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LOCAL NEWS

Ritchot to Improve Water Infrastructure

■ Following a major investment from the provincial government, the RM of Ritchot is upgrading its water system.

Details on Page 6



LOCAL NEWS

In its Final Year, the Imagine Run Goes Technicolor

■ As the annual Imagine Run in Niverville reaches its ten-year anniversary, it will celebrate its final year in colourful fashion.

Details on Page 16

SPORTS & RECREATION

All-Girls Hockey Comes to Île-des-Chênes This Winter

■ A new all-girls hockey team will play its debut season this year with players from Île-des-Chênes and Niverville.

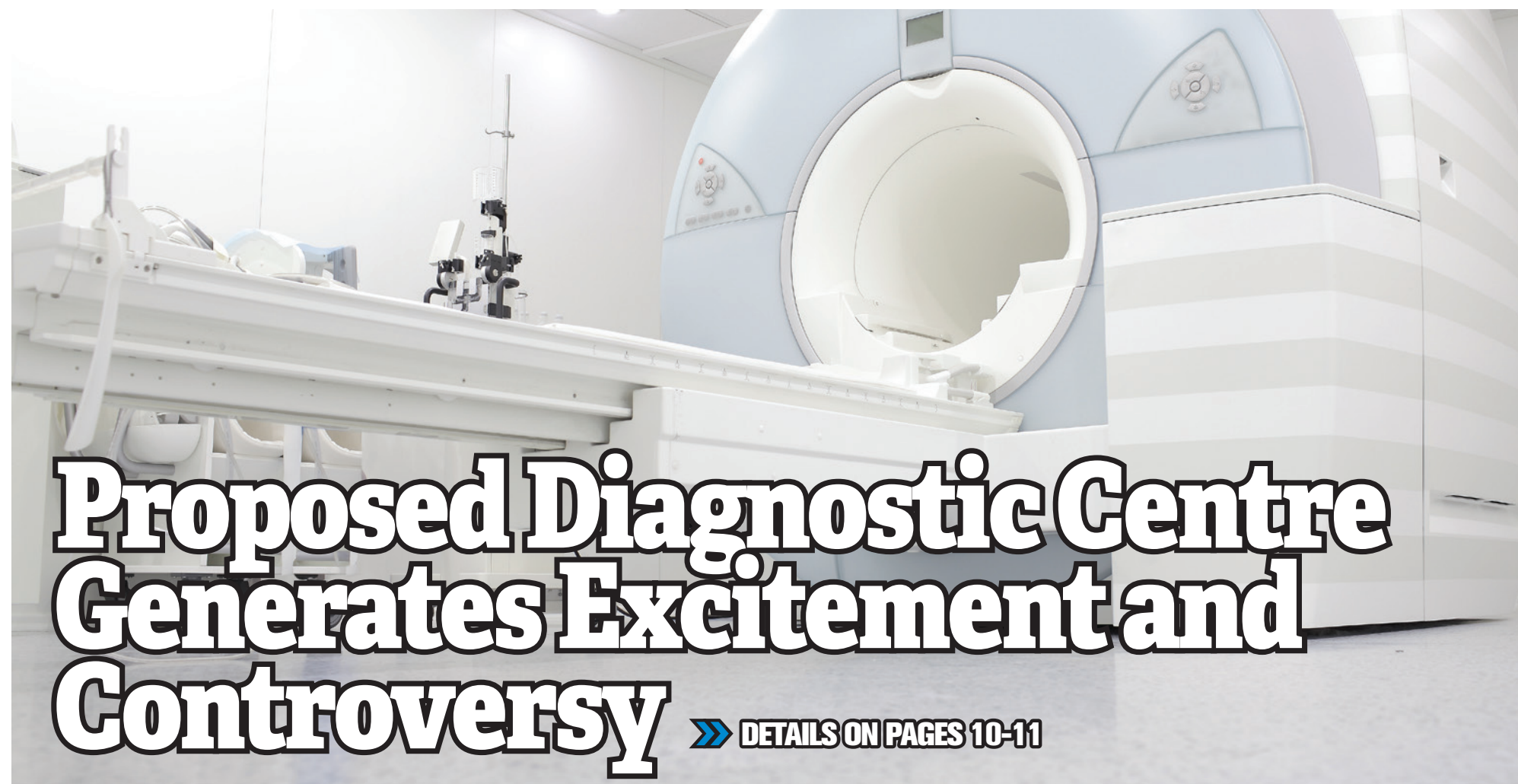
Details on Page 23

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

Sylvia St. Cyr's New Book Asks Big Questions

■ A new book from Niverville author Sylvia St. Cyr tackles fear, from a Christian perspective.

Details on Page 27



Proposed Diagnostic Centre Generates Excitement and Controversy

» DETAILS ON PAGES 10-11

ADOBE STOCK

Imagine Mental Health Matters!

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WHAT'S INSIDE

Ritchot Council Presents 2017 Budget	4
Province Invests in Ritchot Water Infrastructure	6
Girl Guides: Facing Challenges and Making a Difference	7
PEDv on the Rise in Southern Manitoba	8
ATV Association Raises Big Bucks for Cancer Care	9
Proposed Niverville Diagnostic Centre Generates Controversy	10
Roof Replacement in Works for Ile-des-Chênes School	13
Niverville Family Fundraises for a Service Dog	14
In its Final Year, Imagine Run Goes Technicolor	16
Community Gardens Aim to Alleviate Hunger	18
Niverville Council Prioritizes Eco-Friendly Policies	17
Post-Fire, Providence Accommodates New Students	19
Council Requests Proposals for Hespeler Park	21
IDC Introduces All-Girls Hockey	23
A Summer of Bright-Eyed Bootcamps	24
The Recreation and Wellness Showcase Is Here	25
Author Confronts Fear, Asks Big Questions	27
African Children's Choir Coming to Niverville	29

The Citizen

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Open Health Close to Opening Doors



The Niverville Medical Clinic is about to take on a whole new look. The array of medical and regional health practitioners currently scattered throughout the Heritage Centre will centralize their services in the newly erected Open Health. Though ownership of the building will remain with Niverville Heritage Holdings Inc., a collaboration between the Niverville Medical Clinic and the regional health authority will allow them to lease space in the same facility.

Open Health's unofficial "soft" opening is scheduled for September 19. Dr. Chris Burnett of the Niverville Medical Clinic anticipates the move happening quickly, with only one workday closure on September 18 to provide a minimum of disruption for patients. An official grand opening is anticipated for the annual Heritage Centre Gala in November.

Open Health will provide a number of unique amenities not available at the current location—primarily, a ground-level facility housing all the current medical and regional health staff under one roof. The new building has been designed with mobility access in mind. A total of 15 parking spots will be available outside the main door.

A single reception area will answer all calls and serve as the hub for the entire facility. Dr. Burnett says that reception staff will be well-versed in patient needs and have access to all of Manitoba's health resources, allowing them to direct patients to other facilities when a different type of care is needed.

"I want them to be resource people," says Burnett. "I don't want them to be saying, 'I don't know.'"

The practitioners moving



The new Open Health facility in Niverville.

DUSTIN KRAHN

to the new facility include doctors Chris and Mairi Burnett along with two nurse practitioners, a physician assistant (PA), and a public health care nurse. Dr. Antonius, the clinic's most recent addition to the physician team, will be moving on to another clinic in Emerson on September 15. Until a new physician has been hired, the Burnetts will assume all of his current patients with the exception of those residing in Winnipeg and south of St. Malo. With the aid of a newly hired PA, he feels they will have more than adequate time to take on the new clients.

Dr. Burnett describes the role of physician assistants as a relatively new approach to medical care in Manitoba, although training for this degree has been available in the province for upwards of ten years. The PA performs most of the primary consultation, diagnosis, and treatment plans a physician would perform in a clinic setting but still consults with an overseeing physician regarding a patient's care.

"It's kind of a team approach," says Burnett. "The [PA] will probably do the majority of the work. We'll decide on a joint treatment plan between us but [the client] will remain under my name or Dr. Mairi's name. [A

PA] is only limited by what [their training doctor] can do. I think what clients will get from them is more time. The other thing they will get is two good brains looking at them instead of one. Sometimes that helps."

As for hiring another physician, Burnett adds, "I've had three or four conversations with Canadian physicians in the last month—one who would happily start tomorrow but is stuck in Winnipeg at the moment, and another who is still in residency."

"Most days if you want to get an appointment, you'll get one that day or the next day."

Dr. Chris Burnett | Niverville Medical Clinic

The Niverville Medical Clinic was the first clinic in Manitoba to use a system of electronic medical records based on cloud storage, a form of internet-based computing that allows the storing and sharing of data with other computers and devices on demand. Cloud storage provides a unique electronic means of accessing patient information from other medical facilities.

It also gives patients the ability to access their own medical records. Patients will be able to log on to their own online portal in order to access their records and communicate with their doctor. As well,

client questionnaires can be filled out securely online, giving the attending physician a briefing on their patient's health concerns before their appointment. Follow-ups can take place online with patients filling out the questionnaire again in a few months' time, providing the doctor an opportunity to assess their progress without an appointment.

Burnett envisions many exciting things in store for the new clinic, including an extension of their operating hours. He hopes to quickly bring on part-time physicians and practitioners who will be able to take shifts that allow the clinic to be open from 6:00 a.m. until 10:00 p.m., seven days a week.

Another goal is to eliminate the early morning drop-in appointments and instead incorporate an "urgent care" model where a number of appointment times are left available for drop-ins throughout the day.

"In many ways, our clinic space becomes semi-urgent care," says Burnett. "We will try and keep as many [time slots] open as possible during the day, regardless of whether you are a current patient or not."

Though non-urgent care may still have a few weeks of wait time, Burnett believes it's possible to accommodate

everyone in a reasonable amount of time.

"Most days if you want to get an appointment you'll get one that day or the next day," Burnett says. "It's a case of just adjusting how many appointments a day we have available to meet the demand. You should not have to wait to see a physician for three or four months. That's got nothing to do with the popularity of that physician. It's about how good his or her management of the wait list is."

To further expand on their diagnostic capabilities, one of the clinic rooms will be equipped with a spirometer for diagnosing and monitoring breathing issues. Down the road, Burnett hopes to add electrocardiogram equipment (EKG), allowing technicians to check for heart problems.

Burnett also envisions a time in the near future where private x-ray and other technicians will hold regular clinics at Open Health. Just such a diagnostic centre was proposed in mid-August.

"We are the biggest community in Manitoba without a hospital," says Burnett. "[But] we don't need a hospital. Down the road, when we are open all of these [extended] hours and have special clinicians come in on a regular basis, we'll be well equipped to deal with most concerns."

During the design stages of the new facility, a decision was made not to include the pharmacy, which adds another level of security. Burnett feels the existing pharmacy has a prime location on Main Street.

"The reason why we [chose this location for Open Health] is because it just made sense," concludes Burnett. "We've got the personal care home here and we've got the people who are seeing us most. In other locations we might have had more greenspace or be on Main Street, but we would have sacrificed access for our seniors."



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Ritchot Council Presents 2017 Budget

By Brenda Sawatzky

bsawatzky@nivervillecitizen.com

Ritchot's 2017 budget plan is finalized and property tax bills are in mailboxes. A three-month break in council administration and a by-election left residents of the municipality in limbo until the new budget could pass its final readings.

Though the previous council had already performed the rigours of creating the budget, Mayor Chris Ewen says the new council still needed to review the numbers and ensure that all the final approvals were in place.

On August 10, the new council and chief administrative officer (CAO) held a public meeting, providing an overview of Ritchot's 2017 financial plan and opening the floor for questions and feedback. Under different circumstances, the public hearing would have been scheduled for a date prior to May 15.

"I don't believe there are any big shockers in this budget," says Ewen. "Our administration all work their hardest to ensure the right suggestions come to council, always at the best dollar possible. We have road reconstruction in Île-des-Chênes and St. Adolphe that have needed attention for some time and it's great that it's in the budget to be completed this next year. Some 'fun' money for the town committees to improve their community sites, parks, and centres is another great thing for all residents. The Ste. Agathe fire hall is another project I am very excited about."

Based on this year's financial plan, residents will see

a five percent increase on their tax bill if their property assessment has not changed since 2016. Factors that might cause an assessment change could include the addition or extension of buildings on a property site.

Those property owners receiving garbage and recycling services will see a further increase of \$170.

The 2017 property assessment rates are still based on 2014 market values. 2018 will mark a new assessment year for the provincial assessment branch, bringing property values closer to current resale values.

"The learning curve has been significantly small. We have such a well-rounded council that each member brings great knowledge to the table, making all of our jobs easier."

Chris Ewen | RM of Ritchot Mayor

This year, Ritchot's portioned assessment (the portion of a property's value that is taxable) went up by 5.3 percent from last year. This increase is primarily due to new builds in Ritchot in the last year, providing an extra source of taxation income. In preparing the budget, council took this number into consideration, along with other revenues.

The municipality's total proposed revenue for the year is \$7.5 million, and the total expenses have been portioned to equal that number. The school mill rates in all five school divisions have seen increases, some up to 17 percent.

Mitch Duval, Ritchot's CAO, reminded residents at the public hearing that the municipality has no control over school mill rates, but the municipality is required to collect these taxes on the school divisions' behalf.

Outside of property taxes, 44 percent of Ritchot's revenue is obtained through grant funding; 15 percent through the sale of goods such as land, equipment, and water; and six percent from the sale of services such as fire department calls, recycling kickbacks, property variations, and conditional use permits.

On the expenditures side,

Elm disease control, and the municipal water system.

A variety of capital expenditures have taken centre stage in this year's budget. Among those are the Ste. Agathe Fire Hall Project, estimated at \$2.25 million. There will also be some new additions of equipment and storage facilities to the Public Works Department, coming close to \$240,000. The Main Street Revitalization project will see a boost of \$70,000. Also, \$1.1 million has been dedicated to water and sewer services, while \$696,000 will provide for road and sidewalk construction projects in all four wards.

Ewen feels confident in this new budget and his role as mayor.

"The learning curve has been significantly small," he says. "We have such a well-rounded council that each member brings great knowledge to the table, making all of our jobs easier."

Due to the late release of this year's property tax bills, Ritchot council has decided to extend discounts to residents for early payment. Typical discounted rates in previous years meant a 1.5 percent discount for payments received in the month of June and one percent for those received in July. The same discounts will be available this summer if payment is made by the end of August or September.

All property tax bills are due for payment no later than 4:30 p.m. on October 31 and a one percent penalty will be applied per month on unpaid balances.

transportation consumes the largest portion of the RM's budget, coming in at 30 percent. Transportation services include equipment purchases and rentals; salaries for the Public Works Department; road, street, bridge, boulevard, and sidewalk upgrades and maintenance; and street lighting.

General government expenditures total 19 percent of the budget and include all costs required to run a civic building and maintain salaries for council members and staff.

Fifteen percent is dedicated to environmental health, including garbage and recycling collection, Dutch



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Province Invests in Ritchot Water Infrastructure

By Evan Braun

✉ editor@nivervillecitizen.com

The population has been steadily rising in southeast Manitoba, and the tide of new residents has been putting pressure on Ritchot's regional water supply.

Earlier this month, the provincial government announced \$2.5 million in upgrades for water infrastructure in Île-des-Chênes, St. Adolphe, and Ste. Agathe. These funds come from the Manitoba Water Services Board's recent five-year plan to invest \$33.65 million in water and wastewater infrastructure. The municipality will contribute matching funds to the project, bringing the total investment to \$5 million.

With this money in place, the municipality has its own five-year plan to make four key upgrades.

1. The upgrades include a one-million-litre increase to the storage capacity of Ritchot's water treatment plant.

2. Because the water pipeline between Ste. Agathe and St. Adolphe has limited capacity, a second pipeline will be installed.

3. An extra pipeline will also be built between St. Adolphe and Grande Pointe.

4. Currently, 36 litres of raw water can be transferred from the well site per second. This capacity will be increased to 50 litres per second.

Although these are the four main projects to be tackled with the \$5 million, the RM of Ritchot has identified a fifth



MLA Bob Lagassé, Ritchot Mayor Chris Ewen, and MP Ted Falk.

BOB LAGASSE

project that needs attention in the coming years. Council has requested \$3 million from the Water Services Board for the purpose of expanding the Ste. Agathe lagoon. There has not yet been any word on this request.

Finally, the provincial government has granted an additional \$21,000 from the Small Communities Fund for the installation of a new condenser and dehumidifier at the St. Adolphe Arena. This represents one-third of the project's cost, with the other two-thirds being provided by the municipality and the federal government.

Dawson Trail MLA Bob Lagassé and Provencher MP Ted Falk were on-hand to make these announcements alongside Ritchot Mayor Chris

Ewen on Wednesday, August 16.

"Our Progressive Conservative government continues to make important investments in local infrastructure that ensures Manitobans have access to modern and reliable water and wastewater services," said Lagassé. "Projects like these are important to our communities. As well, with the Small Communities Fund, we are supporting priority, local projects across Manitoba with investments in infrastructure that facilitates growth, improves the quality of life and boosts regional development."

The Small Communities Fund, run jointly by the provincial and federal governments, prioritizes communities across Canada with populations below 100,000. Forty-two

projects in 37 communities have been identified in Manitoba. The fund specifically targets projects that improve drinking water, wastewater management, culture, tourism, recreation, and public transit.

"This is great news for our water supply projects in Ritchot. With the growth in our municipality, for the MLA and provincial government to recognize the demand for improvements, we have great appreciation for that," said Ewen. "The volunteers and community of St. Adolphe are also thankful and excited about the funding for the arena. This support from the Manitoba and federal governments goes a long way toward necessary improvements to maintain our popular facility."

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Girl Guides: Facing Challenges and Making a Difference

By Evan Braun

✉ editor@nivervillecitizen.com

With summer beginning its slow transition to fall and kids going back to school, young girls from Niverville and the surrounding area are eagerly anticipating another year of Girl Guides. The Guides have been active in Niverville since 2013, and a few dozen girls are part of the local program.

"Girl Guides for Niverville usually begins a week after school starts," says Becky Beaton, the contact leader for the Niverville Brownies. "We allow family to get in the school routine first, then bring on Guiding!"

The local program is split into three different age groups. The youngest group is the Sparks, for girls between the ages of five and six. Next comes the Brownies, for ages seven to eight. After that comes the eponymous Guides, for girls between nine and 11. Although those are the three branches offered in Niverville, the organization at large has older groups as well: the Pathfinders (ages 12–14), the Rangers (ages 15–17), and Adults for anyone 18 or older.

Beaton is passionate about the many benefits and opportunities that come from being a member of the Girl Guides, especially from a young age.

"Girl Guides is valuable because you learn about being you, self-esteem, and Guiding around the world," she says. "And it allows you to travel the world and meet new friends."

Another advantage is that the program provides a safe, all-girl environment for girls and young women to face challenges, find their voice,



Brownies Erin Beaton and Ryleigh Wachniak attend STEM Day at the University of Manitoba.

BECKY BEATON

and look for ways to make a difference in the world.

"Girl Guides of Canada (GGC) strives to ensure that girls and women from all walks of life, identities, and lived experiences feel a sense of belonging and can fully participate," reads a statement from the GGC website. "Girl Guides is an organization with over 100 years of history and a strong and growing future."

Beaton has been involved as a leader for a total of nine years, the first five of which were in The Pas. After that, she took a break and returned to it when her oldest daughter joined Sparks four years ago.

"My most memorable moments are being able to take these girls on adventures," says Beaton. "We go on sleepovers that you normally don't get, like sleeping at the Manitoba

Museum. The Goldeyes stadium was our most recent one. We [also] go to camp in September for Canada's one hundred fiftieth birthday celebration."

Registration for Girl Guides begins in spring and continues throughout the summer until the unit is full. This year, Beaton says that all three age groups have been full since mid-August.

This year's members have a lot to look forward to after fall kickoff. The Niverville Guides will take part in 2017's Provincial Camp from September 15–17 to celebrate Canada 150.

Prominent on the schedule is the first-ever Guide Day with the Bombers, which happens on October 28. Girls will have the opportunity to attend with their families, and receive a special Bomber Badge. They

will also be announced as special guests to the game. Even better, they will have the opportunity to watch the pre-game warmup from the sidelines.

Then, on December 2, comes Guide Night with the Moose, which Beaton says is always a fun event for the girls and their families.

"We also do caroling at the PCH here in Niverville," she adds. "This past June, Niverville Brownies did the Girl Guide Provincial Spring Cleanup at Hespeler Park. Some of these events we do as a unit or group or with our families."

Beaton points out that it's important to acknowledge the hard work of the many leaders who make the local program possible. The leaders of the Sparks include Amanda Moran, Sherry Nash Unrau, and Julie Lux. In addition to Beaton herself, the Brownies are led by Trish Wachniak and Danielle Eppert, who is new to the unit this year. At the Guides level, Lindsay Saloni and newcomer Kerri Murphy take charge.

In addition to these leaders, there are many parent volunteers who make a big difference at weekend camps or fill in for leaders when they aren't available.

Finally, if you're waiting for those world-famous Girl Guide Cookies, they're right around the corner. Niverville's girls will start selling mint cookies in late September or early October. If you're looking for those classic vanilla and chocolate sandwich cookies, those are coming your way in the spring.

ONE BIG DAY

LOCAL CELEBRITIES:

- Carl & Heather Fast | 9:00–9:30
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- Chris Ewen | 10:00–10:30
CAPO DI GRANDE
- Kim | 10:30–11:00
JADE TRANSPORT
- Matt Falk | 11:00–11:30
COMEDIAN
- Jonathan Kleinsasser | 11:00–11:30
CRYSTAL SPRINGS
- Anna Sawatzky | 11:00–11:30
ANYA'S HAIR STUDIO
- Christine Morin | 11:30–12:00
- John Schmitke | 12:00–12:30
NIVERVILLE BIGWAY
- Matt Tkachyk | 12:30–1:00
(IN MEMORY OF JOEY STOTT)
- Donald Stott | 1:00–1:30
- Josephine | 1:30–2:00
KELBURN ESTATES
- Tanis Ross | 1:30–2:00
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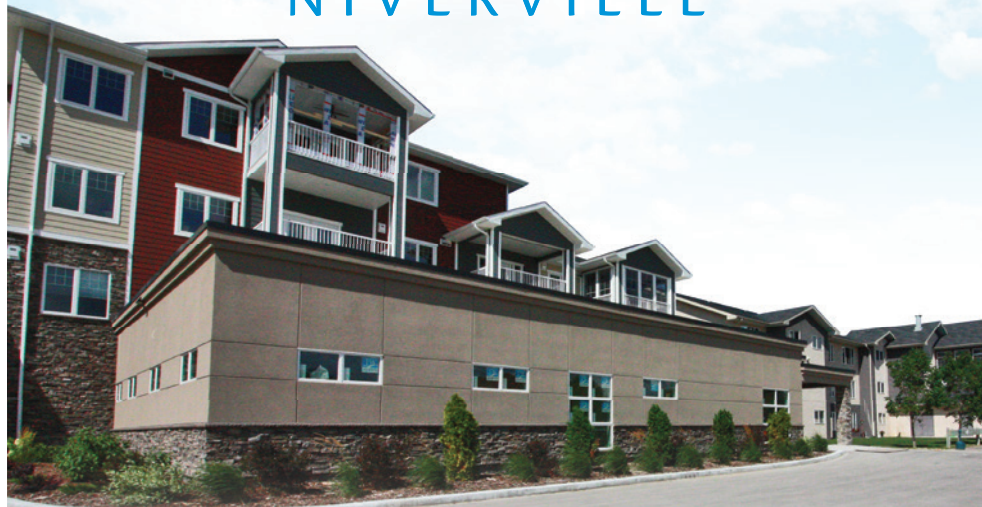
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ADOBE STOCK

PEDv on the Rise in Southern Manitoba

By Trevor Lux

Hog farmers in the south-east have become increasingly concerned about the growing number of barns infected by PEDv (Porcine Epidemic Diarrhea Virus).

According to data available from the province, there have been nine confirmed cases of the virus in Manitoba in the month of August alone, and 66 affected sites have been reported in 2017. The affected farms include mostly sow herds, which produce piglets, and finishing barns that raise pigs to slaughter weight.

PEDv causes severe dehydration and diarrhea in pigs and is generally fatal to young animals. The virus is not transmitted to humans or other animals, and it's also not a food safety risk. The virus spreads best in cold, damp weather. However, as of late, the weather has become hot and relatively dry in most parts of the province.

The first confirmed case of the virus in Canada was identified on January 22, 2014 at an Ontario farm. A large scale PEDv outbreak occurred thereafter in the Ontario swine sector, initiating a provincial response. This came amidst a large-scale outbreak in the U.S. which killed more than eight million piglets, pushing retail pork prices to record highs.

Canada is the world's biggest swine exporter, while Manitoba is Canada's third largest pork-producing province. The province ships large volumes of feeders (young pigs) to the United States. Canada has exported 1.8 million feeder

pigs to the U.S. in 2017. This is up by two percent from a year earlier, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

As of August 29, nine of the 80 premises in Manitoba previously confirmed to have PEDv are now determined to be PEDv Presumptive Negative, following a protocol developed by the Chief Veterinary Office (CVO) and Manitoba's swine veterinarians. Eighty percent of the PEDv-positive herds previously identified by the Ontario Swine Health Advisory Board are also presumed negative.

When a herd is determined to be PEDv Presumptive Negative, this means that the producer has implemented strict measures to eliminate the virus from all pigs and pig contact areas. In these cases, the virus has been eliminated through repeated animal and environmental testing. However, it is known that a potential risk of the virus could remain within the manure storage system.

In an effort to combat the spread of the virus, the province of Manitoba, in conjunction with the hog industry, has set up buffer zones around the affected farms and created a disease management group to share information and coordinate their efforts.

Strict biosecurity practices also help to limit the spread of the virus. All pork producers must maintain strict on-farm biosecurity procedures to keep PEDv out of the barn.

"Of course we are concerned about the spread of the virus," says a local farmer who asked not to be named.

"However, on our site we adhere to the biosecurity measures outlined by the province. Nobody is allowed on the premises except for the person who takes care of the pigs and the truck for pickup."

It is deemed critical that the entire industry, including producers, transporters, and suppliers, work together to reduce transmission through strict biosecurity practices.

When positive samples are confirmed either on-farm or at a high-traffic site, biosecurity measures are heightened. All parts of the supply chain are notified and encouraged to maintain strict biosecurity to reduce the spread of the virus.

To date, follow-up has occurred with over 400 Manitoba premises throughout all investigations.

A voluntary PEDv testing program is ongoing at high-traffic sites that move or handle large numbers of pigs, including livestock assembly yards, federal and provincial abattoirs, truck wash stations, and livestock trailers.

As of August 29, 19,759 samples have been submitted for PEDv testing from 20 high-traffic sites.

PEDv is a reportable disease in Manitoba. Producers should contact their veterinarian immediately if animals show any signs of illness.

Producers who have questions about PEDv, biosecurity, and related issues are encouraged to contact the Manitoba Pork Council for assistance through their resources and expertise.



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ATV Association Raises Big Bucks for Cancer Care

By Evan Braun

✉ editor@nivervillecitizen.com

Recent reports have shown that the rate of cancer incidence in Canada is steadily climbing, due in large part to our growing and aging population. It is now estimated that nearly one in two Canadians will get cancer at some point in their lifetimes, and that approximately half of those people will die from cancer.

Last year, another report estimated that 19 Manitobans would be diagnosed every day in 2017, on average, and this number is on the rise year after year.

There is, however, some good news behind these ominous numbers. While the number of people diagnosed with cancer has risen dramatically over the last 30 years, so has the rate of survival. This is in no small part due to the dogged efforts of organizations like Cancer Care Manitoba and the many hard-working people around this province who support them.

One local group, the Eastman ATV Association, has taken its place on the front lines of the battle against cancer. On June 3, they raised \$12,838 at their second annual Ride for Mom, an event that's held in the Sandilands area, where the association has built a marked 90-kilometre trail. They've donated those funds to Cancer Care Manitoba.

"I'm a breast cancer survivor," says Deborah Nicol, President of the Eastman ATV Association. "I went through Cancer Care Manitoba, I went through the whole system, and I still am, years later. It's the most amazing group of doctors, nurses, staff, everybody involved in getting you through this event in your life. They were so amazing to me. Part of my healing process was asking, what can I do? I needed to do something besides feel sorry for myself. I thought, there's got to be some way."

Nicol observed that a friend's kids had recently held a bake sale,



The Eastman ATV Association presents a cheque to Cancer Care Manitoba.

JOEY VILLANUEVA

donating their funds to Cancer Care. That friend was Derek Roth, one of the owners of Adventure Power Products in Île-des-Chênes. The wife of Roth's business partner had recently passed away from cancer, and his family wanted to do their part to help.

"I thought, these little kids are really doing this," Nicol says of the decision to host the inaugural Ride for Mom in 2016. "And I couldn't think of a better place to donate money—and it helped our club as well."

Roth and his business partner, Frank Cicco, made the easy decision to step up, with Adventure Power Products becoming the event's title sponsor. It was a natural fit, with Adventure being one of the region's biggest retailers of ATVs, motorcycles, and boating equipment.

Since that first ride, the cause has only become more personal for everyone involved. Roth's own wife was diagnosed with breast cancer last September, and he credits Cancer Care Manitoba for saving her life.

Cancer Care Manitoba is heavily dependent on grassroots fundraising efforts like this one. According to Sherelle Kwan, the foundation's community events manager, organizers of events like Ride for Mom are the real heroes.

"It's incredibly meaningful," says Kwan. "It just means that the communities come together to support Cancer Care Manitoba. All the funds raised are going to stay right here in our province and they're going to benefit people, our neighbours, our family members, and our community members. It's amazing to see the impact, like these guys have done."

Nicol says that the second Ride for Mom brought in about 800 riders from Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta. Along with showcasing their new trail, which took six years to bring to fruition, the event included a pancake breakfast, a trail lunch, a silent auction, and other giveaways.

Kwan attended this year's Ride for Mom and found herself swept away by the camaraderie on display.

"It's moving to just be with people," Kwan says. "You feel empowered against a disease that really makes you feel quite helpless. It gives you some power back. It's like nothing else. By the end of it, I was buying a quad, saying, 'I need to be part of this!'"

Nicol agrees, and points out how amazing it is to watch such a large group of people rally together in common cause. "On the day of the ride, it's so humbling for me to see the people come together. It's just amazing that people are doing it. It's just so humbling that people put themselves out there."

While Nicol says that talking about her struggle with cancer used to be a struggle, organizing the ride and fundraising for Cancer Care Manitoba has given her a voice and a productive way to fight back and make a difference.

"It's hard to talk about," Nicol says. "I never used to be able to talk about it. I'd just break down. But then it gets better and easier, and everyone help you and you get stronger."

IN BRIEF

New Approach to Weed Control on Private Property

Niverville's council is taking a new approach to dealing with homeowners who allow their properties to become overgrown with weeds.

The town's former policy stipulated that they would step in, complete the work themselves, and then send the owner a bill for the work. With the Public Works Department stretched thin, they have decided to outsource any weed control that needs to be completed on private property.

Going forward, the town will pass on the cost of the outsourcing in addition to a \$100 administrative fee. The steep cost, according to town councillors, is intentional in order to discourage residents from letting their properties become overgrown.

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Proposed Diagnostic Centre Generates Excitement, Controversy

Big changes could be coming to our healthcare model, and not everyone is happy about it.



August 16, 2017 marked yet another day in Niverville's innovative history, with a forward-thinking announcement that community leaders believe will push Niverville a little closer to the forefront of creative solutions to the problems presented by our struggling healthcare system.

If all goes according to plan, the Heritage Centre will soon be home to a brand-new medical diagnostic centre. The 2,400-square-foot centre will include a variety of diagnostic equipment, including MRI (magnetic resonance imaging), ultrasound, and x-ray capability. A full-service medical lab will also be onsite. The proposed facility is expected to open sometime before the end of 2018.

Due to its late introduction to the Open Health concept, the diagnostic facility will be situated in its own building, just west of the campus's life lease wing but within short walking distance of the new medical clinic. It will add a dynamic extension to the community's existing medical services.

The vision began with Niverville resident Yves Kimbo, who for the past five years has been partnered with his sister, a medical practitioner herself, in a number of privately run medical and diagnostic centres in Regina, Saskatchewan. Kimbo will partner on this new endeavour with his colleague, Felipe Campusano, a pharmacist and representative for Liver Care Canada.

Kimbo presented to town council his dream of creating a facility that could not only assist in reducing wait times but give those Manitobans currently heading to North Dakota for the same services a reason to spend their hard-earned dollars at home.

The conversation quickly moved to include Dr. Chris Burnett of Open Health and



Felipe Campusano, Gordon Daman, Yves Kimbo, and Niverville Mayor Myron Dyck.

BRENDA SAWATZKY

board members of Niverville Heritage Holdings Inc. (NHHI), seeking ways to incorporate such a model into the existing Heritage Centre campus.

From those meetings a new partnership was formed between the Town of Niverville, NHHI, Liver Care Canada, and Kimbo and Campusano. A five-page Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was created, outlining in legal detail the means by which the new Heritage Life Diagnostics Centre (HLDC) will operate.

"Considering the team we have here, there's nothing to stop us except ourselves," said Campusano in his August 16 address.

BACKLASH

Some might say Campusano's optimism is premature given the backlash that has quickly spread through the news and social media. The unique model under which this facility will operate is poorly understood by the public due to its complex mode of ownership and operation. Some feel that, despite its P3 (private-public

partnership) approach, it will change Manitoba's universal healthcare model for the worse.

Darrin Cook, President of the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) in the southern health region, has been vocal on the union's stance towards this new initiative.

"Private profit has no place in our healthcare system," Cook has said. "Universal healthcare is a pillar of Canadian society, is enshrined in the Canada Health Act, and profiting off MRIs should not be allowed."

Michelle Gawronsky, President of the Manitoba Government and General Employees Union, shared similar concerns in an August 30 *Winnipeg Free Press* editorial. Gawronsky suggests that Canada's public healthcare system is the most cherished of our public services. She notes the examples of England and New Zealand's mixed systems, offering both public and user-pay options. According to Gawronsky, wait times actually increase in mixed

systems, with surgeons and technicians who are already in short supply inevitably being pulled from the public system to provide for the private one.

She also predicts that the creation of clinics such as the one proposed in Niverville will give the Canadian government an easy out instead of a reason to fix our current healthcare problems in a way that benefits everyone.

"Their profit-driven idea will not only increase diagnostic wait times for average Manitobans," Gawronsky writes. "It actually will allow the provincial Tory government to ignore solutions right under its nose."

A THIRD WAY

However, the MOU outlines a model that the partnership believes supersedes those arguments. The new clinic will not fully operate under the public health umbrella. Nor can it be considered a private facility.

"This is a third way," says Gord Daman, spokesperson for NHHI. "[It will] neither be private nor public, but simply an innovative community response to a current need

both in Niverville and the province, all focused on the common good."

This third way, according to Daman, will provide x-ray and lab services still covered by the public healthcare system should they be directed by a physician. MRI and ultrasound procedures will not. However, payment for these procedures will be based on a client's income tax bracket to make them more financially accessible than a completely private model of healthcare would.

Daman adds that the provincial government was not invited into the conversation before the news release, although informal discussions have taken place.

"My sense, overall, from numerous discussions with the current government since they were elected, is that they support community-based initiatives that are innovative and exhibit value for money," says Daman. "As there is no specific ask of provincial funds here, it is my personal opinion that the government will generally be supportive."

Kimbo agrees. "We truly believe that this initiative is the kind of solution the government may want to consider," he says. "It's a P3 initiative that is responding, within the frame of the Canadian Health Act, to a crucial need."

Although the province declined full comment when *The Citizen* initially reached out to them, Minister of Health Kelvin Goertzen has since made public comments on the subject, saying that he is supportive of Niverville's approach to diagnostic options and sees clinics like this one as inevitable as the federal government continues to make healthcare spending cuts.

"We've asked communities to be innovative and to be creative when it comes to healthcare delivery for their residents," Goertzen told the CBC. "Niverville has a long history of being innovative and creative."

The Press Secretary to the Cabinet, Amy McGuinness, told *The Citizen* in August that the Health Department had not yet been approached by the municipality, but that they would review any proposal once it arrived and comment further at that time.

According to Daman, NHHI has since provided a full overview of the proposal to the Health Minister's office for review and is awaiting a response. The process is expected to take three to four weeks.

FUTURE CONSIDERATIONS

The MOU between the partners was designed to ensure very low risk to the town or NHHI. Both Kimbo and Campusano will be assuming the greatest risk by personally taking on all costs—including subdivision, water connection, legal and professional fees, and the estimated \$4 to \$5 million for the building and equipment. At the end of the day, should the provincial government not support the plan, the duo will be left with a building that could be leased for other Heritage Centre-re-

lated purposes. The only risk to the town or NHHI is the \$1,500 in legal costs incurred to draw up the MOU.

Further, Kimbo and Campusano will be required to provide proof of financial backing before the building permit is issued. They will not receive title to the property until the building is completed and, in 25 years' time when their leasehold title expires, they will legally be required to turn over the entirety of the facility's assets to the town as a donation. In return, NHHI will lease the land on which the facility sits to HLDC for one dollar per year for 25 years, commencing January 1, 2019. During this 25-year period, the duo will hope to recoup their costs.

Daman feels that this clause, which guarantees that the building and business eventually become public assets, is critical to reducing concerns from the federal and provincial governments, who have, in the past, not always been supportive of privatized healthcare options. He also stresses that the quality of the structural build will ensure the town will inherit a building with an economic life of well over 100 years. The diagnostic equipment has an average lifespan of about 15 years, meaning HLDC will be replacing it before the town assumes the assets.

HOW THE FEES WILL WORK

The sliding-fee system of charging for diagnostic procedures will mean that clients may be able to save up to 25 percent on the cost, depending on their income status. The cost of these discounts will be borne by HLDC and will not be subsidized by NHHI.

MRIs south of the border can range anywhere from \$900 to \$3,500, depending on the complexity of the procedure. However, the most complex MRIs are generally those required in urgent health situations, which tend to be moved to the front of the Canadian healthcare queue. Thus, they're expected to mostly be performed in hospitals and covered by the public system.

"The average MRI that most folks seek privately are related to orthopaedic needs," says Daman. "These typically would be around \$1,000 Canadian, which is cheaper than Pembina, North Dakota, that averages at \$1,100 to \$1,300 Canadian with exchange. So, if

[HLDC performed] an average MRI at \$1,000 and the person is in the lowest Manitoba tax bracket, they would pay \$750. It's certainly more accessible than the current option in North Dakota. For those who face economic barriers, they will still be able to access these images in the public system."

The hope, in the end, is that a clinic like HLDC will ease our stressed healthcare system by accommodating those who are able to fund their own diagnostic procedures.

Manitoba Public Insurance (MPI) and Workers Compensation Board (WCB) clients, as well as sports teams such as the Jets and Bombers, are regular users of these kinds of services and will invariably be glad to have another option for a quick procedure.

STAFFING AND HARDWARE

Daman and Kimbo see this as a win for everyone. The pair is also confident that staffing will not be a concern, as Winnipeg has a ready labour pool of professionals to pull from.

"The MRI alone will see some 7,000 patients coming to Niverville. This has huge economic spinoff for community businesses. Everyone benefits... It makes us become more of a hub."

Gord Daman | Spokesperson for Niverville Heritage Holdings Inc.

"Facilities within 50 kilometres of Winnipeg typically don't struggle with finding staff," says Daman, who believes that he has learned a great deal through his work with regional health authorities. "Outside of 50 kilometres they do."

He adds that technicians are generally easier to acquire and retain than physicians. The government does not as stringently control the number of technicians coming out of university as it does with physicians, meaning there are typically more of them in the market seeking job placement. He counters Gawronski's arguments by stating that plenty of new technicians are currently being trained at Red River College.

On top of that, diagnostic reports can be sent to radiologists out of province.

"Radiologists do not have to live in Manitoba for reading scans," says Daman. "The centre's partners hope to attract

them from other provinces but have a solid plan in place to utilize radiologists, licenced by the Manitoba College of Physicians and Surgeons, from out of province if necessary."

"We moved to Niverville in 2007 and felt right away that we belonged here," says Kimbo. "I am pretty sure that attracting qualified technicians in Niverville won't be difficult as it's just a great place to be. Coupling that with a great work environment will help us not only attract qualified people, but also retain them."

Daman says that the province will take responsibility to ensure all staff are appropriately licenced in their fields, as this is a legal requirement of the province's professional governing bodies. The clinic itself will need to be inspected and approved by a senior health officer appointed by the Health Minister and receive accreditation under the Manitoba Quality Assurance Program as set out by the College of Physicians and Surgeons.

at reasonable rates in times of inflationary pressures.

BROAD BENEFITS

Though not everyone in the community may directly benefit from all the services at HLDC, the broad benefits of such an endeavour, if successful, have the potential to affect every Niverville resident.

The partnership between Open Health and HLDC may cause medical specialists in all types of fields to take a look at Niverville as a viable option for setting up shop. Daman says that Dr. Burnett is already looking at ways Open Health might eventually become a "mini Mayo Clinic" right in Niverville.

The relationship between HLDC and the PCH could also prove fruitful. In fact, plans are already in place to begin research into age-related cognitive therapy for Alzheimer's and dementia patients. HLDC has committed to provide 50 MRI procedures per year for patients in the special care unit of the Heritage Life PCH

at no cost. A representative of the University of Manitoba's research team was invited to the August announcement with the hope of encouraging a doctoral research candidate to be assigned a placement here.

In the long run, Niverville residents will most likely make economic gains as a result of the diagnostic centre.

"The MRI alone will see some 7,000 patients coming to Niverville," Daman says. "This has huge economic spinoff for community businesses. Everyone benefits as more people will now have reason to come to Niverville. It makes us become more of a hub, particularly around healthcare."

The new facility will also bear significant property and school taxes, easing the tax burden for residents. In the future, hotel chains may see an advantage to opening in a community that has a large flow of visitors.

In the end, this new initiative has the capacity to change the landscape of healthcare in Manitoba forever. It may, as easily, see its demise in the coming months. Whatever happens, the town of Niverville continues to build on its reputation of rising up in difficult times.

And, as they say, any press is good press.

CITIZEN POLL

THIS MONTH'S QUESTION:

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

- ☐ **YES** – Considering the ongoing provincial and federal healthcare cuts, strategies such as this one are a good way to ease an overburdened system without raising taxes.
- ☐ **NO** – This offers an unfair advantage to the wealthy and takes the onus off of the government to fix the problem for all of us.

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LAST MONTH'S RESULTS:

What do you think of the notion of eliminating recess for middle-years students in Manitoba schools?

A – Recess is a necessity in order for students of that age level to excel, and schools should ensure that this need is met.

93%

B – Recess is not a requirement, and these students should be able to adapt to a similar schedule to the one kept by older students.

7%

YOUR COMMENTS:

A physical break to get fresh air and socialize generally has a positive outcome on overall engagement, so I don't think it should be eliminated.

Recess is a must! Those kids need a break from sitting at a desk and having to concentrate. They also need better playground equipment. At nine years old, my son will be starting high school. He is still a kid and needs to play and interact with other kids to have a well-rounded education. They need to be able to blow off some energy and I feel that the lack of play space and potential for no recess will not be fair to the kids or the teachers.

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THE BOLD LOOK
OF KOHLER

Exploring the Poutine Trail

By Evan Braun

editor@nivervillecitizen.com

How far would you go for the perfect poutine? That's the question posed by CDEM Manitoba, an organization dedicated to spurring economic development in the province's many bilingual communities. They're banking on poutine to act as a lure to attract Winnipeggers outside city limits—and, in this reporter's opinion, they're on to something.

"We're really looking to draw the Winnipeg crowd into these communities. So what better way than poutine?" says Roselle Turenne, a tourism consultant with CDEM, who spoke to the CBC in mid-August about the promotion. "We know that it's popular, we know that people like it, and we know that people will drive out to taste something that's really unique and creative."

Turenne adds that the goal is to bolster the local economies and encourage city folk to sample the vast opportunities available right next



ADOBE STOCK

door to Winnipeg. She points out that most of the 750,000 people living in the city have never visited the country or had a good reason to drive out to these smaller communities and get a taste for rural life.

The Poutine Trail includes eight intoxicating stops at restaurants throughout south-eastern Manitoba: Ste. Agathe (Lucky Luc's Bar and Grill), St. Jean-Baptiste (Bistro 758), St. Malo (St. Malo Hotel), St. Pierre-Jolys (Lucky Luc's Bar and Grill), Lorette (Chicken Chef), Ste. Anne (Old No. 12 Café and Lounge), Richer (Ti-Beauville), and Marchand (Marchand Inn).

While each of these restaurants offers a classic poutine—French fries with cheese

curds, smothered in delicious gravy—the real draw is their signature takes on the famous francophone dish. According to Turenne, the only criteria were hand-cut fries and cheese curds. From there, the only limit was the chefs' imaginations.

For example, Lucky Luc's in Ste. Agathe will be offering up the Burger Poutine, made from shoestring fries and topped off with ground beef, cheese curds, crisp bacon, onion tangles, a layer of cheddar cheese, and a bourbon barbecue gravy.

Or you can head down the road to St. Pierre-Jolys for a plate of Tourtière Poutine, a double dose of francophone culture. This poutine starts

with a base of double-fried pommes frites, lathered with cheese curds, savoury tourtière filling, gravy, a touch of pastry crumbs, spicy ketchup aioli, and green onions.

La Beau-tine in Richer mixes seasoned hamburger and mushrooms with cheese curds, gravy, bacon, and onion.

Other variations include the Taco Curd Poutine, the Sweet & Spicy Chicken Poutine, Perogy Poutine, Breakfast Poutine, and Popcorn Chicken Poutine.

At least one group of cyclists from Winnipeg has already made a two-day round-trip excursion to each of the eight stops, eating five poutines the first day and three the second before returning home full but satisfied.

Whether you're driving, cycling, or taking a very long walk, you can't go wrong with this uniquely Canadian culinary pilgrimage.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

www.poutinetrail.com/poutinetrail

Parent Calls on Province to Change Curriculum Guidelines

By Evan Braun

editor@nivervillecitizen.com

Michelle McHale, the Steinbach-area parent who last year launched a lawsuit against the Hanover School Division over its policy to ban discussion of LGBT subjects from its curriculum, has expanded her fight to include the provincial government. McHale argues that not on-

ly should Hanover have to change its ways, but the province should enforce the same inclusive standard to all school divisions across the province.

Like the first lawsuit, this second complaint has been filed with the Manitoba Human Rights Commission.

While individual school divisions are currently free to set their own policies, the

province's guidelines lump LGBT content into the "sensitive content" category. As a result, parents are given the right to opt out of exposing their children to that material.

McHale, who has said she is disheartened that the second complaint is necessary, argues that this practice is discriminatory.

"Our position is that everyone should be able to

see themselves and their families positively reflected in their education," McHale has said. "And people shouldn't have the ability to just opt out of learning about who [other] people are."

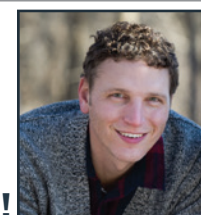
The recent lawsuit asks the province to make changes to its curriculum requirements, making it more inclusive.

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Roof Replacement in Works for Île-des-Chênes School



École Île-des-Chênes.

GOOGLE

By Evan Braun

✉ editor@nivervillecitizen.com

Manitoba's provincial government has committed to a couple of key infrastructure upgrades for schools in the Dawson Trail constituency. École Île-des-Chênes will receive a much-needed roof replacement, and École Lorette Immersion will see its boiler replaced.

In total, the government has earmarked \$92.4 million in capital spending for public schools across the province for the 2017-18 school year, \$53.7 million of which is comprised of renewal projects like the ones in Île-des-Chênes and Lorette.

Until the specific projects are tendered, it's not known how much either will cost.

"Our Progressive

Conservative government understands the importance of safe and healthy places for Manitoba students," said Dawson Trail MLA Bob Lagassé. "These projects, which include necessary health and safety-related upgrades, will help ensure the children of Dawson Trail have a positive learning environment."

The two local projects are expected to be completed between six to 24 months following the start of construction.

PLAYGROUND UPGRADES UNDERWAY

In related news, École Île-des-Chênes has also received \$1,000 to help in the purchase of two new soccer nets through BSI Insurance's Because We Care initiative. The school committee is in the process of revamping its old playground structures and faced a total cost of \$6,000 for the nets. The BSI contribution bridges the funding gap.

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IN BRIEF



Fighting Substance Abuse with Awareness

The Town of Niverville has partnered with Community Safety Net to help raise awareness about drug safety. The initiative is targeted at local young people, to help ensure that they have access to the information they need to make smart life choices.

The Recreation Department will be distributing copies of *Drug Safety: Smart Choices for Life* from the Niverville Arena this fall and winter. The 112-page handbook contains useful information about the dangers of alcohol, tobacco, and illicit drugs. Although geared toward youth, the book also serves as a comprehensive family resource, with tips for both young people and their parents.

The book, which is made available through the support of local businesses and organizations, comes with a free downloadable app for smartphone and tablets.

Community Safety Net is an international organization that has been partnering with community leaders, businesses, and schools since 1989 to produce and distribute award-winning educational resources.

\$296,000



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ROYAL LEPAGE
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Niverville Family Fundraises for a Service Dog

By Evan Braun

✉ editor@nivervillecitizen.com

One Niverville couple just got a big boost in its efforts to purchase and train a service dog for their son. Eight-year-old Gavyn Demers was diagnosed three years ago with Autism Spectrum Disorder and Sensory Processing Disorder (SPD).

"Over the years we have had our good days, our bad days, and days we try and forget," say Courtney and Pierre, Gavyn's parents. "We watch Gavyn struggle on a daily basis. We watch him try and process the world around him. No matter how hard the struggles get, he continues to fight."

Children with autism find themselves in a near-constant state of anxiety as a result of their impaired understanding of relationships and the social expectations of everyday life. Children with SPD have trouble detecting and interpreting sensory input from the world around them. For example, children with SPD can be overwhelmed by the process of interpreting feelings of hot and cold, tiredness, and hunger. They also routinely struggle to identify lights and sounds, triggering atypical responses that can be unexpected and difficult to deal with. It's not uncommon for people with SPD to have extreme reactions to certain textures, noises, foods, and change, and their physical coordination is often affected.

Although SPD was until recently considered to be a symptom of autism, studies have now shown that the two are separate disorders and that one can occur without the other. Unfortunately, Gavyn has both.

Service animals are a proven form of therapy for these disorders, but the extensive costs associated with them are not covered by Manitoba Health, leaving families like the Demers in the lurch.

"The only provinces that do it, I think, are B.C., Alberta, and Ontario," says Pierre Demers. "Then you go on a wait list, and it could take three to four years. So everything is on slowdown."

Fortunately, the family discovered MSAR, a private organization



Back row: Steve Fast, Stan Hiebert, Tyler Wiebe, Pierre Demers, Collin Funk, Joel Martens, and Ray Dowse. Front row: Courtney Demers and Gavyn Demers.

right here in Manitoba that specializes in training service dogs. The cost to purchase and train their dog, Hero, is approximately \$30,000. The training process takes more than a year, and Hero likely won't be ready to serve until next summer.

To help meet these expenses, the Demers have planned a fundraising social for Saturday, November 11. It will take place at the TransCanada Centre in Île-des-Chênes and run from 8:00 p.m. until 1:00 a.m.

donation to present to you," Pierre explains. "And so they showed up the next day. My wife called, and there was six of them, and they presented us and my son with a cheque. That's incredible."

The cheque was for \$5,930.

"We had no idea that this was coming," he adds. "Me and my wife were just speechless. Just for people to be doing that, we're pretty grateful that this happened."

The golfers, who organize the annual Niverville Masters Tournament, choose a local cause every



Local area golfers gather for the 2017 Niverville Masters.

© GORD PETKER

"Because of that long weekend, usually there's not much going on," says Pierre. "We are selling support tickets and also social tickets. The social tickets are \$15, and the support tickets are \$10."

So far the family has raised about \$12,000.

MASTERS DONATION

Earlier this month, the Demers family was caught by surprise when they received an unexpected email from a group of local golfers.

"The email said, 'Is it okay if we show up at your house? We have a

year to support. This year, the money was raised by 44 players.

"We started the tournament out as a fun thing for a bunch of friends to have a competitive round of golf," says Ray Dowse, one of the tournament's organizers. "We then added in a fundraiser component to raise money for local charities along with the fun game."

Last year, the golfers made a donation to a family whose son required a specialized surgery only available in the United States. In 2015, the money went to a family whose daughter was born

with a rare genetic disorder; they needed a wheelchair-accessible van to transport her and her medical equipment.

"Ever since we started the Masters, we wanted the opportunity to help out organizations and causes in our hometown," says Joel Martens, another Masters organizer.

In the last 15 years, the Masters has raised more than \$34,000 for local causes.

THE TOURNAMENT

The 2017 Masters was held at the Bear Club Casino and Hotel on the White Bear First Nation near the town of Carlyle, Saskatchewan. The tournament was played at Golf Kenossee on Sunday, August 27, with the preliminary Ryder Cup taking place the day before at White Bear Lake Golf Course. The weather was ideal all weekend, with both the resort and the two courses in excellent condition.

The winner was Stanley Hiebert, receiving his second green jacket with a score of 85. Brian Chornoboy and Adam Wiebe also scored 85, although Hiebert edged them out on a countback. The low net score champion was Collin Funk,

with a score of 74 after applying handicaps.

The Ryder Cup preliminary round, staged between Teams Red and Blue, was won by Team Blue. The cup was added to the tournament six years ago, and so far Red and Blue are tied at three wins apiece.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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- www.gofundme.com/gavyns-service-dog
- www.msar.ca

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In its Final Year, Imagine Run Goes Technicolor

The Imagine Run is coming to an end after this year's run, but Imagine itself, and its important cause, will live on.



EVAN
BRAUN

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For ten years, the annual Imagine Run has been a fixture on Niverville's event calendar, and the same will be true this year as the run once again transforms Hespeler Park on September 23 into a family-friendly party zone. But as the run marks its ten-year anniversary, it also bids farewell.

"The run has evolved and changed with the times," says Mona Stott, who started Imagine with her husband Jeff and daughter Danielle a decade ago following the sudden death of their son and brother, Joey. "I know people are going to say, 'Well, why don't you continue doing that?' We'd rather leave it on a bang than just let it peter out. And what a nice way to finish this!"

The Imagine Run will indeed go out with a bang, introducing a new twist. The 2017 event will be a colour run. As runners make their way through the five-kilometre course (there will also be a 10k option), they'll pass through various stations where participants on the sidelines throw coloured corn starch at the runners. The effect promises to be kaleidoscopic.

In the evening, with the

multi-coloured runners covered in a psychedelic melange of red, yellow, blue, green, and purple, out will come the black lights to make the rainbow display glow brightly in the night. Under a hail of fireworks, the Imagine Run will celebrate its grand finale after party, ten years in the making.

The fireworks come courtesy of Archangel Fireworks, who have pledged to bump up their game for this special occasion. The day will also feature Floyd the Clown, face-painting, Pedro's fire show, and the annual \$5 barbecue prepared by Crystal Springs. Teen Challenge will be out in force to give Imagine a hand as well.

"I truly believe in the ten years we have made a change," says Stott. "We have. Someone said to me recently that it's actually sexy to talk about mental health now. Well, I never looked at it that way, but we've come a long ways. Someone can say, 'Yeah, I suffer with bipolar.' Before? Oh my god, no one would have ever come close to admitting that. So have we made progress? Absolutely. Is there a lot of work to be done? For sure."

THIS IS NOT THE END

Although the run is coming to its nat-

ural conclusion this year, the Imagine team itself will continue its important work of raising awareness about mental health.

"The ten years of the run are coming to a close," Stott says, noting that Imagine as an organization is bigger than just the annual run. "It's sad in a way, but you know what? It's just the birth of the next thing. The One Big Day for Imagine has started. And we did the fashion show, we did the craft show. Imagine is a group that puts on

"It's sad in a way, but you know what? It's just the birth of the next thing."

Mona Stott | Imagine

events to help raise awareness."

Last year, on the Wednesday prior to the run, Stott helped to oversee the inaugural One Big Day for Imagine. This event sees many of our region's local celebrities hoisted up into the air on a crane from the Niverville Credit Union parking lot. Once at the top, they bring out their phones and take pledges from their friends and family to be let down.

The first Big Day went extremely well, beating Stott's expectations. So it seemed a no-brainer to keep it going,

with a few tweaks. In fact, she hopes to keep it going for the next several years.

"I think we have enough celebrities in our town and surrounding places that we can keep having people on the lift," Stott says. "The whole idea behind the lift is that if I was in distress or suicidal, I'd be going to my contacts. And my contacts differ from yours. So that's why when you're up there, you're reaching out. That's the whole idea."

A barbecue lunch will be served, hosted by William Dyck and Sons, and celebrities will be hoisted up in half-hour intervals from 9:00 a.m. until 3:00 p.m. This year's celebrities include comedian Matt Falk, Ritchot Mayor Chris Ewen, and many local business owners like Carl and Heather Fast, Anna Sawatzky, John Schmitke, Al Wiens, and Colleen Dyck. A full list, as well as a schedule, can be seen on page 7.

A WORD OF THANKS

Over the years, the Imagine committee has changed a lot. Stott says that she's been the one constant since the committee's inception.

"This is all volunteer, one hundred percent," she says. "Nobody's being paid. It's all about the cause. And it's

tasking, and lot of people who are on this committee suffer themselves. So they go go go, hard, and then they burn out. You can see it. And that's okay. We've had lots of people that love the Imagine group and have many times said that it's saved a member of their family."

Stott says that none of the amazing gains she's witnessed in the past decade would have been possible without the help of past committee members and community members who have come up alongside to lend a hand. She is deeply grateful for the innumerable contributions people have made in the service of creating suicide-safer communities.

"It's amazing that it's been ten years," says Stott. "But it's been a long ten years. It's been ten years since I've spoken to my son. It's ten years since I've seen him. I see old girlfriends that are now married and have a family, and I think, 'This is what we're missing out on.' He's missing out on his niece. We've been robbed and he's been robbed. Those are the cards we've been dealt. We're making the best of it, but it's a daily struggle. And you just keep going."

FOR MORE INFORMATION

■ www.partillife.ca/events/imagine-in-color

Niverville Council Prioritizes Eco-Friendly Policies

By Evan Braun

✉ editor@nivervillecitizen.com

Over the past few years, Niverville has been on the forefront of implementing environmentally friendly policies. Among their most successful initiatives is the ongoing decommissioning of the town's sewage lagoon through a bioremediation process. This led to Niverville receiving a Manitoba Excellence in Sustainability Award in 2014.

More recent initiatives include the construction of a splash pad that incorporates a water recycling system, a town-wide recycling system aimed at reducing landfill waste, and measures to encourage backyard composting.

Even more recently, the town has partnered with the province to study the feasibility of heating the new high school and proposed multiplex with geothermal technology. Solar power and window-tinting are other options on the table.

"One thing we're looking at is repurposing the [arena's] ice plant," says Mayor Myron Dyck. "When you use it for cooling, it gives off heat, and that heat can be captured and used for heating in another part of the multiplex or school. And we look at costs, obviously. There has to be a benefit over time. Even if your upfront cost might be greater with a geothermal field, you save over time on your heating bills."

Dyck says that council is committed to taking a leadership role in the area of



The bioremediated lagoon in Niverville.

■ NATIVE PLANT SOLUTIONS

conservatism, even though the resulting policies are not always immediately popular with residents.

One controversial measure has been instructing residents to only water their lawns on odd or even days. Although this is often a necessary action to conserve water use from the town's often overtaxed water treatment plant, Dyck points out that it's also a good practice to follow in terms of being effective stewards of our natural resources.

THE LOCAL ACTION PLAN

In 2012, the town partnered with Eco-West, a national organization whose aim is to help rural communities across Canada green their local economies. They look at several sectors of a community, including its use of energy, transportation, wastewater treatment, waste management, composting, and brownfield redevelopment. The term "brownfield" refers to land that has previously been used for industrial or commercial purposes and which may be contaminated as a result.

Eco-West gives municipalities a boost in several

ways. For one, they measure greenhouse gas emissions, identifying sources of energy waste and inefficiencies within a community. They also facilitate the introduction of green technologies that might otherwise be unknown or unavailable, helping local councils access financial support at various levels of government and through other funders.

In consultation with Eco-West, Niverville's town council has identified a number of priorities for the coming years to continue their promotion of sustainable practices. They've called it the Climate Change Local Action Plan.

One goal is to continue encouraging residents to reduce waste through promoting backyard composting, ensuring that students receive education about composting in school, effectively managing the current recycling program, and promoting town beautification efforts, such as the Community in Bloom committee's gardening workshops.

Another goal is to operate town buildings in a sustainable manner. Eventually the town strives to build all-new facilities that utilize geothermal

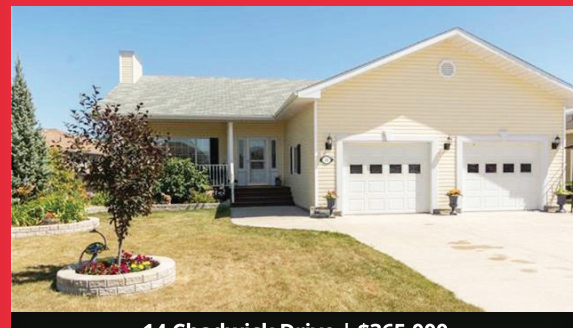
heating and cooling systems. Until then, they'll consider ways to further recycle water when possible, purchase smaller and more energy-efficient vehicles and equipment, and conduct regular energy audits of town facilities.

Dyck adds that water management, in particular, is key and that the town should ensure that utility rates encourage residents to use water responsibly. The town will also look to plant more trees throughout the community. A long-time goal has been to hire an arborist to educate town staff, and the public, about best practices. Niverville will also continue its work with the province to reduce wastewater production.

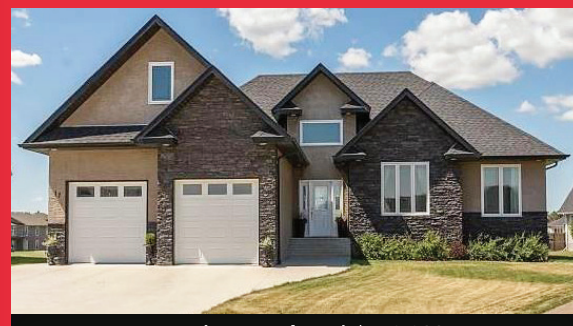
With Niverville's population on the rise, the town has identified objectives to make sure the community grows in sustainable ways. This includes encouraging high-density residential development to decrease the human footprint on the environment, and holding regular meetings with developers to explore creative solutions along these lines.

The town has also said they will conduct a review of Niverville's Development Plan and Zoning By-Law by next year. Specifically, they'll be looking for ways to encourage active living and responsible land use. Dyck says that he hopes the recent installation of bike racks on Main Street will encourage more residents to cycle around town.

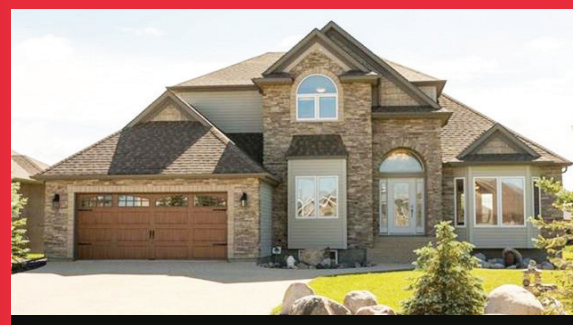
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Community Gardens Aim to Alleviate Hunger

By Evan Braun

✉ editor@nivervillecitizen.com

The RM of Ritchot has partnered with Southern Health-Santé Sud, Gabrielle-Roy, and some passionate volunteers to grow locally sourced vegetables in Île-des-Chênes's community gardens. The new garden boxes, located to the northeast of Gab-Roy along the Hamilton Road bus loop, are bursting with fresh produce.

"The southern regional health authority provided the funding for the garden boxes, as well as all the infrastructure," says Amber Mamchuk, Ritchot's Recreation Director. "There's a shed, and inside the shed is a water tank, so there's water on site for the gardeners to use."

Those gardeners include Desinee Ralph and her nine-year-old son Milo. The pair has spent a lot of time this summer tending the gardens together. Of the ten garden boxes, seven of them are used to grow food to donate to local food banks. The other three are currently rented out to residents of Île-des-Chênes.

Although the intention is eventually to donate all the food to the local food bank, until those arrangements can be settled the produce is being sent to Forward House in Winnipeg's Elmwood neighbourhood and Addictions Foundation Manitoba in St. Norbert.

"We started in June," Ralph says. "I had seen the garden boxes, so I called Amber [at the RM office], and said, 'Hey, I'm wondering about these garden boxes. What's going on? I heard they might be for the food bank.' I wanted to know if there was any way I could help with that."

Mamchuk then put Ralph in touch with Ada and Keith McNeil, the couple who spearheaded the idea.

"I contacted them, and then I've been helping ever since," Ralph says. "Milo's been a pretty good



Milo and Desinee Ralph have spent the summer tending the Île-des-Chênes community gardens.

✉ EVAN BRAUN

help, and he's been doing this for a while. I think it's important for children to learn about providing for your community. To take care of it, and take care of the people in it."

Mamchuk adds that Gab-Roy has generously donated the land for the gardens. "[This] will allow the school to use the garden for the students, who can help plant and decide what's going in the gardens. We might also paint the outsides of the boxes and allow the students to do some decoration. They helped us fill the boxes with soil, so the students came out and got pretty dirty, and filled the boxes with us."

The boxes are currently bursting with Swiss chard, four different kinds of tomatoes, three kinds of peppers, yellow beans, green beans, zucchini, cucumbers, beets, and corn—all of which will be donated to people in need. The seeds were donated by Glenlea Nursery, who have also contributed plants for the upcoming St.

Adolphe community gardens. Mamchuk says gardens are planned for Ste. Agathe next year.

Ralph's passion for gardening began when she was a child, spending the summers at her grandparents' farm in the Lockport area.

"My grandfather is actually 86 years old, and he still supplies the local grocery store with vegetables," says Ralph. "So I grew up spending the summer there, and I was put to work. All the time. I've just always liked it. I'm also a bit of a health freak, so for me I like my fresh produce and I go to certain specific grocery stores where I know I can get the good local stuff."

Ralph is passionate about educating people on the many benefits of growing and consuming food from your own garden.

"There's so many different reasons for having a garden," she says. "It's staying local, it's the nutrition, it's the growing itself, it's getting

oxygen from the plants, there are so many benefits."

She's quick to add that there's also a financial incentive. "You know what, for me to go buy a head of cauliflower, it costs five bucks and I can grow it in my own garden. Same with spinach. It's six bucks! Well, I put in a couple of spinach seeds and all of a sudden I have a huge plant. The cauliflower maybe doesn't turn out quite as good here as it does in California, we just don't have the right environment even in the summertime, but the whole thing is very cheap. Like, you go and spend 30 bucks on a bunch of seeds, and now you have all your vegetables for a whole summer."

Mamchuk says that the boxes are available to rent for a seasonal fee of \$35, although she adds that the municipality would consider offering subsidies to people who want to grow their own food but struggle to make ends meet.

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Temporary housing units have been installed at Providence.

b PROVIDENCE

Post-Fire, Providence Accommodates New Students

By Evan Braun

✉ editor@nivervillecitizen.com

About 200 resident students are settling in at Providence University College this week despite a fire earlier this summer that claimed Bergen Hall, the men's dormitory. The university has been busy making alternate arrangements to ensure that the fire doesn't result in any disruptions.

Several renovations are complete, and 28 temporary housing units have been installed near the Student Life Centre. The renovations include new paint, flooring,

and furniture in the existing Cundy, Sweet, and Piece residences. Each of the temporary housing units, which the university describes as "executive units," has a bathroom, fridge, and oversized bed. Televisions and laundry services are available in the campus's common areas.

"We have done a lot of work to ensure that our students have a great experience in residence this year, and we are excited to welcome more resident students this year than we did last," says Marlin Reimer, Associate Vice-President for Student Life.

Reimer adds that a plans are

underway to build a permanent replacement for Bergen Hall.

"We are currently in the research phase of our planning, which involves consulting with various experts and visiting other successful universities that have excellent buildings and residence life programs," Reimer says. "Critical to us in this process is ensuring that the mission of Providence, and the resulting educational mission of the residence life program, is the driver behind the design and architecture of our buildings."

Town Advises Precautions During Sewer Cleaning

The Town of Niverville will be cleaning sewers throughout the community from September 11-15. Although no exact route or timeline has been identified yet, sewers along the following streets will be affected: Main Street, First Street North, Second Street North, Third Street North, First Avenue North, Second Avenue, Third Avenue, Fourth Avenue North, Ritchot Drive, Church Street, as well as all residents of The Highlands up to

Muirfield Cove.

"Occasionally during sewer cleaning, air pressure builds in the sewer line, causing water to splash out of toilets, sinks, and drains," reads a statement from town council.

Council has suggested that residents take several precautions to prevent water damage. These include closing lids and covering toilet bowls when they are not in use, inserting drain plugs in sinks

and bathtubs, removing floor mats from bathrooms, covering basement floor drains, and placing towels around the base of toilets.

"Sewer cleaning on rare occasions may leave an odour in the home," continues the town's statement. "If so, please run some water down all sinks and bathtub drains, flush toilets, pour a pail of water into each basement floor drain, and open your windows. After a short time, the odour should disappear."

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Some Things are Best Left to the Professionals!

Commentary

Tommy's Dream

By Greg Fehr

When the Greatest Canadian, Tommy Douglas, envisioned and fought the long, hard fight for universal healthcare, many average Canadian citizens thought we were headed for the hellfire and brimstone of a Communist society. The sacred cow of capitalism and the free market were under attack. Many wondered which bastion of free enterprise would be next on the hit list. Throughout the implementation of our universal system, there were strikes, lawsuits, and other forms of resistance.

What a difference a few decades make. Socialized healthcare has gone from a troublesome child to independent adult, and now it's entering the golden years under palliative care as we struggle to find a way to keep the system from completely falling apart. Not only has the pendulum truly swung from right to left, but the paradigm of citizen passion has followed, causing even some of the staunchest capitalists to defend this truly Canadian right.

So why do we struggle with non-traditional models that include components of private partnerships? For some, it is simply the taboo of private involvement in a socialized service. For others, the sticking point is the use of



ADOBE STOCK

tax dollars to work with these private partners. And which tax dollars from which level of government?

These may very well be valid perspectives, but we have to understand them in the context of our current situation. The reality is that new models for health delivery must be found—and to find them, different models must be tried. I suspect not all of our attempts will be successful, but changing a system as complex as healthcare seldom comes without trial and error.

We must all acknowledge this fundamental truth as we consider the proposed MRI clinic at the Niverville Heritage Centre. When a single system devours 50 percent of our tax dollars—as the healthcare system currently does, and its share grows daily—we have no choice other than to abandon it or change it. It's that simple. To continue without change is to accept its death, be it

immediate or delayed.

If you don't buy into the death analogy, consider that the current system will increasingly devolve until it's a shell of its former self. Service times and delivery will be compromised to a level beyond the already inadequate levels. And this is happening at a time when people are calling for increased service, reduced wait times, better equity in geographic coverage, and a national pharmacare system.

It's foolish to think we won't just maintain our system but improve it without venturing significantly outside the current model. In fact, believing so is downright asinine. Dangerous, even.

In terms of finding solutions, time is of the essence. Private money, when properly leveraged, can take the financial pressures off the system. It would be unreasonable to begrudge private money when it promises a return on

investment.

While healthcare is a provincial responsibility (although federal transfer payments prop it up), does it really matter if other levels of government, such as municipalities, participate financially?

Perhaps it matters more to the bureaucracy. Governments have their various tax envelopes, but as Joe Citizen I only have one wallet, regardless of who's taking money out of it. Maybe the real impact of municipal involvement is that my dollar doesn't have to pass through so many layers of administration, each one siphoning off their nickels and dimes. It's more local, there's less waste, and more of our dollars get put into action on the front lines.

Even for staunch supporters of socialized services, we must get real. We must embrace pragmatism over utopian ideals. For the system to survive, it has to be reborn. Life is a series of tradeoffs, something we learn as we grow older and begrudgingly accept as we reach maturity.

In the end, will we try new models to save a system that has become part of the Canadian identity? While the reborn system may look different, both for the positive and negative, the fear of watching the death of Tommy Douglas's dream scares me more.

Look On the Bright Side: Crazy Love

By Jan Kendall St. Cyr

Although unique in personality and temperament, each one of my grandchildren possesses the strong family trait of having a wacky sense of humour. Raised without creative limitations, these incredible creatures are always plotting, using their imaginations to come up with some over-the-top activity, making the time I spend with them extremely entertaining.

Desiring to live in the moment with them has found me steering clear of normal. Instead I conjure up nonsensical escapades we can experience together. My crazy love for them compels me to be silly and frivolous and willing to go to extremes, something I didn't necessarily do when I had the responsibility of being the parent.

I've adopted a motto: "Whatever happens at Grandma's stays at Grandma's." This has impacted how I spend time with my grandkids. At our annual Grandma/Grandpa party this year, we took the scavenger hunt to the next level. Clues were immersed in bathtubs and bins full of spaghetti, jello, and chocolate pudding! While making crafts, we were elbow-deep in goop attempting to make an extravagant piñata that

would hold even more treats than the year before, and a bigger and better volcano that would erupt with more force and make a greater mess.

Baking is another favourite activity—or, more to the point, pre-baking, whereby the batter goes through a serious taste-testing process, oftentimes not even making it to the oven.

When it comes to finding bizarre things to do, this summer was no exception. We walked along the lake's edge, catching crayfish in our nets and drying them out in the sun until the awful smell was gone, after which we carefully picked up the fragile carcasses and pressed them into wet cement, thus solidifying their fate—and our memories—by creating a weird yet wonderful stepping stone for the garden.

Relieved of the task of having to discipline the children allows me to be the superhero in their eyes. With permission, we can soar above the parental rules and connect with each grandchild in a magical way via these playful encounters.

I am grateful for the gift of this crazy love, as it has taught me to participate with joy and abandon in so many childlike antics with my wacky and wonderful grandchildren.





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MLA

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Sports & Recreation



Niverville's town council is looking to redevelop this section of Hespeler Park.

JOEY VILLANUEVA

Council Requests Proposals for Hespeler Park



CHANTEL
TODD

✉ ctodd@nivervillecitizen.com

Niverville's town council is seeking proposals for a new playground in Hespeler Park, as announced on August 25. The proposed new park feature will be located west of the splash pad, where the current set of swings can be found. The area will run along the soccer field to the newly planted tree line,

forming approximately one acre of green space.

The town is looking for a qualified person or organization to consult and work with council, staff, and residents in the development of the site.

"It is the goal that this new playground will provide Niverville and the surrounding area a one-of-a-kind playground destination to further develop Niverville's position as an urban hub in southeastern Manitoba," reads the request for

proposal.

The town envisions that whoever delivers the winning bid will introduce key personnel and design objectives, survey the lot, provide a conceptual design and drawings, host an open house to receive feedback from residents, hold meetings with staff and council, and provide costing for construction.

The deadline for proposals is September 11, offering an unusually short window of

time. The reason for the quick turnaround is that the provincial government announced in mid-August that funding would be available for this type of community development program. The programs targeted should focus on accessibility, reduce barriers for Manitobans, and provide greenspace, opportunities for active transportation (such as trails and walkways), and help newcomers get more involved in their communities.

EVENT GUIDE

Strength, Stretch, Cardio, and Core

September 5, 13, 18, 27; 6:30 p.m., \$12 (drop-in)
Niverville, Hespeler Park Picnic Shelter

Tuff-n-up Bootcamp

Mondays/Wednesdays until November 15, 6:30 p.m.,
\$150, Niverville, South End of Arena

Yoga

Wednesdays, September 13–October 27
Flow at 7:00, Yin at 8:15, \$84, Niverville Curling Rink

Canadian Red Cross Babysitting Course

Saturday, September 16, 9:00 a.m.–4:00 p.m., \$50
Niverville, South End of Arena

Niverville Community Garage Sale

Sunday, September 16

Tot & Kinder Gymnastics (Ages 2–5)

Wednesday, September 20–December 20
1:00 p.m. or 5:30 p.m., \$126, Niverville, South End of Arena

Recreation & Wellness Showcase

Tuesday, September 12, 5:00–8:00 p.m.
Niverville Heritage Centre

Red River Rage Ringette/Niverville Rec Hockey

Register in person on September 12 at the Heritage Centre

Clipper Ice Sports

Registration Deadline: September 30
Register in person on September 12 at the Heritage Centre

Southeast Youth Rec Hockey (Île-des-Chênes)

Registration Deadline: Friday September 29
To register, contact seyhrhockey@gmail.com

Ritchot Senior Services

- Yoga: Weds., Sept. 6–27, 1:30 p.m., \$40/10 classes
- Cardio Fit: Mon., Sept. 11–25, 9:00 a.m., \$40/10 classes
- Chair Fit: Mon., Sept. 11–25, 11:00 a.m., Free.
- Muscle Fit: Thurs., Sept. 14 & 28, 9:30 a.m., \$40/10 classes
- Coffee Talk: Tuesday, Sept. 19, 10:00 a.m.
- Block Therapy: Tues., Sept. 19–Oct. 31, 6:00 p.m., \$64 or \$10 (drop-in)
- Art Program: Mon., Sept. 18–Oct. 30, 7:00 p.m., \$80

Come Try Ringette

- Saturday, September 9, 2:30 p.m.
St. Adolphe Arena, 345 St. Adolphe Rd.
 - Saturday, September 27, 10:15 a.m.
Île-des-Chênes Arena, 630 Rivard Street
- Pre-registration required: www.cometryringette.ca

Île-des-Chênes Recreation

- Indoor Walking: Mon./Weds./Fri. in September, 9:00 a.m.
- Seniors Yoga: Mon., Sept. 18–25, 10:00 a.m.
- Yoga: Tues., Sept. 19–26, 6:30 p.m., \$125/10 classes
- Zumba: Mon. starting Sept. 25, 7:00 p.m., \$75/10 classes
- Pickle Ball: Tues./Thurs. starting Sept. 19, 1:00 p.m.
- Pickle Ball: Weds. starting Sept. 20, 7:00 p.m.
- Block Therapy: Weds. starting Sept. 27, 6:30 p.m.,

For More Information or to list your event:

- www.nivervillerecreation.com
- ctodd@nivervillecitizen.com



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Ethan & Logan Maroni

Ethan (Grade 5) and Logan Maroni (Grade 6) are well rounded athletes. They excel at soccer, marathons, hockey, flag football, and tackle football, just name a few. Last year, playing for the St Vital Mustangs, Ethan and Logan capped of an undefeated football season by winning the Atom Provincial Championship.

Whether it be on the ice or on the field, Ethan and Logan's sportsmanship and work ethic makes them great teammates and a pleasure to coach.

—Coach Andy

Will the Jets See Playoff Action This Year?

By Nicholas Anderson

Circle the calendar, Jets fans. In less than a month, Patrik Laine and the Jets prepare to take flight in their season opener against Auston Matthews and the Toronto Maple Leafs.

Matthews, taken with the first overall pick in 2016 (one pick ahead of Laine) helped lead his team to the playoffs, only to lose in the first round to the President-Trophy-winning Washington Capitals in a hard-fought six-game series. In addition, he also won the Calder Trophy, awarded to the league's best rookie.

Laine, in his own right, finished second in voting for the rookie of the year award, scoring in nearly 50 percent of games, with 36 goals in 73 games.

Unlike Matthews, however, Laine did not get to see any playoff action. Nor did any of his teammates. And now the Jets head into 2017 hoping to take the next step.

It's no secret that the Jets just couldn't find a way to keep the puck out of their net last season. Laine himself was quick to identify the issue, saying, "Last season, we just allowed too many goals... It's hard when you have to score three or four goals every night just to win."

The numbers do back up what he's saying.

Offensively, the Jets were a powerhouse, finishing seventh in



The Jets take the ice.

DUSTIN KRAHN

the league with 249 goals. In their own end, however, they were stuck fishing the puck out of their own net the fourth most times in the league, allowing 255 goals. Thus, in an effort to tighten up play in their end, Kevin Cheveldayoff and co. signed checker Matt Hendricks, two-way defenceman Dimitri Kulikov, and goaltender Steve Mason.

The additions of Hendricks and Kulikov aren't quite as significant as Mason, but their hard-nosed, solid defensive play will benefit the Jets in their own end.

Since returning to Winnipeg in 2011-12, goaltending has been a never-ending issue for the Jets. Is Steve Mason the answer?

He's coming off his worst season in four years, but at 6'4, with quick reflexes, Mason holds a solid set of skills. Over the last three seasons, he's posted a .918 save percentage alongside a 2.48 goals-against

average, while going 67-58-29. His quality start percentage (the percentage of starts in which he met or exceeded the league average save percentage) over that time is 53.5 percent, which just meets the league average.

As mentioned, however, he's coming off a bad season. If we exclude last season from his quality start percentage, we see it jump to 57 percent, which is still not elite but is above average. At even strength, Mason should help cut their goals-against, as the Jets allowed the third most goals at five-on-five last season.

Sharing the net with Mason is 24-year-old Connor Hellebuyck. Much like Mason, Hellebuyck looks to recover after having the worst season of his young career to date. Last time around, Hellebuyck had no competition and was practically handed the keys to the Jets' net. It's a different story this season.

He and Mason will be forced to compete against one another until one takes the reins.

The goaltender can't be expected to assume full responsibility for a team's poor defensive numbers. There's a team in front of him that must share accountability. And whose job is it to hold these players accountable? The head coach.

In Winnipeg, that's Paul Maurice.

With a year remaining on his contract, and with no extension imminent, all eyes will be on Maurice as he heads into 2017 on the hot seat.

What does Maurice have to do to keep his job? The simple answer is win, but to be more technical he needs to deploy a defensive strategy with more structure and fewer holes. On top of this, he most definitely needs to find a way to keep his team discipline. Over the last three seasons, the Jets have led the league in minor penalties, with 1,001. This doesn't mean the Jets will take zero penalties. Penalties are bound to be taken, and once they are Maurice needs to scheme up a greater penalty kill system. After all, the Jets finished with only the twenty-sixth best unit last season.

If all comes to fruition, Laine and Winnipeg fans could be seeing playoff action for the second time since the franchise's return. It all starts October 4. Be ready!

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Optimist Park Gearing Up for Annual Slo-pitch Tourney

By Chantel Todd

ctodd@nivervillecitizen.com

Île-des-Chênes is known for its Optimist Park, with beautiful diamonds that are well maintained by volunteers in the community.

For more than ten years, Seine River Ball has been putting on one of the largest slo-pitch tournaments around at Optimist Park. On September 15-17, approximately 32 teams will gear

up and play ball.

Organizer Sheldon Dubois explains that this tournament is run fully by volunteers, with the exception of umpires, who are hired. The tournament is believed to be the biggest community tournament around.

"Not many places have enough diamonds to accommodate that many teams," says Dubois.

Teams can register for either of the two different leagues at the

tournament, the recreation side or the competitive side. On the recreation side, teams are just there to have fun and have a good time. The competitive side is for those who are in it to win!

The recreation entry fee is \$175 and the competitive entry fee is \$225. Spectators are free to come watch as they wish and cheer on the teams.

Teams and spectators will be welcomed with a scrumptious

pancake breakfast on both Saturday and Sunday.

And let's not forget the beer gardens. What would a slo-pitch tournament be without beer gardens?

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Contact Sheldon via text at 204-232-9342 or email sheldon.dubois@gmail.com.

IDC Introduces All-Girls Hockey

By Brenda Sawatzky

bsawatzky@nivervillecitizen.com

While hockey is almost a prerequisite sport for boys in rural Manitoba, girls have more recently been introduced to the game and are loving it. Kristen Fontaine of the Île-des-Chênes Minor Hockey Association board has been working to bring an all-girls team to the Ritchot and Niverville area—and she's seen an exceptional level of interest.

Though Canadian female hockey teams date back to the late nineteenth century, it took 100 years for women's hockey to be recognized on national and international levels. Provinces like Ontario, British Columbia, and Alberta were at the forefront of women's hockey throughout the late twentieth century. In the last number of years, Winnipeg has also introduced all-girls programming.

Girls in rural Manitoba, however, are often left out in the cold.

"In rural Manitoba there is limited programming for girls to play all-girls hockey," says Fontaine. "Historically, girls have played with the boys until they are about 13 years old, when the game becomes quite a bit more physical."

Fontaine says that rural female hockey players can be accepted to play in the Winnipeg all-girls league at the Atom level (ages nine to ten years). Many who apply are not accepted. She adds that girls in the Novice (ages seven and eight) and Initiation levels (ages four to six) are never accepted, leaving many young girls with few options other than to play on co-ed teams.

In the fall of 2016, Kim Paull, currently the female hockey rep for the RM of Macdonald's hockey association, decided to organize an all-girls Novice team. She started with nine girls, but within two weeks of recruiting she had 16 players signed up. Paull quickly discovered that Stonewall had also been organizing all-girls exhibition games for a few years. Together, she and a woman from Stonewall proceeded to create an exhibition schedule for their teams to play each other.

This spring, Fontaine recognized the need for a local all-girls hockey team when her eight-year-old daughter decided not to play in the fall if



Hockey players Amélie Fontaine, Josée d'Auteuil, Evangeline Golding, and Emma Vincent.

by KRISTEN FONTAINE

she had to play on a boys' team again. So Fontaine joined the IDC Minor Hockey Association (MHA), became their female rep, and came into contact with all these other women who were already working to bring all-girls hockey to rural communities.

"It's not a board," says Paull of the committee the women have formed. "It's just a committee of all the female hockey reps from each association, working together to create a fun environment for girls to play hockey."

This year, women from Stonewall, Macdonald, Île-des-Chênes, Lorette, and Springfield banded together to create the Perimeter Female Hockey Alliance (PFHA). This is not a league per se. Instead the program has been sanctioned by Hockey Manitoba to play on an exhibition basis.

"An exhibition team is still sanctioned by Hockey Manitoba, but the games aren't monitored and scores aren't kept in the same way," says Fontaine. "They're just for fun. In our case, because we're trying to mirror the original league as much as possible, we will be keeping track of wins and losses and ranking the teams within the PFHA, but Hockey Manitoba won't pay any attention to this."

Currently, the PFHA is comprised of four teams from Macdonald, three from Stonewall, two each from Lorette and Springfield, and one with players from both Île-des-Chênes and Niverville. The

latter team will be known as the IDC Elks.

"We've had to do some recruiting," Fontaine says. "I sent letters to the local schools and increased our numbers by accepting some girls from Niverville. From there we started to realize that this could be big. It could potentially increase our female numbers dramatically if we continue to promote our program and offer female hockey at a young age."

And that is exactly what the PFHA hopes the outcome will be.

"[The IDC Elks] are doing everything in our power to ensure that we advertise and promote this program in the hopes that more girls will come out and lace up," Fontaine says. "Throughout the year we will be hosting Female Hockey Days, a kick-off tournament, and some fundraising activities to incite people to learn more and get their daughters interested in the game. Any girl who wants to play hockey is welcome, regardless of her background."

Though the first team in Île-des-Chênes will play at the Novice level, Fontaine says plans are already in the works to start an Initiation team as well. The other communities in the PFHA have already begun their Initiation programs this season.

"We will be organizing some games for them throughout the season," adds Fontaine. "[But] because we don't have enough Initiation level players, they will be rostered with the

co-ed teams and throughout the season we'll get any girls who would like to play together to play some all-girls games. We feel that in some cases, this will get them to stick it out and play all-girls hockey later on. Often we see girls fall off the roster after a year or two in the [co-ed] Initiation level."

The IDC Elks have moved ahead with fall fundraising efforts to assist them with their financial targets for the 2017-18 year. They held a bottle drive on August 28, and they will host a garage and bake sale on September 16 at the Île-des-Chênes Arena. They will also use the September 16 event to provide information to any parents whose daughters may be interested in the program.

A Female Hockey Day event is being planned in Île-des-Chênes for early October, details to be announced.

"The Female Hockey Days will be open to all girls from ages six to ten who are interested in playing hockey," says Fontaine. "Whether they've played before or not will make no difference. We're hoping to get some good mentors on and off the ice to give them a real experience and hopefully recruit a few more players at all levels."

The PFHA's season kick-off tournament is scheduled for October 8 in Île-des-Chênes.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

For more details about the IDC Elks, contact Kristen Fontaine at kris82@mymts.net or 204-470-8500.

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IN BRIEF



JOEY VILLANUEVA

Soccer to Light Up Hespeler Park This Fall

By Chantel Todd

ctodd@nivervillecitizen.com

The Niverville Panthers, both girls and boys, have been practicing all August for the start of the upcoming soccer season. In June, it was announced that NCI would be hosting not one but two major tournaments in the fall. It's an exciting opportunity for students.

The first tournament falls on Saturday, September 23, in Hespeler Park. The games will be played on Fields A and B, starting at 9:00 a.m. and running throughout the day until 3:30 p.m.

In October, NCI will host one of the largest sporting events in Niverville this year: the 2017 High School Soccer Provincials. The two-day event is also set to take place at Hespeler Park. The action starts on Friday, October 13 and will continue into Saturday.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Visit the NCI website for details: www.nci.hsd.ca

Niverville Boys Rush into Soccer Playoffs

The Niverville Rush boys soccer team has been busy practicing all summer in preparation for the playoffs. The team qualified in the spring, and have been sitting tight for their chance to make good. They will enter the playoff as one of the top seeds.

The Rush will face four playoff games in September, two of which will be home games in Niverville's Hespeler Park. The first match is scheduled for Tuesday, September 5. They'll play again a couple of days later on Thursday, September 7. Both games run from 5:30 through 7:30 p.m.

The Rush are competing for the first time this year in the Winnipeg Youth Soccer Association (WYSA). The move has exposed them to a higher level of competition, to which they have so far responded with great success. The team completed the regular season with eight wins, two losses, and two ties. In total, they scored 42 goals and were scored against just 15 times thanks to a tight defence and strong goalkeeping.

Delivering Motorsport Action for the Whole Family

By Keiron Berndt

Motosports are becoming increasingly popular across the prairies and the movement is only getting bigger as time goes on. However, the steep costs to get involved, both physical and wallet-wise, can be a drawback.

Enter the Manitoba Dirt Riders Association (MDRA). Their goal is to create a family-friendly community for riders of all ages across Manitoba while hosting sustainable events that are cost-effective, challenging to riders, yet action-packed for fans and riders alike.

MDRA's humble beginnings can be traced back to 2008, when they had only a handful of riders. They now host six annual events and have more than 300 members. While 300 racers may sound like a lot, Vice-President Dan Huberdeau strongly believes that even more riders will be showing up in the near future.

"It's quite easy to get involved," says Huberdeau. "All you need is safety equipment and a proper bike."

Proving Huberdeau's point, an estimated 50 new racers attended the most recent race, the Morden



Kids take part in a recent MDRA event.

RACHEL RAND

Corn Scrambler on August 26–27.

Especially popular is Enduro racing, which involves dirt bikes racing across many different terrains. Race distances can vary from eight to 13 kilometres, and locations range over the season from Virden and Minota to Morden and Lee River.

A fan favourite is the infamous Horsepower Hill in St. Lazare.

"Horsepower Hill is special," says Huberdeau. "It provides an up-close look at the racing, as spectators get to watch riders tackle the daunting challenge that's always

filled with excitement."

Enduro racing is a great sport for riders of all ages, whether they're four or 70. The races can run anywhere from an hour to two hours, and there's something for everyone.

Most important, Enduro racing isn't always about winning or losing. Huberdeau says it's about learning.

"Enduro racing doesn't just teach riders how to ride and improve their skills," he says. "They also learn to respect the road, gauge speed, avoid objects, understand

terrain types, and [master] basic mechanical skills."

Along with these skills, Enduro racing tests the riders' mental and physical strength. Track terrains can change in a heartbeat and include dirt, mud, rocks, logs, streams, and everything in between. In the end, the rider has to decide the best way to tackle obstacles.

MDRA's events feature race classes for all levels of experience, from Peewee and Junior all the way to Veteran and Masters.

With summer on the way out, there's just one race left in the season. Huberdeau encourages everyone to come out and watch the action, or even get involved. The final race is set to take place in Minota on September 16–17. Along with guaranteed smiles, fans and racers will enjoy a community meal prepared by MDRA volunteers.

Between great food, fast-paced racing, and a wholesome community, MDRA races are a great experience for the whole family.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

■ www.manitobadirtiders.com

A Summer of Bright-Eyed Bootcamps

fitville

By Chantel Todd

ctodd@nivervillecitizen.com

As I set my alarm at night this summer, I often dreaded the morning bootcamp I signed up for. What was I thinking? Why was I doing this again?

I always got my things ready the night before so that I could wake up at 5:45 a.m., put my workout gear on, grab my water bottle, and head out the door. All with my lovely hubby! I'd asked him if he wanted

to join me for this bootcamp at Hespeler Park.

"Sure," he'd said, not knowing it was at 6:00 a.m., three times a week.

As it turned out, I really enjoyed the morning workout. The fresh air felt great on my skin, and it really woke me up. I got home at 7:05, showered, and still had time to relax before going to work.

The workouts were great! We did a different type of workout each morning, whether it was tabatas, circuits, supersets, or interval

training. It was always fun...

Well, except for the one day when I threw out my right hip and couldn't walk or sit down afterward. A couple of visits to the physical therapist fixed that right up!

I learned to really enjoy getting active first thing in the morning, as it always made me feel great for the rest of day.

With the summer almost over, though, and the mornings staying darker for longer, my enjoyment

of getting up early has decreased significantly.

I still enjoy my regular soccer games once a week, and I also joined the summer slo-pitch league here in Niverville. I certainly kept myself busy this summer.

With fall on the horizon, I'll be right back into Zumba—my favourite workout of all. When soccer finally ends, I'll have to settle for evening walks with dogs.

Before it gets too cold outside, that is.

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Last year's booth about the Crow Wing Trail.

NIVERVILLE RECREATION

The Recreation and Wellness Showcase Is Here

By Chantel Todd

ctodd@nivervillecitizen.com

Every fall for the past nine years, the Niverville Recreation Commission has put on the Recreation & Wellness Showcase to highlight all the local sports and rec opportunities available to residents, not to mention giving people a chance to talk with local health professionals and get to know their neighbours.

This year, the showcase on September 12 will feature 20 different booths ranging from hockey and ringette to skating

and the Crow Wing Trail. Canadian Blood Services will be on hand, too, with information about their upcoming blood drives. There is still space available to showcase your health, recreation, or sport opportunity in Niverville.

The evening will also include demonstrations from local dance artists and Taekwondo practitioners. The Prairie Soul Dance Company will heat up the floor at 6:30 p.m., with Taekwondo following at 7:30. All demonstrations will be held in the atrium. Seating will be provided.

The showcase is a good opportunity to register your children in a variety of programs. But adults can register in programs too, of course! A full list of booths is available on the Niverville Recreation website (below).

The doors will be open from 5:00–8:00 p.m.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

■ There is still space available to showcase your health, recreation, or sport opportunity in Niverville. Visit www.nivervillerecreation.com for details.



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NOTICE OF APPLICATION
TOWN OF NIVERVILLE
REVISED WASTEWATER RATES
WASTEWATER UTILITY

August 28, 2017

The Town of Niverville (Town) has applied to the Public Utilities Board (Board) for revised wastewater rates for Town of Niverville Utility (Utility) as set out in By-Law No. 782-17, read for the first time on August 15, 2017. Rates were last approved in 2012 in Board Order No. 156/12.

The current rates and proposed rates are provided:

	Current By-law 711-12	Proposed Year 1	Proposed Year 2	Proposed Year 3
Quarterly service charge	\$ 4.05	\$ 5.36	\$ 5.47	\$ 5.58
Unmetered services flat rate per REU	\$ 58.15	\$ 64.31	\$ 66.06	\$ 67.85
Minimum Quarterly Charge*	\$ 62.20	\$ 69.67	\$ 71.53	\$ 73.43

*Based on 1 Residential Equivalency Unit

Details of the Town's application are available for review at the Town office or the Public Utilities Board's office. Any questions concerning the application for revised rates, or the operation of the Utility, should be sent directly to the Town.

If you have concerns/comments regarding the Town of Niverville application for wastewater rates please go to www.pubmanitoba.ca and provide your comment. *Please note all comments will be forwarded to the Town.*

Questions or comments should be sent on or before September 29, 2017.

The Public Utilities Board is the provincial regulatory agency that reviews and approves rates for water and wastewater utilities in Manitoba, with the exception of the City of Winnipeg. The Board's review process involves:

- the Utility filing a rate application to the Board,
- the public notification of proposed rate changes,
- the Board's review of the application through a public hearing or paper review process, and
- the issuance of a Board Order which outlines the Board's decision on the rate application and the rates to be charged.

The Manitoba Ombudsman has recently issued privacy guidelines for administrative tribunals. The PUB is mindful of its obligations under those guidelines. Its decisions in respect of the application being considered will be sensitive to the guidelines. Personal information will not be disclosed unless it is appropriate and necessary to do so. However, the PUB advises participants that these proceedings are public and that as a result, personal information protections are reduced.

The Board will then decide whether any further notice is required and whether to proceed with a public hearing or paper review process. All concerns received by the Board will be considered in the Board's decision on rates to be charged.

PLEASE BE ADVISED THAT IN CONSIDERING THIS APPLICATION, THE PUBLIC UTILITIES BOARD MAY OR MAY NOT FIND IT NECESSARY TO DETERMINE RATES DIFFERENT FROM THOSE APPLIED FOR BY THE APPLICANT.

Note: All proceedings will be conducted in accordance with the Board's Rules of Practice and Procedure which the Board may vary in order to constrain regulatory costs. The Rules are available at www.pubmanitoba.ca.

"Original Signed By:"
Jennifer Dubois, CPA, CMA
Assistant Associate Secretary
Manitoba Public Utilities Board



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Arts & Entertainment

Author Confronts Fear, Asks Big Questions

In St. Cyr's first book, she pits love vs. fear in the ultimate battle royale.

By Evan Braun

✉ editor@nivervillecitizen.com

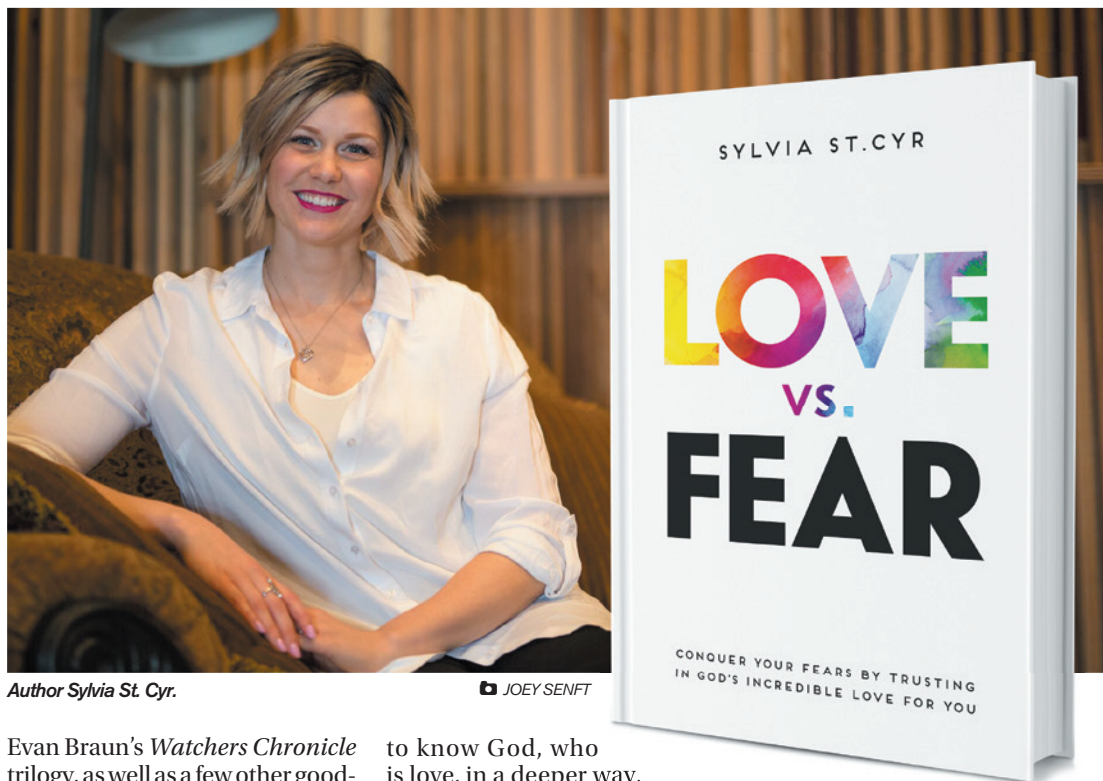
On September 16, author Sylvia St. Cyr is set to launch her first book, *Love vs. Fear*, at McNally Robinson Booksellers in Winnipeg. The event kicks off at 7:30 p.m. Regular readers of *The Citizen* will know St. Cyr from her extensive writing as co-ordinator of the paper's Arts & Entertainment section.

"Everyone battles some sort of fear, whether that is fear of flying, public speaking, your mother-in-law, or failure," says St. Cyr of her passion project. "So the question remained, how do we fight fear so that it doesn't ruin our lives? A couple years ago, I read the Bible verse 1 John 4:18, which says, 'There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear,' and I was intrigued. What does this mean in a practical sense? How can I live in that love zone?"

The book tackles the subject of fear, insecurities, and the mind-sets that hold people back from achieving their dreams, all through a Christian lens.

"In every moment of our lives, we can be filled with love or filled with fear, and our identity plays a huge role in this decision," St. Cyr says. "I spent quite a few years on a journey of finding out how much God loves me. This journey led me to write this book, because the love I found was life-changing and I just couldn't be quiet about that anymore."

St. Cyr will be joined at the launch by local comedian Matt Falk, who will introduce her. She will also be giving away a gift basket which includes a signed copy of her book, Falk's latest comedy album, two CDs by local artist Jordan St. Cyr, signed copies of local author



Author Sylvia St. Cyr.

JOEY SENFT

Evan Braun's *Watchers Chronicle* trilogy, as well as a few other good-ies. Refreshments will be served.

In addition to her book launch on September 16, St. Cyr will be attending the Women's Journey of Faith fall conference in Saskatoon, from October 20-21. A short while later, she'll be appearing alongside author Heather Boersma at the Limitless Women's Conference at Niverville Community Fellowship, from November 3-4.

"I love reading non-fiction books that uplift and inspire," St. Cyr explains. "I find the best non-fiction to be books that I can relate to in some way, but that also push me to grow and learn something amazing, either about myself or the world. This is the hope for my book as well, that anyone who has ever wondered if God's love was actually real and personal, come

to know God, who is love, in a deeper way. When you know your identity, it allows you to live in love, which means that the fears in your life diminish more and more."

Love vs. Fear has been a long time in the making, with the writing having begun three years ago.

"It only took me three months to write the initial rough draft, but then it was on the shelf for a while," St. Cyr acknowledges. "The editing process also took almost two years, but it is such a necessary process if you're going to publish a book. The journey to publish your book will most likely be longer than you anticipate, but if it is something that has been on your heart, then go after it! Allow yourself to make mistakes, and keep writing and pushing on anyway. Talk to someone who has walked the path

before you to find out what worked and what didn't... Even if what you are saying has been said before, you may have a unique way of saying it that can reach a different audience, so don't give up."

Although St. Cyr has spent the last two years writing for *The Citizen*, this is her last month as a regular contributor. She also works full-time at Word Alive Press, a Christian publisher based out of Winnipeg, and has decided to leave the paper to pursue new and exciting opportunities. We wish her well!

FOR MORE INFORMATION

■ www.sylviasblog.com
■ www.facebook.com/authorsylviastcyr

EVENT GUIDE

Worship on the Water

September 10 | 2:00 – 4:00 pm
Hampton Amphitheatre, Niverville. Free.

Sylvia St. Cyr's Book Launch (*Love vs. Fear*)

September 16 | 7:30 p.m.
McNally Robinson Bookstore, Winnipeg. Free.

Painting on the Prairies

September 18 | 7:00 p.m.
Lucky Luc's Bar and Grill, Ste. Agathe. \$35.

Matt Falk Comedy

September 21 | 7:00 p.m.
Pat Porter Centre, Steinbach. Free.

Corks N Canvas - Winetasting

September 22 | 7:00–9:30 p.m.
Steinbach Arts Council, Steinbach. \$25.

Painting on the Prairies

September 26 | 7:00 p.m.
Niverville Heritage Centre, Niverville. \$35.

ONE Worship Night with Jordan St. Cyr

September 30 | 7:00 p.m.
Calvary Temple, Winnipeg. Free.

Send your event listing to:

■ editor@nivervillecitizen.com

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Dental Injuries in Children – What To Do

Kids will be kids. As all parents know, children love to play and whether it be on the playground, at home, or while playing sports, they can fall and have a tooth/teeth break or dislocate. Here is a quick guide on what to do:

1. Broken or dislocated baby tooth – see the dentist promptly so that they may determine if the tooth's nerve may be involved. Treatment may include just smoothing any rough edges, performing a filling, just leaving it as is, or removing it.

2. Dislocated adult tooth – an adult tooth that has been knocked out requires immediate treatment. It should be placed back within the socket within 15 minutes! It can be placed into the mouth within an hour only if the tooth is stored in cold milk, not water as this dries the tooth out. 85% of adult teeth that are placed back with five minutes will survive!

Due to the importance of timing, it is best if whoever the supervising adult is places the tooth back into the socket. Here are the recommended steps:

- a. Hold the tooth carefully from the top*
- b. Remove any dirt by gently rinsing it under salt water or water but do not scrub*
- c. Place the tooth into the socket carefully by hand*
- d. Keep the tooth in place by having the child bite on a towel*
- e. See a dentist as soon as possible*



www.nivervilledental.com



The African Children's Choir.

SARAH WANYANA

African Children's Choir Coming to Niverville

By Sylvia St. Cyr

✉ sstcyr@nivervillecitizen.com

On Sunday, September 10, the African Children's Choir will be performing at the Niverville Community Fellowship at 6:30 p.m. This free evening of music will include traditional songs and gospel favorites sung by 19 children who are touring across Canada.

The African Children's Choir tours under their parent organization, Music for Life, which has educated approximately 52,000 children and

impacted the lives of more than 100,000 people through its relief and development programs. Their goal is to help create new leadership for tomorrow's Africa by focusing on education. The countries they work in are Uganda, Kenya, Rwanda, Sudan, Nigeria, Ghana, and South Africa.

"Children only do one tour, around America and Canada, and some choirs tour the United Kingdom as well," says Lydia Sherwood, who handles public relations for the choir. "After they have toured, they then return home where they attend

the African Children's Choir Primary School. These children's education will now be paid for until the end of university."

The ten girls and nine boys, aged from eight to ten years old, travel on a very large bus. They also travel with chaperones whom the children call "auntie" and "uncle."

"Two [of the chaperones] are from Africa, and they were in the choir when they were younger," says Sherwood. "We are very blessed to stay with host families who provide us with food and a place to sleep,

but [they] also give the children new experiences like swimming and playing with toys."

The African Children's Choir is a non-profit humanitarian and relief organization dedicated to helping Africa's most vulnerable children today so they can help Africa tomorrow.

At the concert, the organization will be accepting freewill offerings to help with their mission.

The choir has had incredible opportunities in the past, including singing alongside artists like Paul

McCartney, Keith Urban, Mariah Carey, and Michael W. Smith.

"We have not been to Niverville before and we are very excited to be coming to Canada," says Sherwood. "We hope there may be new types of food for us, and some of the children really want to see their first snowfall!"

Although let us all hope snow doesn't fall as early as September 10.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

■ www.africanchildrenschoir.com



Todd Anderson, Shauna Harms-Wiebe, Burt Hiebert, Coralee Warkentin, Vic Froese, Gerry Guenther, and Dan Klippenstein (kneeling).



SOUL PURPOSE

Soul Purpose Combines Music and Faith

By Sylvia St. Cyr

✉ sstcyr@nivervillecitizen.com

It's been ten years since the local band Soul Purpose released their debut album. This fall, they will be releasing their second outing. The Christian contemporary album has 12 songs, including three originals: "Come on Home," "At the Cross," and "For All You've Done."

The seven-piece band is led by Todd Anderson, who

sings and plays acoustic guitar. Anderson and keyboard player Dan Klippenstein wrote the three originals on the album. The other band members include Shauna Harms-Wiebe and Coralee Warkentin on vocals, Vic Froese on electric guitar, Burt Hiebert on bass, and Gerry Guenther on drums.

"We have been fortunate enough to be able to record this album at Arcade Studios in Niverville," says Anderson.

"Evan and Gerry St. Cyr have a state of the art studio and have been very professional and extremely encouraging during the whole recording process."

The band formed back in 2002, after a few of them were asked to play a church event. That same year, they decided to become a band and chose the name Soul Purpose.

"Over the years we have played different worship services and various community

events as well as local festivals and fundraisers," Anderson adds.

The band is already planning some bookings for the summer of 2018, as well as their album launch. They are available to play local events.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

■ www.facebook.com/soul.purpose.manitoba



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Dancer Receives Grant to Study Belly-Dancing

By Sylvia St. Cyr

✉ sstcyr@nivervillecitizen.com

Local dancer Accalia Robertson recently received a travel/professional development grant from the Manitoba Arts Council to study the art of belly-dancing in Portland, Oregon.

Robertson, who recently moved to Niverville, has been studying this style of dance for 11 years. She has a day job in Winnipeg, but dance is her passion. She performs belly-dancing for hire at events, weddings, and restaurants.

"I dance with Deep Roots, Strong Dance, a dance company that I founded in 2012," Robertson says. "I have been invited to dance in several productions by The Prairie Dancers, Frostbite Circus, and The Canadian Palestinian Association of Manitoba."



Accalia Robinson practicing her trade.

IRINA GALEEVA

The Winnipeg-born dancer has studied dance outside of Canada multiple times.

"The eight-elements approach to belly-dance is a four-phase training that was developed by world-renowned dancer and instructor Rachel Brice," says Robertson. "I have self-funded phases one and two, and now with this grant I will undertake phase three: culmination."

Brice will be teaching this third phase out of Portland from August 31 until the end of September.

"There is an incredible and vibrant belly-dance community here," Robertson says, "but you really have to travel outside of Manitoba to progress beyond an intermediate ability."

Robertson and her partner moved to Niverville to get back to a more nature-filled life. She says they've had some pleasant surprises along the way. "Many people that we have met here are so friendly. The very first day we moved here, I met a stranger in line at Subway who offered to pay for our meal."

He simply asked me to 'pay it forward.' We grew up on that same philosophy, so it felt very home-like to encounter that."

Throughout the year, Robertson teaches weekly classes out of her dance studio, and she also offers private lessons. On top of this, she choreographs, directs, and performs for special events.

"Giving back to the community is a big part of my work with my dance company, Deep Roots, Strong Dance," she says. "I've co-produced The Manitoba Fusion Bellydance Showcase for two years, as well as choreographed and performed for The Arabic Heritage Celebration. We used these productions to raise funds for the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) and Mercy For Animals, a farm animal welfare organization. In my special event belly-dance classes, all proceeds are donated to these organizations."

FOR MORE INFORMATION

■ www.deeproots-strongdance.com



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Prov Hosts Second Annual Welcome Week Concert

By Sylvia St. Cyr

✉ sstcyr@nivervillecitizen.com

Welcome Week at Providence University was full of fun activities this year, including a free concert. The concert, open to the public, featured well-known bands The Color and Scribe.

Welcome Week ran from September 1-5 on campus in Otterburne. Normally, this week is intended to help new students become integrated into life at college, but last year the organizers decided to do something a little different. The new Welcome Week traditions include outdoor games, food trucks, and a free concert. Soccer tournaments were held this year for new and former students, as well as a huge

bonfire and a comedy night with local comedian Matt Falk.

"We were blown away by the response to last year's concert featuring the City Harmonic, and it will be our model going forward," says Jerrad Peters, the university's head of marketing and communications.

The campus was able to book two bands this year. The Color is a rock band from right here in southeastern Manitoba. They've won quite a few GMA awards throughout their musical career. Scribe is a hip-hop artist on the Christian music scene. He was born in Jamaica and raised in Canada. Previously he was in the hip-hop collective called KMF.

This year, with Bergen Hall having burned to the ground

during the summer, the campus had an alumni booth set up during the week for former students to share their memories of the men's dormitory.

"Hosting public events allows us to welcome alumni and other friends and constituents to campus, and we find they're often curious to learn about what's happening here," Peters adds. "We want to engage with the general public, and we want the general public to engage with us. Basically, we want to share our excitement about the upcoming school year with everyone. Of course, there's also nothing quite like a hype concert to get students stimulated ahead of the start of classes."

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