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LOCAL NEWS

John Funk Runs for Re-Election in Niverville

■ John Funk, the longest-serving councillor in Niverville's history, will be on the ballot this fall, looking to tie up loose ends.

Details on Page 17



LOCAL NEWS

Dream Comes True for Local Teen

■ Hailey Sigurdson, a 15-year-old from Niverville, had her life turned upside-down when she was diagnosed with a rare genetic condition. With some help from The Dream Factory, her fellow students, and the community at large, she and her family got a boost this summer with a trip to Prince Edward Island.

Details on Page 11

SPORTS & RECREATION

Flagman for a Day

■ Ryan Becenko hasn't had an easy life, but he had the opportunity last month to cross a major item off his bucket list: waving the flags at the race track.

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ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

Local Worship Band Records First Album

■ The Cornerstone Servants have been busy at Arcade Studios this summer preparing their first release, a ten-song album out this fall.

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Dairy Queen Makes Royal Debut in Niverville

» DETAILS ON PAGE 3

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The Citizen

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FREE TO SHARE. PLEASE RECYCLE.

Dairy Queen Makes Royal Debut in Niverville

By Brenda Sawatzky

bsawatzky@nivervillecitizen.com

Big news, ice cream lovers: Dairy Queen is coming to Niverville, and residents from miles around will soon be chowing down on their world-renowned entrees and desserts. Shovels are already in the ground for the sit-down restaurant and drive-thru in the new commercial strip fronting Old Drovers Run.

"I am very excited to see another major franchise make the commitment to our community," says Ray Dowse, partner in Westside Properties Inc. of Niverville. "I have been in communication with them for some time. The team at Dairy Queen have been exceptional to work with."

The new restaurant will include over 2,600 square feet of kitchen and dining space. An additional 500 square feet of patio space will be constructed for an al fresco dining option during the sunny summer months. On-the-go diners will be able to take advantage of the full-service drive-thru as well.

"Everything fell into place over the last couple of months for them to become part of phase one of our development," Dowse says. "The Dairy Queen at this location will service not just Niverville but the population of the surrounding region and trading area. I am very pleased to see the momentum this community is beginning to generate from a business investment perspective."

"This size town is DQ's 'sweet' spot across the country," says Eric Rochefort, DQ franchise developer. "Niverville is a fast-growing community... comprised of young families with children... and draws from many other smaller towns around. Creating smiles and positive memories is what DQ does. There's no better place to be doing that than in Niverville. The community deserves to have their DQ."

According to Rochefort, one of this location's franchisees, grew up in the community and has an ear to the ground for the needs of the area.

"A big part of DQ's success is making sure that our owners get involved



Tony Watters, Director of DQ Franchise Development; Ray Dowse, Westside Properties; Eric Rochefort, DQ Franchise Developer; and Matt Zubec, DQ Business Consultant for Manitoba.

DUSTIN KRAHN

in the community in many ways," adds Rochefort. "As the store gets ready to open, the owners will be recruiting 60 [employees] or more. Hiring local is always key. We will advertise for recruitment towards the end of the summer or early spring."

The Niverville location, he says, won't be your average run-of-the-mill quick take-out restaurant.

"We are going all out for Niverville," Rochefort says. "We are rolling out our prototype Core 72 concept. Seventy-two seats inside, an exterior patio, and a drive-through window. This is our larger concept store."

Rochefort and other DQ reps visited the new site and, according to Dowse, were impressed with the community as a whole. The new franchisees, Joel and Jackie Carriere and Nick and Nichole Hagidiakow, are equally thrilled about their new prospects in Niverville.

"[We] are very excited to be bringing DQ to the lovely community of Niverville," says Joel Carriere. "I lived in Niverville for a couple of years and very much enjoyed the people and my time spent there. We feel very

fortunate to be able to bring a DQ to the community as there are some great projects on the horizon like the sports complex and new high school."

Carriere's partners are not new to DQ franchising. They currently operate two locations in Winnipeg: in the Polo Park mall and on McPhillips Street.

"Dairy Queen has been a great company to work with," says Nick Hagidiakow. "It is not like your typical fast food restaurant; it's a fun, happy environment. They have a great corporate support system for their franchisees and help to create the DQ brand that has never been stronger. This is because of all of the great products that everybody recognizes, whether you choose the iconic Blizzard, the timeless banana split, or the classic Peanut Buster Parfait, everybody recognizes and has a favourite DQ treat. There is a reason why we call it fan food, not fast food."

He adds that their goal is to form long-standing relationships within the community in the years to come.

"We treat our staff like family," Hagidiakow says. "We are also

looking forward to being involved in the community through sponsorship and fundraising opportunities while getting to meet and interact with as many residents as possible."

Along with Dairy Queen and the Great Canadian Dollar Store, phase one of Westside Properties Inc.'s commercial development will also include additional commercial space. The remaining 2,475 square feet of phase one rental space is expected to be divided into two units—one of 990 square feet and the other of 1,485 square feet.

"The additional 2,475 square feet in phase one, which will be attached to the Great Canadian Dollar Store, has been spoken for," Dowse adds. "We are currently working with several parties on options for phase two development."

Mayor Myron Dyck says council is ready to welcome these new businesses to the local business community.

"I thank them for investing in our community and wish them much success," Dyck says.

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IN BRIEF



SHANNON MARTIN

Falk and Martin Host Barbecue

For the fourth year in a row, a pair of local politicians joined forces to host a constituency barbecue in Niverville. Ted Falk, MP for Provencher, and Shannon Martin, MLA for Morris, gathered at Hespeler Park on Tuesday, July 10.

In addition to enjoying a great meal of burgers and dogs, Falk and Martin both enjoyed meeting and greeting the more than 400 local constituents who showed up to visit on the beautiful summer evening.

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Business Is Hot for Freedom Fire

By Fiona Robinson

Installing a fire protection system makes perfect business sense when it comes to protecting both lives and business assets. Now in their second year of business, Freedom Fire is steadily fulfilling this demand with the boom of commercial property development in Winnipeg and the south-east Manitoba region.

"We offer three areas of service: sprinklers, alarms, and extinguishers. We are the only fire protection company in Manitoba that has been able to package these services together with in-house expertise," explains Emile Jolicoeur, the company's President of Operations. "We also have a federally inspected mobile recharging unit that drives around and recharges commercial fire extinguishers onsite, saving our clients time and money."

Jolicoeur has been working in the industry for 25 years with extensive training in fire protection. He started as a technician recharging fire extinguishers, and then moved into sales, management, and eventually the founding of Freedom Fire.

"You fall into things," he says. "My friend's dad owned a fire extinguisher recharging shop in Winnipeg and I started working there part-time when I was 18 years old."

Over time he was able to build relationships with customers and vendors until he was ready to open Freedom Fire as a home business outside of Île-des-Chênes. His home business aspirations were quickly dashed as the business grew and he hired employees. In September 2017, they leased an office in Île-des-Chênes, which includes a front office as well as shops in the back. Jolicoeur anticipates needing more space as the



Emile Jolicoeur stands ready in the Freedom Fire mobile unit.

FREEDOM FIRE

business continues to grow.

Jolicoeur and managing partners Trevor Bush (Sprinkler Division) and Kevin Lawrence (Fire Alarm Division) have managed to keep their cool as the fire business heats up. The bulk of their business comes from southeast Manitoba, but the company also serves commercial clients as far as Saskatchewan and northern Manitoba.

Some of Freedom Fire's clients include the southern campus of Manitoba Institute of Trades and Technology as well as St. Vital Centre. They are also working on the brand new high school in Niverville.

"We'll be doing all the fire extinguisher cabinets as well as the design and engineering for the sprinkling systems," says Jolicoeur. "It's exciting to be working on a local project that keeps kids safe."

Freedom Fire appreciates working with any size of commercial client, whether it's a company that has just one fire extinguisher, or a new build that requires an overall fire protection system including alarms, sprinklers, and extinguishers.

Although the company doesn't offer formal residential services, Jolicoeur welcomes local residents to stop by their office in Île-des-Chênes to have their fire extinguishers tested.

"We can test them, recharge them, or recommend a replacement. We can also answer any questions they have about the quantity, size, and types of extinguishers they need for their home. For example, a kitchen requires something different than a mechanical shop."

Freedom Fire also keeps commercial-grade fire extinguishers

in stock that can be purchased for anywhere between \$35 and \$100 depending on the size of canister, a better deal than is available for store-bought extinguishers.

"We offer commercial-grade quality extinguishers for roughly the same price as consumer models," Jolicoeur explains.

As for the future, Jolicoeur is optimistic.

"The business climate is exciting. We're capturing a good percentage of jobs we bid on and commercial lots continue to open up all over southeast Manitoba."

As your business or workspace continues to grow, is it time to revisit fire protection systems? It may be better to play it safe and get advice from the experts.

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■ www.freedomfire.ca

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Local Woman Seeks Kidney Donation

By Brenda Sawatzky

bsawatzky@nivervillecitizen.com

Karla Boyechko is a pretty average Canadian. She enjoys life in her mid-size home with her partner and three small dogs. She's an educator by trade and lives a comfortable life.

Comfortable, that is, apart from her diabetic condition which, at 37 years of age, has brought her to a place of desperation. Boyechko is experiencing kidney failure and is in desperate need of a donor to survive.

At the age of six, she was diagnosed with Type 1 diabetes. She's considered a brittle diabetic, which means she has a harder time than most controlling her sugars. Over the years, this has led to a series of complications including retinal detachment, diabetic mastopathy, and, in more recent years, diabetic nephropathy—or kidney failure.

Kidney disease is listed in stages. Boyechko is between stages 4 and 5, from severe to the end stage of her kidneys' life. Her kidneys are functioning at between 16 and 20 percent capacity and dangerously close to shutting down completely. Dialysis, she says, is the next stage, but this is accepted as a temporary measure until a donor is found. Without a donor, the outcome is, as yet, unthinkable: death.

"Kidneys work in tandem, so as soon as one starts to go, they both start to go," says Boyechko.

This is true in the case of kidney disease, but healthy humans with no history of kidney dysfunction can manage through life with just one kidney.

"The funny thing about kidneys is that you can function nearly perfectly fine with one kidney," Boyechko adds. "There's a few things you should restrict, like contact sports, but other than that you can function just fine."

Donors might wonder what will happen if they donate a kidney and then develop disease in their one good kidney. Boyechko says,



Karla Boyechko.

BRENDA SAWATZKY

in cases like that, a person would have lost them both anyway. But in situations of kidney damage due to an accident or trauma, the circumstances are different.

A variety of levels of testing are involved in finding the right kidney donor. They need to have the right blood type, be a genetic match that's not too close to her own, and undergo rejection testing.

"If I find a donor with all of those perfectly matched, I can get 30 more years with that kidney."

Boyechko has an A-positive blood type, but she can take a donation from anyone with a type O or type A, regardless of whether their blood is positive or negative. So far, her parents and one sibling can't help due to a history of high blood pressure, cancer, and inadequate blood types. Boyechko holds out hope for one sister who is a blood match, but further testing is needed to determine her viability.

"It's been a hard thing for me to accept," Boyechko says. "I've always been a very independent person, so to rely on somebody in this great manner is really hard. I don't think I could feel like I'd ever be able to pay that

person back."

She adds that in the case of kidney failure, a live donor can offer the best long-term outcome, especially if it's someone who's not too closely related genetically. The average downtime for a kidney donor is about two weeks, and this downtime is typically covered by health insurance or government employment insurance due to a clause on life-saving measures.

"I think the biggest message I'd like to get out there is that anybody can be a living donor for multiple things—your liver, your skin, your blood, your kidney," Boyechko says. "There's so many people who are waiting for transplant out there and you could walk by your possible perfect match [at any time]. All you have to do is call into a clinic and be a possible donor. There's so much that we can do for each other. Going through all of this has really opened my eyes to the lack of awareness about that."

Anyone can be placed on the donor list by contacting the Health Sciences Centre in Winnipeg.

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The building at 166 Main Street Niverville is no more.

RAY DOWSE

Building Demolition Brings Up Old Memories

By Evan Braun

✉ editor@nivervillecitizen.com

On Monday, July 9, a demolition crew made short work of the commercial rental property sandwiched between Country Snacks and Gan's Kitchen in Niverville. The demolition of 166 Main Street will make way shortly for a significant expansion to Country Snacks.

As previously reported, owners Pete and Rose Friesen have some big plans for the property, including the addition of six new gas pumps, a new entry and egress loop, and an outdoor attached patio.

"I am very excited," said Rose Friesen back in April following town council's unanimous vote to approve the development. "You have no idea how long we've waited for this. It's a dream coming to reality. We've had a lot of dreams over the years, but this is pretty great because, when you're independent, it's a long process to get [to the place] where you can [afford to] do this. But to have the support of the community, we feel so blessed."

The existing gas pumps in front of the building will be removed and a contemporary six-pump, six-lane island will be installed. This

will result in 12 new filling stations, covered with an overhead canopy illuminated by LED lighting. In an effort to reduce congestion and improve safety for pedestrian traffic, the current egress on Fourth Avenue South will be closed off. A new access will be added on the west end of the 166 Main Street property, forming a loop that will connect to the current Main Street entry.

Although many residents are excited about this upgrade to one of the community's most popular businesses, still others lingered next to the pile of shattered bricks and broken glass, recalling the storied history of 166 Main Street.

The 60-year-old structure served for its first 30 years as The Pines Restaurant, owned and operated by Neil and Helen Friesen.

"As I watched the building come down today, it was with an awareness and some regret," said Clarence Braun, the former mayor of Niverville who was also a co-owner of 166 Main Street for a period of time beginning in the late 1980s. "The Pines Restaurant building was over 60 years old. There were additions and changes to the original building. Neil and Helen

served a few generations. When I bought the building, it was configured to rental space and served another 30 years. Wishing Peter and Rose many years of success as they expand their dreams and vision for Country Snacks."

Locals stopped by social media throughout the day to share memories. In particular, Neil and Helen Friesen were remembered for their great food and even better hospitality.

"I started working at The Pines when I was 12 years old," says Lisa Letkeman. "By the time I graduated high school, I had six years work experience and learned a lot of good things about life. I served a lot of Pines Burgers, apple pie with cheese, and Monkey See Monkey Do desserts in my time."

Another former employee recalled a particular quirk of owner Neil Friesen's: he would always drop a single toothpick in the restaurant's infamous Pines Float.

After The Pines closed, the building was home to many tenets, including a long-time hair salon, a health food store, and more recently a chiropractic office and a daycare.

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Small-town “feel” is connection – knowing people in your community; having a sense of belonging; sharing concerns and common goals.

Part of that small-town feel comes from getting to know business owners and their staff. That local connection means you’re known by your name. If you’re not yet known by your name, you’ll still get a welcome smile or a nod.

Shopping locally is one more way to build your relationships and feel more at home in a community.

If you have a concern, local business people are more likely to help you solve it because your community is their community. Can’t find something? Local business people are more likely to help you find what you need or an alternative.

Businesses come to a community and stay in a community when owners know residents will support them. It’s simple math. Businesses have payroll to meet, taxes to pay, and operating costs to pay. They need revenue to cover those costs. Revenue comes from customers using their services and buying their products.

Niverville 2.0 is a great community connection. Neighbors helping neighbors and making connections. Often, I notice questions about where to find a service or product. What surprises me is the number of times suggestions are made for businesses outside the local area.

As a chamber of commerce, we’d ask you to look locally first. We have a member directory on our website ... www.niverville.com/member-directory. There you will find businesses that serve Niverville and the surrounding area.

If you have concerns or comments about our members, please send those to me at chamber@niverville.com.

– Dawn Harris,
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Welcome to our new member

QUINN AND DOT

Rachel Drader. **Quinn & Dot** is a family run clothing company based out of Niverville that designs and creates modern clothing for babies and young children. Contact: hello@quinnanddot.com or visit www.quinnanddot.com

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ROYAL LEPAGE
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Life's a Buzz for Local Beekeeper

By Brenda Sawatzky

✉ bsawatzky@nivervillecitizen.com

Scott and Meghan Beasant of Niverville know bees. They know the little honey-producers so well, in fact, that they've collaborated in business with them to create Bzzzant Honey.

"I'm a small-time [beekeeper]," says Scott Beasant. "I make a bit of profit, but it's just covering the expenses, mostly. I hope to make a bit more in the future, but for right now the honey I'm making is finally starting to surpass the amount of money I'm spending."

Beasant works a full-time job as a refrigerant technician with JWH. The beekeeping and honey production was initially intended to be a hobby, giving his family the perk of a low-cost sweetener. He admits that he is completely self-taught in the delicate and complicated profession of beekeeping.

"Originally, I thought maybe I'd just have a hive for [my own use]," Beasant says. "Something to have some fun."

As his skills grew, so did his hives, and today he keeps ten hives on a rural property just north of Niverville. With increased production came sales to locals looking for fresh honey. Now Meghan is involved with managing their social media sites and YouTube pages. Even their young son gets involved, helping with the bees while donning his very own peewee bee suit.

One hive, for Beasant, consists of approximately 30,000 bees. As he

learns, he's gotten to know his bee livestock well enough to be able to tell if the hive has a strong queen bee, based on her winter survival ability, and if any new queen bees have been produced in the hive, allowing him to start another hive.

"I'm artificially driving them for a higher population, sort of like livestock," Beasant says. "In the spring, I take weak hives and I pull resources from powerful hives and use them to bolster populations in weaker ones."

"If a honeybee comes up to you and starts bumping into you, they're actually being aggressive. They don't want to sting you, because if it sting you it dies."

Scott Beasant | Owner, Bzzzant Honey

He's also captured bee swarms, a condition that occurs when a hive becomes overpopulated. The swarms are tightly balled groupings of bees sometimes found on tree branches or fences with a new queen bee tucked safely at its centre. Swarms like this indicate a new colony relocating to a hive of its own.

For the most part, he says, honeybees aren't aggressive by nature but they don't appreciate their hive being tampered with. For this reason, the best time to check a hive is during the day when the majority of the bee population has left to scout for food sources.

Because his beekeeping happens mostly in the evenings, he's had to be more careful while the population is returning home.

"If a honeybee comes up to you and starts bumping into you, they're actually being aggressive," says Beasant. "They don't want to sting you because if it stings you it dies. At first it will just start bumping into you and telling you to go away."

There are a variety of reasons Beasant needs to tamper with the hive. Every spring and fall he adds

sugar water and pollen patties to the hive. In spring, this awakens them from their winter dormancy and gets them active again for a new season of productivity. In fall, it encourages them to make stores of honey that will keep them fed throughout the winter months.

During the summer months, Beasant checks his hives regularly, removing frames as they become filled with honey and replacing them with clean new frames. The full frames are taken to an outbuilding where his equipment waits.

With a special knife, Beasant scrapes the beeswax away from the frame's surface, revealing hundreds

of tiny cells, all holding miniature stores of honey. The wax is also a by-product made by the bees, used to seal each cell so that the flower nectar stored within the cells can dry and crystallize into honey.

From here the frames are placed into an extractor, a large stainless-steel drum with a manual crank. As the frames spin within this unit, the honey is released and sticks to the walls of the drum. A spigot near the bottom of the drum allows the honey to pour through filters and into a large vat. Finally, the honey is jarred and ready for use.

One of the biggest threats to a beekeeper's livestock is overwintering. While bees are conditioned to weather a Manitoba winter, extended winters like this past one are hardest on a bee population.

Beasant saw a 72 percent loss to his stock this year. He went into last fall with 14 hives and by spring only four had survived.

"If they're stuffed in the hive for too long, they start getting dysentery and all kinds of things," Beasant says. "Normally my bees are outside by March, getting some fresh air and defecating outside the hive."

Beasant explains that a reduction in flower pollen and nectar in fall indicates that winter is coming. As temperatures drop, the bees form a tight huddle around their queen, who always remains at the core.

The bees vibrate to add warmth to the hive, and rotate like a convection current, the inner bees



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Scott Beasant of Bzzant Honey.

BRENDA SAWATZKY

moving to the outside of the ball, allowing the outer bees a chance to move inward for warmth. The colder it gets, the less they vibrate, conserving energy for the toughest winter months. Eventually, the outer bees begin to die off if the spring temperatures don't arrive early enough.

"You have attrition occurring on the outside of the ball," Beasant says. "When you have a long cold winter, that ball gets smaller and smaller and the amount of heat drops and drops. Going into March, I had about nine hives, but by the end of the month I was down to five because the extended length of the winter is just too much."

For this reason, Beasant puts entrance reducers on the hives in fall to help keep the heat in. He also wants to experiment with placing his homemade insulation pads on the outside of the hives this coming winter.

In spite of the winter losses, the hives that do manage to winter through are the powerful ones, proofed by their survival. Powerful hives are strong producers of healthy new populations.

While it's amazing to consider the bee's ability to create something as delectable as honey, what's equally fascinating and awe-inspiring is the lifecycle of a hive and the powerhouse at the centre of that hive: the queen.

"The queen doesn't do anything but lay eggs," says Beasant. "She doesn't even feed herself or [leave the hive to] defecate. The [worker bees] actually take the faeces from her and escort it out of the hive. All she cares about is laying as many eggs as possible. She goes to every cell and measures the cells with her little mandibles, making sure it's the right kind of cell, because male

eggs are bigger."

The queen lays up to 3,000 eggs per day from spring through fall. These eggs hatch within 21 days. Her primary goal is to ramp up production by adding bee numbers during the peak months. She has complete control of the kind of eggs she lays, whether they are male, female, or future queen bees. The majority of eggs she'll choose to lay are female since they are the only worker bees in the colony. Males are only good for reproduction, so few are actually needed in the function of the hive.

"She will only lay the male eggs once enough nectar has come in because they are a waste of resources," Beasant says. "They don't help at all. They don't even have a stinger, they just have genitals. They don't even protect the hive."

Bees born during the summer months have a five-week lifecycle. After birth, their first job is that of housekeeping: taking out the trash such as dead bees, tending the young, feeding the queen, and cleaning and lining the cells with an antibacterial sap they gather from trees to ready the cells for new eggs.

From here they graduate to field bees, leaving the hive slowly at first to take orientation flights within close proximity of the hive. This ensures that they will recognize their surroundings adequately to return every day.

"It's flight school," Beasant quips. "You'll see them flying in circles around the hive and over the course of time they'll start to go farther and farther."

Once ready for field trips, bees are given instructions from the top down. Some will be commissioned to collect nectar, others pollen which will feed the larvae their daily dose of protein. According to Beasant, they will never

deviate from their duty and risk disappointing the queen, who governs the entire brood.

In fall, it's the queen who decides when to shut down production of new eggs.

"When the temperature starts falling, she'll start slowing down brood production so there's less bees in the hive," Beasant says. "This way, she's not feeding all these bees in the winter. It's about ramping down soon enough while trying to [keep a sufficient] population for next summer."

At times, when the colony shows signs of outgrowing the hive, the queen will lay new queen eggs to encourage the formation of a new colony which will separate from her own.

While she may lay several queen bee eggs, only one will survive. The first queen infant to exit her cell will lance the openings of all other queen bee cells, causing them to die.

The queen also gives off pheromones that are unique to her. As her colony rubs shoulders with her, the chemical is transferred to each bee, allowing them to identify as her colony. This makes for easy identification of outsider bees that attempt infiltration. Unless they come bearing a sack of nectar like a gift, they are quickly ushered off.

Beasant says he'll get approximately 1,000 pounds of honey from his hives this summer. That's about double what he made last summer. Many of his clients are return customers, placing large orders for their annual use. He welcomes new customers, too, at least until his stock is depleted for one more season.

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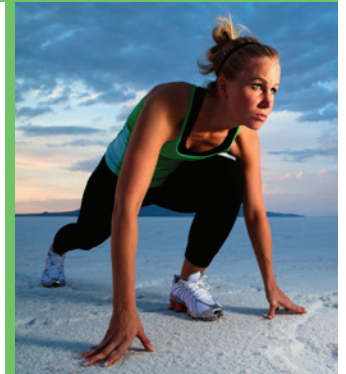
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Niverville Endures Another Water Services Hiccup

By Evan Braun

✉ editor@nivervillecitizen.com

In mid-July, the Town of Niverville experienced a brief interruption to its water services.

On Wednesday, July 18, the town issued a request for residents to restrict their water usage—notably, to avoid watering their lawns. This followed a long lawn-watering ban in the spring, not to mention frequent similar requests from town council in previous years.

Water shortages such as these seemed to have been solved for good when Niverville hooked up to a new water source at the beginning of June.

Mayor Myron Dyck characterized the incident as a hiccup in the new system, one which was solved after a



Niverville's water treatment plant.

■ NATALIE BATKIS

weekend of troubleshooting. Full service was restored on Monday, July 23.

The problem resulted from iron sediment building up in the water line, which Dyck says is a problem encountered by many other nearby communities after sudden

increases in consumption, such as Niverville has experienced due to recent dry conditions. When water usage increases dramatically, iron sediment in the line can be flushed down the pipes and clog the treatment plant.

Dyck seeks to reassure

residents that the town's maintenance protocols have been updated to avoid this kind of issue in the future.

"For lack of a better way of saying it, [we use] a big foam earplug," Dyck says of the process to clean the water line. "This line is 14 inches in diameter and the plug is roughly two feet long. It has a big hard cap on either end and foam in the middle, and through water pressure they force this thing along the line and it essentially cleans the inside of the pipe."

The cost of one of these plugs is a mere \$80, and the people who complete the work are, for the most part, already on salary for the town. Thus, the cost of adding this process to the regular maintenance schedule, Dyck says, is negligible.

Niverville Joins BlueW Program

By Brenda Sawatzky

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"Wherever you are in the world, you won't have to pay for a drink of water when you are thirsty." This is the mantra of the BlueW organization and the reason that Niverville has become one of the newest members of this international, community-based program.

BlueW.org was created to make healthy drinking water easily accessible to everyone, eliminating the need to purchase bottled water. Their website provides easy-to-navigate maps that guide the user to the nearest locations

where they can find clean, free, public, and commercial sources to fill their reusable bottle. Niverville is now one of over 26,000 locations to hit that map.

"It's a great way to promote our municipal water system, and also provide a service to residents and visitors who may be walking, biking, etc. in or through town," says Angela Janz, Recreation Director for the Town of Niverville. "It's also a great thing with us being a part of the Crow Wing Trail, to have locations where trail users can stop and fill up their water bottles at no cost."

Current Niverville

locations include the town office, Hespeler's Cookhouse and Tavern, and Bigway Foods. Janz is hopeful, though, that other businesses will come on board to provide this terrific service to residents and visitors alike.

"They need to be on municipal water and have a faucet [which is] easily accessible or a jug of tap water available," Janz says. "The only stipulations are that an employee cannot take their water bottle and fill it for them where they cannot view, they cannot use washrooms for refilling, and it cannot be in a school."

Janz became aware of the

program through Southern Health, who made a presentation at a meeting of recreation professionals this past spring. When she presented the opportunity to council, they approved.

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Dream Comes True for Niverville Teen

By Brenda Sawatzky

bsawatzky@nivervillecitizen.com

Fifteen-year-old Hailey Sigurdson fulfilled a long-time dream in July, a dream realized thanks to the help of The Dream Factory, her NCI peers, and the community at large. In mid-July, Sigurdson and her family indulged in the sights, sounds, and experiences of Prince Edward Island.

"I first started wanting to go there in Grade Four because I did a project on it," says Hailey.

What she didn't know at the time was that a life-threatening illness would pave the way to achieving that dream.

In 2015, Sigurdson was diagnosed with Marfan Syndrome (MFS), a degenerative disorder of the connective tissues in her body. MFS affects one in 5,000 people if it's genetically transferred to the child from a parent. Sigurdson's MFS was a spontaneous mutation, which is said to occur in only one of 20,000 people. Her parents and sibling have since been tested and are free of the MFS gene.

"[Hailey's doctor] sent her for testing to the geneticist because she has the outward symptoms of Marfan Syndrome," says her mom, Colleen. "They sent us to a heart specialist right away and they [discovered that] her aorta is dilated a little bit, and so they put her on heart medications to try to prevent it from getting bigger. Her aorta will slowly dilate over time, which makes it weaker."

While it's primarily her aorta, the largest artery in the body, and heart complications that put her at the greatest risk, MFS can also negatively affect the lungs, eyes, bones, and joints—virtually anywhere connective tissue can be found.

Symptoms of MFS typically become more evident in the teen years as the child's body develops. Sigurdson had already been diagnosed with scoliosis at 12 years of age,



Hailey Sigurdson with her family on vacation on Prince Edward Island.

COLLEEN SIGURDSON

a condition that is often the first indicator of the disorder. Since that time, doctors have discovered a 40 percent reduction in her lung function and a weakening of her aortic wall.

While there is evidence that the disorder can be managed if treated early, MFS patients need to avoid strenuous activities, falling, and hard bumps to the body.

"It changed how she is with her dad and her brother," Colleen says. "They used to wrestle and I had to [remind them to stop]. Her dad had to learn to be [less rough and tumble] with her."

Hailey says that she's had to give up soccer and basketball, sports that she loved, because she tires quickly from any activity she's involved in. Colleen adds that, due to the rarity of the disorder, it has felt very lonely at times. Clinic appointments have become a regular part of the family's life, with Hailey seeing as many as eight specialists at any given time and having up to five appointments in a day.

"She's been amazing," Colleen admits. "When she was first diagnosed, we took a few days to just be miserable and then she said, 'Okay, I've got to change this thing around and do something.' So she threw herself into her art. She wasted no time with feeling sorry for yourself."

Colleen also wasted no time in

reaching out to The Dream Factory, a Winnipeg-based charitable organization dedicated to fulfilling dreams for kids who are battling life-threatening illnesses.

"We're unique because we're based in Manitoba and all of the funds we raise stay in the province to help local children," says Howard Koks, Executive Director of The Dream Factory. "Everything we do is focused on helping sick kids and their families. The Dream Factory relies solely on the generous support of people and businesses. Since 1983, we've created cherished memories for more than 700 families in Manitoba."

As fate would have it, NCI student president Giuppi D'Amico reached out to The Dream Factory a few years later, requesting an opportunity to get involved. He was unaware at the time of the need within his own school. The Dream Factory put the two in contact, to ensure that Hailey was agreeable to the school's involvement. From there, D'Amico and his co-president, Kenzie McGarry, were given the green light to start fundraising.

"I thought that [sponsoring an NCI student] would be a better motivator and pull everyone together," D'Amico says. "We set our goal and we reached it."

The pair set to work rallying the school behind the cause. Cash

donations were collected from many students. Others brought baked goods to support the school-wide bake sale. Going one step further, the presidents decided to take it to the larger community, hosting a bingo night and a barbecue.

D'Amico says the response from local businesses was incredible. Many businesses donated prizes for a variety of raffles. Wiens Furniture offered their location for the community barbecue and supported it with door prizes and advertising. Bigway Foods donated the food.

In the end, the students exceeded their goal of raising half the money required to fulfill Hailey's dream. A cheque was then sent to The Dream Factory on her behalf for \$5,300.

"The [Dream Factory] said that anything helped," says D'Amico. "We could have given them \$500 and they would have been happy, but Hailey's dream cost around \$10,000, so to raise just over half was a big help for them. They were very touched when I first called to say we wanted to help. They usually don't get schools asking."

"Giuppi and the NCI students set their own goal and ran their own campaign," Koks says. "In our experience, we've found that a committed group of volunteers, regardless of age or circumstance, can do tremendous things, so we are very proud that they

were able to raise so much to help our organization. At The Dream Factory we've learned to never underestimate the power of the human spirit, especially in young people."

Throughout the fundraising efforts, Hailey says the students and staff were very mindful and sensitive, preventing her from feeling awkward or the centre of unwanted attention.

"I wanted them to know, just to raise awareness because it's not really well-known, but I didn't want [the spotlight] entirely on me," Hailey says of her generally timid nature.

The balance of the funds required to fulfill Hailey's dream trip came from outside donations to The Dream Factory, one of them from a couple who requested only a picture of the family having fun in PEI.

Apart from the joy of fulfilling her dream, Hailey will continue to pour herself into her artistic skills of painting, drawing, and writing.

D'Amico and McGarry graduated this year. D'Amico was accepted to the University of Winnipeg where he'll be pursuing a career in education.

"I used to be a really shy person up until Grade Ten," D'Amico says. "Then in Grade Eleven I decided that I wanted to make connections and enjoy high school. I really liked it that I could be school president in Grade Twelve. I figure I can become a teacher and continue this."

And The Dream Factory staff hope to encourage D'Amico to continue in his passion for helping people.

"Giuppi is a fine young man who represents the spirit of what The Dream Factory is all about," Koks says. "We hope to keep him involved with the organization as he moves on to university as he is exactly the type of energetic and community-minded person we love to have involved. We will work with him to find future volunteer opportunities going forward."



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IN BRIEF

Niverville Sidewalks, Lanes Get Upgrades

By Evan Braun

✉ editor@nivervillecitizen.com

This summer, the Town of Niverville completed its latest sidewalk repairs. The old cobblestone walkways were replaced on both sides of Main Street between Second Avenue and Third Avenue.

For the last three years, the town has been spending roughly \$100,000 annually on sidewalks, with the end goal of having the entire length of Main Street complete.

"For the year, [we're finished], yes," says Mayor Myron Dyck. "For the scope of the project, no. We still have the elementary school to the Subway corner, so that whole block past the cemetery needs to be done. And then we also have the block from Andrew Neufeld's physiotherapy office to JWH that still needs to be done. But that won't be this year. That'll be another year."

Another aspect of the town's commitment to improving Main Street involves building a back lane behind the businesses on the south side of Main Street between Second and Third Avenues.

Dyck says this will improve flow to the affected businesses, including the HUB Insurance, Niverville Family Chiropractic, and the town office.

"This is basically to assist with parking," Dyck explains. "The back lane will provide staff with access and egress and a place for employee parking."

Eric King, Chief Administrative Officer, confirms that the project will be completed at a cost of \$44,358.95 before taxes.

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Growing Minds Celebrates 10th Anniversary

By Brenda Sawatzky

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This August, Growing Minds is getting set to celebrate an auspicious occasion, the tenth anniversary of opening Niverville's first and only licensed daycare centre. On August 22, Growing Minds' staff and board members invite the community to come and celebrate with them from 5:00–8:00 p.m. in Hespeler Park.

The event will include old-fashioned family games and races, bouncy castles, as well as food and drinks which can be purchased inexpensively thanks to the support of a number of local businesses. There will be no admission charge.

"We wanted to make it a community event because the community has played such a large role in its success," says Helen Peters, chairperson of the Growing Minds parental board. "It's not a fundraising event. It's literally to continue building those bridges and relationships within the community, to thank everyone and to recognize those people that were involved over the years."

Peters says that the event's focus will be on young families, providing a means for parents to interact with their children and with other families, too. As a parent with children in Growing Minds, she recognizes the need for parents to have activities that don't take them away from their kids any more than they need to be.

The event also welcomes those who have served in the centre in past years, community business people, members of town council, as well as grand-friends of the community's children.

"We're very blessed to be located in the Heritage Centre because our programs involve

regular visits with grand-friends," Peters says, in reference to the daycare's interactive visits with residents of the personal care home. "Whenever my family goes biking, as soon as they see a silver-haired person they instantly shout out, 'Hello grand-friend!' And, more often than not, this person will turn around with the biggest smile on their face and wave at them. My children now recognize anybody above that certain age as a grand-friend."

For Peters and other parents, Growing Minds is one of the reasons that Niverville has been an attractive place to live and call

our centre a good environment for staff to work in," adds Peters, suggesting that childcare staff are often under-recognized and underappreciated in society, in spite of their important role in a parent's and child's life. "I think Growing Minds is one of the best daycares in southern Manitoba."

In part, she says, it is because the staff go above and beyond to provide more than just a babysitting service. Ongoing programming allows the children to learn about their world and helps prepare them for their future. Regular themed activities will include the importance of recycling and

projects and whether those projects are feasible. They spend a lot of time talking to the town and business partners within the town. We will always look for new opportunities, but they will be reliant on the province's willingness to fund those extra spaces."

Growing Minds has made inquiries into the promised daycare spaces coming to the new Niverville high school. At this stage, the space has been assigned to the second phase of development and won't be ready for at least a year and a half. These will include infant and pre-school spots only. They've been informed by the province that there is little likelihood of future funding for school-age daycare spaces.

"School-age care, even nationwide, is a genuine concern for every community, and between the government and school boards, they are trying to figure out whose responsibility that is."

In the meantime, Growing Minds' objective will be to make sure that the existing centre and its children have a solid foundation to work on. As for the centre's highlights and struggles over their ten years of service to the community, Peters says that they are pretty much one and the same.

"Every September, we're not sure if we're going to have enough school-age spots for our kids, and through some amazing organization and goodwill we have yet to turn a child away," Peters reflects with a sense of awe. "Our director, assistant director, and the board have done everything in their utmost power so that, come September, everybody that's in our care that needs a school-age spot has been able to get one. That's through sheer dedication and something we can be very proud of."

"Every September, we're not sure if we're going to have enough school-age spots for our kids, and through some amazing organization and goodwill we have yet to turn a child away."

Helen Peters | Growing Minds

home. Without a daycare facility, many families would not be able to live here.

"Way back, ten years ago, there were some ladies at Puratone who saw a need for a daycare and they didn't quit," Peters recalls. "They just never gave up until Growing Minds was up and running and so we owe a lot to those ladies."

Five years ago, Peters joined the daycare's parent board, whose role is to act as staff support, oversee the day-to-day running of the centre, and assist in budget preparation and fundraising efforts to provide enhancements to the centre.

"We want the best staff looking after our children, so we do the best job that we can of making

environmental responsibility, learning where their food comes from and teaching them to care for animals.

Occasionally, members of the public service sector will be invited in to interact with the children, such as firefighters, RCMP officers, and ambulance attendants.

Though Growing Minds has been at maximum capacity for years, Peters suggests that they are always actively looking at ways to try and accommodate the many families who have yet to find a good licensed daycare facility close to home.

"We have a strategic committee that looks for opportunities to expand and grow," says Peters. "They basically take a look at new

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or have been here a while...*

In 2016 the new splash pad was opened. This splash pad and canteen is part of over \$1 million dollars spent in Hespeler Park during the past couple of years. Other projects have included almost \$200,000 spent on redoing the baseball diamond infields and adding more soccer fields.

In 2016 a dog park on the arena grounds was built for all the other "residents" of Niverville.

In 2017 a new natural park was built in the Highlands.

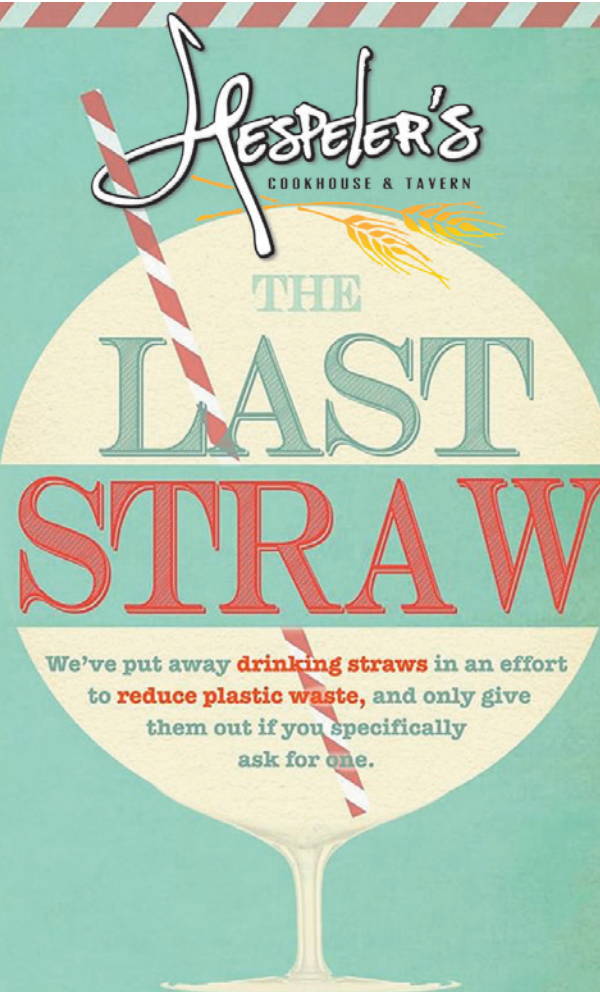


In 2018 the next phase of the Wetlands is being completed. This lagoon remediation project is one that Niverville has received national awards and Federal grants for as we are leading the way in being environmentally responsible. The Wetlands, located in

Hespeler Park, will have new trail ways with trail markers, once complete, and is part of the plan to continue to connect the community. A new gazebo is also in place to become the interpretive centre for the Wetlands.

QUESTIONS FOR COUNCIL

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Councillor John Funk Looks to Extend His Town Service

By Evan Braun

✉ editor@nivervillecitizen.com

John Funk has served on Niverville's town council for more than 30 years, longer than anyone else in the town's history. He was first elected in a 1988 by-election when two seats opened up midterm, seats which were heavily contested when an unprecedented 11 candidates threw their hats into the ring.

To put it mildly, the town has changed epically during his 30-year tenure.

"When I first ran, my boys were just learning to walk, and my parents were aging," says Funk. "So I ran on those two platforms: we needed senior housing and we needed sports facilities that would accommodate the children that are coming up."

Funk smiles when he looks back at his naiveté when it comes to his expectations for how long it would take to bring a personal care home to Niverville.

"Anytime we went to the government, we said we needed a personal care home, and they would say, 'You don't have the seniors,'" he explains. "We were the youngest town in Manitoba. You have to have a certain percentage of seniors [for a PCH]. So it was slow going."

Niverville—which is still the youngest town in Manitoba, incidentally—started by helping to develop Silver Courts, a complex of 55+ life lease apartments. The town owned the land, and they negotiated to sell it to the corporation that built the facility.

Next came the Niverville Credit Union Manor, with

both assisted living and supportive living apartments, and then the Heritage Life Personal Care Home. Funk says it was very rewarding when that final piece in the senior housing puzzle fell into place.

So what about the second plank of his original platform, bringing more sports facilities to Niverville?

"That has been partly met," he says. "The first year I was on council, I found out that the farm where Hespeler Park is, there by the lagoon... well, the lagoon was leaching [into the soil]. So we would pay every year a subsidy to [the farmer] because his crop was poor 100 feet around the lagoon. I said, 'This is terrible, how long are we going to do this?' If we're paying him anyhow, we might as well own the land. So I convinced council at that time to buy the land. It took a couple of years before we moved on it, but then we got a grant, which I think was in 1997, and we put the park in—the ball diamonds and the [first] two soccer pitches. That was the start of Hespeler Park."

In the years since, Hespeler Park has grown to include more soccer pitches, a walking trail with a variety of play features, a picnic shelter, and a splash pad. More improvements are still to come, with council having recently received bids for a new state-of-the-art play area.

But what happens in the winter? Funk says that one of the biggest concerns he hears from residents is that young families with preschool kids need somewhere to go when the temperatures drop and the snow piles up.

"I've heard that over and



Councillor John Funk.

JOHN FUNK

over," says Funk. "And I've heard that in winter if our kids are not in school sports or if they are not in hockey, there's nothing to do."

At the first planning session after the 2014 election, Funk says that he made a suggestion that helped get the Community Resource Centre (CRC) project off the ground. He pointed out that the town was receiving about \$100,000 every year from Manitoba Hydro, on account of Niverville's proximity to the Bipole 3 line to the south and east of town. Funk proposed that this would be enough to pay off the debt on a \$5 million contribution to the CRC, meaning that the town could make their commitment without having to raise taxes.

The CRC, Funk says, is going to solve the problem of families having nowhere to go during the winter months. With an ample indoor play structure, a walking track for seniors, and a fieldhouse that can accommodate a large variety of sports all year-round,

local families will have more options at their fingertips.

So after such a long and accomplished run as councillor, one can't help but wonder: why another four years?

The answer, according to Funk, is simple. He still hasn't accomplished everything he set out to do. The Community Resource Centre promises to be the culmination of three decades of work, and he wants to see it through.

"I think we're seeing the light at the end of the tunnel," he says. "We hope to hear a funding announcement [from the federal government] around November or December."

Other major endeavours he'd like to see through include the further development of the business park, which is picking up steam, and the recent boom in the town's commercial sector. In addition to the commercial strip west of town, Funk sees potential along Highway 311 on the east side of the community. He also looks forward

to seeing the report that council recently commissioned to study the implications of private police force.

A PROJECT MANAGER

Not everything that goes on behind the scenes gets people excited, he says. For example, at election time the public doesn't always want to hear about basic infrastructure projects like street repair, water and sewer line improvements, and work on the lagoon. People take such things for granted. But basic infrastructure is a necessary preoccupation for members of council.

"I'm a builder by nature," Funk says of the qualities that have allowed him to make an impact. "When we did the expansion of the town office [in the early 1990s], I was project manager on that. If you tender the whole thing out, it's going to cost you anywhere from 10 to 20 percent more. So those are savings that I could give to the town."

As project manager, he also oversaw upgrades in the mid-90s that allowed the Public Works building to be converted into a home for the burgeoning fire department. Before this, the fire department had been housed in a little shop behind the Chicken Chef. Funk took the lead in selling that shop and using the proceeds of the sale to add two large fire truck bays to the Public Works building, without involving any tax dollars.

Funk also project managed the construction of the picnic shelter in Hespeler Park, resulting in cost savings.

Another interesting case is the building located at 329

Bronstone Drive that has most recently been occupied by Horizon Livestock and Poultry Supply. The building was built by the town 15 years ago, intended to be leased by an internet pharmacy. When that business ran into trouble and closed after six months, despite having signed a five-year lease, the town ended up turning a profit of \$100,000, due in large part to Funk's cost-saving measures during construction.

INSTITUTIONAL MEMORY

A benefit of having long-serving councillors is that they have long memories. Councils change and mayors come and go, so it can be valuable to know what came before. In government terms, this is called institutional memory.

That's something Funk brings to the table, as over the years he has served with five different mayors—Gil Wiebe, Clarence Braun, Gord Daman, Greg Fehr, and Myron Dyck—and well over a dozen fellow councillors.

He says that every mayoral administration has had a very different dynamic.

"When Clarence Braun took over from Gil Wiebe, he was a visionary," says Funk. "He wanted to see things happen. When Gord Daman came on board, he was 'get it done' [with] infrastructure, like the Heritage Centre and those type of things. Greg Fehr was very much into all the details."

For the last few years, Funk has come to admire Mayor Myron Dyck, who he describes as a people person.

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Commentary

Trading Places

By Greg Fehr

It is a well-known economic theory that the three major factors in free markets—resources, labour, and capital—will be used or invested in the area where they are most productive. According to the theory, these factors, and the people who direct them, will always look for the greatest efficiency, and hence the greatest profit.

In the past, this typically meant that countries or regions were able to capitalize on what they already had. For example, note that many of the products we enjoy come from other parts of the world. Bananas are native to Southeast Asia and still grow there, and the sweet orange we love so much comes from China and India. Craftspeople around the world at one point honed their trades, excelling in some areas of

production more than others. Consider the Swiss and their watch-making skills, or the Germans and their precision tools.

The reality is that these regions were best served by focusing their skills and production on what they did best, sacrificing other avenues of production. And as regions continued to do this, trade developed to provide for the people's basic needs and enhance their lifestyles through access to goods they either couldn't produce at all or couldn't produce efficiently.

And so life was good.

At its humble roots, trade enhances the lives of all parties involved. Think about it from an agricultural perspective. Agricultural trade has allowed regions to enjoy a new diversity of diet and flavour that has improved people's overall health and

enjoyment of life.

Now think about it from a labour perspective. The sharing of labour has allowed for a greater return on our workers' investment of time. Consider the hours that skilled workers have put into honing their crafts, making products in greater volume to meet the demand of populations beyond their borders.

However, this enormous return of capital has inspired one of the two big trade issues we face today. As we have moved from the era of small producers to large multinationals, corporate greed has produced a situation where all the efficiencies and benefits derived from trade are deposited in corporate coffers, converted into share value and dividends for investors.

And this is a problem, compounded by the second issue: technological advances

have eroded the regional advantages people around the world once enjoyed. Bananas from India and China are now rare; producers in South and Central America have taken over the industry.

Indeed, while we may never efficiently grow bananas in Canada, advances in hybridization allow many regions to grow foods that wouldn't have been possible fifty or a hundred years ago.

These changes have suppressed production in regions where products once flourished. Those regional industries have been suppressed by competition.

The technology and skills that go into production are no longer limited by weather patterns and acres of arable soil available. We can transplant skills from one region to another. Access to raw materials is still a factor, but in our

global society it is surprisingly easy and cheap to move these resources.

In light of this, the largest factor in production is now the cost of labour, which places the Western world at an extreme disadvantage, not only against countries like Mexico and China but most of the world. The majority of people around the globe haven't experienced our level of affluence, and they are willing and able to produce goods at a fraction of the cost—to be quite blunt, they are happy to do it.

So can the answers to our current trade issues in the Western world be found in the area of production? Our own corporations have transplanted our technologies to foreign lands, where goods can be produced more cheaply, and these same corporations now need to ask them themselves a simple

question: are they willing to see the cost of production rise in order to bring production back to our soil?

By considering the history of these corporations and the behaviour of their shareholders, the answer is clear. Probably not. These corporations are governed by dollars and cents, not any moral rules.

This means that we, too, need to ask ourselves a question. Are we, as labourers and consumers, willing to adjust our lifestyles accordingly? Are we willing to endure lower wages, higher prices, or a combination of both? What are we willing to accept as far as changes to our standard of living? Perhaps we need to question whether our standards in the Western world are even sustainable in today's global economy.

In short, we need to ask ourselves: what are we willing to trade?

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Choose to Be Part of the Solution

With the municipal elections coming up this fall, on October 24, voters will be looking to our slates of candidates and judging them based on their ideas and platforms. Sometimes we spend so much time evaluating candidates by their politics, though, that we forget to evaluate them as potential leaders.

This is the second article in an ongoing column by Clarence Braun, former mayor of Niverville, about the qualities of leadership we should look for in those who will lead our communities for the next four years.

By Clarence Braun

Last month, we talked about how each of us has an experience of leadership based on growing up in families. Whether we had one or two parents in our lives, we were all impacted by parental leaders. The reality is that we probably formed some ideas about leadership from those early experiences.

If you grew up in a family where your opinions weren't valued, that might reflect on the lack of importance you place on your perspective as a citizen today. In a democratic country, the perspective of every citizen has the same value and worth when it comes to choosing our leaders.

But voter participation is at an all-time low in most democratic countries around

the world. People have become disengaged from the political process and have stopped caring—to the point where they have ceased to exercise their rights to help elect their leaders.

Our provincial and federal governments have tended to be very partisan. Added to that is the reality that the greater the distance between a government and the people, the greater the lack of connection. The party system we inherited from the British Commonwealth is one of the best in the world in terms of democracy, yet it has problems.

Unlike a republic like the United States, which elects its president by a direct vote along with its senators, congressman, sheriffs, and judges, our parliamentary system elects a political party, and the party itself then holds a leadership convention to choose its leader.

However, the leader, having been chosen by the party, owes his or her allegiance primarily to the people within the party who elected him or her. Leaders in our system are actually elected with an agenda and chosen by a relatively small number of people.

The various leaders' agendas are then placed before the populace and we elect a party to lead us based on those agendas.

I would suggest that this system is problematic.

It seems that the only way to get voter participation up is

for the populace to get angry enough to show up in force to make a change.

The reality is that the party in power tends to work hard to maintain their power, meaning that good ideas from the opposition are rarely part of any meaningful discourse. This can go the other way, too, with the opposition parties so concerned with opposition that they don't recognize good ideas from the party in power.

The good news is that the party system doesn't come into play at the municipal level. Communities like Niverville are not led by partisan leaders. Leaders are elected to serve without any party affiliation, and they're elected by people who believe that their voices are important and should be heard.

So there are many different kinds of leadership, but it should be important to all those who aspire to lead to walk alongside the people for the benefit of the community.

We don't have to get angry to make a difference. We simply need to care and ask those who aspire to lead to engage with us. We need to ask those who desire to lead to communicate the things they see. We need to see the value in our own voices being heard, and we need to see the value in our ability to vote—to choose.

Free choice is ours and if we choose to be involved, then we choose to be part of the solution.

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Sports & Recreation

Flagman for a Day

By Brenda Sawatzky

✉ bsawatzky@nivervillecitizen.com

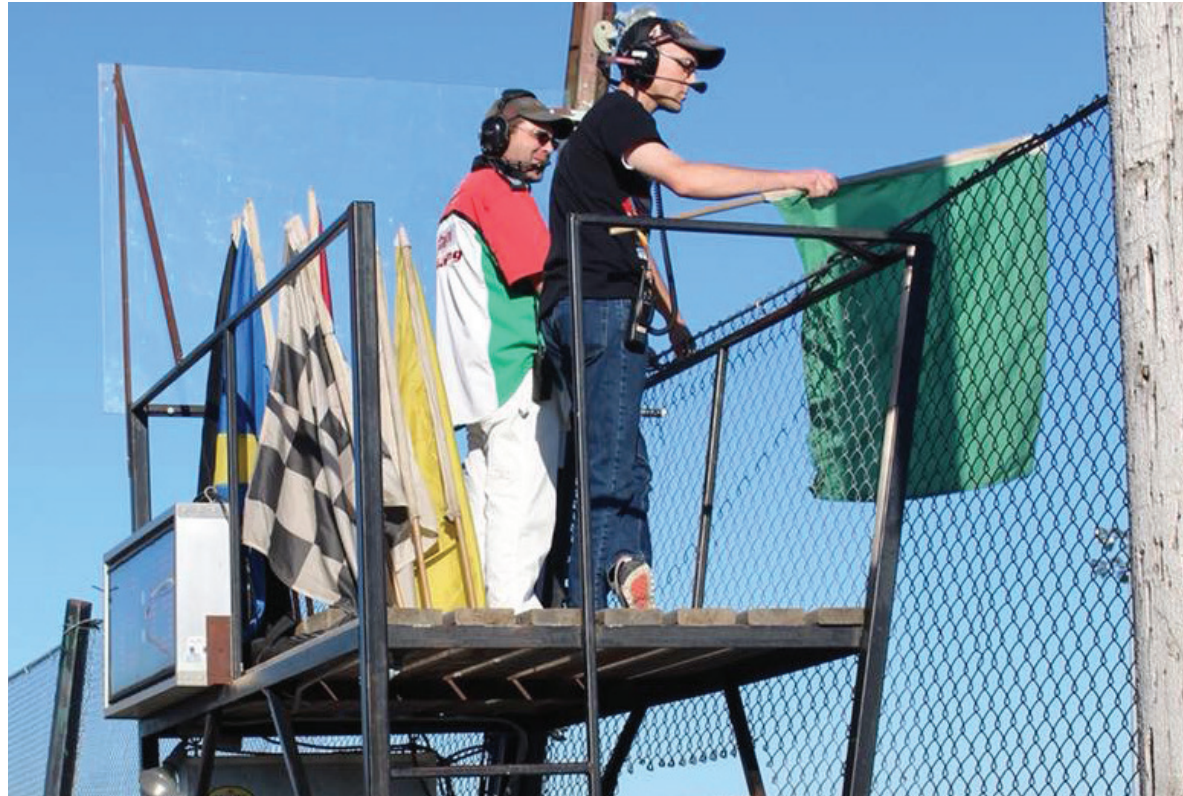
If you live, breathe, and dream about sports, like Ryan Becenko, then your life will be replete with visions of becoming the star player or sitting in the stands at a world-class game. At 35 years of age, Ryan has already accomplished many of his dreams. This summer, he struck one more from his long bucket list.

On July 5, Ryan's family and friends watched from the stands as he waved the green flag over the modifieds class of race cars at the Red River Co-op Speedway (RRCS) near Ste. Adolphe.

"For his eighteenth birthday, we took him to his first NASCAR race in Michigan," says his mom, Susan Becenko. "[He's been to] major league baseball, national football in the States, CFL... he's done it all. I've watched many events through my camera." She laughs, reflecting on her role as a mother to Ryan. "Way back when, I think he was in high school still, his dream was to be a flagman. Whenever we go to a race, we have to sit behind the flag stand so he can watch the flagman."

Susan is astounded over the many doors that have opened up for her son to realize his dreams over the years, and the kind-hearted folks who are behind them. Ryan has lived the majority of his life with a brain impairment called cortical apraxia, the result of a blood infection which caused his temperature to spike and his brain to seizure when he was only 18 months old. Since then, he's struggled with impaired motor skills and speech, and he experiences epileptic seizures when he's overstimulated.

Today, Ryan lives independently in a house in Niverville, aided by support workers through the EnVision Community Living program. He is



Ryan Becenko on the right, Flagman Steve to his left.

✉ SUSAN BECENKO

well known in the community due to his work placements with the Town of Niverville and more recently with the Heritage Centre, Wm. Dyck and Sons, and Giz's Garden Centre. In a sense, he's become everyone's son, brother, and friend because of his jubilant character and inviting smile.

The idea of flagman-for-a-day began at Giz's Garden Centre. Aware of Ryan's dream, owner Giz Bergen connected with Blair Bodley, manager of RRCS, who in turn reached out to Susan. Bodley made them an offer that would become a first at the track: to wave the flag during a feature race at RRCS's Canada Day celebration.

"The best part about this job is

that I get to give people a very unique experience," says Bodley. "When I found out that Ryan liked waving the flag, it was just a natural instinct for me to offer that opportunity to him."

Ryan, in fact, had been practicing for this day for years. He has his own set of race flags which he waves regularly from a perch on his deck, signalling imaginary drivers around an imaginary track.

"They gave us a section [in the stands] of the race track and there was about 20 staff and friends that came to watch him flag one race," Susan says. "Quite a few people cried."

"I was sitting beside him in the stands," says Ryan's support worker,

Lindsay Kehler. "He was so loud, talking the whole time. He was very, very excited. Before the race he told everyone at work about it. Everyone was really excited."

Susan recalls the mounting excitement as the race official made the announcement over the PA system along with a brief bio on Ryan's sports accomplishments with the Special Olympics.

"His greatest dream is to become a flagman," said the race announcer to the crowd. "Tonight, his dream comes true!"

Ryan was outfitted with headphones and a radio and climbed to the top of the flag stand to work alongside a man he now calls

Flagman Steve. Instructions were communicated to Ryan through the radio and a tap on the shoulder indicated Ryan's turn to wave the green flag.

Ryan's participation took only minutes, but the event will last a lifetime in his memory.

"I got choked up," says Bodley. "I couldn't even talk. It was such an emotional experience."

Now, in hindsight, when asked what's the best part about being a flagman, Ryan simply states, "I like it!"

Ryan already anticipates the day when Flagman Steve might go on vacation and require his services to wave the flags on his behalf. While Bodley laughs about Ryan's enthusiasm, he says he certainly anticipates Ryan's future involvement at the tracks.

Susan suggests that it was likely the idea of being the boss that appealed most to Ryan. "He likes all officials. If you're watching football, he'll be telling you what the penalty is [before the ref does]. He knows all the rules, which is pretty impressive. And he knows the rules for every single sport. When he was in high school, he really liked basketball so we'd watch the NBA. He had a whistle and he'd run back and forth blowing his whistle."

Ryan recalls two other highlights of the night's event: a race car engine that caught fire, causing the driver to abandon the car mid-track, and the closing Canada Day fireworks.

"So many of his dreams have come true," Susan says. "He's been given great opportunities. He has wonderful people around him and it's just so emotional that they care enough to do this. As a parent, it's really overwhelming."



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STEINBACH CREDIT UNION

Why the Jets Must Go All-In

By Nicholas Anderson

When a recent report came out suggesting that the Jets and Trouba were once again far apart in terms of dollars while discussing a new deal, it felt like a flashback to the 2016 offseason, when the then-22-year-old Trouba believed he was worth \$6 million before ultimately signing a two-year deal with an annual average value of \$3 million. That deal was signed on November 7, just three weeks prior to the December 1 deadline for restricted free agents (RFAs) to decide whether to sign a deal or become ineligible to play the rest of the season.

Things were different this time around. Coming off his second deal, now as a 24-year-old, Trouba was eligible to enter arbitration. Heading into arbitration, Trouba placed his value at \$7 million while the Jets placed his value at \$4 million. After the arbitration hearing, he was awarded a one-year deal for \$5.5 million, which of course means that the Jets will be in the same boat this time next year.

Except it will be worse next year, with Patrik Laine, Kyle Connor, Tyler Myers, and captain Blake Wheeler all in need of their own new deals.

General Manager Kevin Cheveldayoff definitely has his work cut out for him.

But Cheveldayoff can only do so much. While I could sit here and think of ways to keep this team together beyond next season, it seems very unlikely. So rather than focus on the big picture, I think it's time for Cheveldayoff to flip the switch and focus on short-term success.

Why? Because next season's version of the Jets stands a good chance of being the



SHAYLIN FENTON

best version ever.

Consider this, Jets fans. Your 31-year-old captain, Blake Wheeler, just seems to get better as he ages, putting up a career high of 91 points last year and leading his team all the way to the Conference Finals on an extremely friendly contract that pays him just \$5.6 million per year. You also have one of the best young goal-scorers this league has ever seen in Patrik Laine, and he's still on an entry-level contract. You've also got an elite first line centre in Mark Scheifele, who will be making just \$6 million a year over the next six seasons.

Some may argue that Laine's performance in the playoffs has hurt his overall value, but in reality he was a 19-year-old from Finland who had never played an NHL playoff game prior to this season. That means he can only get better the next time around.

Furthermore, you have one

of the best group of forwards in the NHL. Alas, the majority of their contracts expire after next season. And you're going to need to use a majority of your cap space next year to attempt to retain Wheeler, Trouba, and Myers.

Which is a perfect segue to my next point: you have arguably one of the best defensive cores in the NHL heading into next season. But next year, you're bound to lose a guy or two.

When you put things in perspective, it's not hard to see why the Jets should go all-in this season. It may be the best line-up the Jets are ever going to have. And while moving a guy like Bryan Little or Matthieu Perrault may be an option to create some cap space next summer, is it really worth compromising what you already have? Because the Jets already have a lot to look forward to long-term. We still haven't seen the best version of Patrik Laine, and

we still don't know what Jack Roslovic can turn into.

The Jets' front office needs to think about the present, about holding onto all their roster players and adding a player or two later in the year to help put them over the top—and possibly even win a Stanley Cup.

What could the Jets add to this team?

Priority number one should be finding a better backup than Laurent Brossoit. And with Ondrej Pavelec, Steve Mason, and Kari Lehtonen the only NHL-calibre goalies remaining on the free agent market, there appears to be no other option other than to trade for one.

Another thing the Jets could consider is signing a veteran such as Lee Stempniak or Joel Ward to a cheap one-year deal. This could add greater leadership and playoff pedigree to the locker room, the same way Matt Hendricks did this season.

CITIZEN POLL

Is the time right for the Jets to go all-in this upcoming season?

- ☐ **YES.** Considering the salary cap woes facing the team, it's the Stanley Cup or bust this year.
- ☐ **NO.** The Jets have many promising years ahead of them and don't need to break the bank this season.
- ☐ **UNSURE?** Let us know what you think.

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LAST MONTH'S RESULTS:

Were you happy with the new additions and changes made to the Niverville Fair in 2018?

YES. From my perspective, the fair went over very smoothly.

92%

NO. There were a few hiccups this year that I hope the committee can iron out before next June.

8%

YOUR COMMENTS:

I loved that the tent had local music playing.

Thought the prices were very fair. Loved the idea of a steep discount for weekend attendees. Also the children prices, etc. Great job. Well done.

Sure would be nice to see some rock and roll band headline the Friday night. The 5440, the Trews, or even some of the better known cover bands from Winnipeg.

Had a great time at the fair. Didn't notice anything lesser than the year prior. Thanks for putting it on!

All seemed smooth, with the exception of the wait to get the scanners working, for those who bought tickets online.

Loved the early bird discount and ease of ordering street wristbands online this year!

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GORP WORLD

ATHLETE OF THE MONTH



Grace Mayers

Grace Mayers is an 11-year-old from Niverville who has completed Grade Five. She started the dance program at Prairie Soul when she was four years old and has continued to dance competitively every year since. Grace is a natural hip-hop and tap dancer. Her natural rhythm was discovered as soon as she took her first few steps.

She recently competed in the Manitoba Provincial Dance Festival in Winnipeg, where the local dance teams brought home some high silvers and golds. Her passion for dance makes her moves look effortless, but don't be fooled: it is hard work!

Prairie Soul Introduces Barre Yoga

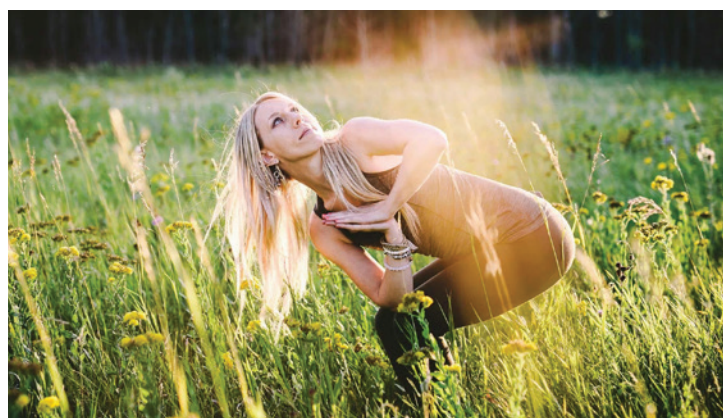
By Liz Byron

Prairie Soul Dance Company of Niverville is encouraging residents to spend their Thursday evenings in August participating in a barre and yoga class.

"August is a great time for people to renew their fitness goals and fall back into a regular exercise routine before the change of seasons," explain studio owners and artistic directors Danielle Auld and Melanie Ducharme.

Prairie Soul was previously known as the Sadler School of Dance, which opened in 2002. In 2016, however, they expanded to a new location at 10 Cedar Drive, allowing them to expand from one studio to three, including larger studio spaces with sprung flooring.

Although Prairie Soul has offered both barre and yoga classes for the past year, this will be the first time that they've offered a class combining both



Instructor Stefanie Baranowski.

PRAIRIE SOUL DANCE COMPANY

disciplines.

The 90-minute classes incorporate movements from barre, yoga, and pilates.

"The barre component incorporates a traditional ballet barre and combines basic ballet and pilates movements to tone and strengthen the body," Auld and Ducharme explain. "The yoga component focuses on

yoga sequences to stretch and strengthen the body while calming the mind."

Classes will cycle between upbeat music and slow and relaxing music, with participants flowing through different movements.

The new class, which is geared toward adults and older teenagers, is open to participants of all experience levels. Beginners

are welcome, note Auld and Ducharme, but people with more fitness experience will also find the classes beneficial and challenging. Regardless of experience or fitness level, all people registering for the class will require comfortable exercise clothing, a yoga mat, and a water bottle.

Niverville resident and certified yoga instructor Stefanie Baranowski will lead the class. With experience teaching yin, barre, kids yoga, and flow yoga, and with a background in psychology and the performing arts Baranowski's approach is, in her own words, "creative and always evolving."

Classes will run from 7:30-9:00 p.m. on Thursdays starting on August 9 and finishing on August 30, at a cost of \$84, tax included.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

■ prairiesouldance@gmail.com

New Season, New Opportunities

By Travis Mason

Clipper Ice Sports in Niverville wants to get the word out that registration for the upcoming 2018-2019 hockey season is open. This year, signups are solely available online at the Hockey Canada website (see below).

Good news this year is that Clipper Ice Sports won't have any fee increases. On top of that, the organization is excited to announce some new opportunities, free of charge, to players and coaches alike.

One such opportunity will include one monthly on-ice

session for every player from Novice to Bantam with GT Performance, a Manitoba coaching business with years of proven success. A portion of these on-ice sessions will be devoted to goalie development. GT Performance will also run conditioning skates to kick off the season prior to tryouts.

Note that these training opportunities aren't limited to players. Clipper Ice Sports and GT Performance are partnering to extend specialized training to local coaches, to help them broaden their skillsets. This will include the introduction of new

training aids for coaches to share during practices. It is hoped that these coaching clinics will help recruit and retain great coaches to keep the Clippers program strong for many years to come.

As well, Clipper Ice Sports will be hosting day camps for players on school in-service days, along with a preseason dry-land training program that will be run by Niverville's very own ShopGym. However, these two initiatives won't be included in the regular registration fees.

Buyout options will be available to parents who choose to make a donation in lieu of fundraisers and

volunteer canteen shifts.

"We'll have more details and dates in the weeks to come," says Travis Mason of Clipper Ice Sports. "CIS is looking forward to taking the next step and building a development program that will strengthen the skills for players, coaches, and the association as a whole. Here's to another great year of hockey!"

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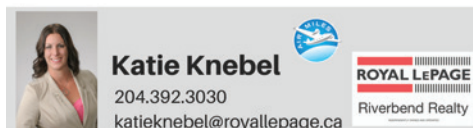
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It's Never Too Early to Think About Skating

By Liz Byron

In the midst of the heat and sun of a Manitoba summer, the Niverville Skating Club (NSC) is preparing its schedule of lessons and activities for the fall. And while it may seem early to be thinking about lacing up skates, NSC president Elissa Leah is encouraging people interested in skating later in the year to make plans now.

"Registration starts in early July, closing date for registration will be August 15, and anyone wanting to register after that date will pay a late fee," she explains.

Since reopening in 2014, the Niverville Skating Club has grown every year, adding more programs for skaters of all ages and levels.

The core program at the club is called CanSkate, a learn-to-skate program for beginners of any age. CanSkate is a national curriculum designed and overseen by Canada's governing body for figure skating, Skate Canada. Skate Canada programs are offered at over 1,200 skating clubs across the country, helping more than 130,000 skaters per year develop on-ice skills.

"CanSkate is a nationally tested and proven program that guarantees skater success," says Leah, who has been president of the NSC for the past three years. "Skaters will learn a series of agility, balance, and control skills that will prepare them for any sport, whether it be figure skating, hockey, ringette, or recreational skating."

All CanSkate programs are taught by coaches who have completed the National Coaching Certification Program, and they are run in a group format with no more than ten students per coach. Sessions are very active and upbeat, to keep students motivated and focused on learning a series of balance, control, and agility skills.



Participants in Niverville's CanSkate program.

NIVERVILLE SKATING CLUB

In order to participate in CanSkate, all participants need skates, a CSA-approved hockey helmet, long pants, mittens, and a warm sweater or jacket.

The club recommends that students start CanSkate when they are at least three years old—but Leah is quick to add that learning to skate isn't just for kids.

"You are never too old to learn how to skate," she says, noting that the NSC also offers an adult CanSkate class.

In addition to the beginner's program, the NSC runs CanPowerSkate. Another program based on a national curriculum, CanPowerSkate "focuses on balance, power, agility, speed, and endurance skills, all of which are especially important for hockey and ringette players," according to Skate Canada.

Other offerings from the Niverville Skating Club include a program for figure skaters called STAR and a program for synchronized skating.

Leah emphasizes the fact that not only is the Skating Club open to skaters of all skill levels, it is also open to people interested in all sorts of skating.

"It is a fun and friendly environment for people to learn or to improve their skating skills, and provides the best foundation for figure skating, hockey, and ringette," Leah says. "Everyone thinks that we are just for figure skaters, but that is not the case."

Whether people are interested in skating for competitive purposes or purely for recreation, Leah feels that anyone with an interest in improving their skating skills will benefit from the

coaching available in Niverville.

"Our coach, Meghan Rafferty, is highly qualified and certified in all programs she teaches. Meghan has been asked to coach all CanPower coaches in Manitoba on a new program being launched this year. Coach Meghan is awesome. We couldn't ask for a better coach."

The club also has program assistants—parents or older skaters—to help out with CanSkate and CanPower programs, ensuring that students can learn in small groups and receive personal attention.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

■ nivervillesc@gmail.com
■ www.skatecanada.ca

IN BRIEF

Local Kids Hit the Turf

By Eric Peterson

editor@nivervillecitizen.com

Across Manitoba, young people are getting ready to grab grass and growl as the 2018 minor football season gets set to kick off. Locally, the story is no different.

One young star is Ashton Heiland, who plays for the Eastman Raiders in Steinbach. He's beginning his second season of organized football and says a couple of trips to see the Blue Bombers got him primed to play.

"When I went to my first game, I wasn't that interested," says Ashton. "But by the second game I was just hooked."

This year Ashton will suit up for the Raiders Black team in the Manitoba Minor Football Association's Cruncher Division, so named for its Old Dutch sponsorship and not the ferocity of the tackling. He counts amongst his teammates fellow Niverville kids Jerih Woligarski and Rylan Tye.

The Crunchers are eight and nine years old. From there, players move up to the Atom, Pee Wee, Bantam, and finally the Midget age groups for 16- and 17-year-old players. This year, the MMFA moved each age group up by one year to fall in line with national standards and address safety concerns some parents had about seven-year-olds playing tackle football.

But Ashton's mom Keri has no problem with having her son in the sport. "First of all, at this age they don't move fast enough to do any damage to each other," she says. "And the coaches do such a good job of teaching the safer way to do things."

Last year, Ashton scored two touchdowns and even got an interception.

He now has some big goals for his football career. "I want to go all the way to the CFL," he proclaims. "And I want to play for Winnipeg."



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Arts & Entertainment



The Cornerstone Servants.

■ ZAC AND JESS PHOTOGRAPHY

Cornerstone Servants Record First Album

By Jan Kendall St. Cyr

The Cornerstone Servants, a contemporary worship band from Niverville, are currently recording their first album at Arcade Studios.

This seven-piece group is comprised of siblings, cousins, and friends alike. Simon Doerksen plays piano while sister Elizabeth sings. They are cousins to Larissa Doerksen, who plays both mandolin and violin. Armando Toews, singer and guitarist, performs alongside brother Fabian, the bass player, with friends Jon Wiebe on percussion and Ian Voth on drums.

According to Armando, he and Fabian grew up in a home that

wasn't particularly musical, yet their parents were still very encouraging when it came to their children's talents and dreams.

"When I was quite young, I took a year of guitar lessons and hated them," Armando says. "But six years later I picked up that old guitar and started teaching myself the basics. Then my dad took me to buy my first acoustic guitar, and before too long the members of my church thought I was good enough to lead worship. At that time I turned to my old friend, David Wiebe, for advice and he helped me start my first small group."

Cornerstone Servants began playing together back in 2012 as part of the worship team at the Niverville

CMC church. Over the past six years, their confidence and ability has grown, resulting in finding their authentic sound.

During this time, they mostly played the Sunday morning services with an occasional performance outside the church at special events. More recently, the Cornerstone Servants have joined in community worship events with other Niverville churches.

"Choosing to record an album was a huge step for the band," says Armando, "but one that was made easier with the generous offer of sponsorship from two gentlemen within our congregation."

The next step was to seek out a

place to record—and this brought them to Arcade Studios.

"As soon as we met the guys, Gerry and Evan St. Cyr, we felt comfortable and confident in them."

With the hope of eventually writing and recording their own songs in the future, this project is a beautiful rendition of the music they currently play and love. The ten-song album is well underway.

"Cornerstone Servants are really an awesome group of young people that really have their priorities in the right place," says Evan St. Cyr, Arcade owner and music producer. "They came into this project fully prepared and have given it their all, which has made my job so enjoyable. It has

been a pleasure to work with them!"

The album is due to be completed by the end of the summer. The group also has plans to host a CD release event sometime in November.

Cornerstone Servants will continue to handle worship duties in their home church as well as participate in community events. They'll also perform at this year's Worship on the Water, an open-air event held at the Hampton Amphitheatre in Niverville.

"We don't as of now have any big plans for the future," says Armando. "But we are open to God's plans for us!"

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Updates from the Ritchot Chamber

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Cheyenne Summer Fest a Resounding Success

By Brenda Sawatzky

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This summer marked the thirtieth anniversary of Ste. Agathe's Cheyenne Summer Fest, held July 20-21, and Mother Nature responded with sunny skies and warm temperatures for the nearly 1,000 visitors to the two-day event.

"Every year we see more and more [people] coming from neighbouring communities of Niverville, St. Adolphe, St. Jean, St. Pierre, St. Malo, and Winnipeg," says Joel Gagnon, committee chairperson for the last nine years. "The weather could not have been better."

The committee is comprised of 13 hard-working, community-minded individuals who, Gagnon says, did a remarkable job once again this year.

The committee relies on the help of approximately 80 local volunteers to pull the event off without too many hiccups along the way.

Friday night kicked off with a parade winding down the community's main street. Beer gardens, games, and music followed at Cartier Park. The night sky came alive with a colourful pyrotechnics display by Big Top Fireworks.

"Friday night had a slight change to the program," says Gagnon. "Instead of the pioneer games, we hosted a Family Feud game night that had many participants, both



Locals get into the spirit of Cheyenne Summer Fest in Ste. Agathe.

ALISSA DOAN

young and old. It was very successful."

Saturday morning opened with a pancake breakfast accompanied by live musician Logan Picton. Fuelled for another day of activities, the community was geared up for one of their favourite traditions: baseball.

"The family baseball tournament stresses the inclusion of family members and children to participate, and this was successful once again this year," Gagnon says. "The Lemoine family ultimately took home the top prize."

Event goers could also participate in a horseshoe

tournament and organized family and children's activities. Lucky Luc's pulled out all the stops to provide a delectable pork dinner alongside both live and deejay music throughout the evening.

"Saturday evening featured a theme night, Toga Party, with many people getting into the spirit of the theme and showing off their creativity with togas in full force," Gagnon quips. "Saturday night also featured the band Les Enfants de Cheyenne. [These are] local guys that first performed at Cheyenne some 20 years ago, so it was awesome to see the reunion!"

While the goal of the festival is to provide a fun way for neighbours to get to know neighbours, Gagnon says that the committee also works hard to incorporate elements of the community's franco-phone heritage throughout the weekend, providing visitors with a unique look at Ste. Agathe's rich culture.

"This is important to showcase our heritage, specifically for newcomers to our town so they gain an appreciation of where we live and the pride of this community," Gagnon concludes.

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