

The Citizen

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LOCAL NEWS

New Ste. Agathe Fire Hall Open

■ The RM of Ritchot's new-est fire hall, a state-of-the-art facility, has opened in Ste. Agathe.

Details on Page 14



LOCAL NEWS

Candidates for Civic Election Speak Out

■ Several local races will be decided on October 24, including two council seat races in the RM of Ritchot, three trustee positions in the Seine River School Division, and two trustee positions in the Hanover School Division. Read the details inside.

Details on Pages 3-4, 7-11

SPORTS & RECREATION

Local Man Named Canada's Top Gun

■ In late summer, Paul Richards of Niverville won first place in a national shooting competition held in Selkirk, Manitoba.

Details on Page 32

ARTS & RECREATION

Eastman Choir Under New Leadership

■ The Eastman Choir Association and its six choirs have a new pair of co-presidents, and they are coming out of the gate strong.

Details on Page 33



Dog-Breeders vs. Puppy Mills: What Is the Distinction?

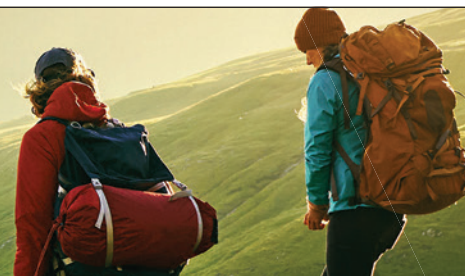
Following a recent controversy in Ritchot, The Citizen digs deeper into the big business of raising puppies for profit.

»» DETAILS ON PAGES 22-24

DEPOSIT PHOTOS

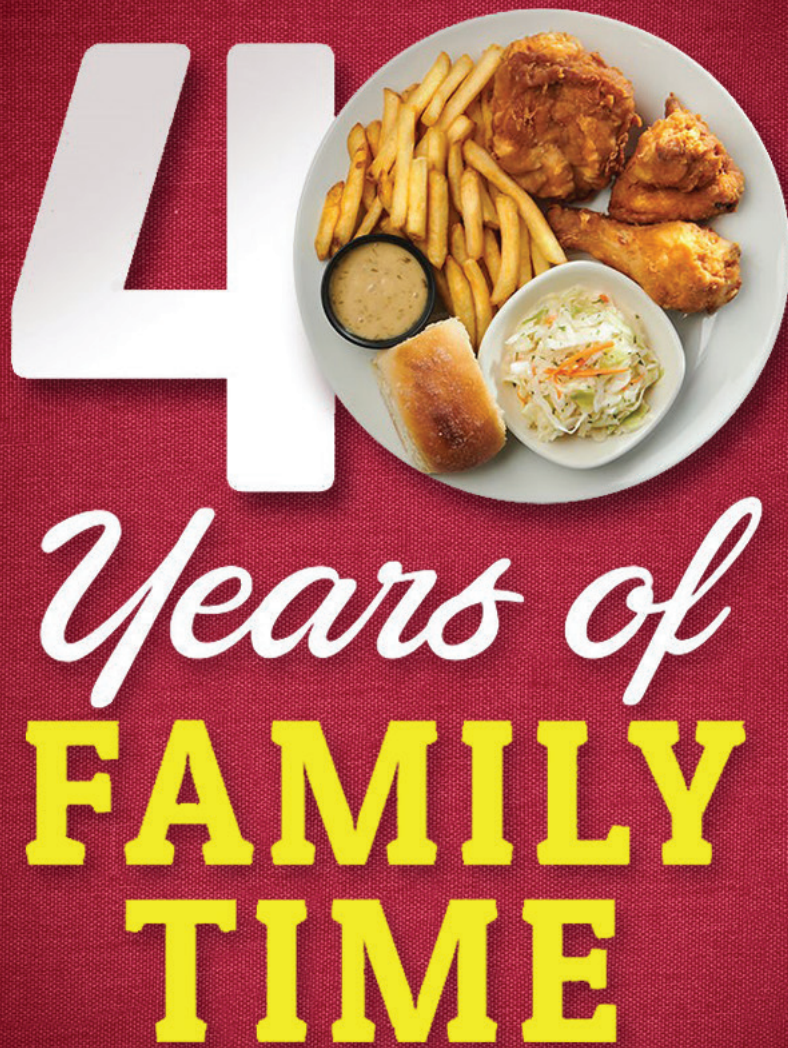
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The Citizen

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Two Ritchot Wards See Race for Council Seat

By Brenda Sawatzky

bsawatzky@nivervillecitizen.com

While Ritchot Mayor Chris Ewen and Councillor Janine Boulanger of Ward 4 are back for another four-year term by acclamation, Ward 3 will see a change this year. Curtis Claydon will be replacing retired councillor Jeannot Robert. Claydon is also accepting his new seat by acclamation with no other nominees coming from the Ste. Agathe area.

Residents in Wards 1 and 2, however, will have a selection on their ballots on October 24. Yves Bérard is running against incumbent Shane Pelletier for the Ward 1 seat, which includes the community of Île-des-Chênes. Residents of Ward 2, including those living in St. Adolphe, will also see two names on their ballot: incumbent Ron Mamchuk and challenger Keith Pearce.



RON MAMCHUK

Ron Mamchuk has served as a Ritchot councillor for four years and is hopeful to regain his seat for another. He says that he brings many qualities to the table, including dedication, experience, leadership, and integrity. In part, his decision to run again was prompted by an interest in seeing to

completion the many projects council currently has underway.

"This council was really emphasizing greenspace," says Mamchuk. "People want walking paths. That seems to be the biggest thing. And of course, like in Tourond Creek, which is our future project, it'll be done, but it's going to take time. We have to see homes sold before we can start these projects."

Baseball diamonds and soccer pitches are also anticipated for development in Tourond Creek down the road.

"We're also still working on a daycare project," he adds. "Hopefully that will happen in the near future in St. Adolphe. And of course, affordable housing for senior citizens. That seems to be another item that we really have to address and we're working on it. We have to find the right developer so that it doesn't cost the municipality any extra taxes."

Mamchuk says that council has applied for grant funding for the Main Street Revitalization project, which is currently on hold until that funding is received.

"Our communities are aging," he acknowledges. "We have concerns about roads and streets and drainage. But it's a process you have to go through. It doesn't just happen overnight. Everything is prioritized. If we don't get revenues from the government from grants, it would need to go on the local taxes, but we try and avoid that as much as possible."

On the whole, he says, the new mayor and council elected 15 months ago have been easy to work alongside

and have provided a good range of knowledgeable insight. In fact, he was proud to be surrounded by the good people in the RM office, from the chief administrative officer to the administration staff and the public works department.

"The biggest thing that was accomplished in the RM this past term was the Ste. Agathe fire station," Mamchuk says. "That is something that we are very pleased to have. It will be really good for Highway 75, because it's a high volume of traffic. It will be a real positive thing for emergency calls, fires, and accidents. We also opened up a new doctor's office in Île-des-Chênes, so there's a lot of positive stuff that's happening and it's ongoing."

As well, he says that council has been working hard to attract new business to the community. During the last term, they've seen a much needed four-way stop installed at the intersection of Highways 200 and 210 and have been working together with the RCMP to curb speeding and theft in the area. Options are being researched for improved internet services.

He agrees with others that council-to-resident communication can be improved and it's something council's already been working on through improvements to the municipal website.

"You've got to listen to the residents," he says. "Residents are very important. They're the ones that select the councillor and that's the role of the councillor, to listen. Residents are the ones living out in the community and they are very knowledgeable about what's

going on. I'm approachable and I listen. And if I can't handle it at my level, the other departments can."

Mamchuk's roots in St. Adolphe go deep. He and his wife Susan have been active members of the community for 43 years. Together they've worked on almost every local committee in years gone by and raised three children here. Two of their grown children have also decided to call St. Adolphe home and are likewise raising families of their own while maintaining an active involvement in the community.

Being a retiree, he feels, provides him with the time needed to really commit himself to the position of councillor. He likes to make himself as available to constituents as possible and can be reached anytime by email or phone with questions or concerns. He hopes to drive home that message with a door-to-door campaign this month.



KEITH PEARCE

Keith Pearce has been a proud resident of St. Adolphe for 23 years and is confident that he knows his community well enough to recognize its needs and shortcomings. He and his wife of 42 years raised their two children in the community, both attending the St. Adolphe School and St. Norbert Collegiate.

"I have put a lot of thought into my decision to run for council," says Pearce.

(continued on page 4)

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IN BRIEF

New App Keeps Ritchot Residents in the Loop

By Evan Braun

✉ editor@nivervillecitizen.com

Two months ago, Ritchot's council launched a new app to help keep residents up to speed about what's happening in local government.

"Our goal is to bring information to our residents at their convenience," says Ritchot Mayor Chris Ewen. "From changes in garbage day to important hearings and fun events, we want all residents to know what's going on."

Ewen touts the app as a convenient solution to the problem of keeping people informed.

"You can receive text, email, or phone call notifications," he says. "You choose the information you want to hear about, and [you] can adjust it with your own account whenever you'd like. We have access to pinpoint where we send the info as well, so if it isn't relevant to a certain area, it saves them from receiving a redundant message or call."

Since the launch, Ritchot Connect has attracted 420 users. Ewen says that council expects that number to hit 1,000 by the end of the year, now that council has approved a marketing budget for the endeavour.

"We are also giving away two iPads for those that register within the next couple of months," Ewen adds. "I believe the draw for the iPads will be in October."

To build the app, Ewen says that council has utilized the services of All-Net, a company specializing in online solutions for municipal governments. The RM's website was also provided by All-Net.

(continued from page 3)

"Over the last few council terms, the drama and mismanagement that was pervasive in running the council and municipality has been frustrating many people in town as well as myself. The straw that broke the camel's back, so to speak, was the way the spring zoning application was being handled by our local representative. After quarterbacking the written and online petitions against the zoning change, I was asked repeatedly to consider running [for council], and after months of thought I decided that I should commit."

Pearce has never before held a council seat, although he did run for council 15 years ago. What he does have is a keen interest in the political processes of the RM. Politicians at the municipal level, he says, should consider themselves humble caretakers of the residents' wishes and hard-earned tax dollars, providing more direct interaction and connection than you might expect at higher levels of government.

"I believe that a councillor should represent his or her constituents in the most honest and open manner possible," says Pearce. "I do not believe that this has been done for a number of terms and that needs to change. St. Adolphe needs to have a proper blend of residential and retail/commercial space to fulfil the potential that almost everyone who lives here knows that it has. Having lived here through the '97 flood, I have witnessed the feeling of 'neighbourhood' that exists and lies just under the surface of everyone. I am proud of that."

Pearce believes that his 24 years of experience in the consulting and design business, where he's assisted many clients in realizing their dream of running their own business, will go a long way toward advancing the community's business sector.

"Understanding the codes, costs, and pitfalls of small business will be a valuable asset to the RM's ability to attract these businesses," he says.

If elected, Pearce adds that he'll

work hard at the further development of the community's recreation facilities and greenspaces.

"I think we need to immediately establish the baseball fields and soccer pitches earmarked for development in the secondary plan," Pearce says. "There is, as far as I am concerned, no valid reason to not have our children using these facilities right now."

Other important areas of development include installing a boat launch where the public can enjoy the river. As well, he'd like to establish a safe parking area for resident and tourist birdwatchers who flock to the area during bird migration season. Currently, he says, cars park along the bridge, causing a dangerous situation and discouraging tourism.

In his mind, the empty building on Main Street once owned by Brodeur Brothers could also be put to valuable use right away by providing space the whole community can enjoy. Fairs, indoor garage sales, vegetable markets, and seminars are just some of the possible uses for this otherwise neglected space.

Pearce would also like to see more effective speed measures applied to the south approach into the community.

"Having personally completed a survey of speeding on this entrance to town, it is abundantly clear that traffic calming measures are a necessity."

Pearce adds that the results of his survey indicated that 75 percent of vehicular traffic entering town was doing so over the speed limit.

Environmental issues are also high on his list of priorities.

"On the whole, I feel that we are responsible for our neighbours both near and far," says Pearce. "I would like to see an effort to take control of invasive species like Purple Loosestrife, which are present in our RM but affect all RMs downstream. Working with adjacent RMs, we might be able to reverse the degradation of the Netley and Libau marshes, an ecosystem that is vitally important in the health of Lake Winnipeg."

As for being a team player along

with the council the municipality elects, Pearce describes himself as calm and level-headed. "In my life and business, I have always worked well with others and look forward to the opportunity to assist the other members of council in any way that I can."

His goal before the election is to meet with every constituent in his ward through door-to-door campaigning.



SHANE PELLETIER

Shane Pelletier was elected to council for the first time just over a year ago in a by-election and is hoping to fill the seat this time for a full four-year term.

"After our 15 months, I have learned a lot and have a solid understanding of the inner workings of the RM," Pelletier says. "I feel this opportunity has given me the insight to be able to serve the community for next term and beyond. While I had many dealings with council before being elected, most of them had to do with recreation and the two RM-owned facilities in Île-des-Chênes. There were some areas where I had to do research and lean on staff and fellow councillors for guidance."

Pelletier adds that he was pleased with the generally harmonious nature of council this past term.

"Our current council works well together," says Pelletier. "At times we have our differences, but we are respectful toward each other and each other's opinions and are able to come up with an

amicable resolution."

Teamwork was required right out of the gate for this group, working diligently to approve the budget within the first month in office in order to restore the financial processes and get things back on track. This, for Pelletier, was a highlight of his time so far as councillor. Other exemplary moments included the strategic planning sessions and council's current work on a recreation master plan.

There have been some major learning curves along the way as well.

"I think most of the struggles between council and constituents have related to communication," Pelletier adds. "While staff follow provincial regulations with regards to notifications regarding conditional use [permits], variations, and bylaws, we consistently hear that residents feel that they didn't know this was being presented. We are in the process of addressing this with the Ritchot Connect app. We believe this will be a great tool to keep constituents informed."

As a resident of Île-des-Chênes for most of his life, Pelletier feels he's got a finger on the pulse of the area. He and his wife raised a son in the community and his daughter still attends Gabrielle-Roy. Pelletier has volunteered for many years as the coach of local hockey and ringette teams and served as president of the minor hockey league.

"I have a great sense of community and I am willing to work with other members of council to help make Ritchot a great place to live, work, and play," he says.

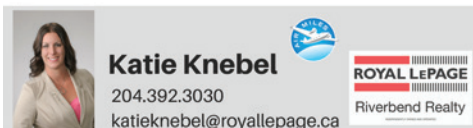
Pelletier notes that residents of Ward 1 will soon see more information regarding his campaign in their mailboxes. He also hopes to pay personal visits to each of his constituents before election day.

NOTE

■ Yves Bérard, candidate for councillor in Ward 1, did not respond to requests for comment.



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Updates from the Ritchot Chamber

The Ritchot Chamber Business Awards Gala
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The awards gala is only one month away! Do you have your tickets yet? This semi-formal event includes dinner, live music, awards, dancing, a casino venue, prizes, and surprise entertainment! Early bird tickets are on sale for \$50 until October 26.

For tickets, visit: www.ritchotchamber.com/galaTo nominate businesses for awards: www.ritchotchamber.com/nominateTo sponsor the event: www.ritchotchamber.com/sponsorEmergency First Aid & CPR Training
October 30, 8:00 a.m. | TransCanada Centre

This first aid and cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) course provides the skills needed to recognize and respond to cardiovascular emergencies and choking for adults, children, and infants. The course is suitable for workplace or general interest. Contact Trina Brulé of Seine River Safety Solutions for more details: trina@seinerivsafety.ca or 204-298-3454.

Wildlife Haven Open for Business Tour
November 6, 6:30 p.m.

This members-only event will provide a tour of the new Wildlife Haven facility and the good work this organization is doing for our local wildlife. Please RSVP to info@ritchotchamber.com if you plan to attend.

Growing Strong

The Ritchot Chamber welcomes Deva Jatt Transport (Howden), Dylan Morrow's Painting (Île-des-Chênes), and veterinarian Angelika Stoutamyer (St. Francois Xavier). Would you like to find out more about the benefits of becoming a Chamber member? Contact Fiona Robinson, Executive Director, at 204-881-2351 or fiona@ritchotchamber.com.

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Norm the dog waits in anticipation of the RuffMutt's grand opening that took place September 15.

GUY BRITTEN

RuffMutt's Expands to a Full Re-“Tail” Location in Niverville

By Fiona Robinson

Many local pet owners are already familiar with RuffMutt's, a Niverville pet-grooming service that has been in operation for five years. September 15 marked a significant date for the company as they expanded into a formal retail location at 10 Cedar Drive (Unit B) in Niverville.

The grand opening took place from 11:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m. at the new location. Special guests included local animal advocate Barry Piasta, who has been raising funds for the Niverville Dog Park. RuffMutt's co-owner Amanda MacLean was also on hand to clip nails for charity at the low cost of \$5.

Two animal rescues were also onsite: the Great Pyreneese Rescue and Steinbach and Area Animal Rescue. Dog trainer Sean Diamond of Diamond in the Ruff brought some adoptable rescue dogs searching for their fur-ever homes.

RuffMutt's is owned and operated by husband-and-wife team Guy Britten and MacLean. MacLean is the dedicated groomer, an interest she acquired at a young age while raising chow chows. Britten, a lifelong dog-lover, takes care of pet food, pet products, and the administrative aspects of the

business. The two recently hired a couple of employees to run the retail aspect. As a result, the couple is enthusiastic about the support and reception.

“We live here. It started here,” says Britten. “We wanted to be a family business and to hire people that are local. We want to support the town.”

Even as the company grows, MacLean remains committed to being the only designated groomer and maintaining her signature one-on-one customer service. (She notes that the grooming side of the business will continue from their home.) For dogs, this means getting their own designated appointment without having to wait anxiously in a kennel for their turn. Whether you have a short-haired dog that just needs a “bath and tidy” or a breed where grooming is essential to their physical health, they're in experienced hands with MacLean.

Although RuffMutt's has been selling pet food for the last four years, the retail expansion allows the company to increase the volume of food sales. When it comes to food and product selection, MacLean and Britten reserve the right to be picky.

“We wouldn't sell anything that we wouldn't give to our

own pets,” says Britten. “We also try to support local or Canadian products as much as we can. This includes Perfectly Raw out of Starbuck and Smack Pet Food from Winnipeg.”

Other popular food brands that customers can count on include Acana, Orijen, Go!, and Now. The business is receptive to requests and input from customers as they make future inventory selections.

“We get to know our customers well so we can work with them on allergy or other food concerns,” explains Britten. “We're not afraid to take back a bag of food if it's not working for their pet.”

The company's pet products include pet beds, collars and leashes, pet deodorizers, toys, kennels, vehicle barriers and floor mats, and an all-important treat selection.

The bottom line is that RuffMutt's saw a need in the community for more advanced pet care and pet products.

“We want to provide people with everything they can get in the city, with the small-town values of service and affordable prices,” Britten says. “We are committed to ensuring our prices are as good or better than what you can find in the city.”



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Wiens Won't Seek Re-Election as HSD Trustee

By Evan Braun

✉ editor@nivervillecitizen.com

Ruby Wiens has sat on the Hanover School Division's board of trustees for 12 years, having served three full terms representing Ward 1, which includes her hometown of Niverville as well as Kleefeld, New Bothwell, and the Crystal Springs Hutterite colony.

"My own perspectives have been challenged and I've become so much more aware of the ongoing daily realities that our administrators and teachers face," Wiens says of her experience on the board. "It's been an exciting time of growth for the division, with the building of two new schools—and a third underway in Niverville. It's also been frustrating at times when cultural issues polarized our communities and isolated our marginalized LGBTQI kids."

Wiens says that she feels humbled to have had a voice in many of the division's weightiest matters over the past decade. She emphasizes the board's role as a governance body, meaning that their primary role is to draft policies.

"I'm particularly proud of our Respect for Human Diversity Policy that we drafted four and a half years ago in response to Bill 18," says Wiens.

At the time of its drafting, the policy included protection from discrimination in matter of religion, cultural background, physical disability, sexual orientation, and other protected characteristics specified in Manitoba's Human Rights Code. Recently, she says the division has added protection for transgender students.

"I was very taken aback four and a half years ago when Bill 18 first brought the needs of our gay kids to the forefront," Wiens says. "They needed a safe and affirming space within the schools in which to meet. The government at that time passed a bill that mandated the formation



Ruby Wiens.

CONOR GERBRANDT

of student-led gay-straight alliances as a necessary accommodation for every publicly funded school in Manitoba. The resistance and public pushback to this has been disheartening. I do believe that as more conversation and education is being initiated in our division at the board level, and with parents, staff, and community groups, there is increasing acknowledgment that our LGBTQI group is a marginalized one that truly deserves understanding and respect. I was honoured to walk in the first Steinbach Gay Pride Parade in 2016 in support of our LGBTQI students and friends. It was an awesome celebration and a deeply meaningful experience for me."

Another big highlight was the beginning of construction of the new Niverville high school, a development long in the making.

"Since my second term in 2010, a new school for Niverville has been an agenda item, so to actually now see the physical building taking shape is very gratifying," she says.

Finally, Wiens is happy to say that meaningful communication

has significantly improved between the board and parents. In addition to receiving invaluable feedback through surveys, the division now holds divisional parent council liaison meetings twice per year.

"We've held community forums during difficult community transitions," Wiens explains. "In Niverville, we initiated a forum when we started to move the Grade Fives and Sixes to the NCI campus. We also initiated community forums in New Bothwell and other communities affected by the rural Grade Nines moving to the newly expanded SRSS."

Wiens concludes by encouraging the various candidates who have stepped forward to join this year's trustee election.

"I wish you well," she says. "Please remember that if elected, you are here for all kids, all students. You will serve students and families from very diverse backgrounds. No one should be marginalized or maligned. Only in that context of safety and acceptance can authentic learning truly take place."

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Trustee Candidates Speak Out

On Wednesday, October 24, residents of the Hanover School Division and Seine River School Division will have their say in this year's trustee election.



EVAN
BRAUN

✉ editor@nivervillecitizen.com

Many council seats in the RM of Ritchot and the Town of Niverville are going uncontested this year, with the entirety of Niverville's council and three of five members of Ritchot's council, including the mayor, getting elected by acclamation.

As a result of this situation, many people may come to the conclusion that there's no reason for them to cast a vote in the October 24 election.

However, even if you don't find yourself headed to the ballot box to elect members of your local council, you still have an important electoral decision to mull over—one which often gets little media attention but which nonetheless has a big impact on our everyday lives.

In both the Hanover School Division's Ward 1, which includes Niverville and New Bothwell, and in the Seine River School Division's Ward 2, which includes Île-des-Chênes, St. Adolphe, and Grande Pointe, a full slate of candidates are vying for positions on their school boards.

Although we tend not to discuss school board issues as often as we discuss those relating to our municipal councils, school trustees carry a significant responsibility.

In short, this election matters.

"The role of trustee demands deliberation in matters of fiscal responsibility and policy, of educational programming, of staffing, of liaison and connection with our parent councils and other community groups, and in supporting the superintendent's team as they bring direction and leadership with a deeper learning philosophy to the schools in the division," says Ruby Wiens, the outgoing trustee for Hanover School Division's Ward 1. After 12 years and three terms on the HSD board, she has decided not to run for re-election. "Most importantly, the role of trustee requires a passion for kids and an awareness that the decisions made around the board table affect their health and success as learners and as people."

In order to help our readers make their decision and get to know the candidates better, The Citizen has asked each candidate for trustee a few questions clarifying their experiences and qualifications.

Here is what they had to say.

Ward 2 | Seine River School Division

5 candidates, 3 open positions



JENNIFER STEFANSSON

JENNIFER STEFANSSON
INCUMBENT

Q: What do you feel is the greatest asset you can bring to the table in the role of trustee?

A: I am the only professionally designated accountant currently on the board and running for re-election. I am a CPA-CA and have a Master's Degree in Professional Accounting. My financial background has helped me in my role as the Chair of the Finance and Operations Committee as I liaise with the auditors and help to ensure proper controls are in place over the public funding. I am open and honest and a great listener. I advocate for the stakeholders in our division and am an active member of our community, volunteering on boards every chance I get.

Q: What previous experiences have helped prepare you for this position?

A: In my professional career, I lead the Audit & Risk Management department in a large international company where I oversee the company's policies and Enterprise Risk Management program. My experience in my career has been transferred to my role in the board as the Chair of the Finance and Operations Committee and a member of the Governance Committee as I work to ensure proper fiscal management by questioning policies and procedures in place.

Q: What are your greatest priorities when it comes to working as a member of the SRSD board?

A: Students are my number one priority. Student learning is of utmost importance and ensuring we

have the resources in place to help students and staff to accomplish goals is a priority. Staff well-being is another priority of equal rank. We need to ensure we have engaged staff who are active in the students' academic careers to help them to strive to be the best learners they can be. Providing staff access to resources and learning opportunities is key. Lastly, having an inclusive environment that is conducive to open communication is a priority. I want to make sure everyone feels they have a voice and can be heard and valued for their opinions.

Q: Is there anything else you would like voters to know about you?

A: I am a mother of four children and a vested parent in our school system in both the Immersion and English streams, having one child in high school in French immersion, two in elementary in English, and one who is beginning preschool. I am an active community volunteer as the treasurer of both the Lorette Family Fun Group and the Lorette Skatepark project. I believe that actions speak louder than words and have shown my commitment to our great community through the work I do as a volunteer. My daytime job prevents me from being active in my children's classrooms, so my way of giving back to the education system is to offer my professional experience through my work as a school trustee. I have loved the last six years of being on the board and would be honoured to serve our community in the upcoming term!



SEAN MAGUET

SEAN MAGUET

Q: What do you feel is the greatest asset you can bring to the table in the role of trustee?

A: I have been involved on sports teams my entire life and also been involved with volunteering my time on various boards and groups. In all these cases, I have learned what it is like to be part of a team and how to pull together to achieve a common goal. In the case of a school trustee, I would work extremely hard with my school board team and all other concerned parties to ensure that the children of the Seine River School Division get the best education and guidance they can get, as I strongly believe that they are our future.

Q: What previous experiences have helped prepare you for this position?

A: I was voted the Team Leader of my entrepreneurship practicum while enrolled in the Business Administration Program at Red River College. My responsibilities included overseeing a team of 12, which included a secretary, writer, accounting team, marketing team, and administration team. I oversaw all these departments and was the liaison with our professor and business groups in the community whom we met with.

While working at Great-West Life, I was asked to help organize a company soccer league and hockey league.

Since moving to Lorette, I have had the opportunity to help young girls and boys in the community enjoy a great experience playing both ringette and soccer by coaching in both sports and being a current member of the Lorette Ringette Board. I am also a current member of the Eastman Ringette Board.

Q: What are your greatest priorities when it comes to working as a member of the SRSD board?

A: If I am given the opportunity of being a school trustee for the Seine River School Division, it would include doing whatever is needed to enhance the experience of all students during their time as a student and prepare them for a happy and successful future. I believe the most important thing I can do is to help our children get all the advantages possible at Seine River, which includes giving them all the resources and help they need to reach their potential.

Q: Is there anything else you would like voters to know about you?

A: I grew up in the small town of

Ste. Rose du Lac, which is a smaller version of many of the communities in the Seine River School Division. I moved to Winnipeg after graduating high school and lived in Winnipeg until 2015. I am married with one beautiful seven-year-old daughter who is the reason I am running for the position of school trustee. My wife is also from a small town, and prior to our daughter beginning school we decided that we wanted to move to a small town to give her all the advantages that we had growing up. After looking at many places in the area, we ended up moving to Lorette and immediately loved every minute of it. I have gotten involved in volunteering in the community ever since we moved here and I would like to continue to serve and give back to this community and surrounding area by working hard as a school trustee.



VICKY KIANSKY

VICKY KIANSKY

Q: What do you feel is the greatest asset you can bring to the table in the role of trustee?

A: I believe my biggest contribution would be my policy skills. I have six years of experience researching, writing, developing, and delivering effective policies and programs. The primary role of the board is to set policy and I know who needs to be at the table on the front end, how to solve problems during the process, how to communicate and train leaders on the changes, and how to hold the right people accountable on the back end to achieve success. Change happens with good policy, and good policy begins with the right people at the table—trustees, educators, parents, government, local community, and children—working collaboratively and acting

in the best interest of the children with integrity, respect, skill, and dedication.

Q: What previous experiences have helped prepare you for this position?

A: I have many years of experience working on committees and councils. I have been co-chair of United Way's GenNext Engagement Committee and Day of Caring Committee, working closely with both community groups and stakeholders. I was also a council member for six years with United Way and am currently a Fund Development Committee member with Bookmates, an early literacy program for families and children, where I have been effectively working with others to collectively reach our goals.

Additionally, my thesis work through my Master's Program in Family Social Services taught me the value and importance of early child development. My decade of being a big sister for the Big Brothers and Sisters organization has taught me the value of mentorship for children. These experiences, combined with 13 years working for the province as a financial officer and policy analyst, contribute to a well-rounded board candidate.

Q: What are your greatest priorities when it comes to working as a member of the SRSD board?

A: First and foremost, my greatest priority is ensuring all decisions made by the board are in the best interest of the children and community we are serving. I think it is important to remember that children also have a voice and, where appropriate, they should be consulted so we can make the best decisions with them rather than for them. Empowering children not only gives them valuable life skills, it gives them confidence and a sense of ownership as well.

Secondly, I want to ensure that communication with parents, teachers, and the community is a two-way street. I want to determine how we can better share information with parents but also hear and address their concerns. The board has an

important role in guiding the direction of schools and it is important to acknowledge that we cannot do it alone.

Q: Is there anything else you would like voters to know about you?

A: I am passionate about education. I have the knowledge and skills to be a valuable contributor to the board and I have the drive and motivation to see the board succeed and, more importantly, see our children thrive. As the only candidate west of Lorette, I also want to bring some much needed diversity to board. Ward 2 encompasses three major towns and our board should reflect that with a greater distribution of members.

I understand what it takes to work together with a team. I know how to listen effectively, ask the right questions, and stay focused. As a new board member, I would be bringing a different voice, fresh ideas, and new perspectives to the table, developing innovative goals and finding ways to continuously improve our children's education.



CHRISTINE ROSKOS

CHRISTINE ROSKOS
INCUMBENT

Q: What do you feel is the greatest asset you can bring to the table in the role of trustee?

A: I believe my connection to the communities, with having my kids currently in the school system and involved in various activities, allows

me to have an ear to the ground with concerns and changes that our stakeholders would like to see in our education system.

Q: What previous experiences have helped prepare you for this position?

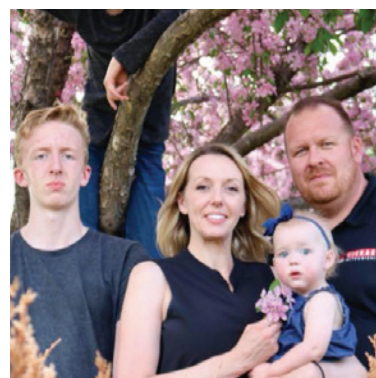
A: Prior to my first term as a trustee, I was involved with the Parent Advisory Council for six years. I took a very active role on the PAC, serving as President for much of that time. I have also served on several boards throughout our community. I want to continue to be the community voice at the board table. Coming from a French language background and seeing the benefits of a bilingual education, I would like our division to continue to enhance our French Immersion education. During my first term as trustee, I sat on the Governance, Communication, and Human Resources sub-committees. I am also an administrative assistant and event planner for an agricultural trade show.

Q: What are your greatest priorities when it comes to working as a member of the SRSD board?

A: SRSD has recently made a priority of enhancing our students' emotional, cognitive, physical, and social well-being. This will be a big priority and endeavour over the next four years and I look forward to the support of the St. Adolphe, Île-des-Chênes and Lorette communities to provide me with the opportunity to be a part of this work. Meeting all of our students' needs and ensuring they grow up to be resilient critical thinkers is important to me both as a parent and community member.

Q: Is there anything else you would like voters to know about you?

A: I was born and raised just outside of Lorette and completed my education in the French school of the Seine River School Division, which later separated to the DSFM. Together with my husband, we are raising our three kids on a family farm in Dufresne. Our kids attend the French Immersion grade school and high school in Lorette.



JESSALYN CAHILL

JESSALYN CAHILL
INCUMBENT

Q: What do you feel is the greatest asset you can bring to the table in the role of trustee?

A: I believe the greatest asset I bring to the role of trustee is my unrestrained passion for the students, staff, and all stakeholders of Seine River School Division. I boldly represent stakeholders at all meetings. I am not afraid to stand alone on issues I know matter to the people of SRSD. I have roots in all the communities of Ward 2, which gives me the understanding and drive I need to conduct myself as a true servant to these communities. I think my passion shows in that I joined the local parent council 11 years ago before I had children attending school. I have a genuine interest in high-quality education.

Q: What previous experiences have helped prepare you for this position?

A: I think the best experience I have is the past eight years of being on the board. I have never failed to present the wants and concerns of stakeholders at the board table. I have learned how to approach situations facing the local education system effectively, enabling me to make real change possible.

Q: What are your greatest priorities when it comes to working as a member of the SRSD board?

A: My single greatest priority is to accurately represent the communities in my ward, to voice their concerns and priorities at the

board table. What do I hear from my communities? I hear we care about keeping class sizes modest, we question and want to be informed about multi-aged classes, we want improved French learning in both the French Immersion and the English stream, we want more choices when it comes to exploring band and arts, we want to attract and maintain passionate teachers, we want improved access to sports and more sport program options at all skill and grade levels, we care about the well-being of students at all ages, and we want middle years class choices such as home economics and woodworking.

I am also interested in developing a system where student voice becomes a strength in our division. I am interested in keeping students engaged in school while preparing them for success after high school. My hope for SRSD is to provide an environment which supports every student and every staff member in their quest to achieve their best!

Q: Is there anything else you would like voters to know about you?

A: I grew up for the most part in St. Adolphe, where I started my journey in education. My family relocated to Grande Pointe in my teen years, which saw me graduating from College Lorette Collegiate. This is also where I met my husband, a lifelong resident of Lorette. We have three children together, ages 14, ten, and one and a half. We have lived in the Lorette and Île-des-Chênes area since 2004. I like to volunteer my time with various community groups and causes, including Lorette Junior Youth at SRC. I enjoy cheering on my children at their sports, which include hockey, baseball, basketball, swimming, and gymnastics. In my spare time, you can find me reading, learning a new skill, or begging my family to play a board game with me.

(continued on page 10)

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MYRON DYCK

Thank you for your support these last four years! I look forward to the next four and to challenging myself and council to work harder and to be even better in serving all of you, because you deserve it!

(continued from page 9)

Ward 1 | Hanover School Division

4 candidates, 2 open positions



CARISA KLASSEN

CARISA KLASSEN

Q: What do you feel is the greatest asset you can bring to the table in the role of trustee?

A: I'm an ear to the ground. I'm a mom of three school girls. I walk them to school every day and I volunteer in order to meet and interact with other children, parents, and school staff. I'm a good listener, goal-oriented, and can make decisions without emotional influence.

Q: What previous experiences have helped prepare you for this position?

A: My previous role as a procedure writer and auditor for a feed company, and my current role as the CFO for a local business, have given me experience in the areas of policy, procedure, and finance. Life experiences as an empathetic and sensitive person have enabled me to relate to the needs of others and given me the drive to set change in motion when necessary.

Q: What are your greatest priorities when it comes to working as a board member?

A: Working together with staff of schools to create a healthy atmosphere for both staff and students. I want to know what works and what doesn't work within the system. How are we getting kids to believe

in themselves to become good decision-makers? How have we adapted teaching techniques to nurture this generation within the scope of their emotional and developmental needs, and how have we equipped teachers to do so?

Q: Is there anything else you would like voters to know about you?

A: I believe that confidence is about relationships, students feeling known and valued by their teachers, staff and administration feeling supported, and families feeling heard and respected. In terms of achievement, I want to empower our children in social and emotional domains, believe that every child can learn, and help staff and administration to feel equipped. Finally, I believe collaboration is key and would like to form an alliance with the PAC and administration to achieve the above goals, partner with staff to create a healthy atmosphere at school, and build community and parental support.



SHANNON FRIESEN

SHANNON FRIESEN INCUMBENT

Q: What do you feel is the greatest asset you can bring to the table in the role of trustee?

A: One of the greatest assets is my experience and knowledge gained from being on the board for the past four years. Another valuable asset I possess is a passion for all students and to see joy and success in their learning experience. I am also very personable, outgoing, and

understanding, which has allowed me to form connections with parents, students, staff, and other educational stakeholders.

Q: What previous experiences have helped prepare you for this position?

A: My prior experience working in the school division, owning a business owner, and being a parent of four children has prepared me to make well-informed decisions regarding our students, staff, and divisional operations. I have also been an active PAC member and volunteer in various school and community activities, including outreach organizations that focus on the health and well-being of our communities and students.

Q: What are your greatest priorities when it comes to working as a board member?

A: I believe our focus as a board should always be based on what's best for our students. Education has changed from 20 years ago and so has society, so a top priority for me would be to continue to focus on the essential subjects and skills each student needs, but to also expand on technology, innovative programs, and our learning environments so all students engage in their learning and develop into lifelong learners.

Student safety is also a top priority for me, whether that is within the school, on the playground, or in the community as students travel to and from school. Studies indicate that a safe school environment is critical for the students' academic achievement, health, and well-being. Another priority for me will be to continue to advocate the government for new school buildings, improved infrastructure, and stricter laws when it comes to traffic safety, bus violations, and safety around railway crossings.

Q: Is there anything else you would like voters to know about you?

A: I am very grateful to have had the opportunity to serve as a trustee for these past four years and would like to seek re-election in order to continue some of the great projects

that we as a division have started during my first term. I am currently the vice-chair for the building committee for the new high school in Niverville and look forward to seeing the completed new space and the learning opportunities that this building will provide. I am committed to being a strong voice on the HSD board and would like to see that communication and collaboration between schools, students, and home remains a priority. I am passionate and dedicated to represent the communities of Ward 1.



JENNIFER LAVIN

JENNIFER LAVIN

Q: What do you feel is the greatest asset you can bring to the table in the role of trustee?

A: The greatest asset I bring is my ability to advocate with strength and persistence. My child has special needs and so from the day he was born I was thrown into a world where I was responsible for getting him the care he needed. I learned to advocate with great passion for my son and I believe I can now transfer those learned skills to the board of trustees where I would be able to work for every student and every staff member to ensure that their experience in HSD is a positive one.

Q: What previous experiences have helped prepare you for this position?

A: I have spent much of my career as an office manager or property manager. In those positions, I acquired an ability to organize,

problem-solve, and look at issues with a long-term perspective.

Q: What are your greatest priorities when it comes to working as a board member?

A: My greatest priority is inclusivity. Students need to know that no matter their gender, race, religion, sexual orientation, or ability level, they are welcome in our schools. I believe that the core of a healthy community is its children. Our children need to be given a well-rounded education, and just as importantly they need to know they are safe and respected and that they will be included and equal. In order for our kids to feel this way, their teachers, administrators, educational assistants, and all other staff members need to know that they are supported and treated with respect. If our children are taught to believe in themselves and to witness the inclusion of others as equals, they will grow up to become the next generation of leaders and parents and strong forces for good in our community and the world.

Q: Is there anything else you would like voters to know about you?

A: Class sizes must remain small so that our teachers aren't overworked, resulting in students who get lost in the shuffle. I'm in favour of permitting properly chaperoned school dances. I believe that educational assistants should receive better training and higher pay. And I would like to see the inclement weather policy changed so our students and staff can remain at home if the weather or road conditions make travel hazardous.

MARY YODER

Q: What do you feel is the greatest asset you can bring to the table in the role of trustee?

A: I'm a natural leader. However, I believe a great leader knows the value of a team and the benefit of drawing areas of leadership out of the people they work with. I like to think outside the box and I'm great at problem solving.

RE-ELECT

Shane Pelletier

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Q: What previous experiences have helped prepare you for this position?

A: I'm originally from Alberta, where I studied diligently and qualified for scholarships toward my four-year Bachelor of Arts from the University of Alberta. Since then, I have overseen the Field Education Program at Providence College and have been a substitute teacher in most of the schools in the HSD. Since becoming a mother of three, I have also volunteered in the school our children were attending, as well as participating in the Parent Advisory Council.

Q: What are your greatest priorities when it comes to working as a board member?

A: From my point of view, I think that the province as a whole is really losing out when it comes to academics. As both a concerned parent and a potential trustee, I was astonished to see how Manitoba matches up academically with the rest of the country.

I read an article in the *Winnipeg Sun* from May 4 of this year that really opened my eyes as to how our students are not measuring up. Manitoba education is failing, and I don't say that to put down the dedicated teachers and staff that are trying to educate our children. They have an overwhelming responsibility. Yet the reality is that our children are no different than kids in other provinces, and yet, as a province, we spend more on our students than in almost any other province.

According to the article, we rank dead last when it comes to math. When I looked at the Pan-Canadian Assessment of



MARY YODER

Reading, Mathematics, and Science, I learned that we also rank in the bottom three for science and reading, yet we spend more than most, and certainly more than the provinces who received higher marks in this assessment. That's a huge problem. Money is obviously not going to get us out of this. We are going to need strong leaders with creative and inquisitive minds to tackle this. Our children's futures depend on it.

Q: Is there anything else you would like voters to know about you?

A: I have a great sense of humour and I love to laugh. But perhaps more pertinent, I just want to say that I think we have a very strong school division—I'm thrilled to have my children in Hanover. I believe that if we work together as parents, teachers, administrators, and trustees, we can do even better for our kids. I believe we must do better for the sake of our children's futures, and I believe I have a bold voice and

unique perspective to help press toward such a goal.

SPECIAL QUESTION: LGBTQ RIGHTS

One issue that has received a great deal of attention in the Hanover School Division these few years, both from residents and the media, has been the division's stance on matters related to the LGBTQ community. Notably, there were local protests in 2013 in response to a government anti-bullying bill that extended to all students the right to form gay-straight alliances, and in 2016 a parent whose child was bullied lodged a human rights complaint about the division's curriculum pertaining to a lack of LGBTQ representation.

In advance of this election, The Citizen asked all candidates the following question: as a prospective member of the HSD board of trustees, do you have a position on these matters?

Carisa Klassen: No one deserves to be bullied, and school should be a safe place. Bullying isn't limited to the LGBTQ community. People are bullied for their size and shape, athletic ability, academic performance, and religious beliefs, just to name a few others, and it's never okay. Often children are bullied by others who are insecure and have learned this behaviour as a coping technique. Our children need to be taught kindness, respect, support, and the ability to make decisions that are not based on emotions and reactions. Parents and teachers alike need to model and teach kindness and respect towards others, regardless of differences.

Shannon Friesen: I believe all students should feel welcome and safe in our schools—or anywhere, for that matter. Our schools need to support and respect everyone in a safe and caring environment, ensuring that divisional policies, guidelines, and practices are inclusive of all according to the Human Rights Code and the Manitoba Public Schools Act. We need to continue to work together as parents, students, staff, and community to prevent bullying and exclusion.

Jennifer Lavin: The law is clear in regards to LGBTQ rights. Discrimination against someone because of their sexual orientation is illegal. Bullying of all kinds and, tragically, teen suicide rates are on the rise and it is critical that we end this. We can change kids' lives if we make school their safe place—for some, it may be the only one they have. I believe that school should be a welcoming place and a safe haven for every child.

Mary Yoder: I think our children are going to need strong leaders who think outside the box regarding concerns being presented by the LGBTQ community, while retaining the traditional values that the families in Hanover School Division have established and want to preserve. There has to be a safe place for all children in our schools. It's going to take a strong, compassionate, intelligent, out-of-the-box kind of person to team up with the other elected trustees in the division to work toward a reality where every child and their family is treated with kindness, compassion, understanding, and respect.

We firmly believe that the best stories are local stories.

If you know of any local people who are accomplishing big things, let us know.

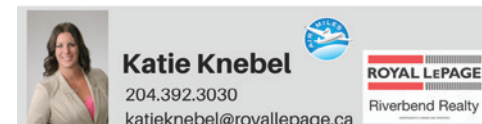
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Fire Chief Emphasizes Safety Message

By Evan Braun

✉ editor@nivercitizencan.com

Fire Safety Week is coming up soon, October 7-13, and Niverville's fire chief, Keith Bueckert, has an important message to convey.

"This time of year it's very important for us to get through the message to the community about fire safety," says Bueckert. "We need to reiterate to people that they need to check to make sure their smoke alarms are working. It's that cut and dry. If you're living in an older home that has battery-operated smoke alarms, we have at the fire hall ten-year smoke alarms that we will come and install in your home for free. And you don't have to do anything with them for ten years except test them twice a year. The earlier people know that something is going on in the house, the better, and that's a big thing for us during fire safety week."

According to Bueckert, it's also important for people to understand the trend in fire intensity. With the newer homes that are being built in our communities today, both in terms of their construction techniques and the type of furniture we choose to put inside them, fires now are burning much hotter and faster than in the past.

"Construction techniques have gone from more of a dimensional lumber to more of a pressed board and synthesized sort of wood," he says. "Poly solvents and



DEPOSIT PHOTOS

hydrocarbons are being used to produce cheaper furniture... When these things light up, they produce black smoke that is unburnt fuel, and when that fuel gets hot enough it actually catches fire, too. So it's a very, very quick and fast-burning environment."

Bueckert points out that in older homes, fires used to take upward of 20 to 25 minutes to fully engulf a room.

"Now you're getting all these synthetic materials, and these rooms are reaching full ignition in under five minutes," he says about the urgency needed to react quickly to an alarm. "They say now that by the time your smoke alarm goes off, you have under two minutes to get out of your house. And it's not the fire that's going to get you, it's the large quantities of smoke."

On October 9, members of the fire department will visit Niverville Elementary School and make presentations to classes. Students will go home with fire safety information to review with their families, and

the classroom that returns that largest number of signed review forms will win a pizza party. Students will also be entered into a draw to earn an individual prize. In the past, this prize has been a Nintendo DS, although Bueckert says this year's prize hasn't yet been determined.

"We also have our annual open house on October 9 at the fire hall, from 5:30-7:30 p.m.," adds Bueckert. "We're having a toonie supper to support Helping Hands, and we're collecting food for Helping Hands that day as well, too. This year's toonie supper will be farmer sausage burgers and hot dogs, with chips and a drink."

Turnout in past years has been good, and Bueckert hopes to see lots of community members out this year.

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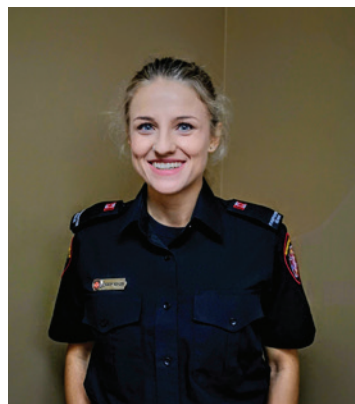
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VOLUNTEER PROFILE | Lindsey Kehler



By Liz Byron

Lindsey Kehler was fascinated by first aid books before she was old enough to read them. Now she's an emergency medical responder and firefighter with the Niverville Fire Department, with plans to train as a paramedic.

"I've always loved medicine," she says. "I don't want people to

get hurt, or for bad things to happen, but they do, and I want to help on the front line."

Kehler grew up in Bolivia and moved to Niverville in 2009 as a teenager. After high school, a ride-along experience with her paramedic uncle inspired her to train as an emergency medical responder, and then as a firefighter.

For the past three years, in addition to being a student at Steinbach Bible College, Kehler has worked with the Niverville Fire Department responding to both fire and medical calls. Her pager is on whenever she's within a four-minute commute of the fire hall. Late-night calls can be stressful, but she thrives on the pressure.

"I do enjoy working in high-stress environments," she says. "Sometimes we get there and it's totally different than what we expected, so we always have to be on our toes. There's an adrenaline

rush that helps me think clearly and really focus on the job."

Another piece of firefighting that Kehler enjoys is the teamwork. The Niverville Fire Department is a close-knit group, she says, and they work hard but also have fun together.

"I remember a bunch of the guys at my very first fire training were teasing me about my boots," Kehler recalls. "I had these brand-new fire boots, and it was really rainy and muddy, and the guys kept coming up to me and stepping on my boots, telling me, 'You can't have clean boots,' and getting them all muddy."

It was then, she says, that she really felt like part of the team.

"It's like having a whole bunch of brothers. Well, and a few sisters, too," she adds.

Although there are a few women in the department, the vast majority of her colleagues are men. Sometimes she feels she

has to work extra hard to prove that she's on the same level as the men and that she can match their physical strength.

"But that's not because of anything they've ever said," she points out. "That's just me. It's never weird. Nobody's ever been rude about it. We all respect each other. And because it's like they're my brothers, we're always competing in the gym: who can lift the most or run faster? It's really great."

In addition to the community within the fire hall, Kehler says that working with the fire department has given her the opportunity to get more involved in town, through the department's fundraising and volunteering, and of course through responding to 911 calls.

"Everyone on our team enjoys serving and helping our community to the best of our abilities. Even if we have to miss sleep... it's so worth it."



VOLUNTEER PROFILE | Marc Bergen



By Liz Byron

Just over a decade ago, Marc Bergen invited a bunch of friends over for a barbeque. Many of the guys were involved in the Niverville Fire Department, including the chief, Keith Bueckert.

"Well, Keith said they were looking for guys for the fire

department, and I've lived here forever and I believe it's important to step up for your community," Bergen says. "So I sent in a resume, and here I am, 11 years later."

It wasn't something he had ever thought of doing, and certainly it was completely different from his day job working for Culligan Water. But he enjoyed the training, first as a firefighter and then as an emergency medical responder, so he has stuck with it.

"There's a lot of training involved," he says. "There are a lot of hours of learning that go into being able to effectively fight a fire."

All firefighters have to pass a series of tests, proving they have the necessary skills and knowledge to handle an emergency. Bergen recalls studying everything from how to use equipment like hydrants, pumps, and hoses to techniques for extracting people

from buildings or cars. He also learned about the chemistry of a fire.

"You have to know how fire works, what to look for, to be able to assess how to fight it, whether it's inside or outside and how it's reacting to conditions."

Born and raised in Niverville, Bergen says he has always valued the sense of community that comes from living in a small town. He points out that working with the fire department is part of that.

"It's always a team effort, with a great group of people, and I appreciate the chance to get to know people within the department and in the community at large," Bergen says. "And of course, knowing I can help people is a great feeling."

Being able to help people when they're experiencing an emergency makes the late-night calls worth it, Bergen says. When his pager goes off, whether he's

asleep, eating dinner with his family, or attending church, he leaps into action.

"First I freeze for a second, because it's startling when it goes off," he says. "But then I prepare my mind and there's an adrenaline rush. Then I get to the hall with everybody else, and I get assigned a vehicle and my duties. And I definitely get nervous, depending on what the call is. I always just hope that at the end of the day everyone is going to be safe and all right."

Once he gets to the site of a call, Bergen says all nerves disappear and all he can think about is the job at hand.

"I'm always focused on that moment. I don't stop to think about anything else. There's no time for anything else, because somebody needs help. That's why I keep doing it, really—because somebody needs help."

IN BRIEF

Construction Worker Injured, STARS Helicopter Responds

By Evan Braun

✉ editor@nivervillecitizen.com

On Thursday, September 20, an accident occurred on the construction site of the new high school in Niverville. One of the workers, a man who was described as being in his 40s, was transported to the Health Sciences Centre in Winnipeg after suffering a fall from an unspecified height.

The transfer was conducted by the STARS air ambulance. Reports say that paramedics placed the patient on a backboard as a precautionary measure, adding that he was conscious and talking to first responders.

"Our involvement primarily was patient care with our first responders attending," says Niverville Fire Chief Keith Bueckert. "And then second to that, the fire department's role with STARS was to make a safe landing zone so the helicopter could touch down."

Bueckert says that the helicopter was able to land in an adjacent field.

"We set up the landing zone and then were in communication with the pilot to land the helicopter and make sure it also took off appropriately," he added.

The STARS helicopter departed the scene at 11:40 a.m.

It is believed that the man was stabilized and suffered broken bones but is otherwise on the road to recovery.



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Ritchot Celebrates Fire Hall Grand Opening

By Brenda Sawatzky

bsawatzky@nivervillecitizen.com

Just one year after Ritchot celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of their local fire department, the municipality officially opened the doors to their third fire hall, this one in Ste. Agathe, which is expected to provide quicker emergency response to areas in Ritchot's southern region. It will also supplement existing fire services in St. Adolphe and Île-des-Chênes.

Open house and grand opening ceremonies were held at the new state-of-the-art fire hall on September 20. The event saw a packed house of enthusiastic residents, council members, and developers. Dignitaries on hand included MLA Bob Lagasse, MLA Shannon Martin, Mayor Chris Ewen, and Deputy Fire Commissioner Robert Pike.

"We'd like to thank the contractors whose quality work built this facility," said Lesley Gaudry, community economic development officer for Ritchot, "[including] L&M Architects, ParkWest Project Managers, the RM's public works department, and also the committee that's worked really hard over the last three years to get this beautiful facility built."

Gaudry extended an invitation for families and individuals to get involved in ongoing sponsorship. A Friends and Family plaque will be erected in their honour.

"I am honoured to be a part of [this] location and, although I was not here when it started, I saw the commitment and process it has



Fire Chief Scott Weir and Deputy Chief Paul Houle collect their service medals from Robert Pike, Manitoba's Deputy Fire Commissioner. **BRENDASAWATZKY**

taken to bring it to completion, from councillors to admin to the project management team to the fire chief," said Mayor Ewen. "This process has taken a few years now and I'm sure there are some of you that weren't sure that there would ever be an end. I can confidently say that our residents will now feel a little safer and a lot more comfortable knowing that they have an emergency response team right down the street... It's a truly remarkable thing to see the growth in Ste. Agathe, and this fire hall will be a part of that

growth."

Deputy Fire Commissioner Pike also took a moment to congratulate council and the residents of Ritchot on the addition of the new fire hall. But he came with a higher purpose in mind as well.

"I'm going to talk to you tonight about the Governor General's Fire Services Exemplary Service Medal," said Pike. "Canada's exemplary service medals recognize the men and women who contribute to public safety through long-standing service. [This] medal expresses national

gratitude for long and commendable service, particularly in a field of endeavour involving potential risk. Recipients have the mission to safeguard both persons and property from fire and life safety hazards through education, investigations, emergency response, and code application. The person involved in these activities is really working for the safety of their community. This medal recognizes all these contributions."

This medal of honour was awarded to Ritchot Fire Chief Scott

Weir and Deputy Fire Chief Paul Houle for their dedicated service of more than 20 years.

Ritchot's new fire hall was built to exacting design standards. The three large fire truck bays are well lit and include in-floor heat as well as optimal exhaust ventilation apparatuses so the trucks can be run indoors during the winter months.

Firefighter training can take place in a 30-seat classroom equipped with air conditioning and audio-visual equipment, as well as a mezzanine overlooking the truck bays where physical training exercises can be done. Here, firefighters will have the use of smoke machines and darkened masks to learn to navigate scenarios similar to burning buildings with zero visibility. The railings can be removed, allowing trainers to descend from high points using safety anchors and harnesses.

The balance of the building includes offices for the administration staff and fire chief, showers, a washer and dryer, and lockers for the firefighters which are separated from the truck bays to reduce contamination.

Over and above a vast new volunteer firefighting team to work from this hall, Ritchot has active training officers who will be a huge asset to the department. The new facility can be used as an emergency measures centre as well in the event that one of the other fire halls are located within a danger zone.

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Love or infatuation?

When people are starting a business, they are often advised to do what they love. That's a great piece of advice – but make sure it is love and not infatuation. To be successful, you'll need to stick it out through thick and thin and work at it. In other words, it takes commitment.



But just because you love something, it doesn't automatically follow that you will turn your love into a successful business.

Sometimes new business owners get an unwelcome surprise. They learn that what they were good at when employed by someone else doesn't translate into running a business.

Business owners are often described as entrepreneurs. But what is an entrepreneur?

The Merriam-Webster dictionary defines an entrepreneur as "one who organizes, manages, and assumes the risks of a business or enterprise."

Sounds pretty straight forward? Yet there is a really important part of being an entrepreneur that this definition does not capture.

That part is the human part. Your characteristics. How you react. How you think. It's your personal qualities that will help determine whether your "love" can develop into a stable, long-lasting relationship.

Are you willing to work hard? Starting a business is a 24/7 job. When you're not "at work," you are thinking about it.

Do you have self-discipline? Can you do things you don't like doing when they need to be done?

Can you take advice? No one knows everything. Can you admit to yourself you need help? It's often said that smart business people surround themselves with people smarter than themselves.

Do you value relationships? Business is all about relationships – employees, customers, suppliers, and the one too often forgotten, family. Treating people fairly, respecting their needs, helping them grow builds trust, loyalty and support.

Are you willing to learn and accept change? A long-ago Greek philosopher said, "Change is the only constant." This is particularly true in the business world today where disruption is becoming normal.

Can you take time to breathe? While being a business owner involves constant work, particularly in the early years, all work and no play can be disastrous. You need to plan to take time for yourself and the significant people in your life.

If you don't have these characteristics, can you develop them? If not, think long and hard about whether being a business owner is right for you.

Need help with business? The Niverville Chamber of Commerce in partnership with the Town of Niverville has a program to help potential, new and developing business owners. For information, please contact the chamber: chamber@niverville.com

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IN BRIEF

Communities Prepare for Annual Fall Suppers

This year's St. Adolphe Parish Fall Supper is taking place Sunday, October 14 at Pioneer Hall in St. Adolphe. A great dinner is lined up including turkey with all the trimmings, meatballs and gravy, vegetables, mashed potatoes, a selection of salads and coleslaws, beverages, and a variety of desserts.

Dinner will be served for three hours between 4:00–7:00 p.m., and the meal will cost \$14 for adults and \$6 for children between the ages of six and 12. Children aged five and younger will dine for free. No reservations will be taken this year, and tickets will only be sold at the door. Take-out meals will be offered, however, for \$15 apiece, with a pickup time of 4:30 p.m.

Île-des-Chênes is also geared up to have a fall supper on that day, October 14, hosted by Seine River Minor Ball. The event will take place at the TransCanada Centre from 3:30–7:00 p.m.

St. Agathe held their fall supper on Sunday, September 30.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- St. Adolphe: Monica (204-299-9396) and Roger (204-688-3057)
- Île-des-Chênes: Claire (204-818-0415)

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Inclement Weather Doesn't Discourage Imagine Event Goers

By Brenda Sawatzky

bsawatzky@nivervillecitizen.com

Dreary skies, rain, and cool temperatures weren't enough to discourage the Imagine Mental Health Matters team, or the many people who crowded into the Niverville Bigway parking lot for a day of fun and fundraising at Imagine's annual One Big Day on September 8. The occasion provided a unique way for families and individuals to donate time and money to help raise awareness about mental health issues.

One of this year's primary fundraising techniques included hoisting 23 well-known locals into the air on a scissor lift. Each person, or pair, was given a designated time slot in which to call family and friends to solicit donations.

The rationale for this is to drive home a message: when you're in a mental health crisis, you need to reach out for help to those who love you. Individuals like LGBTQ champion Michelle McHale and Drs. Chris and Mairi Burnett were among those who took on the challenge. Imagine's volunteers made an effort to bring in scissor-lift candidates from all across southeast Manitoba with the hope that their outreach would grow into other communities as well.

Children's entertainment was also available to encourage families to attend, thus providing a safe place to include children in the conversation about mental health concerns.

"Because of the high wind and rain, the bouncy castles did not get set up," says Mona Stott, founder of the non-profit organization. "However, the brave candidates all came dressed accordingly and



Drs. Mairi and Chris Burnett of Open Health Niverville.

MONA STOTT

went up on the lift. In order to keep everyone safe, we made sure our local Niverville firefighters were on hand to man the lift."

Firefighters came dressed in full gear and also provided firetruck tours and photo ops for attendees.

"We certainly recognize our emergency services and know that many may suffer with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)," Stott says. "Therefore, it's important that they know we are there for them as well."

She adds that the impressive firefighter setup even drew in a passing bridal couple who dropped by for a quick wedding day photo op. They also made a donation to the cause while there.

As in previous years, the Crystal Springs Hutterite colony provided a \$5 barbecue lunch, donating all of the proceeds back to the cause. Approximately 200 people enjoyed lunch under the canopy of a tent and warm conversation. Stott says that providing a safe place for people to talk brings out many stories of personal struggles with suicide, depression, and PTSD.

The Lonely Mile, a series of signs bearing the names of people who have lost the battle with mental illness, provided a somber reminder of why these kinds of conversations are so important.

While Stott views the day as a resounding success, one unexpected turn gave added

weight to the need for events like this and issued a reminder that Imagine's efforts are not in vain. One passerby, seeing the Imagine banners, encouraged a friend to accompany her to the event. Stott describes the friend as someone in an immediate state of mental crisis, walking a thin line between life and death.

"Thanks to one of our members, we were able to bring her into a warm area where we sat with her and got her to go for help that very afternoon," Stott says. "So if you wonder where your donations go, Imagine volunteers give their personal time and effort to raise money to destigmatize mental health by putting on public events. This allows individuals to come to a safe place, understanding that they are not alone. The day is a great reflection on how individuals feel, as some need to be encouraged to get through their day."

Donations are accepted all year long on the organization's website. Stott hopes to continue spreading the word through monthly mental health dialogues with deeJay Dave Anthony, to be aired on the Global West 107.7 starting on October 18 and airing every third Thursday of the month.

Knowing firsthand the pain of losing a child to suicide, Stott can't stress enough the need for this education.

"If you are, or know of anyone that is, in crisis, please reach out, as you're not alone!" pleads Stott.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- www.imaginementalhealth.com
- Manitoba's Suicide Hotline: 1-877-435-7170

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HEALTH

Natalie Dueck

FRIDAY - 5:00
KIDS & NUTRITION

SATURDAY - 1:00
HEALTHY SNACKS FOR KIDS

SUNDAY - 1:00
HEALTHY FOOD CHOICES FOR YOUR FAMILY



"I'm Natalie – mom of 8 and creator of the Rawnata line of snacks. My life was changed for the better by making healthier eating choices. Even though I used to treat myself to the occasional carob bar in my childhood, I never really got into healthy eating until I was expecting my fifth child back in 2003. I had low energy and was experiencing a variety of minor health issues.

I was afraid that I wouldn't live to see my kids grow up, so I started by incorporating whole grains into my diet. Then, in about 2009 I fell in love with raw foods and began creating my own raw cracker and cookie recipes. There were MANY flops and failures. There were successes, too – the most notable being that my Chocolate Hemp Snackers won the grand prize in a local contest in 2011. This led to the creation of Rawnata. My hope is that Rawnata snacks will help other people's lives to be changed for the better, too!"

HOBBY

Dennis Fast

FRIDAY - 6:00
TOUCH THE ARCTIC

SATURDAY - 2:00
THE WORLD IN MY BACKYARD

SUNDAY - 2:00
AFRICAN SAFARI



Dennis Fast is one of Manitoba's best known wildlife photographers. The new polar bear exhibit at the Assiniboine Park Zoo features many of his images of northern wildlife and landscapes. His images have also appeared in numerous other books, magazines, and calendars including National Geographic and Outdoor Photography to name a few. Dennis has also been a frequent presenter across Canada at photo workshops, community fundraisers, and business seminars.

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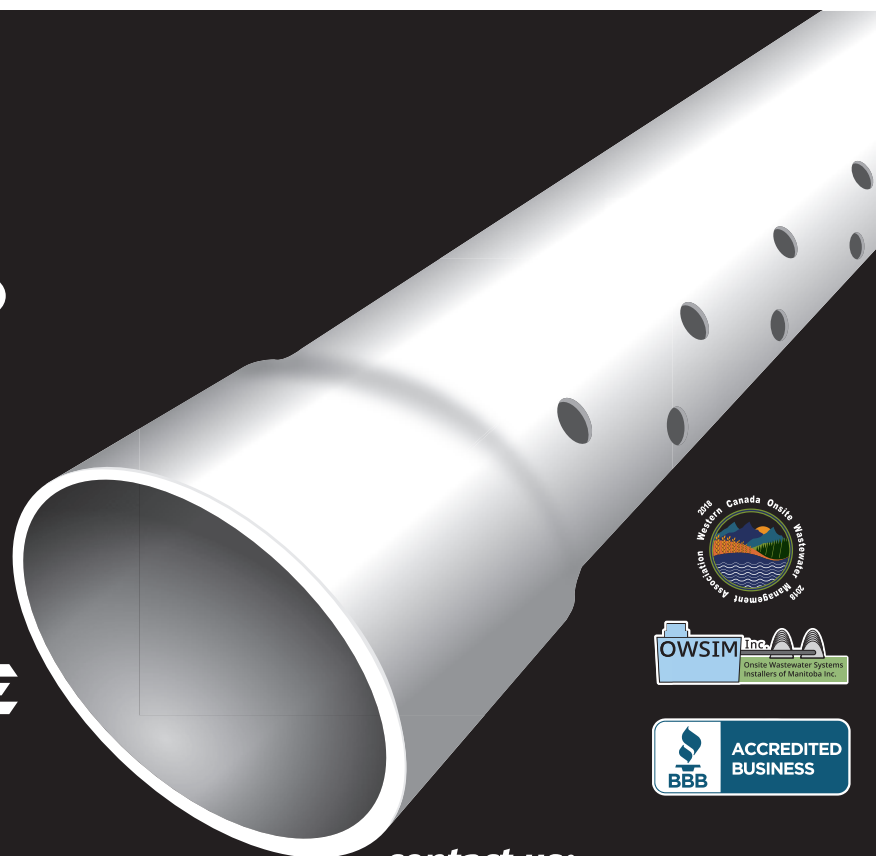
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After Acclamations, Niverville Council Sits for Town Hall

By Brenda Sawatzky

bsawatzky@nivervillecitizen.com

Approximately 50 residents turned up for a town hall meeting hosted by the Niverville Chamber of Commerce (NCC) on the evening of Monday, October 1 at the Heritage Centre. While Niverville residents won't be casting ballots this year for the mayor or councillor seats, with all members of council having been acclaimed, they were still provided the opportunity for an extensive question and answer period.

Dawn Harris, NCC's executive director, emceed the event, posing a variety of questions to council. These questions had been previously submitted by residents and covered almost every aspect of community life from economic development to recreation opportunities, from town growth to council's intentions when it comes to keeping the community safe.

The interrogation opened with a forecast for the future: "Where do you see Niverville in 2028?" The responses were varied: more seniors housing as the majority of boomers age out, a second elementary or middle school to meet the needs of a growing population, a robust business sector providing jobs and shifting the town away from a bedroom



Dawn Harris presides over town hall discussion with Mayor Myron Dyck and councillors John Funk, Chris Wiebe, Nathan Dueck and Kevin Stott. **BRENDASAWATZKY**

community, a town square to provide more community connectivity, a police station, and more services and amenities.

"What I see is that it will be a big change driving into Niverville," said Councillor Chris Wiebe. "You'll drive into town and see a traffic circle at Sixth [Avenue]. You'll proceed to downtown and see businesses on Main Street with residential units above them. As you continue, you'll see crossings at the railroad and things like bicycle paths and [pedestrian thoroughfares]. As you leave town, you'll see a lot of [new business development] and

then see another major traffic circle again [as you leave town]."

The question of pedestrian safety was also posed, asking about the possibility of adding more crosswalks along Main Street. Councillor John Funk suggested that council would need to take a hard look at the effectiveness of crosswalks. Statistically, he says, they have not proven to reduce accidents between pedestrians and vehicular traffic.

In the short term, however, Funk hopes that the province will produce the funding that was promised to Niverville for traffic lights at the corner of

Fifth Avenue and Main Street. This, he said, would help alleviate pedestrian safety at that busy intersection. Additionally, talks are underway between the province and CP Rail about introducing a safe pedestrian passage across the railway tracks.

Another question on people's minds: will Niverville ever see a library?

"We've discussed libraries over the last 16 years and how financially viable they are," said Councillor Kevin Stott. "They are very expensive things to run and staff. Looking into the future, I wonder what the longevity of

the library is going to be, but what we are hoping, with our partnership with the Hanover School Division, is to be able to use their library and to be able to come up with a [plan] in the near future."

Stott said that discussions between the town and the school division are already underway.

Another inquiry was made regarding council's intent on maintaining a small-town feel amidst rapid growth and change.

Councillor Nathan Dueck suggested that the answer to that question lies as much with each resident as it does

with council. Involvement in the community's various volunteer committees, he pointed out, is the best way for people to kindle that small-town feeling. He added that educating citizens on the town's rich cultural history also plays a role in that effort.

In reference to the new high school, council was asked whether any consideration has been given to a collaboration with the province and school division to bring co-op education and mentorship programs to students of Niverville, which would serve to support economic development and keep young people working in the community.

Councillor Funk, himself a retired vocational teacher, couldn't have agreed more with this line of thinking. However, he said that council can only do so much to convince the province of this need.

"Hanover School Division has [a vocational school] in mind, but the province dictates," said Funk to the audience. "Everybody needs to talk to the leaders at hand, and it has to be impressed on them that we want vocational programs. We want co-op programs. Right now, the [provincial] government says no. We will just be a [regular] high school."

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Dog Breeders vs. Puppy Mills: What Is the Distinction?



BRENDA
SAWATZKY

bsawatzky@nivervillecitizen.com

If you're looking to incite passion among dog lovers, propose a dog-breeding operation in south-east Manitoba. That, at least, is what's taken place on numerous occasions in our local municipalities over the past few years, the RM of Ritchot being among the most recent.

On July 18, Ritchot's council voted in favour of accepting a conditional use application by Svetlana and Nikolay Shkhov to allow a Shiba Inu dog-breeding operation on their 3.5-acre lot on Highway 75. Council required that the requested number of dogs be reduced from 20 to 15 and that the applicants comply with all the applicable municipal bylaws, including licensing and registering of the dogs with the RM office. As well, the applicants were required to erect a four-foot fence around the rural property and provide proof of a provincial inspection. Council reserved the right to review the application in five years' time and to perform site audits to ensure compliance.

What followed the decision, however, was a veritable backlash on a number of the RM's community Facebook groups. Emotions ran high for many residents, some calling it a puppy mill and others stating that there is no place in the RM for a dog-breeding business when there are already so many puppies waiting to be adopted.

Emails, letters, and a petition soon rolled into the municipal office.

Tracy Mac, founder of a Manitoba dog rescue, wrote an open letter to the RM, clearly angry over council's decision. She suggested that breeding operations provide miserable lives for the adult dogs, and the offspring only serve to add to an already out of control problem in Manitoba.

"You see, we're tired," Mac wrote. "We're tired of hungry, cold, injured, sick, and stray dogs who will never receive rescue assistance because there are not enough homes for all of them. We're tired of looking into their pleading eyes, tired of pushing them out of our vehicles, tired of leaving them behind. Tired of crying about lives we couldn't save, tired of being unable to prevent more from being born, tired of being too late, and we're really, really tired of trying to fix all of this on our own."



DEPOIT PHOTOS

Mac recommended that a better approach would be to open facilities to keep existing dogs safe until they can be adopted.

"What we do need are community leaders to step up and recognize we need their help and support," she added. "Your voices [as members of council] are more powerful than ours."

A petition against the breeding operation quickly began circulating online as well, started by Rachelle Levesque Bowes, vice chair for Strays That Can't Pay out of New Brunswick. Within hours, signatures were coming in from all over the country, and even from international locales. Within weeks, the petition carried almost 900 signatures and continued to climb.

Ritchot Mayor Chris Ewen was quick to respond. He noted, in a response to one concerned party, that among the main reasons for council's decision was a lack of public opposition to the proposal. Also, council didn't wish to demonstrate prejudice towards an applicant who had no known prior reports of cruelty or negligence.

"As a municipal council, our role is to review all applications for conditional uses that are submitted and to conduct due diligence before making a decision," Ewen told The Citizen. "We understand there is some local interest in this issue and a great deal

from outside our municipal boundaries. Like all councils, we monitor all of our decisions and respond as quickly as we are able to get feedback from our citizens."

Barry Piasta, founder of a local dog adoption Facebook group and long-time dog welfare advocate, is confident that if due diligence was performed by elected officials, these kinds of operations would no longer be permitted.

"By suggesting that it's a small business, you know that they're not in it for the betterment of the breed," says Piasta. "We don't need those kinds of businesses. Would [councils] be okay with an ammunition shop or an adult video store? Is that okay? So how come it's okay to [open a dog-breeding operation]? Councils do have a hard job, but there are some things that should be obvious."

PUPPY MILLS, REGISTERED BREEDERS, AND BACKYARD BREEDERS

Traditionally, dog breeders have been lumped into three different categories: registered breeders, backyard breeders, and puppy mills. But there is a growing consensus that backyard breeders and puppy mill operators are one and the same, with no meaningful distinction between them. It is in these two categories where, arguably, the primary goal is to produce a profit and little more.

"The first thing when you think of

puppy mill is dogs crammed in cages and bad conditions," says Piasta. "Yes, there are those. But what a puppy mill means is that they are producing puppies. It's a business. They are selling puppies for profit. Respectable and ethical breeders will breed once a year or once every couple of years. They have a waiting list of people that want a dog. They are registered [with the Canadian Kennel Club] and they do checks on the male and female to certify that they have the characteristics of what that breed represents. And it's not for profit. They cover their expenses. That's about it."

Registered dog breeders are those who register their business with the Canadian Kennel Club (CKC) or another reputable dog club and follow a series of rigorous checks and balances to ensure the health and safety of their breeder dogs and of each puppy born, both before and after they leave the breeder's premises. Most registered breeders ensure that they have solid, trustworthy buyers before breeding takes place in order to minimize unwanted animals in the system.

"CKC dog breeders are greatly valued citizens throughout the country," says Dr. Paul Eckford, a member of the CKC's board of directors. "CKC breeders purposefully breed purebred dogs and make every effort to ensure their dogs go to responsible dog owners. They bring much

experience and expertise and serve as ambassadors for responsible breeding practices and responsible dog ownership."

Eckford adds that CKC registered breeders advocate for the spaying and neutering of pets, educate new owners on the behaviours of a breed, and encourage obedience and socialization training.

CKC regulations ensure that the breeder engages in formal genetic health testing of the dogs before they begin breeding; provides inoculations, health checks, microchips, or tattoos for all of the puppies born; and provides a written guarantee with a return or replacement policy on each puppy sold.

Likewise, CKC breeders work equally hard to ensure the safety and happiness of the pet by screening potential buyers for their suitability and capability to own and meet the needs of the pet.

"The concept of a dog being a lifetime commitment should always be reinforced with the purchaser," Eckford says.

Backyard breeders, on the other hand, fall into a grey area between the registered breeder and the calloused puppy mill operator. The ethics under which they operate depends solely on the integrity of the breeder, as there are usually no regulatory bodies governing their operation save for the government's animal welfare office, which gets involved only when a complaint is made. Without routine checks by experienced animal welfare personnel, ethics can easily slip through the cracks.

While there are, without question, well-intentioned backyard breeders among us, the unscrupulous ones exist as well. They are the ones who are in it for the quick profit that's provided by unlimited numbers of puppies sold at unregulated prices to buyers with unrealistic expectations—all for cash under the table.

Raeshia Enns is a dog lover and works at Pet Valu in Winnipeg's Sage Creek neighbourhood. She owns a pair of purebred dogs called Chinese Crested and believes that dealing with CKC registered breeders is the best way to adopt a dog.

"CKC registered breeders don't breed puppies to make money," Enns says. "They usually end up losing money because they spend so much money prepping their dogs and showing their dogs all over the world. It's a hobby for people who have

money or love that dog breed so much. You can still have irresponsible breeders, but responsible ones usually only have two litters a year. They're not pumping out hundreds per year. After a few litters, the adult dogs are usually retired to a good home."

Enns was required to provide a number of personal references to the breeder indicating that she would be a good dog owner. As well, she needed to provide a certified veterinary reference to make sure that any pets she'd previously owned had been up to date with their shots and well cared for.

"With backyard breeders, you would hope the puppies are raised in the home and the environment is clean and they're being fed properly," says Enns. "Puppies need to be socialized with humans from day one because that's who they're going to bond with. So if they don't see a human for days at a time, they will be absolutely terrified when they leave Mom."

Enns shares the same concern of many others for the Shiba Inu dogs which will be born on a rural property in Ritchot and purportedly live in a barn instead of the family home. This is generally a safe assumption when up to 15 dogs live on a property at the same time.

BREEDERS, SHELTERS, AND RESCUES: THE VICIOUS CYCLE

Ask anyone who works in an animal shelter or runs a pet rescue and they'll tell you that the reason they exist is two-fold: backyard breeders are pumping out more dogs than there are homes for, and too many pet owners don't take ownership seriously enough.

Alicia Hoemsen is founder

and director of Strays That Can't Pay in Elkhorn, Manitoba. The organization offers pet spay and neuter programs for low-income pet owners as well as education and support to help people become more responsible pet owners. According to Hoemsen, the reason non-profit, volunteer-run organizations such as hers exist is because there are currently 500,000 unwanted dogs and 200,000 unwanted cats in Manitoba alone.

A Google search for Manitoba pet rescues produces page after page of charitable organizations whose volunteers work long, thankless hours to try and combat a problem which is, in large part, produced by unregulated backyard breeders attempting to make some quick cash. It's become a vicious cycle without a foreseeable end.

Hoemsen says the problem is that there just aren't enough laws on the books to regulate pet breeding.

"It's low on the priority lists for 99 percent of politicians, towns, and municipalities," she says. "If there are laws, there's not enough people to enforce them. It's not important until someone gets [hurt by a vicious dog] and then it's all knee-jerk reaction."

Piasta claims that there are more than 150 breeders continuously breeding their dogs in the southeast region.

"Southeast Manitoba is known as the puppy mill capital of Canada," Piasta says. "Rescues and [pet welfare] groups here are trying to get active legislation going. There are places in Europe who have already banned [dog-breeding] or they've made licensing so expensive [so as to discourage it]."

Debra Vandekerckhove of

the Norway House Animal Rescue agrees that southeast Manitoba plays a big role in canine overpopulation.

"The worst backyard breeding and breeders are in southern Manitoba," says Vandekerckhove. "[The] whole area is riddled with backyard breeders. The dog population problem starts [there]. Take a quick look around Kijiji and just take a map out, print it off, and start putting pins on all the areas where the backyard breeders are and that should tell you everything you need to know about the problem in southern Manitoba."

Conversely, Lorna Friesen of Animal Control for Niverville and Hanover is a little sceptical that this area poses more of a problem than anywhere else.

"If there is a problem, that's usually taken care of with the Provincial Vet and Animal Protection Officers," says Friesen. "We don't see a lot of puppy mill action."

In fact, Friesen says the number of strays they've picked up over the past year seems to be dropping since both Hanover and Niverville councils established a system requiring pet owners to pay a \$20 licensing fee. This, in her mind, makes pet owners more aware of the local bylaws. Where she once picked up 100 to 150 strays per year, that number has now dropped to about 60 to 80.

She implores pet owners to tag or tattoo their pets, though, for easy contact should an animal be picked up. Currently, at least half of the strays she picks up are eventually delivered to shelters or rescues because of owners who can't be traced or who neglect picking up their pet once contacted.

(continued on page 24)



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CITIZEN POLL

Do you feel that dog-breeding in Manitoba needs to be more tightly controlled?

- ☐ I think backyard breeding should be banned altogether.
- ☐ Backyard breeders should have to register with the province, undergo regular inspections, and pay income taxes like any other business.
- ☐ I don't think backyard breeders are a problem.
- ☐ Have another opinion? Share your thoughts in a comment online.

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LAST MONTH'S RESULTS:

What do you think of the decision by Niverville council to spend \$1.65 million over three years on the property at 329 Bronstone Drive?

I think it's a good decision. This is a smart move that gets the town all the space it needs at a reasonable price.

71%

I have concerns about the purchase. There are better ways to spend taxpayers' money, and the town didn't need this much space yet.

28%

Have another opinion? Share your thoughts in a comment online.

1%

YOUR COMMENTS:

I don't believe the warehouse floor has the proper concrete strength and lack of floor drains. Makes converting this area for trucks not very feasible.

What about adding on to the building? Really, how many people work there?

Great proactive thinking.

Once town sells off their current building and banks that money, Main Street will be able to showcase another new business that comes in and purchases the space. This larger building is needed in the long run. If you look at other municipal buildings, our current one is a joke compared to some out there.

(continued from page 23)

In Manitoba, the only regulatory body for animal welfare is the Chief Veterinary Office (CVO), a branch of the provincial government. The Animal Welfare Act is a bill of laws designed to protect both companion and livestock animals.

"The [Act] has sections addressing the licensing of companion animal breeding premises and boarding kennels," says a departmental spokesperson for the CVO. "Dog breeders are required to follow generally accepted standards of care, including relevant sections of the Code of Practice for Canadian Kennel Operations as published by the Canadian Veterinary Medical Association."

This spokesperson admits, though, that routine checks are not mandatory by the CVO's inspection agents.

"The CVO responds to concerns about animal welfare or abuse on a complaints-based basis," the spokesperson says. "Follow-up inspections may be carried out when required to ensure compliance with the Act."

Neither are dog-breeders required to register their business with the CVO, although the spokesperson states that this is something that is currently under review. But without requirements for registration and penalties for non-registered breeders, the potential for backyard breeders and puppy mills to operate under the radar is high and provides a wide-open door for limitless breeders in the region. This, for now, is left to municipal or city councils to monitor and control.

THE PROBLEM WITH DESIGNER DOGS

Because consumer demand is what drives a market, one has to question what keeps backyard breeders in business when so many dogs await homes in shelters. Piasta says there are a number of reasons. First of all, he says, puppies are undeniably cute. Who wants to adopt an adult shelter dog when they can experience an adorable newborn puppy?

Secondly, he says that many people treat dogs like commodities, choosing them for the prestige of a purebred, the thrill of a rare breed—dogs bred to create new crosses, such as the Labradoodle—or the en vogue trendiness of a miniature breed.

"When Paris Hilton [made it trendy] to have a purse dog, everyone started getting those," says Piasta. "It's like a status symbol, but this is a living, feeling creature that you're dealing with."

The media, as well, has been responsible for the rising demand for specific dog breeds. According



Bryann Koehn with her daughter Taiya and dog Asia.

BRENDA SAWATZKY

to Piasta, the demand for Dalmatian puppies went up after the release of Disney's *101 Dalmatians*. The same was true after the release of *The Doberman Gang* in 1973.

But while owning a purebred or crossbreed isn't bad in and of itself, too many new pet owners get the breed for its romanticized qualities without taking the time to research the characteristics and temperaments of the dog. Not all dogs, for example, are good with children or other pets. Some dogs are aggressive or overactive by nature and require extremely dedicated training to control them.

"[Many backyard breeders] don't give any concern to the traits of the dog or the background of the dog," says Piasta. "So they could end up breeding a dog that's got issues, from health issues to temperament issues. We used to call them mutts or mongrels, and they're selling them for up to \$2,500."

Dawn Helsing Wolters, outreach coordinator for one of the many Shiba Inu Rescue Associations in North America, says that her rescue takes in 50 to 75 rescues per year.

"Shibas are beautiful dogs but can be challenging for the inexperienced owner or for someone who hasn't done research about the breed," says Wolters. "Shiba Inu are smart, curious, independent dogs who can be escape artists. They were originally bred to hunt small game, and many retain that high-prey drive and desire to roam. They aren't hardwired to stick by your side or have reliable recall off-leash. They can easily shed a harness or collar because their head and jaw are not much wider than their necks and, because they spook easily, they squeeze their shoulders together and back out of a harness in a flash. Many can climb fences."

Wolters says that the reasons Shiba Inus end up in their rescue are varied, but in some cases it's because owners are unwilling or unable to manage the dog's unique characteristics.

"The breed has been growing in popularity after a couple of social media phenomena brought increased attention to the breed," Wolters says. "I expect because the breed is popular, but not long-established [here], [they] may be more profitable for commercial breeders."

THE HEALTH RISKS OF BACKYARD BREEDING

When profit is king, hazards are bound to arise. Cross-breeding to create designer or rare-breed dogs often comes at a cost to the animal.

"Only now is the tragic truth beginning to emerge," wrote Louise Eccles four years ago in a *Daily Mail* article. "Far from being resilient to disease, many of these cross-breeds are, in fact, far more vulnerable to agonising illness and infection than pedigree dogs. Today, thousands of 'toy dogs' sit in freezing cold, cramped cages and filthy sheds... awaiting new owners. Many suffer from parasites, kidney problems, heart disease and respiratory disorders. Within several days of being bought by their new, unsuspecting owners, the unluckiest puppies will have to be put to sleep."¹

Adrienne Janet Farricelli, in an article for *PetHelpful.com* this summer, wrote, "A problem with hybrid dogs is that they often become quite popular, and when a dog gets very popular, the wrong types of breeders get involved. So, what may start as a good thing ends up getting out of hand. Soon, dogs get overbred, causing careless breeding without paying attention to health or temperament while aiming just for the mighty dollar."²

The mother dogs, as well, suffer under breeders who keep them pregnant, cycle after cycle, without a break. Oftentimes these abused dogs end up in rescues once they've exceeded their potential to produce pups. Sometimes they arrive at the shelter with severe physical impairment from overbreeding. Some dogs, Piasta warns, also suffer under the abuse that can occur when breeders forcefully

breed dogs that don't want to breed naturally. It's for many of these ethical reasons that pet stores have stopped selling dogs but rather encourage their patrons to adopt from a pet shelter or rescue.

Bryanne Koehn, the owner of 12-year-old Asia, adopted the dog from the Manitoba Pug Rescue when Asia was four years old. Koehn knew going in that she was adopting a pet who'd been rescued from a puppy mill and suffered health and temperament issues. She was prepared to make the investment of time and energy to give Asia a better life.

Asia came to her with her rear legs malformed and scarring from too many pregnancies. She demonstrated unnatural tendencies for a dog. She didn't bark, lick, sniff, or play and only ate her food when the family had gone to bed. It's taken eight years of patient training and countless vet visits to get Asia where she is today.

"We brought her camping for the first time this year and she was so comfortable that she explored and even wandered a little," says Koehn. "She's never done that before. She's always been my shadow. It's taken her years to get to this place."

As for backyard breeders, Koehn is sceptical.

"They would have to have complete transparency," she says. "To the community? I don't know, but they would have to be accountable to somebody."

Koehn adds that many unregistered breeders don't take the newborn pup's needs seriously enough. "We know that mammals, in the first few years, need to bond. They are taking in so much in the first little while when they are vulnerable. They are learning what kind of world they've come into and whether they'll be able to thrive or simply fight to survive."

Being a dog owner, Piasta says, is a serious affair.

"It's a life that you're playing with," Piasta concludes. "Just the same as farmers take care of their cows, we're supposed to be the caretakers [of our pets]."

REFERENCES

¹ Louise Eccles, "The Hidden Suffering of the Dogs Bred to Be Cute," *Daily Mail*, November 13, 2014 (<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2564373/The-hidden-suffering-dogs-bred-cute-Adorable-looks-Cuddly-names-like-Labradoodle-But-trend-cross-breed-dogs-raises-disturbing-questions.html>).

² Adrienne Janet Farricelli, "Facts About Hybrid Dogs Unethical Breeders Don't Want You to Know," *PetHelpful*, June 6, 2018 (<https://pethelpful.com/dogs/The-Truth-About-Hybrid-Vigor-in-Dogs-Breeders-Dont-Want-You-to-Know>).

New Bothwell Businesswoman Named Mompreneur Finalist

By Lorelei Leona

✉ lleona@nivervillecitizen.com

She's a wife, a mom, a boss, and most recently a Mompreneur finalist. Only a few years after launching Rawnata, her gluten-free snacking company, Natalie Dueck is doing it all.

The New Bothwell entrepreneur started her journey into the health food market in 2003 when she and her family operated as The Bread Lady at the St. Norbert Farmers Market, offering a variety of whole grain breads and baking. Since then, she has grown her business to offer raw, gluten-free snacks, introducing Rawnata's first cracker nine years ago.

Rawnata is committed to creating quality products that offer a wide-range of health benefits while catering to the growing gluten-free market.

"Rawnata products focus on hemp and flax, which are both superfoods containing high amounts of Omega 3s," Dueck says of her snacking line. "We feel that our products are unique in that everything is processed at low temperatures, which aids in digestion. As well, we begin the sprouting process with the flax that we use for our crackers, which increases the availability of the nutrients and makes the crackers really easy to chew."

The company, which is entirely family-owned and -operated, also sources its ingredients from local and Canadian farmers and



Natalie Dueck, owner and operator of Rawnata. ANGELA KROEKER PHOTOGRAPHY

businesses.

Dueck was recently a finalist in the 2018 Mompreneur awards, which supports, educates, and empowers mothers in business. The national award saw over 1,200 nominations, with Dueck ending up as one of 23 top finalists.

"It was a pleasant surprise to [be nominated] and to make it to the finals. It was nice to be recognized and served as encouragement to keep pressing on!" she says.

"The Mompreneurs is a great support network for women in business, whether they're an entrepreneur like myself or Colleen [Dyck] from GORP, or someone working as a product ambassador for another company."

Colleen Dyck, another local woman, won the Mompreneur of the Year award in 2016.

Dueck, however, is no stranger to having her products recognized. Rawnata's

Chocolate Hemp Snackers won the Great Manitoba Food Fight in 2011, made the Foodie Pages Top 20 Picks in 2015, and she won the Emerging Innovator Award in 2016.

"I had definitely hoped to have it in stores and believed it could happen, but back then I thought it would be an item sold in health food stores, and I thought I could make it happen in a matter of months," she says, reflecting on her journey so far. "However, that's not the way it goes in the food world, especially for a stay-at-home mom with a lot of kids... It's been quite wonderful to see organic, raw, and vegan products such as ours go mainstream over the last five years or so. Never once in my wildest dreams had I imagined seeing Rawnata in a Safeway store! Maybe my dream of having Rawnata in Starbucks isn't so far-fetched after all."

Hoping to expand outside the Canadian market in the next few years, Dueck credits her support network of family and friends in the Manitoba business community, as well as her faith as key contributors to her success.

"Our main goal is to create products which can make a positive difference in people's health," she says. "And while working toward this goal we want to support local suppliers whenever possible, because that creates a healthy business community."

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DEPOSIT PHOTOS

Extreme Weather Proved Good and Bad for Farmers

By Brenda Sawatzky

bsawatzky@nivervillecitizen.com

Do you have food on your table today? If the answer is yes, thank a farmer.

While city dwellers may have less connection with the source of their daily food,

residents of rural Manitoba can't help but be exposed to the sights and sounds of our province's many farm operations.

Harvest time here is especially beautiful as the crops mature and change colour. It's also a time of year when

farmers get no rest, their fields abuzz with harvesting equipment from the early hours of the morning until well after the sun goes down.

Ken Krahn is a third-generation farmer and has been growing crops in the area for 35 years. He farms close to

3,000 acres in the municipalities of Ritchot and Tache. This spring, Krahn grew four types of crops throughout his acreages: Hard Red spring wheat, canola, soybeans, and corn.

He says the hot dry summer definitely impacted this year's crops.

"In 2017 we had excellent soil moisture coming into the year, with timely rains during the season which made for excellent yields," says Krahn. "This year was very similar except we did not have any late season rains to finish out the late crops like beans and corn."

The lack of rain, he says, meant less fighting against fungal disease, but it also lowered his overall yields in beans and corn. His wheat yield turned out similar to last year while canola pulled ahead a bit from 2017.

Krahn and his wife Emily believe that sharing their abundance means more than contributing to the local agri-food market.

"We are supporters of the Canadian Foodgrains Bank. However, we have not had a joint community effort for a few years like we've had in the past," says Krahn. "We have also contributed some of our proceeds from the crops to organizations like Harvest for Kids."

Harvest for Kids is a program developed by Children's Camps International (CCI), an organization whose goal is to send children to CCI camps established in developing countries around the world.

While most of us don't have direct farm-to-table

access to our grain products, vegetables and meats can be a different story. CSA stands for community-supported agriculture, and these businesses are popping up all over the region, many of them providing spray-free and grass-fed options during the summer months.

Nick Rempel has been co-owner of Natural Collective CSA for the past three years. His partners, Connor Screpnek, Adam Pauls, Derek Denolf, and Katie Daman, grow a variety of vegetables on their four-acre garden near New Bothwell. With more than a half-acre of additional pasture space, they were also able to raise free-run chickens fed with a non-GMO diet.

"The hot, dry summer was great for us this year," says Rempel. "We're lucky that most of our garden is irrigated, so we didn't have any issues keeping the crops well-watered. We've never had carrots and beets ready to harvest as early as we did this year, and we were swimming in tomatoes from late July until [late September]."

Pests can be a gardener's nightmare. For Natural Collective, flea beetles proved to be the toughest foe this year.

"Flea beetles are always an issue for us, but they were particularly bad late summer after the farmers harvested the canola," Rempel says. "Luckily, most of the plants were robust enough to withstand the damage, but our availability of crops like arugula and kale, which need to be aesthetically appealing, suffered for a month or so."

Rempel says that he and his partners use gardening techniques that allow them to grow without the use of any chemical pesticides, herbicides, or fungicides. To keep weeds at a minimum, many crop rows are planted over a layer of landscape fabric. Another relatively easy intervention that they employ is the use of row covers which means placing a light layer of fabric on top of the fledgling plants that is sunlight- and water-permeable but helps keep the pests at bay.

As the demand for locally sourced fresh food products grows, so do the number of farmers' markets in the area. Rempel says, over and above their CSA share sales, the team found themselves regularly at Farm Fresh Food Hub's market on south Osborne, the River Heights market, and the St. Malo farmers' market throughout the summer.

Rempel says that Natural Collective sprung from a collaboration of friends who shared similar values.

"Market gardening seemed like the easiest way to do something that fit our ecological values while also fulfilling our desire to work for ourselves and gain a bit more self-sufficiency."

He adds that the team will be back at it again next spring. In the meantime, fresh-farmed chickens can still be purchased by visiting their website or Facebook page.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

www.naturalcollectivecsa.ca

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MUNICIPAL ELECTION ANNOUNCEMENT

The Town of Niverville would like to announce that the current Mayor, **Myron Dyck**, was elected by acclamation to the position for an additional four-year term. Also, the Town received four nominations for Councillor, filling all vacant spots on Town Council.

The following members have been elected by acclamation to Niverville Town Council for a four-year term:

John Funk
Chris Wiebe

Kevin Stott
Nathan Dueck

Senior Election Official (SEO) — Audrey Neufeld
Contact number: 204-388-4600 ext.102
Fax number: 204-388-6110
Email: audrey.neufeld@wheretheyoubelong.ca

Commentary

When Debate Happens Out of Earshot

With municipal and school board elections coming up on October 24, voters are looking to a slate of candidates and judging them based on their ideas and platforms. This is the fourth and final article in an ongoing column by Clarence Braun, former mayor of Niverville, about the qualities of leadership we should look for in those who seek to lead us.

By Clarence Braun

I want to begin by congratulating all those who were acclaimed in the upcoming 2018 municipal election. I also want to thank all those who made the decision to enter the various races, whether for municipal council or the local school board. Public service is probably the most rewarding kind of service, as it allows those involved to be a part of positive change in their communities.

The reasons many people choose to let their names stand for elected office are varied, but I really believe that most people do so with a genuine intention to give back to their community in a general way. There are probably some others who have a specific issue that has fuelled their interest.

Let's assume that each elected official is running for all the right reasons. If you're running for office, you've probably stated that your goal is to best represent your community. This is never in question until you sit around the table with your fellow elected officials and discuss the issues that come to bear on your neighbours, friends, and family.



DEPOSIT PHOTOS

You may have some strong opinions and be forced to work alongside those with different perspectives. You may even be asked at some point to keep your personal views to yourself in order to create the perception of public unity.

A unified position can be a really good thing, but if it comes at the cost of our elected officials being unable to be authentic, we need to ask ourselves an important question: is the process as real as it could be?

When I served my two terms as mayor of Niverville, it was difficult at times to respect that process around the table. However, I soon

realized that I would need to be a consensus-builder. If I had a predetermined opinion on a course of action, I really couldn't embrace the differences and strengths of those around me.

The reality is that you can listen to others and think you are engaging with them, but if your mind is already made up you may not be able to actually hear what they have to say.

I'm not certain how each council and school board in our region functions. However, I'm somewhat perplexed at the lack of voices I hear from our elected officials. It seems

we often hear from our mayors and superintendents or board chairs, not from our elected councillors and board trustees. It would appear to me that much of the real talk may be happening around boardroom tables—out of the earshot of voters. As such, maybe it's not as transparent as it could be. The messages seem to be very controlled.

Last month, I wrote about the need for trust to be established in order for communities to move forward. The purpose of engagement is not primarily to gain agreement but rather to hear other people's perspectives. As people learn

to listen and hear others, they have the potential to gain greater understanding.

In retrospect, there were times when I could have been more focused on engagement during my time as mayor. Everyone who serves is owed honour and respect. I really believe that more engagement is the way to bring communities together, not less.

Democracy at its finest leads to greater engagement with people—not just greater, but also more frequent, as opposed to just once every four years. And this engagement process needs to be open and transparent, not a unidirectional message delivered only after school boards and councils have already decided what they are going to do.

I believe there are leaders today who may be afraid to engage with the electorate. After all, elected officials don't get paid enough to suffer much misunderstanding. It can be a lot easier to stay silent. Without a doubt, by choosing to engage more directly before making decisions, a person opens him or herself to the possibility of being misunderstood.

The reality is that, with any given decision, the electorate isn't always right. There are times when, after a process of listening and engaging with people, decisions will need to be made which may not be supported by the majority.

Will our leaders be able to endure those disagreements and misunderstandings without receiving offense? Or will the need for broad, universal acceptance by the majority be the cause of further silence?

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Sports & Recreation



The Jets take a faceoff at Bell MTS Centre.

DUSTIN KRAHN

Predicting the Jets' Opening Night Line-Ups

By Nicholas Anderson

With the countdown to the regular season in its final hours, all that Paul Maurice will have to do is put the finishing touches on his line-up before taking on the St. Louis Blues at the newly renamed Enterprise Center on Thursday, October 4.

Expectations will be high for this Jets team, higher than they've ever been before, coming off a playoff run to the Western Conference final, with most of the core intact.

Of the 19 players who suited up for game five of last year's final game, all the forwards except Joel Armia and Paul Stastny are back. Another notable omission from last season's roster is defenseman Toby Enstrom, who announced his retirement from the NHL during

the offseason.

With only a few holes in the roster to fill, building a line-up for Maurice can't have been too difficult. After all, if something ain't broke, why fix it? And if the preseason was any indication that things aren't broken, the Jets should be set to dominate once again.

That being said, in today's article we'll be looking at what we can expect in the line-up when the Jets head onto the ice for their first game of the regular season.

FORWARDS

The Jets' first line will remain the same: Mark Scheifele will play the middle between captain Blake Wheeler and freshman sniper Kyle Connor. This line was arguably one of the best in all of hockey last season. At even strength, they played a total of 54 games

together, scoring 30 times. After putting up a career high of 68 assists during last season's campaign, Wheeler should be poised to reach that number again, especially with elite snipers playing with him for a full season at even strength.

The second line is where things get a little tricky. At the beginning of last season, the second line was centred by Bryan Little, with Patrik Laine and Nik Ehlers flanking him. Two-thirds of that line remained intact throughout training camp, with one small change: Mathieu Perrault took the place of Nik Ehlers. How long this combination lasts is uncertain, but it will be contingent upon how well Ehlers plays alongside Jack Roslovic and rookie Kristian Vesalainen.

Needless to say, if the line combos used in training camp

are any indication of what Maurice uses on opening night, the second and third lines would look like this. Line two: Perrault and Laine, centred by Bryan Little. Line three: Ehlers and Vesalainen, centred by Jack Roslovic.

The play of Patrik Laine with Perrault on his wing will be something to keep an eye on. Perrault, less of a shooter than Ehlers, is a pass-first type of player. Throw Little in there and you have two good passers on the ice with one of the league's most elite snipers in Laine.

Two words that sum up the third line are youth and speed. Ehlers is one of the quickest north-south skaters in the league, Roslovic had lots of success using his speed in the middle of the ice at the AHL level, and Vesalainen is big, fast, and can shoot the

puck and drive the net. These three kids are going to be fun to watch.

But should the Jets need to send Vesalainen down for a bit more seasoning in the minors, wingers Brendan Lemieux and Marko Dano could easily step up. Dano had a very impressive training camp and he's finally showing Jets fans what they were hoping to see when the team acquired him from Chicago in 2016.

The fourth line will be the same trio that played so well all of last season: Brandon Tanev and Andrew Copp, centred by Adam Lowry. That trio was among the Jets' most effective lines analytically, with a shot attempt percentage of about 60 percent.

DEFENCE

There are little to no changes to report on defence so

far. Besides Byfuglien losing his long-time sidekick in Enstrom, the remainder of the defensive core remains intact—for the most part. Morrissey will still be playing alongside Trouba, and Myers will still be lining up with Kulikov.

As for who steps in as Dustin Byfuglien's partner, Joe Morrow really made the most of his opportunity during pre-season play, so he's the man to watch.

The Jets tried putting Myers on the left side of Byfuglien, but that experiment yielded no results. Morrow looked very good, and he seemed to add a bit more speed to his game over the offseason, too.

All in all, the Jets look to have a moderately retooled group that could go even further than last year's team.

Klassen Brings Home Gold and Silver in National Games

By Brenda Sawatzky

bsawatzky@nivervillecitizen.com

For a first-time participant, Sandra Klassen of Niverville is pretty proud of her successes at this year's Canada 55+ Games. Klassen joined approximately 1,875 senior athletes from across the country to compete in a variety of sporting events and board game challenges in Saint John, New Brunswick from August 21-24. She returned home decorated with four medals and an illustrious smile.

Klassen's first experience with the Games happened in June of this year, at the Manitoba 55+ Games held in Glenboro, Manitoba. There, she took gold and bronze medals in every category in which she was entered. Invigorated with a renewed sense of competitive confidence, Klassen wasted no time signing up for the nationals.

She found her footing quickly among this diverse and active group of seniors, taking a gold medal in the triple jump, two silver medals in each of the 50- and 100-meter track races, as well as another silver in the long jump.

At 60 years of age, she's considered one of the younger competitors. But she admits she had no idea she still had it in her since competitive track and long jump haven't been a part of her life since high school. On top of that, Klassen suffered a pulled leg muscle just four days before her first event. Taking those days off from training to recuperate meant time lost.

Not only does she still have it in her, though, she can also brag a little. And rightfully so, having broken the national record this year in the 50-meter run. The first-place winner of Klassen's three silver-winning events beat her only by a hair in each event. In the 50-meter, the gold



Sandra Klassen, on the far left, receiving a silver medal in track. © LEON CLEGG

winner had 0.2 of a second on Klassen, in the 100-meter she won by only 0.5 of a second, and in the long jump Klassen was beat by a mere two inches.

Klassen, who trained on her own outdoor tracks, says she jokingly teased the gold winner after the events, saying that she was prepared to beat her in future competitions. The winner, Klassen says, admitted to having had a personal trainer and the luxury of indoor tracks throughout the year preceding the Canada Games.

Manitoba saw 88 participants in this year's national games, 70 of whom were first-timers. Team Manitoba brought home an impressive 42 medals. Over half of those medals were taken by first-timers such as Klassen.

Klassen speaks highly of the city of Saint John and the many maritime volunteers who made the Games an inviting and exciting event to participate in.

"The people of New Brunswick were so accommodating

and so nice," Klassen says.

In true Olympic fashion, opening ceremonies included an athlete's parade led by bagpipers with a special opening address by the mayor and other dignitaries. Throughout the week, participants were treated to a '50s dance party, a Maritime Kitchen Party including east coast musicians and a square dance, and a closing ceremonies dinner and dance.

Winners of the Canada 55+ Games are welcome to enter the international seniors' games in Spain this year. Klassen says, for this year, nationals will be the end of the line for her. She's already looking forward to next summer's Manitoba games, to be held in Swan River. Nationals take place on a biannual basis and will be hosted by Kamloops in 2020.

"It was so much fun and I think anybody that has any athletic ability should consider it," says Klassen.



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IN BRIEF



Public Skating Schedule

As fall deepens and winter creeps closer, our community arenas are opening their doors for public skating. The Ste. Agathe, St. Adolphe, and Île-des-Chênes arenas are already in operation, while Niverville's is scheduled to open on Tuesday, October 9.

STE. AGATHE

- Tuesdays: 4:15–5:15 p.m.
- Fridays: 8:00–9:00 p.m.
- Sundays: 12:15–1:15 p.m.

ST. ADOLPHE

- Sundays: 5:30–6:15 p.m.

ÎLE-DES-CHÊNES

- Sundays: 12:45–1:45 p.m.

NIVERVILLE (STARTING OCTOBER 9)

- Saturdays and Sundays: 11:00 a.m.–noon, public skating; 12:15–1:00 p.m., sticks and pucks.

Niverville Pair Wins ODR Men's Championship

By Evan Braun

✉ editor@nivervillecitizen.com

Local golfing pair Bryan Trottier and Ray Dowse have won this year's men's league golf championship at Old Drovers Run in Niverville. The final took place on Saturday, September 15.

More than 70 players participate in the league, which runs two nights a week from May through September. Each night sent 16 teams to the playoff bracket, and once eight of these teams had been eliminated a final took place to determine the overall winner.

Trottier and Dowse journeyed a long road to earn the clinching win with some difficult playoff matches against Rhett Schramm and Stacey Waldner, Michael Loeppky and Greg Petrick, and then Steve Gehrer and Joey Sawatzky in the third week of playoff competition.



Caption.

© CREDIT

The other three teams rounding out the final four were Brendan Baldwin and Collin Skoleksi, Brian Chornoboy and Kevin Stott, and Kurt Funk and Cory Funk.

In the nine-hole semifinal against Baldwin and Skoleksi, Trottier and Dowse came out victorious. The Funks defeated Chornoboy and Stott in the other

semifinal.

The championship match consisted of a full 18 holes, with Trottier and Dowse defeating the Funks when they were seven up with six to play. Dowse says that he and Trottier were playing the best golf of the season, each playing bellowing their handicaps to take the win.

This is the second men's league championship for the pair, as they also won the title two years ago.

"The league is a great way to get out and meet new people, and also have some outdoor fun in the summer," says Dowse. "Looking forward to continued growth of the league next year."

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- To learn more about Old Drovers Run, contact Brendan Baldwin: proshop@olddroversrunc.ca, 204-230-3789.

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Clippers Closes Registration, Looks Forward to Season

By Evan Braun

✉ editor@nivervillecitizen.com

The first snowflakes are flying, and that means the new hockey season is right around the corner. Clipper Ice Sports (CIS) has closed fall registration, with a total of 250 children having signed up to play in the 2018–2019 season.

"While our evaluations were going on, we also hosted our coaches breakfast," says Travis Mason of Clipper Ice Sports. "We

had over 30 coaches attend from CIS and Niverville Rec Hockey. Included in the morning was a presentation from Erin Rempel on concussion protocol awareness, followed by a one-hour on-ice session performed by GT Performance teaching coaches about proper technique for basic skills. To conclude the morning, GT Performance did an off-ice session."

According to Mason, the program's coaches provided

extremely positive feedback about the sessions, saying that they appreciated the opportunity to learn from professionals.

"The support we're giving to the coaches this year with our new program is hopefully going to get more parents interested in coaching year after year," Mason says. "This year was tough to fill the coaching roles for five teams."

Mason says that the CIS Executive would like to congratulate the seven players who were successful

in making their Eastman Regional teams: Evan Groening (AAA Bantam), Caleb Funk (AA Bantam), Caden Britten (AA Bantam), Logan Wolski (AA Peewee), Jace Woytowich (AA Peewee), Hayden Fast (AAA Midget), and Meich Funk (AAA Midget).

"We would like to wish everyone a fun, safe, and memorable season," Mason concludes. "Good luck to all teams and let's bring home some championships."

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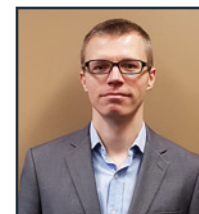
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Local Kid Makes His Mark on National Lacrosse Team

By Liz Byron

Although lacrosse is Canada's national summer sport, it frequently sees lower participation in Manitoba than more popular sports like baseball and soccer. For example, Niverville doesn't have its own lacrosse team. There is, however, a regional team.

The Manitoba Lacrosse Association implements lacrosse programs across the province, including a senior league, a recreation league, and the Red River Lacrosse Association, which involves five regional teams in a competitive youth program.

Niverville participants play for the Sidewinders, covering a region that includes parts of southern Winnipeg and stretches east to Richer, south to the U.S. border, and west to Morden. The Sidewinders play a regular spring league that starts at the beginning of April. The league plays box lacrosse, which is played in hockey rinks after the ice is gone—and in Manitoba box lacrosse is more popular than field lacrosse.

Dylan Knip is only 11 years old, but the 2018 season was his fifth year playing lacrosse. The Niverville student also plays hockey. While he enjoys both, he identifies lacrosse as his favourite sport.

This year, Knip took his play to the next level, trying out for and making the provincial Pee wee team. In mid-June, the provincial team began practicing intensely, with three two-hour practices



11-year-old Dylan Knip of Niverville.

HEATHER KNIP

per week. Knip had the opportunity not just to play at a highly competitive level but also to meet players from across the province.

Helping to ease the transition from regional to provincial team

was the fact that one of the Sidewinder coaches, Richard De La Ronde, was also the head coach for Team Manitoba.

In August, Knip and his teammates and coaches travelled to

Whitby, Ontario for the national championships.

"It was really great for him to get this opportunity," says his mother Heather Knip. "They learn to play at an advanced level, but they also learn a lot about teamwork and organization. The players have to wear matching outfits and they board the plane together. It's really cool."

Seven teams play at the Pee wee age, and the tournament began with a round robin. Afterward, the teams were divided into an A-side and B-side. Unfortunately, Manitoba was no match for the heavyweight teams from Ontario and British Columbia, whose pool of potential players is significantly larger due to overall population and the greater popularity of the sport in those provinces.

However, Manitoba defeated Nova Scotia 7-5 in their final game to bring home the gold medal on the B-side.

Players like Dylan Knip, who love lacrosse and its fast-paced, full-contact action, hope that more people will be interested in joining a team, and that more opportunities to play will emerge in the near future, particularly in the off-season. In this regard, Knip may be in luck—the Manitoba Lacrosse Association has just announced a new high-performance program that will run from November through March for athletes interested in augmenting their skills.

GORP WORLD ATHLETE OF THE MONTH



Keziah Hoepfner

Keziah Hoepfner, a Grade 12 student at NCI, co-captains her soccer squad and her veteran leadership has been a key factor in the team's success. Hoepfner leads by example as well as by providing words of encouragement to teammates. She has scored many goals from her midfield position and has the responsibility of taking the teams corner kicks, direct kicks, and long throw-ins. Hoepfner also coaches Grade Eight girls volleyball, plays varsity volleyball, and will play next year for the University of Manitoba women's volleyball team.

Her coach describes her as an outstanding role model with an unparalleled work ethic, and says she is one of the top midfield players in Manitoba.

New Dugouts at Hespeler Park Ball Diamonds

By Brenda Sawatzky

bsawatzky@nivervillecitizen.com

Niverville Councillor John Funk, along with the public works department, were busy performing some much-needed improvements to the baseball diamonds in Hespeler Park this summer. Covered dugouts were installed, providing sheltered seating for players during games and practices.

"All of the repairs to the baseball diamonds were done by the public works department," Funk says. "We had not budgeted for the dugouts, so to keep costs down we decided to do all the

work ourselves. I volunteered my time to head up the construction [along] with the help of the public works employees."

Funk says that covered dugouts are a requirement in order to host provincial baseball playoffs. The Niverville Youth Baseball will now be able to submit an application to Baseball Manitoba to host either the U11 or U13 provincials in 2019. They will be notified later this fall if Niverville's location is selected.

But even if Niverville Youth Baseball isn't successful in hosting the provincials next summer, Funk is confident the dugouts will be

appreciated by anyone using the diamonds.

"The baseball diamonds in Hespeler Park are well used by all age levels of children as well as adult slow pitch teams," says Funk.

Ryan Dyck, Niverville's Operations Manager, worked with the public works department and made good use of the balmy summer temperatures, adding some further enhancements to the baseball diamonds and soccer fields. Repairs were made to the soccer goal creases, and four new soccer pitches were added just west of the two main pitches. Fencing repairs were also completed around the

baseball diamond outfield.

Beyond the sporting area, push-button access was added to the picnic shelter washrooms, drainage culverts were repaired around the park, and the old tunnel was removed in the children's play area.

Weather permitting, more upgrades are anticipated this fall before the snow flies. Dyck and his team plan on providing some further landscaping around the timber frame building by the wetlands and new walking paths are still intended to be finished, connecting the existing paved path to the wetlands.

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The Manitoba Machine: Paul Richards, Peter Felisario, Doug Engstrom, Paul Little, Oscar De Paulo, David Bullock, and Paul Umali.

CHARLENE ENGSTROM

Richards Recognized as Top Gun in the Country

By Brenda Sawatzky

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There are few competitions as esteemed by handgun enthusiasts as the International Practice Shooting Club's (IPSC) nationals. This year's nationals were held in Selkirk, Manitoba, and Niverville's Paul Richards came out on top in his handgun classification.

"I ended up having the fastest time," says Richards. "My time was 259 seconds in total. I was about ten to 15 seconds faster than the other guys, but I also had better hits than them."

This was not Richards' first foray into national competition. He's previously competed in British Columbia, Ontario, and Alberta where he finished sixth and ninth overall. This was the first year he came out on top. He was supported by his sponsors Campro Bullets and Fast Toys Shooting Sports.

The Selkirk event hosted over 350 competitors from across Canada, all of them separated into five divisions based on their choice of handgun. Richards entered this year with a CZ Shadow complemented by a CMore RTS2 red dot which he describes as an entry-level production gun with an electrical optic.

"It's a bit of a tougher gun to shoot, but it's a cheaper gun,"

Richards says. "There are guys out there shooting with \$8,000 to \$9,000 handguns. They are in a different league."

The annual national event runs over a four-day period and covers a lot of ground. Unlike your straightforward firing range, the competition is set up like an obstacle course with 18 different stages the competitor must pass through.

"Some stages will have just three targets set up and some stages will have 16 targets set up," says Richards. "You can be running for 50 yards, through stuff, around stuff, over bridges. We were literally shooting for a couple of days."

Like a typical target, the goal is to get as close as possible to the centre for maximum points. Targets varied in size and distance, and while most were stationary others were moving targets. Still others were partially hidden from view. While points were gained for accuracy, penalties were also incurred for hitting objects close to the target.

"That kind of thing I can't train for because I don't have the equipment," says Richards. "That's more of an experience thing where you go to a bunch of different matches and try a lot of different things so that when you do try something new you have a little bit of experience

to lean on."

Speed is also considered in the final point tally. Participants' balance was tested while they traversed narrow planks and up sets of stairs while shooting at targets. Other targets could only be accessed through small openings in walls. In the end, judges divided the participants' accuracy points by the amount of time it took to complete the course to determine their final hit factor.

Richards says that the competitors get an initial walk-through of the course to mentally prepare, but no practice shots are allowed in advance of the judged run, making it difficult for competitors to determine the best angles for their shots.

"You only get one shot at it," Richards adds. "It's actually really stressful, but it's part of the fun. You have to be able to take the pressure and mentally think your way through it. If you do screw up, many people just melt down. You have to anticipate failing and come up with a plan B at a moment's notice because time is of the essence."

Richards was also a part of a team of Manitobans using similar handguns in the competition. They called themselves the Manitoba Machine and took top place as well. Scores were tabulated

and averaged for the top three scorers on the team. Theirs came out with the highest overall score.

Since he became a member of IPSC five years ago, Richards has practiced regularly at their indoor facility in Winnipeg. In order to qualify for the nationals, members have to participate in regular IPSC matches and finish in the top four in the province. Richards also challenges himself to beat his own records. Currently, he says he can pull his gun from his holster and hit a target ten yards away six times in 1.42 seconds.

His love of firearms goes back to his childhood.

"I think I shot my first shotgun when I was eight," says Richards. "I had a .22 [calibre] when I was six or seven. Me and my dad have done a lot of duck-hunting and clay-shooting. I'm a big deer hunter. I like rifles, semi-automatic rifles, and shotguns. I just kind of love it all."

Today, Richards is teaching his nine-year-old son Cade to be a responsible and safe firearms user. The pair spends time shooting targets of their own with Cade's junior rifle.

"He's a show-off and I'm a show-off," jokes Cade, recounting one of his more recent conquests of a difficult target his father didn't expect him to hit.

Arts & Entertainment

New Leadership for Eastman Choral Association

By Liz Byron

For 30 years, the Eastman Choral Association (EMCA) has been bringing people together over a shared love of choral music. Recently, however, the organization's leadership roles have been left vacant. That is, until Meredith Hutchinson and Shannon Sawatzky stepped up.

"After moving back to Steinbach, I spent a year or two thinking about who might be a good person to take the reins, who loves choir but is organized as well," says Hutchinson. "Everybody recognized the need, but nobody was volunteering. And then, this spring, I was talking to Shannon Sawatzky. We're so involved in a lot of programs already, so we just looked at each other and said, 'I think it's going to have to be us!'"

There was initially some discussion of whether the various regional choirs needed to be joined under one administrative association. Hutchinson points out that most of the choirs function on their own without any trouble. Ultimately, it was decided that the association was still an important piece of the puzzle—helping organize events, providing funding and advertising, organizing collaborative projects, and generally keeping things in order.

Hutchinson and Sawatzky, both music teachers in the Hanover School Division, are now co-presidents of the association, working with a volunteer board. One of their big goals for the EMCA is to expand choir participation.

The EMCA is one of six regional affiliates of the Manitoba Choral Association, and the region is large, stretching all the way to Manitoba's



The 2018 Eastman Youth Choir.

MIKAYLA PATENAUE

east and southern borders, the Red River to the west, and all the way north to Berens River. Hutchinson says that one of her goals for the various choirs is to reach new people within the region, both near and far.

"We just want to broaden our reach," Hutchinson says. "We want everyone who is in the area and is interested to be able to connect with us. It's easy, in a smaller community, to assume we know everybody, but that's not always the case."

EMCA's six groups include the Vespers Choir, a women's ensemble, the Choral Society Community Choir, the Eastman Male Choir, an adult chamber choir, and the

Eastman Youth Choir. While some groups, such as the Vespers Choir, are invitation-based, others require minor or no auditions.

Île-des-Chênes resident Corina Ruus has many fond memories of her years of participation in the youth choir.

"When I was a kid I was very shy, but I went out and tried it, and I loved it. I couldn't wait to go back next year," Ruus remembers. "Then I went out and joined my church choir, and I started making more friends—I'm still friends with a lot of them. It was a real confidence booster. It really brought me out of my shell."

Now Ruus is supporting her

daughter's participation in the choir. Her oldest daughter, Mikayla Patenaude, sang in the youth choir for three years and is now a coordinator. Her second daughter is currently in the choir as well, and her son plans to try out next year.

"Coming together with a bunch of other people and creating this beautiful sound just gives me goosebumps," Ruus says. "I loved being a part of that, and now I love sitting and listening to my kids be part of that. It's just magical."

One of the things she most appreciates about the Eastman Youth Choir is that its activities are funded largely through fundraisers and

sponsorships, so that parents don't have to bear the entire cost of participating in the choir. This is particularly important, she adds, because she feels that this experience should be available to everyone, regardless of their financial situation.

Hutchinson agrees that choir should be for everyone.

"When you make music with a group of people, there's a sense of community, there's a shared passion," Hutchinson says. "No matter who you are, we can all relate to a melody. I think that's something that everyone should have access to."

Even for those who aren't inclined to sing, she says, there is something in the EMCA for everyone.

"We have opportunities for kids, adults, and seniors who want to sing," she says, "but we also always need volunteers at concerts, and we of course love a good audience who will be able to enjoy our music. We hope people will reach out to us as we are trying to re-establish ourselves!"

The Eastman Youth Choir will be performing in a variety of venues around the region from Thursday, October 11 until Sunday, October 14. In particular, the Eastman School Workshop will take place on Friday, October 12. The Choral Society will hold its annual Peace Concert on November 11 at the Steinbach Mennonite Church.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Further events are listed at www.manitobasings.org/eastman-region. Anyone looking for more information can email the EMCA at: eastmansings@gmail.com



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Local Country Artist to Hit the Stage at Cowboys Roadhouse

By Lorelei Leona

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While most kids are playing sports or participating in extracurricular activities, Daniel Desorcy was busy writing his first song at the ripe age of seven. Now, 16 years later, the young musician is forging his own path into country music.

The La Broquerie native found his love for song writing in an unconventional way—by watching wrestling. And the rest, as they say, is history.

"I've been watching wrestling since I was four years old and in wrestling they do what they call a promo... usually two wrestlers in the ring trash-talking each other," says Desorcy, "So when I was seven I wrote my first song... a rap [which was] me doing a promo towards an imaginary guy. I started writing seriously when I was about 12, after I performed at a school concert."

Since then, Desorcy has found music to be his full-time job, recording his newest song, "Mary-Anne," at Arcade Studios in Niverville.



Daniel Desorcy in concert.

DANIEL DESORCY

"I love every part of it so far, from not having any experience in writing or performing to writing a bunch of songs and performing as much as I can," he says of his journey so far. "I love the stage, I love the instruments, and I love meeting new people. For me, my biggest highlight was recording a song and hearing it on the radio."

His latest tune can be heard on local country station 107.7 FM.

Backed by a four-piece band, Desorcy usually enters the creative process alone, picking up his guitar and strumming some chords until he is happy with the progression.

"After I've done that, I will put it on a loop and then hum some melodies. Once I have a verse done, I will write lyrics for the verse and do the same process for the chorus [and] bridge."

Even though he creates original music, he still wants to make sure everyone can get involved in his shows. He does this by bringing a new sound to old hits. Coming off a busy summer of festivals, including opening for Aaron Goodvin and Jason Kirkness, the country star is hoping to keep his momentum and create more tunes.

He says that his next step will be releasing his upcoming EP.

"Unfortunately I don't have the funding for a full album yet, so I'm focusing on getting an EP done one song at a time," Desorcy says. "I just want to keep performing everywhere I can to get noticed and further my career."

Desorcy recently opened for Jason Kirkness on Saturday, September 22, at Cowboys Roadhouse in Winnipeg. As a change from the outdoor festivals he's been touring, he really enjoyed playing the venue.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

■ www.cowboyswinnipeg.com

Niverville Fair Nominated for Manitoba Country Music Award

By Evan Braun

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The Manitoba Country Music Awards are taking place Saturday, November 10 at The Metropolitan Entertainment Centre in downtown Winnipeg. The evening, hosted by Patricia Conroy, will give away awards in 19 categories.

One of those categories, honouring the best Festival or Event of the Year, has nominated the Niverville Olde Tyme Country Fair for the third year in a row.

The other nominees include

Dauphin's Countryfest, Festival du Voyageur, Howl at the Moon Music Festival, Steinbach Summer in the City, and Stonewall Quarry Days.

"This is an evening not to be missed as we bring the province's largest country music community together," reads a statement from the Manitoba Country Music Association. "Several of Manitoba's top country acts will entertain guests as the prestigious awards are handed out to the highest-voted artists."

Olde Country Fair organizer

Dustin Krahn sees the nomination as validation of the hard work of the many volunteers on the fair committee. He points out that it takes a huge amount of effort on the part of a lot of people for a town like Niverville to pull off such a big event with so many moving parts.

"Having been through a couple of challenging years, and more recently the major changes that we've been trying to implement, it's a big honour for our committee to be nominated," says Krahn. "Hopefully it means we are doing

something right. It is a lot of work for a small organizing committee, even more so this past year with a lot of changes being made and much tighter finances. I thought the committee did an amazing job, and this nomination is a well-deserved pat on the back for them."

FOR MORE INFORMATION

■ www.manitobacma.com

■ Tickets to the awards are available on Ticketmaster.

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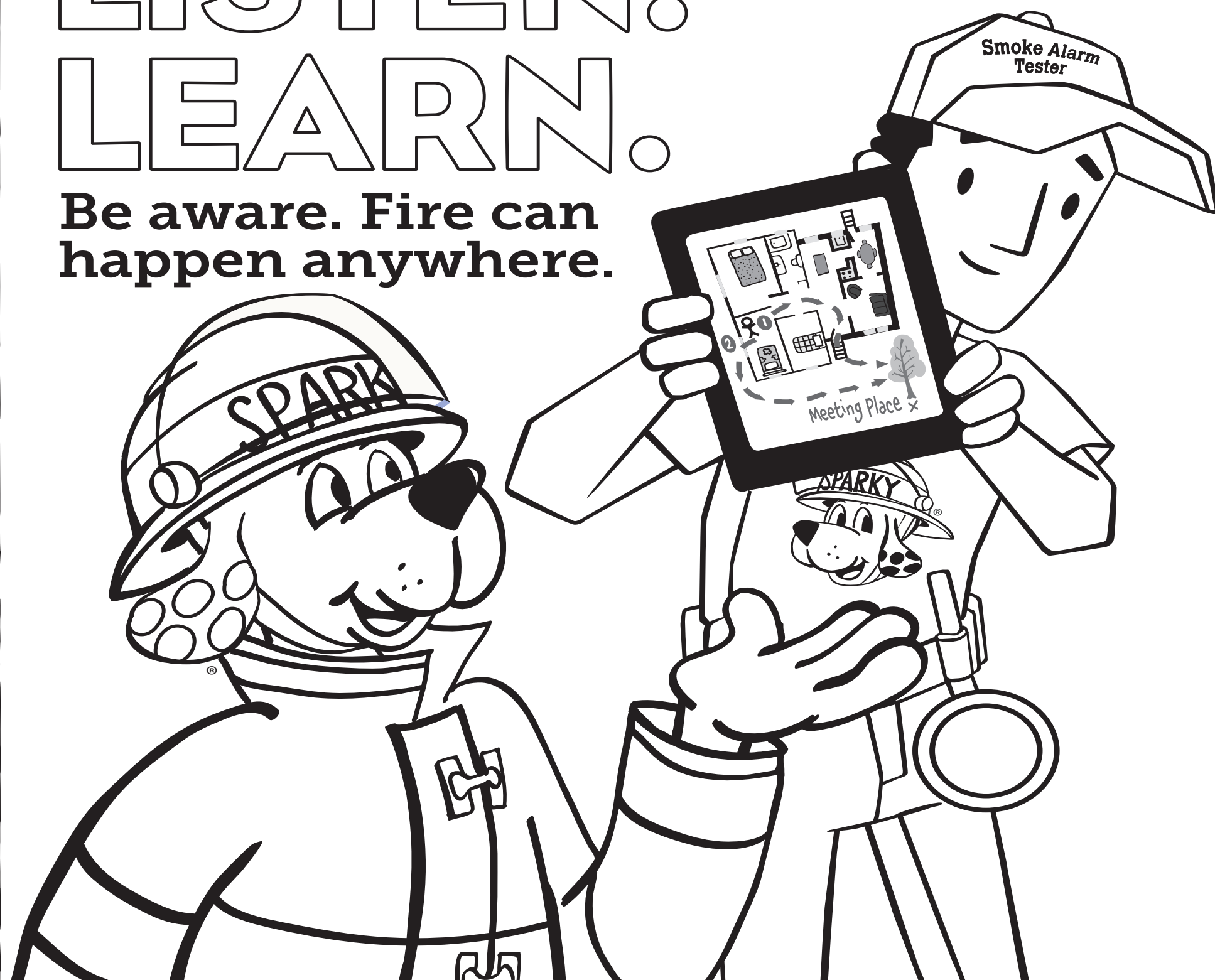
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