'Maybe I should care more about this,' because everyone was [taking it so seriously]. Part of me was like, 'I'm not going to get in [the top five].' But then the other part of me says, 'But I didn't think I was going to get in the first two times.'"

The top five winners were announced at the end of the day. The following day culminated in a game-show-style standoff between the remaining competitors.

Fast says that the school and community are really proud of Rhyanne.

"I have had two other students who made it to Nationals, but at that point it was done online within the school," says Fast. "Rhyanne is the first NCI student to win the province [and go to Ottawa]."

IN BRIEF

Niverville Council Plans for New Water Pipeline

By Evan Braun

✉ editor@nivervillecitizen.com

Niverville's town council has a plan to deal with the shortfall of water from its Spruce Drive water treatment plant. As previously reported, a new wellfield has been identified in the RM of Hanover, to the east of Highway 59, and a pipeline will have to be constructed to connect that well to Niverville's water system.

Council proposes to spend a total of \$2.5 million on the new pipeline, half of which will be paid for by the Manitoba Water Services Board. The other half (\$1,250,000) will come from three sources: the Federal Gas Tax Reserve (\$550,000), the General Reserve (\$100,000), and \$600,000 secured through a loan with an estimated interest rate of six percent over six years. Council intends to make the loan's annual payments of \$122,017.58 using monies received by the Manitoba Hydro Community Development Initiative (CDI). As a result, the pipeline will not result in any new tax increases.

A notice from the town indicates that the project will begin once the province concludes its environmental approvals process.

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Commentary

Talking Trash

By Greg Fehr

The leaders of our community recently decided it was time to talk trash... both literally and figuratively. How strange that a community that still had burn barrels 20 years ago would find the subject of recycling so complex and contentious. It's a testament to our commitment to good stewardship, and for this we should commend our leadership.

Every idea has two parts in implementation: creating the plan and executing/communicating that plan. To get it right, either in actuality or just in perception, you have to do both parts well. Fail on either one and the idea may fail. Lots of well-conceived plans can fail due to poor communication, and even well-communicated ideas can fail when they don't actually work.

Enter the auto-bin, town council's newest unveiling in municipal services. In the interest of disclosure, I am not a big fan. They are bulky and unsightly; I have yet to find a place to put them at my house. But we elect council to make decisions—to study various options to the problems we face, and then determine the most prudent course of action.

Talking to members of council, I understand the



EVAN BRAUN

financial pressure they face. The costs of waste management have climbed in part due to rising dump fees, which are used to deter waste and encourage recycling.

Although we know that the auto-bin solution offered by our current provider was the least expensive, we don't know what other options were considered. Not a problem, as it's the job of our administrators to complete the analysis, but why did we change to the auto-bin system over the old system? Is it possible that the old provider couldn't provide a competitive price due to the costs of them having to upgrade to auto-bin-capable trucks? Will the inherent limit on recycling now discourage full compliance and drive up our waste volumes?

Without this information, I can't say whether council made the right decision.

Council's communication about the new program has been unclear since it was first announced. Residents were left with many questions. Especially on social media, it seems that some council members and the public forgot how easy it is to misinterpret the written word. After all, written comments can be read from different perspectives. What happens when people get worked up and forget to critique the ideas rather than the person presenting those ideas?

I do not like the auto-bin system, yet I also know that I may be an outlier. My recycling bin is quite full after a single week, whereas my waste is seldom at half-capacity. I could likely go weekly on recycling and every two to three weeks on trash. I have taken to shredding more paper in my house and using

it in my compost, otherwise my bin is overfull at 14 days. But I also acknowledge that there are people for whom the situation is reversed and that the vast majority of people are somewhere in the middle. For them, the current solution may work quite nicely.

But council should be making choices not just for the environment and not just for financial reasons. Rather, they should employ the philosophy of prudent environmentalism—the solution that satisfies both environmental and financial concerns. And because recycled materials are considerably cheaper to manage than waste, pound-for-pound, all efforts to encourage reductions to the waste stream can be seen as good for Mother Earth and the public purse.

Ultimately, like all changes, time will tell if this solution was the correct one, and adjustments can be made as required. Perhaps there is a lesson for council here: if they better anticipate the public's questions, it could reduce future frustration. And this can serve as yet another call for citizens to attend discussions and council meetings to engage in solutions ahead of time instead of only after a change is already in progress.

Look on the Bright Side: Outside Is the Best Side

By Jan Kendall St. Cyr

I humorously watched as my grandson lined up all the bicycles and outdoor riding toys, readying them for his "car wash." The fact that he was wearing his preschool graduation hat, two backpacks, and had marker lines drawn across his face resembling war paint was of no concern to him. As he reached for the beloved garden hose, his little sister, artistically covered in blue sidewalk chalk and dragging Daddy's shovel behind her, shuffled over in a pair of Mommy's shoes to share in her big brother's antics.

I marvelled at their imaginative play, and also at their mother's ability to let them be. Although she watched closely, she didn't interfere in their play, giving them the space they needed to create and imagine on their own.

I love Charlotte Mason's quote: "Never be indoors when you can rightly be without." And yet establishing safe boundaries is still essential. While these parameters greatly enhance creative play by offering security, they also aid in our children's overall health and well-being.

We know that outdoor play allows children to build, imagine, experience, investigate, explore, predict, and create. And extensive

studies have shown that playing outside also improves the immune system and eyesight. It promotes social, emotional, and cognitive skills while strengthening language and communication. It also increases a child's attention span by engaging them in problem-solving activities. Even better, outdoor playtime is a stress reliever and can greatly reduce ADHD symptoms.

Children do not need a great amount of instruction nor the latest toys and gadgets to make them happy. Freedom—mixed in with a little mud, sand, and water—will take care of that, thus becoming elaborate pies and castles while old blankets and sticks become secret forts and hideouts.

Given over to imaginative play, children will end their days blissfully exhausted, but not before they share these wonderful discoveries with you. That thick bathtub ring will bear witness to all the fun that was had, and the fresh air consumed will ensure a good night's sleep for everyone!

My parenting philosophy has always been that "outside is the best side." So let the kids get out in the fresh air and imagine, thrive, and flourish! A washing machine, bathtub, and good cleanser is all you need to see you through these summer months. Your kids instinctively know how to create the rest!



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The Role of Community and Church

Riley Hiebert was this year's recipient of The Citizen's \$1,000 graduation bursary. To apply for the award, Niverville Collegiate students must submit an article for our monthly Commentary section. The following article was the winning entry.

By Riley Hiebert

For many years, our community has been evolving. Ten years ago, Niverville had only 2,464 people. Since 2006, that figure has nearly doubled to 4,610. No doubt, other towns across Canada only wish they could grow in the way we have.

Interestingly, the number of people attending church does not seem to have kept up with the growth in population. Rather, it seems that, relative to the population growth, our churches have been shrinking.

While church attendance isn't necessarily an accurate reflection of the health or effectiveness of a church, it does hint at how well that church works within the community. Community has been described as "a group of people interested in each other's lives" (Jason Kehler, Youth Pastor of Fourth Avenue Bible Church). If that is so, then the only way to reclaim our community is to create relationships, meet, converse, and really get to know people.

For many years, the church was a great facilitator of relationships. The church created food banks and offered help to those who needed it—not because they had to, but because it was a way for them to create relationship.

Overall, the church still has a desire to create relationships, but they seem to have forgotten how.



WADE KEHLER | STUDIO 479 PHOTOGRAPHY

The church runs many important programs—Helping Hands, Alcoholics Anonymous, and Baby Blessings, just to name a few. These are amazing ministries. Helping Hands, for instance, addresses poverty in Niverville and its surrounding communities. It's a great organization.

But while programs can be very helpful, if they don't lead to deeper connection, they are useless. Programs should be the means to reach a goal, not the goal itself. What is the goal then? True, genuine friendship.

Jesus called the church to help the needy, giving them what they need so they don't starve. However, Jesus didn't care as much about a person's physical needs; he cared about their spiritual needs. The Bible tells the story of a paralyzed man being brought to Jesus: "When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the man, 'Take heart, son; your sins are forgiven'" (Matthew 9:2, NIV). Jesus focused on the heart of the man because he knew that a physical body means nothing if the heart cannot be saved.

Many programs in Niverville already do this. They focus on the person. They use their skills to reach people, and out of that comes something deeper. Perhaps the program is merely a stepping stone to

guide people towards someone else who can help them—a step in the process of cultivating an honest relationship.

I should clarify: creating relationship does not mean making a convert. Creating relationship merely means that we become truly invested in one another's lives. Not to preach or force anything down anyone's throat, but to literally just become friends. Friends invest in other friends, turning mere towns into thriving communities.

What can we as individuals do to help Niverville reclaim its sense of community and relationship? We can get involved. Not only does volunteering help the community, but acts of service lead to the development of great friendships. I believe that if every person who attends church were to help and get involved on some level, it would open the door for something greater.

There are many ways to get involved, and not just within the church building. Helping Hands, community or school sports, the MCC, the YFC drop-in, and the personal care home are just a few places where we could serve. This is not an exhaustive list. If everyone in our town were to volunteer their time, we would have to start going outside of the community because we would have met all the needs here.

It's not always easy to volunteer. Between school, kids, jobs, and everything else, few find the time to help. But what if we did? What if we found the time and energy to help those in need?

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Watch for your 2017 Property Tax Statement

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Responsibility for payment by the due date lies with the current titleholder whether or not a bill has been received in your name.

Payment must be receipted in the Town Office on or before September 29, 2017 by 5:00 p.m. All taxes remaining subsequently unpaid are subject by law to a penalty of 1.25% per month (compounded annually).

For more information on Property Taxes and FAQ please visit the Town website at www.whereyoubelong.ca

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Sports & Recreation



Kathryn Wiebe, Chantel Todd, and Jen Moore-Duff pose after a round at Old Drovers Run.

CARA DOWSE

IN BRIEF

Niverville Rush Impress in Winnipeg League

By Jason Thompson

The inaugural season for the Niverville Rush U15 boys in the Winnipeg Youth Soccer League (WYSA) has been a tremendous success so far. With the regular season complete, the team now moves on to playoffs under highly regarded coach Walt McKee, although the playoff won't take place until September. Their impressive record of eight wins, two losses, and two ties ensures they are one of the top seeds.

The Rush scored 42 goals and were scored against only 15 times thanks to a tight defence and strong goalkeeping.

The boys will practice weekly in preparation for the playoffs and the goal of winning Niverville's first WYSA championship.

Aside from the regular season, the Rush participated in the Manitoba Soccer Association's festival in Stonewall, winning all three games in convincing fashion with no goals scored against them.

Another mid-June tournament in Fargo saw the Rush compete in a premier division against developmental teams comprised mainly of older 16-year-olds from North Dakota, South Dakota, and Minnesota. The Rush, largely comprised of 13- and 14-year-olds, managed to capture silver in the final against the Minot Magic. The tournament was a big test for the team and tremendous fun for the players and parents.

The Rush would like to thank the support of local businesses for their help in making this season possible.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Follow the team on Instagram @niverrush.

Teeing Off for Ladies League

fitville



CHANTEL TODD

ctodd@nivervillecitizen.com

It was a beautiful evening in June as I set out with my husband's golf clubs and headed into the lobby of Old Drovers Run in Niverville. I was invited out by an acquaintance who didn't have a partner that evening for Ladies League, so it worked out perfectly!

It wasn't long before we were ready to tee off—a shotgun start, as they call it. Each group began at the same time at a different hole, then made their way through all nine holes until they returned to their starting point. My team was lucky enough to start off on the third tee and finish off on the second, so we

didn't have far to go.

I was nervous as I walked up to the golf cart, as I'm not a confident golfer. The only thing I own for golf gear is a pair of gloves I bought at Costco for the one or two times a year that I golf. I don't want to get blisters on my hands, you know.

We were paired up with another set of ladies, Jen and Kathryn, and off we drove to the third hole. We took some practice shots first with our drivers. To my surprise, I hit my ball on the first swing.

It then proceeded to land 20 feet in front of me.

I ran to retrieve my ball and tried a second time. Beautiful! I actually hit it pretty far. As the stars in my eyes twinkled, I assured the group that it was beginner's luck and I'm not that good. I didn't even know

what clubs to use, so I always asked my partner what she was using and proceeded to grab the same club.

We decided to play "best ball"—meaning that we always used the shot that was the best of the four of us. This made the game go by a little faster, and kept everyone in high spirits as we moved along the course together.

On TV—or when you're golfing with boys—you always see that everyone has to be quiet and stop talking altogether when someone goes up to swing. Well, in Ladies League it's quite the opposite. The conversation flowed, and laughter and encouraging words filled the air. It made me feel quite relaxed, actually.

We were there to play for fun, improve our game, and make

friends. There was no competitiveness against one another—just against ourselves.

I did a lot better than I initially thought I would, had a lot of fun on the course, and made a few new friends. Ladies League in Niverville was a blast, and I would highly recommend that you join if you're looking for a fun and relaxed evening of golf.

We ended the night with drinks and pizza at Capo, which grew to ten ladies as the evening came to a close.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

To learn more about Ladies League: www.olddroversrun.com/league.html#ladiesleague



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Jack Wallace

Jack will be going into Grade Six this September at Niverville Collegiate. He enjoys being involved in track and field as well as playing hockey and baseball. This year, he joined the Junior Golf program at Old Drovers Run.

Jack played hockey for the Niverville Clippers Atom A team this past winter and has just finished baseball, which has become one of his favourite sports. His coaches have helped him enjoy the game and learn to play many different positions throughout the season.

He looks forward to his weekly Junior Golf program with Brendon at ODR. His swing keeps improving, along with his new love for the game of golf.

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Richert Spearheads First-Ever Slingshot Racing League

By Keiron Berndt

This time last year, farmboy turned professional race car driver David Richert had the opportunity to become the fourth Canadian to finish a race through the streets of Monte Carlo at the Formula 1 Monaco Grand Prix weekend. This year, Richert's got a new challenge on his hands.

Partnering up with the team SAR (Sport and Recreation) in Steinbach, Richert has founded the world's first-ever Slingshot Racing Cup right here in Manitoba. Not only will Richert race in the series alongside other drivers in the unique three-wheeled Slingshot, a unique vehicle from Polaris that blends elements of motorcycles and race cars, he will also mentor and teach others as the season progresses.

"I'm extremely excited to be part of this ground-breaking championship and play a part in growing it from the bottom up," says Richert. "The initial response has been fantastic and everyone is looking



Slingshot racing is taking off in Manitoba.

KEIRON BERNDT

forward to racing around the circuit in a Slingshot."

Polaris is extremely excited to see the championship debut in Manitoba.

"We couldn't be more excited to be working with David and SAR as they bring together the Slingshot Racing Cup," says Kevin Reilly, VP of Marketing for the Slingshot. "Slingshot is constantly looking for ways to show the capabilities of the vehicle and this is a perfect opportunity to partner with a terrific group of people that are as passionate about racing and Slingshot

as we are on the brand team. We are excited to see it all come to life and cannot thank the team enough for all the hard work they have put in to make this happen."

The winner of this season will be given the exclusive once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to experience driving Richert's open-wheel race car in Europe with a professional race team.

"I am really happy to have played a part in creating a championship like this," Richert says. "The weather was perfect, all drivers were fantastic, and it was

fun to see the reaction of everyone who came along for a ride with me throughout the day. Hats off to [everyone] at SAR in Steinbach for their support in making this event happen."

FOR MORE INFORMATION

■ www.polaris.com/en-ca/slingshot
If you'd like to go for a thrilling ride in the passenger seat of Richert's Slingshot in race conditions, enter the contest here: www.richerttracing.com/ride-with-david

The Block Party Wagon Is Back

By Chantel Todd

ctodd@nivervillecitizen.com

Last year, inspired by a small town's fundraising efforts in Minnesota, the Town of Niverville purchased equipment for its block party wagon. The wagon, which operated throughout the summer and

fall last year and has been used for multiplex fundraisers, is back again complete with eight tables, 37 chairs, a barbecue with grills and griddles, barbecue utensils, and lawn games, all housed in a 16-foot trailer. The lawn games include a bean bag toss, bocce ball, croquet, horseshoes, ladder golf,

and lawn darts.

Residents of Niverville can use the wagon for free. All that's required is a damage deposit. The wagon is a great tool for hosting block parties, fundraisers, sporting tournaments, and everything in between. It can be reserved for all weekends and weekdays from

May to October, with one rental per weekend.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

■ To reserve the block party wagon, contact Niverville Recreation: www.niverville-recreation.com or email recreation@whe-reyoubelong.ca.



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Local Golfer Wins Match Play Gold

By Chantel Todd

ctodd@nivervillecitizen.com

Colwyn Abgrall, a local Niverville, has come home for the summer and taken on a new challenge. The 20-year-old attends Scottsdale Community College in Arizona as a student athlete studying hospitality/tourism and golf management. Abgrall recently received three awards for maintaining a 4.0 GPA.

In the beginning of June, Abgrall attended the Manitoba Match Play Championship at the Niakwa Country Club in Winnipeg, beating out Jay Doyle four-and-two in the 36-hole final. This means that Abgrall was four holes up, with two still to play, thus Doyle could not have caught him.

"It was an unbelievable feeling to win the Manitoba Match Play," says an excited Abgrall. "The [championship] has become one of my favourite tournaments of the summer and I can't wait to see my name on the trophy."

Abgrall fondly recalls another highlight of his young golfing career, which took place last summer. "Travelling to the Canadian Amateur last summer in Ottawa was a great experience, competing against some of the best Canadian golfers."



Colwyn Abgrall wins the Manitoba Match Play Championship. COLWYN ABGRALL

Another memorable moment was making his second career hole-in-one this past April at his regional college tournament.

On June 24-25, Abgrall was invited to compete in the Elmhurst Invitational. "I shot rounds of 75 [and] 75 and finished tied for eleventh out

of a 33-player field."

His next tournament will be the Manitoba Men's Amateur on July 17-20 at the Selkirk Golf Club and Elmhurst Golf and Country Club. "I am also hoping to play in the Canadian Amateur again this summer, which is in Toronto."

Niverville's U10 Soccer Teams Score Big Wins

Ten committed U10 boys soccer teams showed up on a very cold, rainy day in Beausejour on Saturday, June 24 for their final tournament of the season.

The temperature was about

ten degrees, it rained all day, and players had to contend with high winds. Parents had to crank the heat up in their vehicles between games to dry off jerseys, socks, and shoes.

It was memorable but worth it, as all three Niverville teams won medals. The Knights and Chargers won gold, while the Warriors took bronze.

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Jordan St. Cyr.

PETE Z PHOTO

Singer-Songwriter Wins Nashville Competition

By Sylvia St. Cyr

✉ sstcyr@nivervillecitizen.com

Jordan St. Cyr recently returned to southern Manitoba from a Nashville trip, but he didn't come back empty-handed. This month, St. Cyr was crowned the winner of Nashville Rising Star. This was the ninth competition of its kind and has seen other well-known names rise to the top, like Colton Dixon and Kelsey Ballerini.

The way the whole competition came up for St. Cyr was on another trip down to Tennessee in April.

"I was recording new music with my producers," St. Cyr says of a trip he took to Nashville in April. "I knew [producer] Keith Mohr put this event on, but I didn't really know what it was. I needed something to do that night. So I went and played."

The eight-round competition had almost 200 competitors. Only

16 artists made it through to the semi-finals, including Jordan, so less than two months later he and his wife made their way back to Nashville for the end of the contest.

The same song—"Girl Stuff," which he co-wrote with songwriter PJ Ju—brought St. Cyr through both the preliminary round and the semi-finals. The finals took place only a week later.

"We got to do a standard Nashville songwriters round. [The four finalists] each got to play four songs. I opened with the song that took me there, 'Girl Stuff.' Then I played songs that were progressively better and deeper. I ended with 'Wind Blows Hardest.' It's a song about holding true to what you believe inside yourself and the dreams that you have and you believe you were meant for them. Which means that it's going to get a little rocky, but you have to stay true to the journey," St. Cyr smiles,

recalling the moment when his name was announced as the winner. "There is only one way to be authentic and that is to lay it all out there."

Among the prizes is a co-write with Sandi Ramos, one of the judges who has had written songs on many albums. He also gets to record the winning song with producer Jason Wyatt. Other prizes include a year's subscription to the Global Songwriters Network, which is essentially Facebook for songwriters, a couple of slots at the Smokey Mountain Songwriters Festival in Gatlinburg, Tennessee, happening in August, and a tentative meeting with Universal Music.

St. Cyr calls himself not only an artist, but also a songwriter, which means he writes songs for himself and others. "Winning this competition opens doors that weren't available to me before. That's the ultimate prize."

Although St. Cyr would love to put out an album soon, right now he'll simply be releasing singles every few months. His latest single, "Victory," launched June 5 and hit the radio nationally on June 12. Local stations have spun the single, including CHVN 95.1, Mix 96, AM 1250, and Country 107.7. It is available for download anywhere you can purchase music.

In the near future, St. Cyr will be playing a lot of local shows and you can find out when and where by checking out his website (see below).

"I'm excited to continue this trend with this new sound," St. Cyr says. "It's a real positive vibe and a message that resonates with my heart."

FOR MORE INFORMATION

■ www.jordanstcyr.com

EVENT GUIDE

Mitchell Fun Days

July 8–9
Mitchell, Free.

Frog Follies

July 13–16
St. Pierre-Jolys, Free.

Cheyenne Summer Fest

July 14–15
Cartier Park, Ste. Agathe

Crafts and Laughs: Book Bag Painting

July 17 | 7:00 – 8:00 p.m.
Jake Epp Library, Steinbach. \$5.

Painting on the Prairies

July 18–19
Heritage Centre, Niverville. \$23.81.

Whiskey Talks (Band)

July 21 | 8:00 p.m.
Cowboys Roadhouse, Winnipeg. \$10.

Book Signing for Chad Eddy

July 28
Capo Coffee Lounge, Niverville. Free.

Send your event listing to:

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



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Rain or Shine, the Show Goes On

At the Olde Tyme Country Fair in Niverville, the good times roll despite the rain.

By Sylvia St. Cyr

sstcyr@nivervillecitizen.com

Anytime you organize an outdoor festival in Manitoba, you're left to the mercy of the weather. This year, the rain fell throughout the entire Friday evening portion of the Niverville Olde Tyme Country Fair. Fortunately, the sun came out on Saturday.

"It's fantastic to see people take ownership of the fair and pitch in, whether it be to donate, volunteer, help plan and organize, or to simply show up and have fun, even when the weather throws us a curve ball," says fair organizer Dustin Krahn. "Attendance was down, obviously, but we were quite amazed and proud to see people power through the rain and make the best of the weekend. That makes

a huge difference between it being a lower than average year versus a total flop."

Despite constant rain on Friday from roughly 6:00 to 10:00 p.m., people still walked up and down Main Street, grabbing food from vendors and dancing at the mainstage.

According to members of The Big City All Star Band, which entertained the crowd on Friday, nowhere near this many people would be out enjoying themselves in the rain at most city venues.

The weather decided to cooperate later on Friday, which meant the fireworks could still light up the sky. "The fireworks being back in the schoolyard was also very nice to see," Krahn says. "Archangel Fireworks did a really good job of making that happen for us."

Saturday was filled with

performances and activities for the whole family. On top of staples such as the parade, hot dog lunch, and petting zoo, the fair brought in several new attractions.

"This year we focused on getting more entertainers and spreading them around the street for the kids to enjoy," Krahn adds. "We had lots of jugglers, mascots, and magicians all spread around."

The dirt bike stunt crew weren't able to perform Friday or most of Saturday, due to rain and high winds, but they managed to get in one awe-inspiring performance Saturday evening. Also new this year were acrobats performing for the first time ever on a double tall trampoline.

The beer gardens were such a hit in 2016 that they were open both nights at the

mainstage. Quinton Blair, The Washboard Union, and Cold Creek County got everyone on their feet to end the street party Saturday night.

The fair committee would love to see more people join the ongoing effort to make the Olde Type Country Fair a memorable event for Niverville and the whole region. Right now, only a small group of people is responsible to organize the weekend.

"The more people we have, the easier it gets for everyone," Krahn says. "And the better the plan, the better the fair!"

FOR MORE INFORMATION

■ If you're interested in contributing your time, expertise, and ideas, email info@nivervillefair.com



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Discovering the Joy of Music

By Jane Fast

"I took piano once when I was six. I wish I would have stuck with it." That's a phrase I've heard all too often. Fortunately, there's good news. It's not too late for you to get involved in music, and it's not too late for your child.

It starts with finding a teacher. Once you find a teacher, have a conversation with them. Many teachers are willing to accommodate and personalize lesson plans for different musical interests and styles of learning.

Additionally, teachers are often flexible. Some are willing to provide group lessons, parent and child lessons, or even teach out of your own home.

For children or adults with disabilities, music is a creative outlet. Laura Visser, who has more than ten years of piano teaching experience, has often worked with children and adults with disabilities. She notes that some of the highlights from her career have come from seeing these

people connect with the language of music and express themselves through it.

There are a lot of options for the whole family. Consider hand bells, for example. The Community School of Music in Winnipeg sometimes offers hand bell lessons with only basic musical knowledge required. With six to 12 people making up a hand bell ensemble, it lends the feeling of being part of a team.

Another option is to find a choir or instrumental ensemble that interests your family. For new families, or families with infants or toddlers, Visser's own Music for Young Children program is a place for parents to participate in their baby or toddler's early musical learning.

For those searching for something other than classical music, ask a teacher for instruction with a focus on jazz, pop tunes, church music, folk songs, blues, opera, Broadway, or instrumental accompaniment. While classical training remains the most

common style of instruction, teachers often work in a variety of other styles as well.

Sheila Rempel, another local music teacher, often has people ask for help with leading worship music, for example. "It's rewarding when students begin to connect with a piece of music, especially when it's something they are familiar with and can identify with," says Rempel. "I find this often happens when playing worship music."

Involve your family in the joy of music. It's never too late to start and it's never too late to pick up where you left off!

FOR MORE INFORMATION

■ Niverville Recreation now has a directory for local music teachers: <http://www.nivervillecreation.com/page/show/1994489-links->

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IN BRIEF



Author Chad Eddy.

CHAD EDDY

Local Author Publishes Book on Faith

By Sylvia St. Cyr

✉ sstcyr@nivervillecitizen.com

Chad Eddy of Niverville has recently published his first book, *Remember the Gospel*. Eddy has been a speaker for more than 15 years and spoken to crowds at Sunday morning services, retreats, and Bible studies.

"I spent over a decade in pastoral ministry and I have many friends who have struggled with, or even walked away from, their faith, for reasons that have nothing to do with the essential message of Jesus, what we call the gospel," says Eddy. "I've found that there are many peripheral issues in Christianity that can trip us up, distract us, and cause us to doubt. I want to bring people back to the gospel again and again, and that's the heart of this book."

Eddy self-published the book, which was released this past February. "In 2015, I joined a challenge to accomplish one big goal in 100 days, and I decided to finally write my first book. After I was finished with the initial draft... I found an editor to help polish it up. The whole process from beginning to having the book in my hand took one year."

The target audience for this book is young men who have grown sceptical of their Christian faith. Eddy wants to write more books in the future, and one day a novel.

"You need to be proactive," says Eddy to aspiring authors. "If you have something to say, write it out! There are so many mediums, formats, and opportunities to write, whether you keep a blog, guest post on other peoples' blogs, submit articles to well-known websites, or publish a book. You never know who you're going to inspire, or who's going to pick up what you've written."

Although Eddy did not have an official launch for *Remember the Gospel*, he will be at Capo Coffee Lounge in Niverville on Friday, July 28, to read sections of his book and sign copies. The book is available at Halls Books in Steinbach and Winnipeg, as well as on Amazon.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

■ For more information or to book Eddy as a speaker, check out his website at www.chadeddy.com.



Tyler Williams performing at the Olde Tyme Country Fair in 2013.

TYLER WILLIAMS

Hip-Hop with Hope

By Sylvia St. Cyr

✉ sstcyr@nivervillecitizen.com

Local hip-hop artist Tyler Williams is getting ready to launch his first album this summer. The album, titled *Verse One*, is set for an August 25 release. The record has a total of 15 songs including the title track, "Verse One."

"For the most part, I try to take an uplifting beat and try to make light of the darkness in our world," says Williams.

Last August, he became a father to a little girl. When he's not in the

studio, he enjoys spending time with his 11-month-old daughter and long-time girlfriend.

In 2013, Williams performed at the Niverville Olde Tyme Country Fair with a few songs of his own. His music has transformed since then, as well as his life.

"The inspiration [for this album] sparked from making a few wrong life choices in which I ended up being a drug- and alcohol-fuelled teenager," Williams says. "I watched some of my friends die, which really made me want to find some sort of hope for people

going through similar things. To show them that there is some sort of light at the end of the tunnel, and just because we've gone down the wrong path doesn't mean we can't find our way back."

The album was recorded locally at Arcade Studios.

"I've recorded in other studios in the past, and this is by far the most professional recording studio," says Williams. "[Gerry and Evan St. Cyr] really know how to guide you and know how to get the product and outcome you want."

He is planning on opening up

for a few artists in Winnipeg, but also hopes to take his music on the road and play at venues across Canada to get his name out there.

"Music is a way for me to give hope to the underdog, which I was once upon a time. Now things are looking up, and I have God to thank for that."

Once the album is released, it will be available for purchase locally, as well as on any downloading forum.



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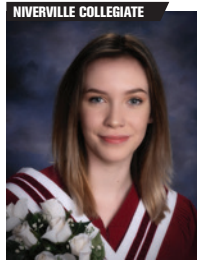
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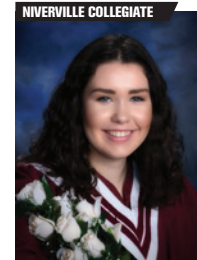
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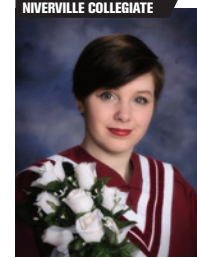
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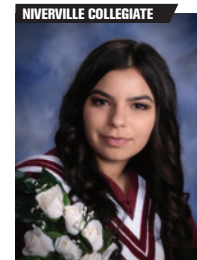
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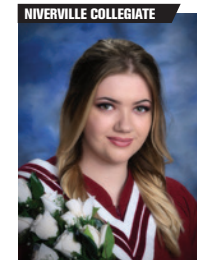
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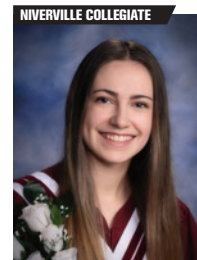
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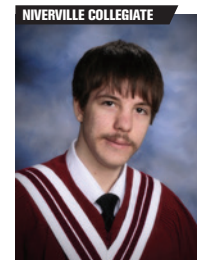
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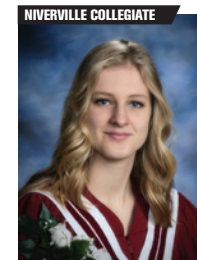
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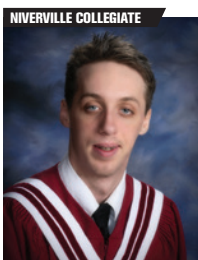
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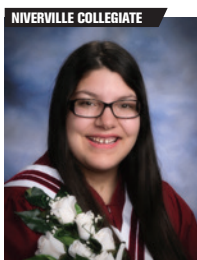
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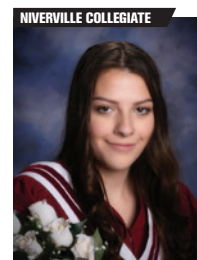
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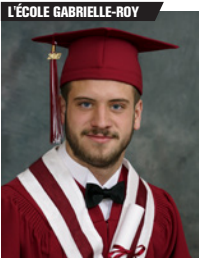





































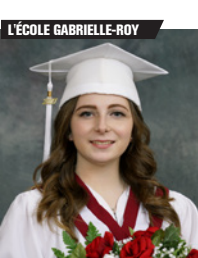
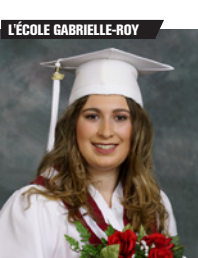
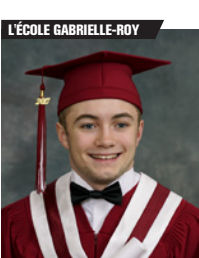
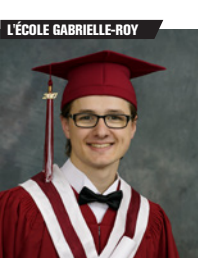



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Niverville Collegiate

Niverville Citizen Scholarship - \$1000

- Riley Hiebert

Niverville Chamber of Commerce Award - \$1000

- Abigail Olfert

Town of Niverville Award - \$1000

- Abigail Olfert

Niverville Credit Union Scholarship - \$1000

- Makenna Woytowich

Niverville Firefighters Scholarship - \$200

- Devon Schepp

Niverville Physiotherapy Athletic Scholarship - 2x \$300

- Female: Trista Dubrieul
- Male: Justin Braun

Evergreen Village Bursary - 2x \$500

- Ben Driedger
- Megan Sawatzky

MCC Thrift Store Bursary - \$500

- Cristal Falk

Niverville Family Chiropractic Scholarship - \$800

- John Visser

Hanover Teacher's Association - \$2000

- Abigail Olfert

Merit Construction Scholarship - \$500

- Danae Ruchkall

L'École Gabrielle-Roy

Bourse de la DSFM

- Margaux Cassagne
- Jenesse Delaquis

Bourse Chown

- Mya Kryschuk

Chevaliers de Colomb (Conseil Île-des-Chênes)

- Adrian Vachon

Chevaliers de Colomb (Conseil St. Norbert)

- Rhéanne Girard

Chevaliers de Colomb (Conseil Jubinville-Lorette)

- Danique Dupuis
- Catherine Sorin

Comité Culturel IDC

- Colin Bouvier

Loretter Thrifty Treasures

- Danielle Desharnais

The Catholic Women's League of Notre Dame de Lorette

- Catherine Sorin

Municipalité Taché

- Austin Arnal

Municipalité Ritchot

- Adrian Vachon
- Kailey Rouire

Bob Lagassé Volunteer and Community Service Award

- Danielle Desharnais

Birco Woodworks

- Liam Harrold

Al Worx

- Danielle Desharnais

Île-des-Chênes Country Store

- Justin Boisjoli
- Mireille Laurencelle

Caisse Groupe Financier

- Melanie Aminot

Bold Commerce

- Adrian Vachon

Capo di Grande

- Andréa Expenell

RE/MAX - Dan Vermette

- Dominique Lansard
- Mélanie Baudry

Wiens Award - \$1000

- Riley Hiebert

Morris Constituency Writers Scholarship - \$250

- Abigail Olfert

PAC Award - \$250

- Hunter Martin

JOY Award - \$1000

- Chris Schurko

Governor General's Medal

- Abigail Olfert

Chown Centennial Scholarship - \$1000

- Rebecka Lemire

NCI Band Award - \$350

- Tyler Kwiatkowski

UM Queen Elizabeth Entrance Scholarship \$1000

- John Visser

UM Guertin Centennial Entrance Scholarship \$2000

- Danae Ruchkall

UM Queen Elizabeth II Entrance Scholarship \$3000

- Rebecka Lemire
- Makenna Woytowich

UM Agricultural and Food Sciences Centennial Entrance Scholarship \$2000

- Makenna Woytowich

Women of Distinction Prairie Promise Award \$2000

- Abigail Olfert

H. Baudry Construction

- Adrian Vochon

Vacuum Depot

- Gillian Woodward

Prix TransCanada Pipelines

- Danika Carrière
- Justin Boisjoli

Bourse de L'annuaire

- Catherine Sorin

Bourse Centennial Gravel

- Jeremy Aminot
- Austin Unraw

Bourse du comité scolaire (ÉGR)

- Mélanie Aminot

Bourse du comité scolaire (E/CRGR)

- Bryanne Gobeil
- Émilie Derbowka

Bourse du comité scolaire (E/CRGR) Amélioration

- Alexandra Peters

Bourse du comité scolaire (Lagimodière)

- Mireille Laurencelle
- Danique Dupuis

Bourse du comité scolaire (Ste-Agathe)

- Margaux Cassagne

Bourse du comité scolaire (Noël-Ritchot)

- Mya Kryschuk

Bourse du leadership du conseil étudiant

- Émilie Derbowka

Bourse du personnel CRGR

- Margaux Cassagne
- Danielle Desharnais

Université de Saint-Boniface (bourses d'admission)

- Bryanne Gobeil - \$1000
- Alexandra Peters - \$1000
- Catherine Sorin - \$1000
- Mélanie Aminot - \$1750
- Jenesse Delaquis - \$1750
- Andréa Espenell - \$1750
- Rhéanne Girard - \$1750

Bourse commémorative Justin-Robert

- Margaux Cassagne

Bourse commémorative Luc-Gosselin

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- Writing 5-6 articles per month.
- Preparing a monthly events calendar.
- Supervising other contributors.

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The **Citizen**

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The Friends of the Plex are looking for volunteers to join our team!

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The Niverville Olde Tyme Country Fair has several volunteer positions that need to be filled on our committee, including:

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- Treasurer/Finances/Bookkeeping
- Sponsorship Coordinator
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ANNOUNCEMENTS



Hockey registration for the 2017-2018 season is officially open!

Kids of all ages and skill welcome.

Group	Ages	Year of Birth
Initiation/Squirts	4,5,6	2013-2011
Novice	7,8	2010-2009
Atom	9,10	2008-2007
Pee Wee	11,12	2006-2005
Bantam	13,14	2004-2003
Midget	15-17	2002-2000

2017-2018 CIS PLAYER FEES June 5 - July 15

	Payment in full at time of registration	3 Payments July 17 October 1 November 1
Squirts/Timbits	\$350	\$116.67 \$116.67 \$116.67
Novice	\$550	\$183.34 \$183.34 \$183.34
Atom	\$675	\$225 \$225 \$225
Pee Wee	\$800	\$266.67 \$266.67 \$266.67
Bantam	\$825	\$275 \$275 \$275
Midget	\$850	\$283.34 \$283.34 \$283.34

2017-2018 CIS PLAYER FEES July 16 - September 30

	Payment in full at time of registration	Payment due at registration	2 Payments October 1 November 1
Squirts/Timbits	\$400	\$50	\$175 \$175
Novice	\$600	\$50	\$275 \$275
Atom	\$725	\$50	\$337.50 \$337.50
Pee Wee	\$850	\$50	\$400 \$400
Bantam	\$875	\$50	\$412.50 \$412.50
Midget	\$900	\$50	\$425 \$425

After July 15 fees for each group will increase by \$50.00.

Register now from the looking link:
http://site3563.goalline.ca/page.php?page_id=8888

Here's to another great hockey season!

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