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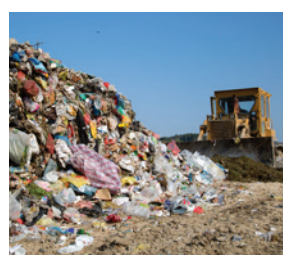
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LOCAL NEWS

Niverville Rail Loop Proposed

■ A local farmer is talking about a groundbreaking grain rail loop northwest of Niverville.

Details on Page 5



LOCAL NEWS

Circular Economy: How to Reduce Landfills

■ Our overflowing landfills are a big problem, and the problem is only getting worse as time goes on. A group of municipalities in southern Manitoba are now looking for sustainable, long-term solutions. They'll be discussing options later in January.

Details on Page 7

SPORTS & RECREATION

A Maze in Snow

■ The world's largest snow maze is underway at A Maze in Corn, just north of St. Adolphe, and is set to open January 5.

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WEDDING FEATURE

Big Day on the Way?

■ Southeast Manitoba has become a hotspot for beautiful, rustic weddings. Our feature will help you make some of your most important decisions.

Details on Pages 16-20



Quality Internet Service Coming to Ritchot

» DETAILS ON PAGE 13

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Niverville Council Prepares for 2019 at Planning Sessions



BRENDA SAWATZKY

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Niverville's council headed to their annual planning sessions on November 30 and December 1, free of outside distraction and ready to make plans for the upcoming year's budget. The two-day, 22-hour brainstorming session was held at Providence University College for the second year in a row.

Mayor Myron Dyck is grateful to the seasoned and hard-working town staff and department heads who provided the information necessary for council to make informed and concise decisions during the session. Having experienced councillors around the table also expedited the process, he says, allowing council to anticipate a first reading of the new budget sometime in December.

"This was my fourteenth planning session and I thought this was about as smooth as any have gone," Dyck says. "Staff did a tremendous job of putting the agenda together. [We had] wonderful discussions and we're looking forward to a lot of [new] things. We have a lot of [items] time-lined and we're trying to build a roadmap [into the future]. We're excited about the next four years and we're very excited about this next year."

This year's itinerary focused on five main areas: planning and development, operations and utilities, economic development, recreation, and protective services. By the end of the discussion period, council was presented with a 2019

budget plan.

One of the first items requiring 2019 funding will be the paving of Sixth Avenue South. In past years, municipalities have received infrastructure funding from the provincial government through the Bridges and Roads program, a program established years ago by the NDP government when PST saw a one percent increase.

As of 2019, the current provincial government will pull this funding, leaving local governments to fend for themselves. Because of this, Niverville's council will need to pave Sixth Avenue in sections as funds allow. The first section designated for paving will run from Main Street to Errington Way.

Young families will be glad to hear that construction will also begin on the Hespeler Park splash pad playground in the new year. The approximate \$300,000 project will be completed in two phases, the first of which will occur in 2019. The playground is expected to be located immediately adjacent to the splash pad.

The parking lot at the south end of Hespeler Park will also be expanded to accommodate residents and visitors enjoying the park throughout the year. The parking lot will extend west into the existing unused grassy area.

As announced in November, council will be investing in a new Rescue 1 vehicle which will assist the Fire and Emergency Services department in their rescue calls and replace their current aging vehicle.

April will see council's move to their new administrative office on Bronstone Drive

after renovations and interior outfitting has been completed.

And in anticipation of a new Community Resource Centre (CRC) and high school on the west side of the CP rail tracks, council has made a budget allowance for a new pedestrian crossing over the tracks.

"We had a meeting pending [with CP Rail], which has been postponed and right now it has been rescheduled to next week," Dyck says. "We're hoping that all parties are able to make it. We've just set aside some [funds for now]. This will be a negotiation as to who's paying for what."

Council continues to set aside funds for the new CRC as well, while they wait on the federal government regarding the grants for which they've applied.

"Should the grant come to fruition, the town will focus

sidewalk redevelopment in this area for 2019," Dyck adds. "So, getting kids to and from the [high school]... may take precedence over our Main Street initiative."

But the largest new project to come out of the planning sessions is a move to begin replacing the sewer system in the aging sections of Niverville with new pipes. The project is expected to begin in 2020 and continue every second year in increments of a few blocks at a time. The project in its entirety is expected to take 13 years to complete.

"What we've seen in homes in the sixties and seventies and older, is that the type of pipe used... in many places it's just the ground that's holding the pipe together," says Dyck. "There is significant cracking in places. What this will involve is digging up that sewer pipe

and replacing it and then repaving the road."

Since roads require a year to settle before repaving, residents in affected areas can expect a little better than a year of construction on their street. Once complete, the core area of Niverville will have all new pavement on their streets and a long-term solution to their antiquated sewer system.

Dyck says that council considered the option of installing curb and gutters in the aging section of town but determined that, in doing so, resident's properties would be negatively affected.

Other items, too, hit the agenda this year, including policing. Dyck says more information on that will be forthcoming in the new year as the policing study which they commissioned comes to completion.

The Citizen

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The cancer fundraiser at Adventure Power Products.

DEREK ROTH

Adventure Fundraiser Takes Aim at Paediatric Cancer

By Lorelei Leona

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Adventure Power Products gave back in a big way during their first ever paediatric cancer fundraiser on Saturday, December 15.

The Île-des-Chênes business, which has previously been involved in fundraisers like the Eastman ATV Association's Ride for Mom, which raises funds for breast cancer in Manitoba, felt they wanted to make an impact in the area of paediatric cancer fundraising. They also wanted to make sure the funds would be used in Manitoba, according to co-owner Derek Roth.

"Jocelyn, our Parts and Accessories Manager, had come up with the concept to have a Santa display with a Powersports theme," Roth explains. "We collectively decided that offering it for free with all donations going to paediatric cancer at CancerCare Manitoba Foundation made the most sense for us, especially at this time of year."

The event featured a large display of decorated Kawasaki side-by-sides and youth ATVs. Other surrounding businesses got involved as well, with Fontaine Landscaping of Lorette providing the real Christmas trees and A Touch of Glass in Niverville

providing the backdrop.

Chris Ewen, the RM of Ritchot's mayor, provided hot chocolate and candy canes for the children, and coffee for the adults. Breanne Neufeld, an Adventure Power Products associate, took photos with Santa for more than 70 families.

Over 300 people attended the one-day event, which raised over \$6,000 for the CancerCare Manitoba Foundation.

"This event was so well accepted from the surrounding communities that Adventure Power Products has pledged to make it an annual event," says Roth.

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Industrial Rail Loop Proposed for Niverville

By Brenda Sawatzky

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Artel Farms owner Grant Dyck has been laying the groundwork to entice innovative, large-scale business to the region. As a presenter at this fall's Grain World conference in Winnipeg, Dyck challenged the big guns of agribusiness to take a serious look at Niverville for a grain-processing facility coupled with a railway loop.

"We saw the need for a commercial or industrial scale business to come to town," Dyck says. "We are right beside one of the last suitable sites in Manitoba for a loop or shuttle track connecting to a railway that lies within 160 kilometres of the U.S. border. The amount of investment that could come in to build something like this is so substantial. It would offset the commercial to residential tax base of Niverville significantly. That's the big selling feature to this and we have a site procured that would support a rail loop outside of the flood zone. For a line company, a soybean-crushing plant, or a grain-handling facility, Niverville is situated ideally for such a venture."

Dyck presented concept drawings at the conference to accompany his proposal. His recommendation is to build the plant and rail loop on 200 to 300 acres of land that he currently farms bordering the CP Rail track on the northwest corner of Niverville.

He says that he shouldn't have been surprised by the interest that his presentation garnered since the ag industry is always looking for new sites next to the railway.

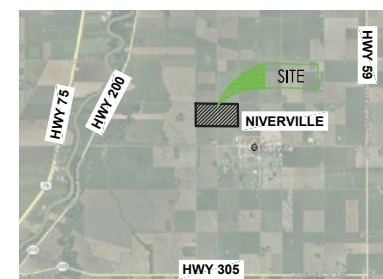
Many of our local grain products are shipped for export to the U.S. as well as the West Coast, headed for Europe and China. Even today, transport by rail is the most cost-effective way to do that. So any grain-processing company understands the need to be strategically located next to a railway.

"Ironically, that's what put Niverville on the map," says Dyck. "We have a rail line running through. So what's the initiative to bring a big business to the community? Well, we have an ideally situated location



One of the proposed layouts for the rail loop northwest of Niverville.

STANTEC



STANTEC

which means they would also have better access to the business park without having to travel along the town's Main Street.

"It takes a bit of vision," Dyck admits. "I can see the dots. Now it's just figuring out how to connect them. There's been a genuine interest and it's a win on so many fronts. The fact that already we're at the level where the town, CP Rail, the province, and interested parties are seeing its merit and discussing it is so amazing."

As for how a large endeavour like this would affect upcoming residential developments and the new high school, Dyck is confident that the distance between them would be substantial enough to mitigate any concerns. Additional measures can be taken, such as a soil berm and fencing, to create safety and noise barriers so that the facility would become a moot issue.

As well, the entire proposal, as it moves forward, would require a public hearing at which point residents could weigh in with any concerns they may have.

"We've got an extremely progressive council and we've got a town that's an anomaly with its location," says Dyck. "Back in the 70s, we had a 75 percent commercial to 25 percent residential tax [ratio]. We were a little hub. Unfortunately, that's been imbalanced to the tune of roughly 80 to 20 percent, residential to commercial. Bringing in an industrial type of business changes us from being a place to sleep to a place where we can live."

that's out of the flood zone."

According to Dyck, municipalities on the west side of the Red River have been extremely successful in staging sites for grain-handling facilities. Currently, five out of the seven big companies are located there. As a result, the CN rail line has become overly congested while the CP rail line on the east side, running through Niverville, has been left underutilized.

Even so, there are only small-scale soybean-crushing facilities in Manitoba. While the Red River Valley produces most of the province's soybean crop, much of it is transported to the nearest crushing plant in Ontario or the U.S. Oftentimes it's transported right back to farmers in the valley that use a derivative of the soybean plant for hog feed.

According to Dyck, the area just east of Niverville is home to the highest hog production per capita anywhere in North America. Having a processing facility on this side of the river just makes good sense and answers some of the concerns about environmental sustainability.

In any industry, efficiency is paramount to success, which is why Dyck's proposal to provide enough land to build a 7,200-foot railway loop is crucial to such a sale. The old standard for loading grain onto railcars meant pulling the cars off the main track and into cramped siding areas, unhooking the cars, waiting while they were loaded, and then rehooking them and moving on. This process could take days.

But the U.S. set a new, highly efficient standard that is taking off in Canada too. Building high-speed loops means the entire train can circle around and off the main track and get loaded in under 24 hours. Rail loops like this can already be found in Glenlea and Ste. Agathe and it's the only way grain-processing plants will even consider building new facilities.

"From procurement of the land to the build, I think the full turn-out time is under two years," Dyck says. "It goes remarkably quick."

He says that a large-scale soybean-crushing facility in Niverville, such as the one he's pursuing, would

mean a \$250 million investment into the community. The jobs it would create close to home would also serve to bolster the local economy.

The industry that purchases the land would build the facility as well as the loop, working alongside CP Rail, who would create access to the loop. Dyck already has two commercial ag businesses interested in his property.

But Dyck's dream doesn't stop there. The completion of such an enterprise would be enhanced by creating a heavy truck corridor around Niverville to allow farmers with large equipment and freight trucks access to the processing plant without disrupting vehicular traffic at some of the busiest intersections in Niverville.

To do this, he's already had conversations with Manitoba Infrastructure and Transportation on a proposal to build a perimeter heavy-truck route from the 311 highway, north along Sood Road and east along Stott Road. Trucks would merge back onto the 311 on the east side of town on Sixth Avenue North,

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Circular Economy: A Twenty-First Century Approach to Landfill Reduction



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We've arrived at a time when global warming has become the most talked about issue in nearly every country around the world. At the same time, we're witnessing the result of a century of natural resource mismanagement that threatens mankind's very existence. Times like these require more than just good intentions and lip service. They require real solutions, right now, from every level of government and every living person.

Rural municipalities around Manitoba have been re-evaluating their impact on planet earth and are researching ways to change their direction in terms of waste management. This includes the 18 municipalities surrounding Winnipeg, which make up the Winnipeg Metropolitan Region (WMR). The reeves and mayors of these municipalities comprise the backbone of this organization, and it includes representation from both Niverville and Ritchot.

The leaders of the WMR believe that strength and innovative ideas come through collaboration, and they gather regularly to seek out creative solutions to the concerns the municipalities face.

One of the most pressing items on their current docket is waste management.

"We have to do something," says Colleen Sklar, Executive Director of the Partnership of the Manitoba Capital Region. "[Manitoba has] the second lowest diversion rate in all of Canada, meaning we divert the least amount of waste from our landfills. Why do we not divert? Because there's not [enough options]."

Waste management is the biggest contributor to greenhouse gas emissions in the region, from collection and hauling to off-gassing from waste disposal grounds. Recycling, too, leaves a massive footprint when products need to be shipped overseas for repurposing.

And now, since China stopped accepting the West's recyclables in 2017, sorters are scrambling to find new manufacturers willing to accept their used products. Bales of recyclable materials pile up at many sorting facilities in North America, eventually getting trucked off to landfills as they become oversaturated.

"There's got to be a better way than just gathering things up and



DEPOSITPHOTOS

landfilling them or shipping them away," Sklar says.

In order to learn more, the WMR commissioned a study on waste management practices in the region. On January 17, mayors and reeves will hold a round table meeting to address the report and its recommendations.

What they can acknowledge at this point is that it's a ubiquitous problem requiring large-scale solutions. Quite simply, it's not cost-effective for each municipality to continue working on waste management independently.

In 2017 alone, the 18 municipalities within the WMR generated 702,000 tonnes of landfilled waste. One-third of that waste is made up of organic materials, which includes branches, leaves, and household food waste. Only nine percent of our total waste is being composted, and only 18 percent is currently being recycled.

One of the WMR's green action plan goals is to work toward diverting 60 percent of waste away from landfills. Finding better recycling options and capturing organics would make a significant contribution to the WMR's diversion rate.

That, in fact, is just one of the concepts of a circular economy, a term coined in the late 1980s. A circular economy attempts to mirror nature. In the natural world, all living things move in a constant cycle of life, death, and decay which feeds the earth and its organisms. When

something dies, it aids in the rebirth of new living things. In nature, nothing goes to waste.

Humans, on the other hand, have created a linear approach to handling the earth's resources: we take, we make, and we dispose. This results in the depletion of valuable natural resources at a pace that exceeds the earth's ability to replenish them.

Many manufacturers produce saleable items with toxic components, such as electronics and plastics. When consumers are done with them, they end up in waste collection sites where greenhouse gases flood into the atmosphere and toxic chemicals leach into the earth. Waste also finds its way into waterways, turning our oceans and lakes into toxic soups.

In a circular economy, the goods of today can become the resources of tomorrow, reducing our overuse of natural resources and keeping goods out of landfills longer. And it all begins with the relationship between the consumer and manufacturer.

The Ellen MacArthur Foundation is a charitable organization which was launched in 2010. Its mandate is to accelerate the world's transition to a circular economy by introducing the model to decision-makers across business, government, and academia.

"Instead of the throw-away-and-replace culture we've become used to, we'd adopt a return-and-renew one, where products and components are designed to be disassembled

and regenerated," the foundation posits on their website. "One solution may be to rethink the way we view ownership."¹

In this new ownership concept, a manufacturer's products always remain in the ownership of the manufacturer, who in turn leases or licenses the item to the consumer for a period of time. Another way of looking at it is to see ourselves as consumers of entertainment (in terms of TV sets), communication (in terms of cell phones), and light (in terms of lamps). The physical product itself never belongs to us.

When consumers come to the end of their interest in a product, they return it to the manufacturer for recycling or repurposing. The manufacturer then has a vested interest in using quality components and building products that are easily recycled into new products. Or they can create connections with other companies willing to buy their used materials and generate a secondary revenue stream. These products can be transported through the entire cycle using renewable energy solutions.

"Here we have a model that builds prosperity long-term, and the good news is there are already companies out there who are beginning to adopt this way of working," says the Ellen MacArthur Foundation website. "But the circular economy isn't about one manufacturer changing one product. It's about all the interconnecting companies that form our

infrastructure and economy coming together. It's about energy. It's about rethinking the operating system itself."²

While this kind of thinking would require a complete global rethink, the foundation's proponents believe that it is not only possible, it is imperative. As for the WMR, their aim for now is to take a moderate approach, introducing better waste management in the beginning and building in other areas of sustainability down the road.

"I think the idea of a circular economy is still far off [for us]," Sklar says. "What we do understand is our waste."

The Netherlands is one of the first countries to fully embrace a circular economy. They've already committed to making a 100 percent shift to a circular economy by 2050.

The Dutch government is introducing a national raw materials agreement to ensure that their economy will be running completely on reusable raw materials in just over 30 years' time.

Sharon Dijksma, the Netherlands' former Secretary of Infrastructure and the Environment, dedicated 27 million euros to improve waste separation, which will allow for better reuse and recycling of waste materials.

"We will need an additional planet if we continue to extract scarce raw materials from the earth at this rate," Dijksma has said. "Currently, products often cannot be recycled or are even designed for short-term use only. We need to rid ourselves of this throw-away mentality. Fortunately, in the Netherlands we are champions in recycling, and... are making the shift to a circular economy a reality."³

Representatives from the Netherlands have been flown to Manitoba to speak to delegates of the WMR about their initiatives. Sklar is hopeful that, in the near future, these local delegates can visit the Netherlands and witness their innovations firsthand.

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¹ "Rethinking Progress: The Circular Economy," *The Ellen MacArthur Foundation*. Date of access: December 28, 2018 (<https://www.ellenmacarthurfoundation.org/circular-economy/concept>).

² Ibid.

³ "A Circular Economy in the Netherlands by 2050," *Invest in Holland*. Date of access: December 28, 2018 (<https://investinholland.com/a-circular-economy-in-the-netherlands-by-2050/>).

CITIZEN POLL

To combat climate change, will you personally embrace initiatives to help your local government divert waste from landfills?

- ☐ Yes. Climate change is real and I want to make a difference that will positively impact the future.
- ☐ No. I don't believe my individual efforts will matter in terms of the global problem.
- ☐ Have another opinion? Share your thoughts in a comment online.

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Yes. Ride-sharing is a good way to reduce your carbon footprint, and a good way to connect with others.

67%

No. Ride-sharing simply isn't as convenient as owning my own vehicle and driving myself where I need to go.

33%

YOUR COMMENTS:

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Ritchot CEDO Moves on to New Challenges

By Brenda Sawatzky

✉ bsawatzky@nivervillecitizen.com

For the past five years, Lesley Gaudry's office at the RM of Ritchot has been a hub of activity. As Community Economic Development Officer (CEDO), she's acted as communicator, networker, researcher, and facilitator of economic development for the municipality. She's worked alongside council, the Chamber of Commerce, local business owners, and municipal staff.

On December 7, Gaudry spent her last day as an RM employee. Due to her hard work and dedication, the municipality benefited from government funding she'd spent hours poring over paperwork for and enjoyed amenities that came to the region as a result of her diligence. Without question, she will be missed.

Gaudry's passion for economic development hasn't diminished, though. She's simply decided to broaden the scope of her reach by taking on the position of manager for the Economic Developers Association of Manitoba (EDAM). In this new role, Gaudry will be overseeing the non-profit organization's mandate of being a resource for all economic development officers in the province. She'll be busy with conferences, team-building, and training programs—just for starters.

"A lot of EDOs come from other sectors and industry and then come into the role...so [we're here] to help people with very practical information and principles and case study examples to help them in their position," says Gaudry.

She adds that EDAM is also there for municipal councils and staff who wish to learn more about community economic development. Gaudry will be replacing long-time manager Shelley Morris



Lesley Gaudry.

✉ BRENDA SAWATZKY

and she'll have the advantage of working from her home office in St. Adolphe when she's not travelling around Manitoba for board meetings and conferences.

But the EDAM position is only part-time, meaning Gaudry will have additional hours to pursue other passions, such as research and writing. Ohana Writing Services is the name of Gaudry's new business. Her ambition is to garner contracts to write family historical books, keepsake books for new parents, and memorial and commemorative books for families who have lost loved ones.

Along with that, Gaudry wants to continue her work in community history, heritage and tourism projects, special interest projects,

and compassionate writing which includes obituaries.

"An area that I'm really interested in... is compassionate writing, which is working with people who have been deemed end-of-life term or in palliative care," Gaudry says. "There's situations where families are so busy looking after their loved one that they don't have the time or energy to capture some stories and memories and thoughts... or getting that down into some kind of booklet for the loved ones after the time of passing."

And this is where Gaudry's business name really says it all. Ohana means family in the Hawaiian language. But according to Gaudry, the term is also

used more broadly to encompass friends, neighbours, and the greater human family.

"It's all about trying to collect and keepsake those memories and stories," she adds. "My hope is to grow [the business] slowly. I'm already pretty much booked up with contracts from January to June."

But it's not all nose-to-the-grindstone for Gaudry. She anticipates having more time for her own family during this next phase of her career. She's already booked a winter holiday in Hawaii with her mother, working on creating lasting memories of her own.

"I'm super thankful to have been able to serve with the community of Ritchot for the last five years," says Gaudry. "I'm very thankful to the staff that I've worked with [as well as] council and the CAO for the support that they've given community economic development. We're very fortunate. Not all municipalities support economic development like Ritchot has chosen to. Being able to serve in that role has been awesome."

She adds that she'll especially miss sharing office space with Recreation Director Amber Mamchuk who she's worked closely with during her years at the RM office. She's thankful, too, for the support that staff and council have demonstrated in her decision to move on.

Gaudry concludes by adding that she's leaving the RM of Ritchot with mixed emotions.

"It's going to be very hard to leave here," she says. "I'm very passionate about our communities, so it's going to be very hard to say goodbye, but I'm not going to be too far away. You'll probably still see me at the seniors' dinner every Thursday."

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IN BRIEF



Alain Robert of Ste. Agathe Service, LESLEY GAUDRY Leanne Moore of Affinity Insurance, and Derek Roth of Adventure Power Products.

Ritchot Businesses Receive Enhancement Grants

By Evan Braun

editor@nivervillecitizen.com

At the Ritchot Community Development Corporation's annual general meeting on Tuesday, December 4, eight local businesses received cheques from the Main Street Enhancement Grant. The businesses each got a share of a \$15,000 fund.

The grant recipients were Derek Roth of Adventure Power Products, Leanne Moore of Affinity Insurance, Alain Robert of Ste. Agathe Service, Massoud Horriat of St. Adolphe Pharmacy, Morgan Dule of IDC Garage Inc, Rene Demoissac of BSI Insurance Ste. Agathe, Larry Niebel from LDN Auto, and Luc Peloquin of Lucky Luc's Bar and Grill in Ste. Agathe.

In total, the grant supported \$140,000 of work to the communities of Ritchot throughout 2018, bringing about improvements in the form of building façade renovations, signage, and landscaping.

Niverville to Join Ritchot and Springfield in New Riding



EVAN BRAUN

editor@nivervillecitizen.com

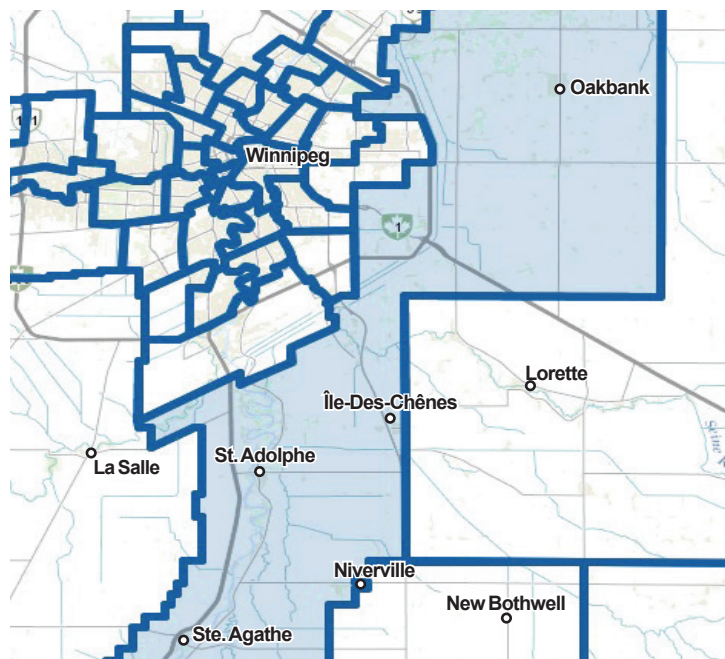
The Manitoba Electoral Divisions Boundaries Commission released their final report on Friday, December 14, after a months-long review process. As part of that process, Niverville's provincial riding has changed. Beginning with the next provincial election, Niverville will join a new electoral division with the RM of Ritchot and the RM of Springfield.

Before making its final determinations, the Commission consulted with communities across the province, specifically through a series of 13 public hearings since the initial boundaries announcement was made in early June. Of the 57 electoral divisions, the boundaries of 56 of them were changed as a result of the review process, and 14 of them have been assigned new names. The average population of each division is 22,427.

"To maintain public confidence in the electoral division redistribution process, public consultation is vital," says Chief Justice of Manitoba Richard Chartier, Chair of the Commission. "The public's submissions greatly assisted us in making the final determinations of the boundaries."

During the summer, Niverville's town council had expressed concern about the Commission's initial proposal to place Niverville at the extreme northwest of a large electoral division called Sandilands that would have encompassed the rural southeast corner of the province, including communities such as Kleefeld, Grunthal, Vita, and Buffalo Point. Council was worried that being part of such a large, sparsely populated division would isolate the town from the rest of the Winnipeg capital region.

"We are in the capital region, and a significant population within the capital region," says Niverville Mayor Myron Dyck. "We were looking to be in a riding that we believed would have greater attributes in that regard. For instance, the



Niverville's new provincial riding, with the RMs of Ritchot and Springfield. MANITOBA ELECTORAL DIVISIONS BOUNDARIES COMMISSION

needs of the capital region from the [rest of the] province are probably different... So we were hoping to be in a riding that would, instead of being with the greater southeast of Manitoba, be something closer to Winnipeg."

A delegation from the Town of Niverville, including Mayor Dyck and members of council, appeared before the Commission on September 18 in Steinbach to make their case.

"There was some comment made from the committee in regards to trying to keep communities within their, I guess, ethnicity," Dyck says of the presentation. "Our argument was that, while we respect that they were saying that Niverville was much like the original [Mennonite] Eastern Reserve, Niverville is now as 'folkloramic' a community as there has ever been. We have become a community of great diversity."

Dyck adds that municipal relations also played a role in their presentation.

"We have good relations with municipalities throughout the province, but we have much closer ties with some," he says. "And so we

were saying, while we would get to know better the municipal leaders in the communities in the riding that was proposed, we already have established relationships with these others [Ritchot and Springfield]. So that was kind of the crux of our argument."

After the meeting, Dyck says the town had no inkling about what conclusions the Commission would draw. Like everyone else, they had been waiting for this week's final report.

"The rural municipalities of Ritchot and the eastern part of Springfield along with the Town of Niverville are grouped together because of their capital region interests," reads the report. "The name of this electoral division is now Springfield-Ritchot."

Dyck says he is looking forward to joining the new riding and building on the town's relationships with Ritchot and Springfield.

"Obviously we meet regularly with the Ritchot municipality," says Dyck. "In fact, we are scheduled to have a joint sit-down together with them, tentatively proposed right now for January 3, and we have these meetings at least a

couple of times a year, or as often as necessary, to discuss things that are needed in our greater region. Roads, the bridges program with the province... water, sewer, and so forth."

The RM of Springfield, although not quite as nearby as Ritchot, also shares the bulk of issues affecting the Town of Niverville.

"They have communities such as Dugald and Oakbank, for instance, that are close to the City of Winnipeg," Dyck adds. "They are facing things, for instance, like traffic congestion on highways. They're dealing with Highway 15, much like we're dealing with Highway 59, for instance. They're also dealing with needing more water and waste capacity in order to meet growing needs. So it's about learning from one another that are dealing with similar circumstances."

Finally, Dyck lauds the consultation process that took place.

"I would have thought it was effective whatever the decision was," he concludes. "I don't want to predicate it on that we seem to have had our proposal met. Having the opportunity to be heard was much appreciated. I thought it was handled very professionally. I give credit to those individuals who are sitting largely as volunteers in this process. They did listen. It's obvious that they took into consideration not just what Niverville presented, but there were other regions of the province as well that had requests. They could just as easily have said, 'We've done the work, we know what we're doing, and no changes need to be made.' But the fact is, they were willing to do adjustments. So I give them much props and kudos for being willing to listen and being willing to make adjustments, even though [it was] more work."

The new provincial boundaries will be in effect for the next provincial general election, to be held on October 6, 2020, unless a general election is called sooner. Should a byelection occur before then, the existing boundaries would remain in effect.



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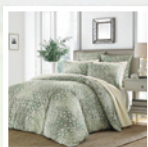
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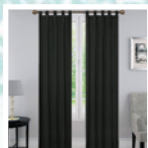
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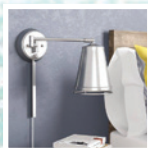


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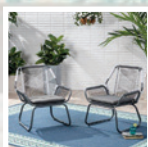
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The Citizen Debuts New Mobile Website

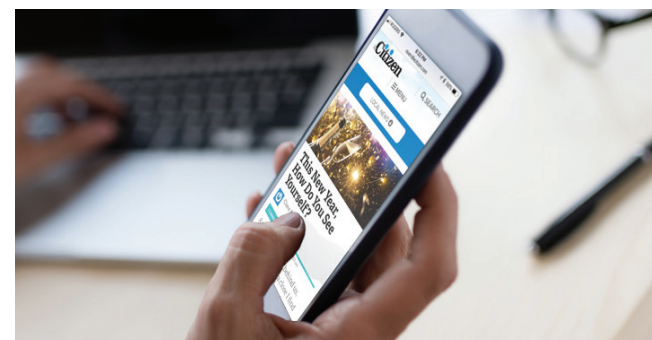
By Evan Braun

✉ editor@nivervillecitizen.com

Consider it a New Year's present from The Citizen: after several months of extensive work behind the scenes, we are finally ready to unveil our new website. The new site comes with several additional features and key updates which are sure to enhance your experience browsing our articles.

If you're reading this on your phone, you may notice that you're accessing a version of the site custom-built to work well on mobile devices. The first thing you'll see is a scrolling wheel of feature stories at the top of the homepage. Below, you will be able to browse a bottomless feed of our most recent stories, each with ample story previews.

What else has changed? Our fonts are larger and blacker, which hopefully will make our stories easier to read for everyone. Just below The Citizen logo, there's a menu that allows you to filter your newsfeed to view Local News, Sports & Recreation, Arts & Entertainment, or



THE CITIZEN

Commentary articles. You can also access our Feature stories from here, or our annual Homes & Communities edition, which comes out fresh every March.

If you click on the menu button at the top of the screen, you'll be able to access several features that used to be available in sidebars: an About page, our Archives, information about Classifieds & Advertising, our monthly Citizen Poll, and Contact info. Advertisers will also find a portal here to upload ads.

The site also contains links to our social media sites, a few of which aren't active yet—but please bear with us, as they will be updated very shortly in

the new year. We're excited to interact with our readers more across the many social media platforms, including Twitter, Instagram, and LinkedIn.

Although all of the main features of the site are up and running, while browsing it's possible you may encounter a few bugs that haven't been fully ironed out yet. If that is the case, we ask for your patience as we get everything worked out. In the meantime, feel free to drop us a note and let us know what you think of the site.

We've been listening to feedback over the last couple of years, and the site has been designed with you, our readers, firmly in mind.

Girl Guides and Senior Services Team Up to Bring Holiday Cheer

By Lorelei Leona

✉ lleona@nivervillecitizen.com

Niverville Service to Seniors and the local Girl Guides teamed up this year to give a few local seniors an early visit from Santa.

Throughout November and the beginning of December, Justina Penner, former Community Resource Coordinator for Service to Seniors, put a call out to the community for gift donations. Over the course of the month,

she received enough gifts for 25 seniors. The donated items have included Christmas candies, baking, socks, toiletries, and puzzle books.

"We distributed gifts collected by the community via Facebook to the residents of Pleasant Plaza," explains Penner. "Eleven were delivered [on December 11], and the rest will be distributed in our community to seniors who live alone and or have recently lost their spouse, by myself and Eddie Walker who did

the collecting and packaging."

This is the second year that this event has taken place, and in addition to the gifts it included the Girl Guides and their parents serving cookies they had baked to the seniors. The girls also sang carols for the seniors. Chicken Chef donated twenty-five \$15 gift cards that were distributed to each senior receiving a gift.

"It was very well received, a blessing to the seniors," Penner says.



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Advocacy does work

Early in December, the Electoral Divisions Boundaries Commission released its final recommendations on where the boundaries should be for voting districts in provincial elections. Niverville will become part of the new Springfield-Ritchot electoral division.

The Board of Directors of the Niverville Chamber of Commerce is pleased to see that the commission acted on the comments made regarding where Niverville should be located.

The first proposal made by the commission was to include Niverville with municipalities to the south and east of town in what would become the Sandilands Constituency. These are municipalities with which Niverville has little in common.

The commission had a challenging job because it is required, by law, to develop constituencies with approximately the same number of voters. It also had working guidelines to consider, including projected population changes, geographic boundaries, and shared community interests.

At the commission's public consultation in September to review its proposed boundaries, Mayor Myron Dyck requested that the commission take into account the fact that Niverville has relationships with municipalities that are part of the Capital Region and has common interests with them.

The Niverville Chamber of Commerce wrote a letter to the commission requesting that Niverville be within electoral boundaries that included municipalities with more similar interests and challenges.

In its letter the chamber stated: "We would like to suggest that there is another, not insignificant, factor that should be taken into consideration. That factor is economic development and commonality of economic development interests within a proposed constituency. Economic development is the litmus test of viability for rural communities."

The chamber's letter also said: "Niverville already has lines of communication developed with the municipalities to the north of it. Established lines of communication are important in moving ahead on projects in a timely manner."

It is very encouraging to see that in its final report, the commission stated, "... the rural municipalities of Ritchot and the western part of Springfield along with the Town of Niverville are grouped together because of their capital region interests."

This outcome is encouraging. It shows the value of community representation in policy development. Advocacy does work.

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

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Ritchot Talks About Municipality's Future at Open Houses

By Brenda Sawatzky

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In the spirit of interactive dialogue, the RM of Ritchot held a series of open houses in each of their five communities in the first weeks of December. Three topics were presented for discussion: the recreation master plan, improved internet services, and the Ritchot Connect app.

Amber Mamchuk, the Recreation Director for the RM, opened the meeting on December 10 in Ste. Agathe with an introduction to the background and purpose of having a master plan.

"The recreation master plan provides a roadmap for the next 20 years," said Mamchuk. "We tried to include as much information as possible... so that at the end of the day, when projects come to our table, we have an idea of where they fit in. The final report will make recommendations for park and facility development, recreation program delivery, how best to support our volunteers, asset management... and a sustainable funding model for recreation."

The project began in 2013 when the council of the day conducted a recreation needs assessment. Five years later, much has changed in the communities in terms of population growth and demographic shifts. This prompted council to reassess and begin actively

working towards more decisive action with longer-term thinking.

The municipality has ten recreation facilities and nine public parks. The investment in this infrastructure amounts to roughly \$65 million.

"It's very important that we have a plan that sets direction for these facilities and takes into account how we make recommendations to council and allows council to make the best decisions," Mamchuk said.

In February 2018, council hired landscape architecture planning firm Scatliff, Miller and Murray and recreation planning firm Jack Harper and Associates to provide joint professional direction and insight into the master plan. The combined bid to provide the study came in at \$60,000. The municipality was responsible for \$35,000 of the cost while the balance of \$25,000 came from the province's Strategic Municipal Investment Fund: Recreation Feasibility Study grant.

Mamchuk accompanied the consultants on guided tours of each facility and park. According to Mamchuk, the consultants were impressed with the facilities and the potential they saw in each of the parks.

Afterward, a project steering committee was formed comprised of residents from each community. Together with the consultants, they created a recreation survey which was made available to every



Amber Mamchuk reviews the recreation master plan at a Ste. Agathe open house.

✉ BRENDA SAWATZKY

resident. In November, consultants, steering committee members, and council met to review the survey results.

The survey gleaned information on the demographics of each community and polled for opinions pertaining to expectations on quality of life, the kinds of recreation programming people desired, the level of volunteer availability, as well as ideas for parks and facilities.

Out of 6,679 residents, 296 completed surveys were returned, representing 12.7 percent of households, a number that Mamchuk believes provides an adequate cross-section of the RM.

On a scale of one to ten, residents ranked the quality of life in Ritchot at an average of just over seven.

"The consultants have done

this survey in many communities and they said that anything over a seven is a good response to quality of life," Mamchuk says. "I think it could be higher, so we'll have some work to do ahead. Just for a little bit of perspective, we're above Hanover and Neepawa and just behind the municipality of Headingley."

Additionally, 47 percent of respondents said they would be willing to pay more in taxes to have better parks, recreation facilities, and programs.

"This doesn't mean that we're going to jack everybody's taxes up so that we can build some fancy splash park somewhere," Mamchuk noted. "But what it does mean is that if the right project came along and it was well planned out, that people are willing to pay a little bit more for that project

depending on what it is."

With the research completed, the consulting firm is now preparing a final draft plan that will be presented to residents at an open house on January 22 at Pioneer Hall in St. Adolphe. Here, residents will get to sit down with the company's representatives and review their recommendations for each community.

Mayor Chris Ewen took on the second subject of the night: faster internet services. This was a topic of great interest to the Ste. Agathe residents in attendance who, according to Ewen, have the poorest internet service in the area.

Ewen described the plan council had previously investigated, a plan that a few other communities in Manitoba had already invested in: the development of an RM-owned and purveyed fibreoptics system. It quickly became clear to council that this plan came with risks beyond what they were prepared to bear.

Since that time, council has joined forces with 13 municipalities surrounding Winnipeg, all members of the Winnipeg Metropolitan Region (WMR), all of which share an interest in bringing affordable high-speed internet to the region. (See page 13 for further details.)

Finally, RM staff member Tanya Waddell introduced the last topic of the night: the Ritchot Connect app. The app was introduced this

past summer as a means for the municipality to offer its residents a twenty-first-century solution to better communication. Notices can now be sent out from the RM office to residents in record time via phone calls, text messages, and emails.

The app allows residents to choose their method of delivery and select the types of topics they'd prefer to be notified about. Use of the app will go a long way to saving the RM office time and money in terms of sending out mailings and posting notices.

It is a useful tool for announcing local emergencies, community events, public hearing notices, council news and updates, and changes to garbage and recycling pickup. Because the app uses a GPS system, it also allows the municipality to narrow their message to a single community, or even a street, meaning connected residents will only receive news that pertains to them.

The RM office's long-term goal is to have at least one member from every Ritchot household signed up to Connect. Their immediate goal is to have ten percent of the population signed up by the summer of 2019.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

■ Visit the RM of Ritchot website to sign up for the Connect app.





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Quality Internet Service Coming to Ritchot

By Brenda Sawatzky

bsawatzky@nivervillecitizen.com

An exciting announcement echoed from the lower chambers of the Winnipeg Legislature on Thursday, December 13—a message that may well be among the gladdest tidings heard by businesses and residents in the RM of Ritchot this year, not to mention a dozen other rural municipalities around the City of Winnipeg. The news? High-speed fibreoptic internet is one step closer to becoming a reality.

In 2018, Ritchot Mayor Chris Ewen joined a collective of 13 reeves and mayors from the Winnipeg Metropolitan Region, believing that such a collaboration could increase networking and cost-sharing capabilities for everyone.

They called their association JohnQ Public Impact Inc., and their overall goal is to enhance development opportunities, increase economic competitiveness, and make improvements to quality of life within the 43 communities of their municipalities. Their first major agenda item has been to bring competitive internet services to the region, an area where much of rural Manitoba has been lagging behind.

“Creating a regional fibre network to ensure residents across the region have access to reliable and affordable internet is a must,” said Brad Erb, Reeve of the RM of Macdonald. “Many of us on the campaign trail this year heard this loud and clear from our residents and businesses, that one of their priorities is access to [high]-speed internet that creates opportunities. In the metro region, internet service is not reliable. We have speeds that are far below those of the standards set out by the CRTC and those are the standards that we’re trying to achieve.”

Colleen Sklar, Executive Director of the Partnership of the Manitoba Capital Region, says that this step forward will help bring rural Manitoba



The mayors and reeves of JohnQ Public announce a new high-speed internet initiative. At the table: Macdonald Reeve Brad Erb, Chris Kennedy of RFNow Inc., and Rob Barlow of WireIE Inc.

BRENDA SAWATZKY

communities up to par in terms of the services that larger centres can offer, thus providing the advantage needed to encourage commercial industry, which relies on the digital marketplace, to put down roots outside the Perimeter.

“It’s about connecting our communities,” said Sklar. “It’s about connecting us to education, the economy. It’s about connecting us to our neighbours. Good jobs, good industry... this project really does it all.”

Members of JohnQ spent the last year researching internet projects across North America and the globe. They conducted feasibility studies, consulted with experts in the field, and met with elected officials. In the end, a decision was made to partner with two well-established local and national internet service providers, WireIE and RFNow Inc.

“We have a network across Canada and in South America,” said Rob Barlow, President and CEO of WireIE Inc. “We’ve mainly focused on connecting the unconnected with trusted, reliable networks. We’re going to be assisting the whole team here on finding what’s available and enhancing it. It’s really about bridging the digital divide, [which is] a mainstay in today’s economy.”

At the end of the December 13 announcement, the three

partners, including JohnQ Public Inc., signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). The deal was official and the project can now be fast-tracked to the next stages: completing the design of the fibreoptic network and beginning negotiations with third-party internet service providers (ISP) and stakeholders. According to the MOU, JohnQ Public will be the majority shareholder.

The plan is to establish a backbone infrastructure around the city’s perimeter, providing the 13 municipalities with a baseline for hook-up. From there, ISPs will be tendered to continue the infrastructure into each municipality as they become ready. According to Sklar, many of the RMs are already shovel-ready and could expect construction to commence as early as May 2019.

Mayor Ewen says that May might be a bit premature for the RM of Ritchot, but he expects it could happen shortly after that.

“I think Ritchot’s ready to go,” says Ewen. “It’s just a matter of getting the final financials in place and [deciding] who’s going to be... the service providers and all that.”

As to the cost to Ritchot for hooking up to the backbone infrastructure, Ewen says he is uncertain, at this point, as to

what it will be. This project, he says, hasn’t been included in the 2019 budget plan so far, but once costs become clearer he feels that it could be looked at in the temporary budget for 2020.

“It very well could [happen in early 2019], but I don’t see it happening that fast,” says Ewen. “Unless we do a public hearing to get this money out of the nominal surplus or reserve fund.”

According to Ewen, the

municipality’s end goal would be to hook up every resident and business that doesn’t have an existing quality service provider. Grande Pointe, Howden, and Ste. Agathe, he says, have the poorest internet in the municipality. St. Adolphe and Île-des-Chênes are already being serviced to a large degree by the bigger players, MTS and Shaw.

High-speed internet was a major topic on the agenda at

the open houses held around Ritchot in the weeks prior to this announcement. Ewen indicated to residents at these meetings that council has been seeking improved and affordable internet options for the RM from the get-go. Early on, they commissioned their own feasibility study and researched what other municipalities were doing.

They took a hard look at the possibility of establishing an RM-owned internet utility similar to the one in Hamiota, Manitoba. In this scenario, the municipality would have full control and it would operate similar to a business, requiring administration, a data centre, help desks, and ongoing maintenance.

In the end, the high cost of such an endeavor, coupled with the heavy responsibility and risk, proved something Ritchot council was unprepared to invest in.

“We’re not in the business of giving you internet,” said Ewen. “We’re in the business of making sure you enjoy living in the municipality.”

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Shaun Macsymic of TransCanada hands over the keys for the new vehicle to Fire Chief Keith Bueckert and the rest of Niverville's Emergency Services personnel.

CREDIT

Niverville Emergency Services Receives Valuable Donation

By Brenda Sawatzky

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December 4 marked a special occasion for Niverville's Fire and Emergency Services department. The team gathered at the local fire hall to accept a major donation in the form of the newest addition to their fleet: a 2010 Chevy Silverado. Five employees from TransCanada Pipeline were there to hand over the keys and congratulate Niverville's emergency personnel.

The donation was a part of TransCanada's fleet retirement program. Steve Loney, the company's Community Relations Director, says TransCanada has always given priority to emergency response organizations when it comes time to retire their vehicles, recognizing the important role these organizations play in the welfare of communities.

"We've been doing this informally since I've been on the job for the last ten years," says Loney. "This program is somewhat unique to Manitoba."

By the time the vehicle arrived at the fire hall, it had already been retrofitted with Niverville Fire and Emergency Services decals, a lightbar package, additional lights on the front and back, a laptop-mounting system inside the cab, a siren, and an amplifier.

"We paid a supplier to put on a basic lighting package, but when they found out we were donating it to Niverville they upgraded it at no extra charge and included some extra equipment," Loney says. "Because they're [in the business of] updating career fire departments... PRO Upfitters from Winnipeg put in the laptop accessory, put in the siren,

[and] put in the PA system."

On top of that, Urban Tactical of Winnipeg donated a bag of emergency response supplies.

The idea for the donation to Niverville began with a conversation between neighbours Shaun Macsymic, a TransCanada employee, and Nathan Dueck, Niverville town councillor. Just weeks later, the vehicle is now proudly commissioned for Niverville's Fire and Emergency Services department.

"We know that TransCanada has been very active in our community in the last few years and we've been very appreciative of the relationship that we have," said Mayor Myron Dyck to the gathered group. "A special thank you to Shaun... for taking interest in the community and for looking to do this to help better our community."

Fire Chief Keith Bueckert couldn't be more pleased with the donation. He says a vehicle like this has long been on the team's wish list and will come in handy in their day-to-day operations of attending fire inspections and meetings, as well as its use as a transport carrier and clean-up receptacle at fire scenes. Having an extra vehicle like this means fewer personal member vehicles will need to be taken out on calls.

In addition to the donated pickup, Bueckert anticipates the arrival of a Rescue 1 vehicle in 2019 to round out the fleet.

"We'll be able to safely transport over 25 members now to the scene," Bueckert says. "With this being brought in and having the Suburban, it just adds to our fleet because we're growing with the community."

2019

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Commentary

At a Turning Point

By Greg Fehr

The word “crisis” is often used to refer to an extreme situation—for example, to describe conflicts that just fall short of being called wars. I suspect this is why we use it to refer to the current “meth crisis,” as the media has so recently done. There are other drugs involved in the crisis, but the focus has been on meth (methamphetamines) for a few reasons. Not only is it the new drug of choice in Manitoba, but it’s also one of the most dangerous due to its low cost, ease of transport and use, instantly addictive properties, and the unpredictable behaviour of those under its influence.

In actuality, the word crisis is the Latin version of a Greek word that refers to the turning point of a disease—the point where the outcome is about to be decided. It’s the moment of truth, when the

patient takes an irreversible turn either towards recovery or death.

With this understanding, let’s think back to our current social situation. Suddenly, the word “crisis” may seem even more appropriate than ever.

In many cases, we only have to look to our immediate family or close friends to find someone who’s been directly impacted by addiction. The impacts are becoming more direct all the time. And while initially this was an urban issue, it now exists in all places and crosses all socioeconomic boundaries.

Our insurance rates are rising and property damages are increasing. Police response times are going up, even when it comes to serious incidents. Inevitably our officers are tied up with urgent calls, including many related to meth. The strain on our EMTs is taking a toll.

Indeed, our medical system is at a breaking point.

While the answer to the problem itself may not be immediately apparent, at least two things are certain.

First, this is not a simple problem. It’s ignorant, arrogant, and counterproductive to simply blame the drug user. This allows us to push the problem away from us and onto them, to ignore the various reasons that have brought us to where we are today.

Secondly, we must realize that this is not *their* problem. It is *our* problem, collectively. Acknowledging that this is our problem doesn’t mean we place blame on everyone, nor do we remove responsibility from certain people. Rather, we accept that the impacts of the problem are seen everywhere in society as a whole.

Just as the problem is complex, so will be the solution.

Acknowledging this reality opens the door for us to have real discussions without getting defensive.

Drug users have made a choice and must accept the responsibility to seek less destructive alternatives. Social agencies must provide them with the resources they need to do this, and help addicts identify and address the root cause of their need to self-medicate. Drug companies must take responsibility for their role in securing the distribution of safer alternatives. Medical professionals must be educated about the dangers of prescribing addictive drugs, and take caution not to overprescribe, as we have seen in the realm of antibiotics.

A holistic approach is the only true path to lasting change. Increasing the presence of police is not the answer on its own, nor is seeking judicial change.

Drug education and safe injection sites aren’t the sole answer either. Banning production of drugs or controlling their distribution is not the answer. Collectively, we must look at all facets of the issue. Simply put, there is no silver bullet to conquer this monster.

We the public are the ones who will decide which direction this crisis takes. We elect officials who in turn make

decisions about funding and legislation, and we also have a great influence through our purchasing power. And we can bring about change by making our collective voices heard.

Taking the first step is never easy, but if we come to own our part in the problem, calling it ours instead of theirs, our feet will be set in motion towards a real solution.

How Do You See Yourself?

By Clare Braun

Another year is now behind us, and as 2018 comes to a close I find that it’s a good time for reflection—an opportunity to refocus.

Our willingness to look backward may depend on whether we consider the past year to have been successful. But how do we define success? By how others view us, or by how we see ourselves? Some of us determine success in the monetary sense. We all face economic pressures, and we may need to plan how to navigate them in the new year. Others tend to view success through a more relational lens. Did we succeed in maturing and developing our relationships with family and friends?

How can we navigate those relationships more successfully in 2019?

Life is a balancing act at the best of times, and the most human instinct is survival. Generally speaking, we will do what it takes to satisfy our own needs before considering others. In the world we live in, that is considered responsible. Indeed, we are each responsible for ourselves, but there may be other factors in play that we don’t readily see. We constantly hear reminders that there will soon be shortages of clean air, water, and other resources. Will these reminders lead us to join in on the dog-eat-dog world around us? Or will we choose to take a more benevolent view?

We all have a certain worldview, a lens through which

we see ourselves. I think it’s valuable to determine where our worldviews come from, to figure out how they have been influenced over time.

In my own life, I have faced my fair share of financial and relational chaos. I have gone through bankruptcy. In 2008, I experienced a marital breakup that was really difficult to endure.

In such times, our beliefs about ourselves are tested. Blaming others often seems like the natural thing to do. If we choose to go there, we may ask ourselves some interesting questions. For example, will we see ourselves as the victims of the government’s economic policies, or the frustrating decisions of our employers? Do other people’s relational

decisions cause us to see ourselves as failures?

Here is the central question: will we simply go through our lives in survival mode, or will we find ways to thrive in the midst of chaos? Is it even possible to thrive?

The answer, I believe, starts and ends with how we see ourselves. We have all made mistakes and we have all failed. Yet we are all human, built uniquely, and we were all meant to live with a sense of meaning and purpose. Why? Because we matter.

Does your worldview start with seeing yourself in that way? If it does, then 2019 could be an exciting opportunity for something new and different, no matter what has come before.

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Wedding Spotlight

Selecting Wines for the Wedding Day

By Sylvia Jansen
Sommelier

When wedding guests raise glasses to toast the happy couple, everyone wants what is in the glass to be pleasant. We also want the wines not to break the bank. Both can be achieved without much complexity or stress.

The main goal is to ensure that wines will be good company with guests and food. Wines should neither be so expensive as to create financial stress, nor of such poor quality that no one drinks them. Both results are wasteful.

There are a few basic principles to choosing wines.

Don't get stuck on a name, brand, or grape variety. There are many good wines that over-deliver for \$12 or less. Many of these hidden gems are crowd-pleasing wines. They may hail from regions you've never heard



of—which is often even better for value-to-price ratio.

Ask for advice. The only way to find hidden gems is to ask. Make

sure you taste the wines that have been recommended by taking some home in order to narrow the field. If you're not a wine drinker, ask

someone who is to taste the samples.

Keep it simple, or offer variety. Selections can be a single white and red for the entire evening, or

switched during the event. (For example, you could have sparkling or red/white for starters, and another pair for dinner.) There is also no rule that you can select only one brand. Some hosts buy a variety.

Finally, have enough on hand. Really, have lots and lots. Even a bottle per guest. The half-bottle per guest rule might work fine for a dinner party, but on a wedding day, if there's a mishap with a few bottles, or guests decide on wine over other beverages, you cannot order in. Unopened, undamaged bottles can be returned to the retailer for a full refund.

Keeping these principles in mind, the selection of wines should be as pleasant as raising a toast.

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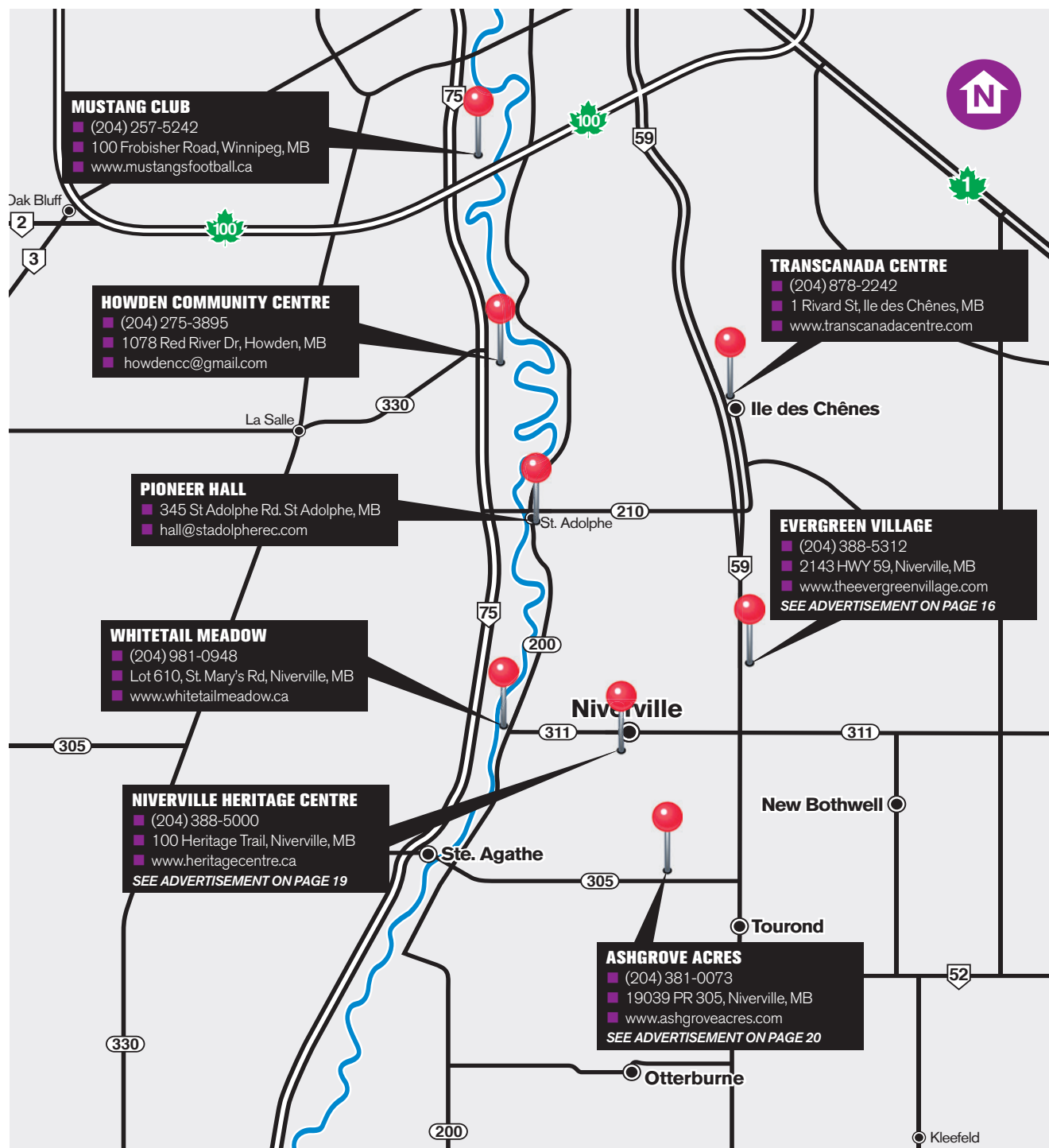
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Wedding Caterers Bring the Pièce de Résistance to Your Special Day

By Brenda Sawatzky

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So many thoughtful details go into planning the perfect wedding day: the dress, the décor, the vows. But let's face it, most of those things will only live on in the memories of the bride, the groom, and their entourage after everyone's gone home.

If you want to make a lasting impression on your guests, something that will have them talking for weeks to come, speak to their appetites by serving up one of the best feasts this province has to offer.

Two local chefs have been catering weddings for so many years that it's pretty safe to say they rank among the best around. Either Danny's Whole Hog Barbecue or Pioneer Catering will wow your guests with their seasoned culinary expertise and delicious flavour profiles. Whether it's indoor or outdoor, black tie or



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kicking-back-and-having-fun, these caterers are as versatile in their cooking skills as they are in their menu options.

"We cater 90 to 100 weddings per

year," says chef Pete Schellenberg of Pioneer Catering. "We also do an additional 25 to 30 other functions [throughout the year]. We make all the [dishes] from scratch in our

commercial kitchen and are proud to source as many items as possible locally. We also take pride in the fact that the food is delivered straight from the oven [to your event] and

served hot."

For the past 30 years, Chef Pete and his catering team have delivered on flavour with some of their most requested entrees, including saucy meatballs, stuffed chicken breasts, and beef tenderloin. A wide selection of sides and desserts are available to accompany the mains. Apple crisp, Chef Pete says, is a frequently requested favourite.

Pioneer Catering takes care of virtually every dinner detail, providing the dishes, coffee, punch, and staff to set and clear the tables and manage the buffet line efficiently. Guests of honour at the head table are served family-style with a smile.

"For the full service that we provide, clients are getting a really good bang for their buck," Chef Pete says, adding that clients won't see a lot of add-on costs when they book with Pioneer Catering.

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years of experience in the catering industry. Their year-round food service specializes in weddings and large events, and their most requested entrée is the one that's made them famous: an entire hog barbecued to mouth-watering perfection.

For adventurous event hosts, Danny's also offers a do-it-yourself whole hog option, providing the equipment, a marinated hog, and full instructions so you can impress your guests and take all the credit.

But Danny's wouldn't dream of limiting themselves to just pork. Other barbecued meat choices include beef, turkey, prime rib, steak, chicken, and ribs. And any of these mains can be complemented with perogies, cabbage rolls, meatballs, and a variety of salads and desserts.

"If you are planning ahead or booking short notice, we will make it happen," says marketing director Deanne Miller. "The customer is always our priority. Our business strives to treat customers well and our goal is to make all our events a success."

Danny's catering manager works with clients to customize their entrées to the event and even provides choices for guests with dietary restrictions. Prices, too, can be customized to fit any budget, whether you're hosting a casual backyard shindig or a formal event complete with a carving chef.

"Our delicious meats are the best you can find," Miller says. It's just one of the reasons the company can boast the motto "We'll bring the flavour!"

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The Importance of Wedding Insurance

By Brenda Sawatzky

✉ bsawatzky@nivervillecitizen.com

There is so much to think about when planning a wedding. It might well be the most stressful event you'll ever plan. But in the chaos of organizing everything from the wedding venue to bridal entourage gifts, many couples fail to realize the importance of liability insurance for their big day, and every related gathering leading up to it.

According to Kris Moffat, an insurance broker for Hub International, weddings, socials, and bridal showers are places where unfortunate or even tragic events can occur and bridal couples or hosting venues may be unprepared to deal with them. These things might include fire damage or vandalism to a rented facility, a wedding being called off resulting in significant losses of deposits, a slip and fall resulting in personal injury, or the many risks related to alcohol consumption. Lawsuits are a realistic possibility when it comes to hosting events where groups are in attendance.

"We highly recommend [insurance] coverage," says Moffat. "These are all fun, life-changing events and people would not want to leave themselves or their assets exposed to liability. Many unforeseen tragic incidents happen and they would not want their special event ruined."

Moffat says there are a variety of liability packages available that provide coverage for bodily injury and property damage.

"Many people assume that the hall or facility which they are renting will have automatic coverage," adds Moffat. "Some venues may provide coverage and others may not. Individuals hosting these functions will always want to check with the facility to see if they have coverage. If they do, they will want to obtain a certificate of insurance."

For events where alcohol is served, Host Liquor Liability coverage, a separate policy, is also very important. A lawsuit resulting from an alcohol-related incident can hold every party responsible, from the venue to the person or persons hosting the event to the liquor license holder.

"Host Liquor Liability offers protection for any liability claims related to alcohol," says Moffat. "An example may be someone leaving a venue very intoxicated and driving, causing damage or injury. The individual hosting the event can be held liable for alcohol-related claims. Some venues that specialize in liquor may include coverage with the rental. If that is done—which is rare—I would recommend that the individuals renting the facility get a certificate of insurance from the venue and also be added as an 'additional insured' in respects to liability. That way they can be covered and defended under the venue's policy. If the facility cannot extend coverage to the event, [the hosts] will want to purchase their own coverage. If the facility can extend coverage to the event, they can still purchase their own policy in case they are not comfortable with the coverage or limits."

Moffat reminds couples to consider all the different aspects of their wedding, including rehearsal parties, socials, ceremony, and reception if they are taking place at different locations. For this reason, having your own insurance extending to all facilities is ideal.

Some insurance companies offer specially designed policies that provide additional protection beyond just liability. They can include wedding cancellation, honeymoon cancellation, deposit loss, photo and video protection, loss or damage to bridal attire, wedding gifts, rings, wedding cake and flowers, wedding stationary, and rented items. Many of the loss or damage policies include coverage prior to the wedding.

Considering the many risks and the huge financial investment you're making to create the perfect wedding day, insurance may well be the best investment you make.

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Sports & Recreation

Local Snow Maze Builder Aims for World Record

By Brenda Sawatzky

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Just a snowball's throw from St. Adolphe along Highway 200, a new world record is taking shape. Inspired by the popularity of their fall corn maze, A Maze in Corn is working hard at stretching out their season by creating one of the most spectacular winter playgrounds in the world, including a potentially world-record-shattering snow maze.

Clint Masse of A Maze in Corn and Amazing Ziplines rarely sits still. Already this past summer, plans were unfolding in his head for a winter fun park that would see families return to his acreage for some cold weather adventure. What he didn't realize at the time was the scope of what he would embark on.

"We had a poor weather fall, so that was a tough one to take," says Masse. "So, I thought we could extend our season. I think, as a customer, going to a snow maze would be great, but a Guinness World Record snow maze."

Masse says, in planning the snow maze, one of his employees suggested going after the world record in keeping with the theme they'd incorporated into the previous season's corn maze. This past fall, maze goers were challenged to locate stations dedicated to Guinness World Records held by Manitobans. This winter, Masse hopes to



Work is underway at the snow maze at A Maze in Corn near St. Adolphe.

BRENDA SAWATZKY

become one of those record holders.

In his go-big-or-go-home style, Masse set out to determine what he'd need to accomplish to compete with past Guinness record holders in Thunder Bay, Ontario, and Poland. Then he designed a maze that was bigger than both of them.

"I think mine's more intricately designed, and [there's] more expense [involved]," says Masse. "Ours is much neater and tidier."

From there, he contacted the people at Guinness and set the ball in motion.

"You can wait six months for them to accept your application or you can pay them \$700 and they review it right away," Masse says, who opted to pay the fee. "We have the confirmation letter that they've accepted us. [There's]

no guarantees of course. If everyone sees and hears how big we're making it, then they could start making another one that's bigger."

Along with some hired help, Masse set to work, employing his snow-making machine which will draw from the bordering Seine River diversion to help compensate for the lack of snow on the ground. With the use of plywood forms, similar to pouring concrete, the team will be erecting 4,200 feet of two-foot-thick snow walls, all six and a half feet high.

In the end, he projects 32,000 to 35,000 square feet of maze—and it's being built right now, at a rate of 200 feet per day.

"We're still just trying to get a rhythm, but once we do maybe we'll get to 300 feet per day," adds Masse. This, of

course, assumes that weather is on their side. "Rain would be really bad and, of course, minus 30 wouldn't make it as fun, but also crazy winds can blow everything around."

When it's complete, Masse has the option of paying

someone from Guinness to come out and judge the behemoth structure or he can submit verifying pictures and documents signed by a Notary Public. To save money, he'll opt for the second. He expects to hear from Guinness

in mid-February.

"They don't give us a nickel," Masse muses in response to prize winnings. "It's just something that Winnipeg and area can be proud of."

And somewhere amidst this hectic pace, Masse is planning to expand his winter wonderland beyond a world-record maze to include a 40-foot snow slide, an area where children can build snow forts with pre-made snow blocks, and sleigh rides led by a team of Clydesdale horses.

He jokes that whether or not they win the Guinness World Record, he'll likely have some toques and T-shirts made to commemorate the event. Opening day for the winter fun park is anticipated for Saturday, January 5... fingers crossed.

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The Eastman Selects offering their gift-wrapping services to Helping Hands in Niverville. ■ NIVERVILLE HELPING HANDS

Minor Hockey Players Give Back

By Lorelei Leona

✉ lleona@nivervillecitizen.com

The Eastman Selects' AAA Minor Bantam hockey team got involved in the community this holiday season by helping those less fortunate.

The team, whose home rink is in Ste. Anne, is in their first year as a club and wanted to give back to the communities that are supporting them. In early December, the players' parents came together to see where the communities were most in need, and how their sons could lend a hand.

"Our children are fortunate to have the opportunity to play hockey at this level and we felt it would be a good life experience for them to give back to the communities that support them," says Gillian Groening, whose stepson Evan is the team's captain. "Companies

from the region support our team and we wanted them to see that they are supporting a group of young men that understand the value of community and are active supporters of others. It also provides the boys with opportunities to feel good about helping others and to learn that when they join together they can do great things."

In early December, the team started their community partnership by promoting Tin for the Bin at a home game and raised funds and goods for the Ste. Anne foodbank.

A group of 15 boys also wrapped gifts with Niverville Helping Hands on Tuesday, December 18.

Ashley Chamberlain of Helping Hands noted that the boys needed a gift-wrapping tutorial, and after that it was smooth sailing.

"We wrapped gifts for over 50 families," Chamberlain says. "Some had multiple gifts, so I'm not sure of the exact count, but it was well over 100 gifts! The guys did a great job wrapping, and the evening was a lot of fun."

Groening says that it was important for the team to find organizations that needed the assistance of volunteers as the holiday season approached.

"Niverville Helping Hands is [an] organization that supports not only Niverville families but also families from other communities in the region," Groening says. "Our last event in the New Year will be supporting the Steinbach Soup Kitchen. Steinbach is home to five of our players and serves the extended region as well."

Local Player Returns from Juniors Challenge

By Lorelei Leona

✉ lleona@nivervillecitizen.com

Grande Pointe resident Matt Osadick recently returned from a stint in the World Junior A Challenge in Alberta.

The forward, who plays for the Swan Valley Stampers in the Manitoba Junior Hockey League (MJHL) was not new to the Team Canada West evaluation camp, having been invited to last year's camp as well. Last year, however, he did not make the team, which meant Osadick needed to spend time this past year working on the skills that would help him make the cut in 2018.

"He is great at killing

penalties... he's a power play guy," says his MJHL coach, Barry Wolff. "He creates offense... he makes his line mates better."

The World Junior A Challenge returned to Bonnyville, Alberta for the second time in three years. The tournament ran from December 9 until December 16 and welcomed the top Junior A talent from four countries—Canada, the United States, the Czech Republic, and Russia.

Osadick was one of three MJHL players on Team Canada West, which won bronze in the tournament with a 3-1 win over the Czech Republic, after a 3-2 overtime loss to the United States. The U.S. would

eventually go on to win the gold medal. The win for Team West marked its tenth medal in 13 years, including last year where they were awarded gold.

"He has matured as a player, even this season," says Wolff. "He's a guy that wants to get better every day, so he puts in the work and that's why he made the team this year."

Osadick is currently ranked seventh in the MJHL for points, with 42 points (18 goals, 24 assists) in 27 games so far this season.

The 18-year-old has also committed to attend the University of Maine in 2019, where he will play NCAA hockey.

The Byfuglien Injury: What You Need to Know

By Nicholas Anderson

As of press time, the Jets have scored one or fewer goals in four of their last six games, with their offensive woes continuing in their December 29 game against Minnesota.

The bigger headline, of course, was the loss of defenseman Dustin Byfuglien. The Jets will be without their highest-scoring defenseman until “at least the all-star break,” according to head coach Paul Maurice.

Though the Jets never announced specifically what the injury was, it seems apparent, thanks to the replay of Byfuglien’s collision with Minnesota forward Luke Kunin, that the injury occurred somewhere in his ankle area, and ankle injuries are no laughing matter in the NHL. I would expect that timeline to be pushed back.

That said, Buff has proven to be a freak of nature and maybe he will heal up in time for the start of February.

In the meantime, Maurice will have to find someone to take the place of his top defenseman, who prior to being injured was on pace for

a career high 69 points, with 29 points in 32 games this season. It’s going to be a tall order.

Heading into the new year, Maurice is one of only two coaches in the NHL who has played just six defensive pairings for more than 50 minutes together this season, according to Corsica Hockey’s defence pairing chart. What is even more peculiar is the fact that Josh Morrissey and Jacob Trouba have yet to play 50 or more minutes with anyone else on the roster, but they have spent nearly 700 minutes on the ice together. With Big Buff out, it may be time for Maurice to break up his top pairing.

Deciding who plays with whom will likely come about through a process of trial and error, and it remains to be seen who will be the sixth defenseman on any given night. Should the Jets seek outside help on the back end, that can’t be ruled out either. But after a weekend in which the Oilers overpaid for a defenseman in two separate trades, it may be wiser for Chevaldoff to do what he does best: hold his cards close to his chest and be patient.

Of course, should he decide to stagger his top pairing, it will

give Morrissey yet another opportunity to be groomed into the Jets’ top defenseman—a role he looked more than capable of filling when Byfuglien missed three games due to injury last month. During those three games, Morrissey had 10 shots, a goal, and an assist, and he averaged a whopping 28:44 in three wins. Morrissey already has 21 points this season, which leaves him five off of his career high. At 23 years of age, he is finally beginning to display some of the offensive touch that led the Jets to snag him with the thirteenth overall pick in the 2013 draft.

By the same token, this could be viewed as an equally huge opportunity for Trouba, who is set to once again become a restricted free agent by season’s end—only this time around, teams will have the option to “offer-sheet” him. This means that another team could offer him a contract; should Trouba decide to sign that contract, the Jets would have seven days to match it.

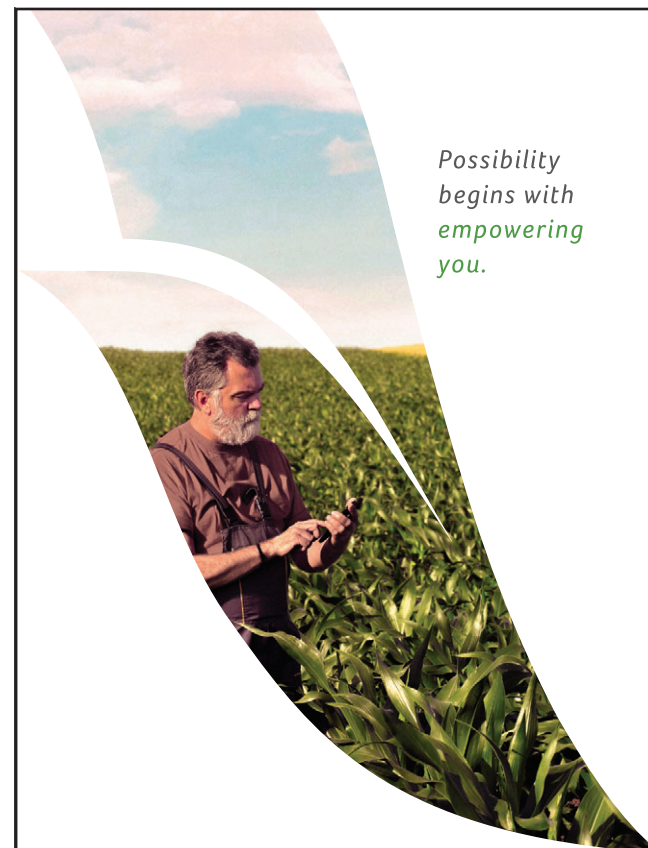
While this is still very rare, especially in today’s NHL, one can’t ignore the fact that top-three right-hand shooting defensemen are a rare

commodity. A little extra ice time, and time away from Morrissey, would give Trouba a chance to show he can be the top-pairing defenseman that scouts thought he could be when he was taken by the Jets with the ninth pick in 2012.

It will be interesting to see how things play out over the course of the next month for the Jets.

I don’t think the loss of Byfuglien is serious enough to knock them out of the playoffs, or even out of the race for top spot in the Central Division. Heading into 2019, the Jets are tied with the Vegas Golden Knights and Calgary Flames atop the Western Conference, with 50 points. In their own division, the Jets sit four points ahead of the Predators, who struggled mightily throughout December but are finally beginning to shake off the injury bug.

After a record-breaking 2018, when Winnipeg made the conference finals for the first time ever, the focus will be more on being ready for those big moments, moments they couldn’t seem to handle last season. And that all starts with Trouba and Morrissey playing bigger roles.



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NCI Varsity Boys Take Second Spot in John Kipe Classic

By Evan Braun

✉ editor@nivervillecitizen.com

Niverville Collegiate’s Varsity Boys basketball came in second place at December’s annual John Kipe Classic.

The final, which could have been dubbed the Battle of the Panthers, for the marquee matchup between the Niverville Panthers and Pinawa Panthers, ended with Pinawa

coming out on top by a score of 63–57.

“It was a good tournament in that there were many close games and teams had a chance to test the waters and prepare for the upcoming season,” says Niverville coach Richard Toews.

Niverville got to the final by defeating the Gimli Lakers in their opening game, and then the Green Valley Pirates in

their second, by a margin of 11 and 10 points respectively.

“Niverville played well their first two games, overcoming inconsistent play,” Toews adds. “However, in the finals, turnovers and missed scoring opportunities were their downfall. Their own errors led to their demise. This, however, is very promising for the upcoming season as the team has great potential

to improve in these areas and become a very good team.”

Two players from Niverville, Joel Dueck and Kress Schmidt, were named tournament all-stars.

The Green Valley Pirates, from Grunthal, finished the tournament in third place, defeated the St. Maurice Patriots 68–56.



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Arts & Entertainment

The Process of Developing as an Artist

By Lorelei Leona

✉ lleona@nivervillecitizen.com

Local artist Kate Braun has been drawing for most of her life, but she has recently taken it a step further by displaying her work in tradeshows.

Braun, who grew up in Foxwarren, Manitoba, a small town about 350 kilometres west of Niverville, spent a lot of time drawing as a child.

"I've had no formal training but grew up in a family of artists," she says. "We were always drawing in my family, to the point of running out of printer paper."

In her earlier years, Braun would draw pictures of other artists' work that she found interesting, but as she got older she realized that she wanted to create something of her own, perhaps something that would make an impression on another young artist.

"I've drawn a few tattoo designs for people, dabbled in realism, even a bit of painting," Braun says of her art's gradual evolution. "But I really found my style in incorporating nature into my work. I find nature to be peaceful. I feel connected to it. I've experimented with many different art types in the past few years, such as long-board designs, greeting cards, logo design, comics, and even a mural."

Braun has had an interest in graphic design and is always looking for ways to grow her craft



An example of Kate Braun's work.

📷 KATE BRAUN

and challenge herself. Recently she has started dabbling on the iPad and creating web comics, an avenue she thinks she might not have otherwise discovered had she stuck to pen and paint. Still, she prefers the simplicity of ink and drawing in black and white.

In November, she attended the Southeast Lifestyles Expo in Île-des-Chênes, her first time displaying her art for public

consumption.

"I was introduced to the trade show by Jon Falk, my old neighbour," Braun says. "After talking to him, I decided to give it a try. It was something I had always thought of doing but hadn't done yet. It was a whole new world for me, showing my art to people in person. I've done a couple others after that show as well."

While she has enjoyed

exploring these new avenues in her art, she admits that she's not quite sure where it will take her in the future.

"Doing something big with my art has always sounded exciting to me," she says. "But for me, the important part is to just be creating. It's what I love to do, and I enjoy it most when I'm doing it for myself."

Middle Years Students Present Christmas Musical

By Lorelei Leona

✉ lleona@nivervillecitizen.com

This holiday season, students from Grades Seven and Eight at Niverville Collegiate debuted their annual Christmas program, a musical version of the classic Cinderella fairy tale.

The Return of the Glass Slipper was performed over two nights, opening on Wednesday,

December 12 and ending on Thursday, December 13. Cookies and cider were sold at intermission.

Deanna Wiebe, the school's guidance counsellor, says that the middle years students put on a Christmas production every December, and the senior years students present a spring drama every May.

"The kids audition in general

and then Mrs. Hinton and I assign the roles based on acting and singing abilities," Wiebe explains.

The students rehearsed *The Return of the Glass Slipper* for two months, with Wiebe doing most of the behind-the-scenes work, directing, organizing costumes and props, handling media, and creating the programs. She was joined in these efforts by Judith

Hinton.

This was Wiebe's last middle school performance, as she will be transferring to the new high school next year.

"We have such talented kids and I love being able to give them a place to shine," Wiebe says. "We went with a musical this Christmas because this group is especially gifted in singing."

IN BRIEF

Prairie Soul Introduces Beginner Ballet Class for Adults

By Lorelei Leona

✉ lleona@nivervillecitizen.com

A local Niverville dance company is offering a new program for adults who are looking to dip their toes into the world of ballet.

The new eight-week class will run alongside the full season program at Prairie Soul Dance Company and give those who aren't ready to fully commit to the nine-month program the opportunity to learn the foundations of ballet.

"Ballet is an excellent form of exercise which works on strengthening and toning muscles while developing posture and flexibility," say Melanie Ducharme and Danielle Auld, Prairie Soul's owners and artistic directors. "Participants will work through basic exercises and movements with and without the assistance of the barre."

Ducharme and Auld have been serving the dance community in southern Manitoba for 15 years, starting with the Sadler School of Dance in 2002 before opening Prairie Soul in 2016.

The adult ballet program is open to all levels and doesn't require previous experience, something that has enticed Niverville resident Ruth Braun to enrol in the full season program for the past three years.

"Everybody in the class is in the same boat as you, so it gives you more of a feeling of 'I can do this,'" she says. "It's a great way to learn posture, balance, and control... all of these things are important as you get older."

Braun, who is in her sixties, has a granddaughter who is also taking ballet at Prairie Soul—in a class for four-year-olds.

"That part is funny to me," she says with a chuckle. "It just shows that you are never too old to start something new."

The eight-week sessions will run from January 16 through March 6 on Wednesdays from 7:35 to 8:35 p.m. The cost is \$126 and simply requires comfortable exercise clothes and socks or bare feet to participate.

"I'm so thankful that Prairie Soul offers this here," says Braun. "This is a program you could take at the Royal Winnipeg Ballet, so it's great that a program like this is offered locally."

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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RITCHOT REGIONAL CHAMBER of COMMERCE

Chamber News



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Updates from the Ritchot Chamber

2018 Ritchot Chamber AGM Summary

The 2018 Annual General Meeting was held on December 8 at Lucky Luc's over a buffet breakfast. We were joined by Chuck Davidson, CEO of the Manitoba Chamber of Commerce, who reminded us of our early beginnings and the value of working regionally so that multiple towns have access to Chamber benefits.

The elections portion welcomed familiar faces and invited new members to the 2019 board. Roles for 2019 include:

- Marc Palud (of RevGen Experts), President (second term).
- Trina Brulé (of Seine River Safety), Vice-President (second term).
- Derek Roth (of Adventure Power Products), Vice-President (second term).
- To-be-filled, Treasurer. (We thank Roger Brodeur for fulfilling this role for the past two years.)

The full board will be confirmed and announced in early 2019.

Growing Strong

The Ritchot Chamber welcomes Dave Audette of Lorette Home Hardware and Monica Phaneuf of Golden Bee Senior Services. Would you like to find out more about the benefits of becoming a Chamber member? Contact Fiona Robinson, Executive Director, at 204-881-2351 or fiona@ritchotchamber.com.

2019 events will be posted soon... stay tuned!

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Well-Known Theologian Taps Local Prof for New Book

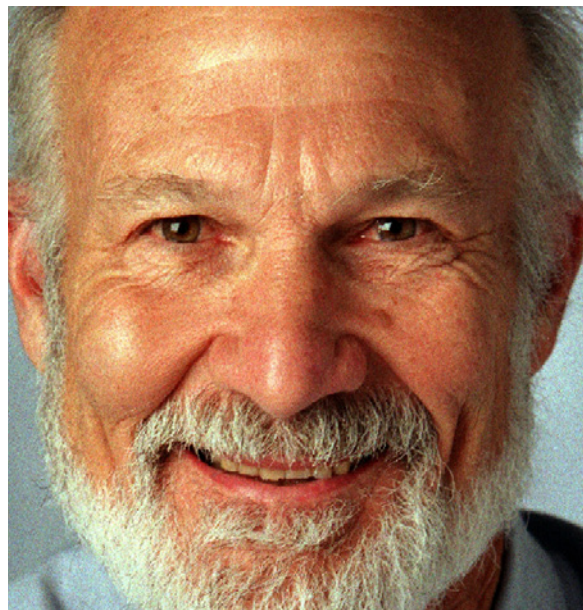
By Evan Braun

✉ editor@nivervillecitizen.com

Dr. Stanley Hauerwas has carved out a place for himself in the academic world as a respected author, theologian, ethicist, and public intellectual.

What is a public intellectual, you may ask? It's perhaps a tricky term to define, but no doubt Hauerwas's significant catalogue of well-regarded books, years of teaching at prestigious universities on two continents, and reputation as a gifted lecturer contribute to his notoriety. His work is widely discussed in his core fields of religion and ethics, of course, although his name also comes up in other fields—for example, political philosophy, sociology, history, and literary theory. He even appeared once on *The Oprah Winfrey Show*.

Recently, Hauerwas reached out to Dr. Robert Dean, who joined the faculty of Providence Theological Seminary as Associate Professor of Theology and Ethics this past August, tapping him to help assemble a new collection of his sermons and essays. Hauerwas had become familiar with Dean following the publication of Dean's first book in 2016, *For the Life of the World*.



Dr. Stanley Hauerwas, author, theologian, and public intellectual.

PROVIDENCE



Dr. Robert Dean, Associate Professor of Theology and Ethics at Providence Theological Seminary.

PROVIDENCE

"I am extremely grateful for how Rob sees the connections between my sermons and the essays," Hauerwas says. "[Dean is] just distant enough from me for that distance to be fruitful."

The fruit of their cooperation, *Minding the Web: Making*

Theological Connections, was published in early November.

"[It was a] great privilege to work with one of the leading theologians of a generation," Dean says. "It's perhaps something like a young hockey player who gets called up to the NHL and finds himself skating on

a line with Wayne Gretzky or Sidney Crosby."

Dean describes the excitement of gaining the opportunity to work alongside someone like Hauerwas, who strongly impacted his own theological formation. He says that the editing and writing process allowed

him a more intimate glimpse of Hauerwas, the man.

"Behind the sometimes fiery and confrontational public persona, there is an exceedingly gracious and unfailingly kind and gentle man," Dean says.

The new book is divided into four sections: Matters Theological, University Matters, Lives Matter, and the Matter of Preaching.

"The first three parts," says Dean, "include essays and addresses by Hauerwas that seek to understand the work of theology, the life of the university, and the lives that we are called to lead, all in the light of Jesus Christ. The fourth part of the book features sermons that Hauerwas preached throughout North America, alongside a couple of my own sermons."

Hauerwas, who turned 78 in July, underlines the importance of having a younger scholar such as Dean dig into his material.

"I should think this book's importance, and I do not want to oversell it, hopefully involves how it spans generations," Hauerwas says. "Dean's contributions are central because he can make me more coherent for his readers than I am able to do."



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Elementary Schoolers Performed Bear-y Holiday Musical

By Lorelei Leona

✉ lleona@nivervillecitizen.com

Niverville Elementary School got into the Christmas spirit with their holiday production of *A Bear-y Merry Holiday*. The play ran on December 18–19 at 7:00 p.m. at the Niverville Community Fellowship church.

"It [was] our first time doing this in a church," says Principal Tracy Beaudin. "We wanted to have more of a community partnership. A lot of times people

won't come to the plays when they're in the school because they don't have kids that go there... this way, it feels more open to members of the community."

Each performance started with the Kindergarten class welcoming everyone with a poem, and then moved into the play, which featured the first and second graders—nine classes spread over two nights.

A Bear-y Merry Holiday told the story of a group of bears who were waiting for their friends, a

group of panda bears traveling by boat from China, and engaged in festive activities like tree-decorating and ice-skating to pass the time.

All the teachers were involved in making the production happen, and they'd been working in their classrooms with the children in the months leading up to opening night. Mrs. Simcoe, the school's music teacher, made sure the musical pieces ran smoothly.

"The teachers put together the

costumes, which [were] black ears or white ears... depending on which bear the child was, and then the student [wore] either all black or white to match," says Beaudin of the tireless work of the NES faculty.

Each performance ended with all the participants coming together to sing a few classic Christmas carols. There was also a baked goods sale, in addition to a Christmas basket raffle.



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