



### **LOCAL NEWS**

# **Residents Brace for Spring Flooding**

Communities and property owners along the Red River are preparing for a flood, the severity of which remains uncertain. **Details on Page 4** 



# **LOCAL NEWS**

# St. Adolphe Daycare Gets Approval

• A borrowing bylaw has been passed by Ritchot council, paving the way for the proposed St. Adolphe daycare project that has been in the works for the past year. However, the project has faced some stiff criticism in recent days. **Details on Pages 8-9** 

### **SPORTS & RECREATION**

# **All Three Atom Clippers** Win Championships

In an unlikely turn, the Atom Clippers-all three teamswere named league champs.

**Details on Page 21** 

## **ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT**

# **James Barker Band** to Headline Fair

The headliner of this year's Olde Tyme Country Fair in Niverville has been announced.

**Details on Page 25** 

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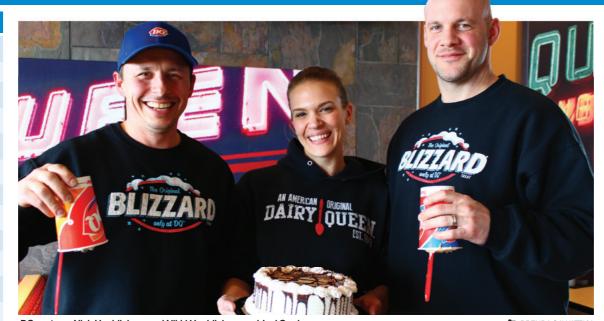
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DQ partners Nick Hagidiakow, and Nikki Hagidiakow, and Joel Carriere.

BRENDA SAWATZKY

# Dairy Queen Gears Up for Grand Opening

### By Brenda Sawatzky is bsawatzky@nivervillecitizen.com

The management and staff of Niverville's new Dairy Queen Grill and Chill opened their doors for the first time on March 18—and now they're gearing up for their grand opening celebration on Saturday, April 13.

The 2,600-square-foot restaurant has the capacity to seat 75 diners inside and, when the weather turns, another 24 on the outdoor patio.

Owners Nick and Nikki Hagidiakow and Joel and Jackie Carriere had been working around the clock to ready their unique Niverville location.

"This is Dairy Queen's standalone prototype store," Nick says. "This is what DQ wants to show off. It's their new look and their new model. It's the biggest store that they offer, including a full drive-through."

Fifty employees have been hired to take on the steady flow of hungry customers. Out of the entire staff, about 70 percent are part-time. For approximately 75 percent of them, this is their first job.

The partners provided the new employees with countless training hours to help ensure they are an instant success.

"What I'm hearing around town is that you can't get a fast-food burger anywhere," says Nick. "We're going to have a drive-through open on Fridays and Saturdays till midnight and up until 10:30 on [all the other nights to fill that gap]."

The Hagidiakows own two other locations—a DQ and Orange Julius takeout at Polo Park Shopping Centre as well as a 50-seat Grill and Chill on McPhillips Street.

For Carriere, the Niverville location is his first foray into DQ ownership. Carriere, together with manager Helen Moutray, is the face behind the new location.

"The scary part about opening a brand new DQ is we don't know what to expect until we turn on the open sign," Carriere says.

One of the most exciting giveaways being planned for the grand opening on April 13 is a free blizzard treat every week for a year to the first 100 customers who purchase a DO cake.

"We've done this promo once before at our Northgate store in Winnipeg and we didn't know what to expect," Nick says. "That was our first kick at the can and, sure enough, at about three o'clock in the morning the line-up started. By the time we opened up, we had about 200 people in line and within the hour we were out of those cakes."

Other surprises are also in store for that day, including a draw for tickets to a playoff game for Winnipeg's favourite hockey team.

The high-end quality food products are what keeps people coming back long after the opening day glow has passed, the partners say. They are proud to own a franchise that only uses dairy sourced from Canadian milk producers. All of their frozen treats are made with low-fat dairy, which is why it's called soft serve rather than ice cream.

And while the Oreo Blizzard has become DQ's number one seller worldwide, the unprocessed chicken strips are rising up to a close second.

"We have a co-op that negotiates [on food sources] for us," Nikki says. "Before other places get the rest of the chicken [meat] to turn into strips or tenders, we get the filet. We get the best part."

Another big seller is the seven-dollar meal deal which is available every day of the week. It includes fries, a sundae, a drink, and a choice between chicken strips, a deluxe bacon cheeseburger, or the Ultimate cheeseburger.

It's a package deal other fastfood chains are hard-pressed to compete with.

"The poutine here is [also] unbelievable," Joel adds. "I've tried the gravy at a few different places and Dairy Queen's is the best tasting."

The cakes, of course, are one of DQ's specialties and an item which Nick says they've sold hundreds of in a weekend. They come in a variety of shapes and sizes and can be custom-ordered with an unlimited number of designs, including kids toys or edible images.

Ready-made cakes will be available anytime and a custom message can be added as you wait.

All of the cakes are made in-house, as are the Dilly Bars, DQ sandwiches, DQ cupcakes, and Treatzza Pizzas.

"We couldn't be more excited to be a part of the community," Nick says. "We see the growth here and we're on the ground level with all of this major development starting. [It's exciting] for us and for Niverville."

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**WHAT DO I DO?** Contact a lawyer to be sure that you have considered all of your entitlements at law, and to plan your next steps in the process;

WHAT ABOUT THE CARE OF MY KIDS? This is a very complicated question but the

guiding principal of the courts is to do what is in the best interests of your children. Putting your children first is the key to a healthier separation and family;

**WHAT AM I ENTITLED TO?** While the facts will always determine this, a general rule to start from would be that the value of all assets acquired while together should be divided equally;

WHAT ABOUT THE HOUSE? Sometimes the house is sold and debts are paid, sometimes one party buys out the other's interests, and your lawyer will help you work through what options are best for you;

# WHAT INFORMATION DOES A LAWYER NEED?

- List of Assets and values
- 3 years tax returns
- Marriage certificate
- Statements of investments and
- bank accounts

### • List of Debts WE ARE AMICABLE, WHY DO WE

**NEED A LAWYER?** Unfortunately, amicable situations don't always last forever, and legal agreements become necessary and in fact when in place help the family unit to get along even better, as there is little to argue over; and, sometimes parties make agreements that they think are fair, before they are informed of all of the facts.

## Shimon Leibl is Family Lawyer with our firm and looks forward to being of assistance to you.

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# Communities Shore Up for Another Spring Flood

## **By Brenda Sawatzky**

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Long-term residents living in the Red River Valley have grown accustomed to the inconveniences of spring flooding. But if you're new to the area, and a lot of people are, it's always a good idea to brush up on the facts before a flood event occurs. In any type of emergency, preparation is key.

Most residents living in the communities of Niverville, Ste. Agathe, and St. Adolphe should have little to worry about in terms of saving their homes. Protective dikes around these communities have been fortified in the years since 1997, the year of the "flood of the century." Dike heights have since been raised to two feet above 1997 water levels. Similarly, homeowners living outside the dikes were required to protect their properties to the same standards.

At best, commuters can expect to plan a new route for a few weeks, since certain road closures are inevitable. Highway 311 west of Niverville has the potential for closure, and Highway 200 will most certainly have submerged stretches.

At worst, if flood forecasts are relatively accurate, dike entrances along the west border of Niverville and south and north side of St. Adolphe may be filled in to block rising water. Niverville residents will exit and enter from Highway 311 east. Ste. Agathe and St. Adolphe residents should expect to travel via Highway 75.

At this stage, officials don't believe the evacuation of homes or entire communities will be necessary.

The RM of Ritchot and Town of Niverville already have emergency response teams in place to mitigate the effects of flooding. Coordinators



The flooding of Ste. Agathe in 1997.

on each team work closely with the provincial Emergency Measures Organization (EMO).

## **RITCHOT'S EMERGENCY RESPONSE MEASURES**

**Ritchot's Municipal Emergency** Operation Centre is set up and active at the St. Adolphe fire hall. Emergency coordinator Harold Schlamp has been providing regular flood reports which are available on the RM's website. Schlamp and volunteers will be available daily between the hours of 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. to field inquiries from residents.

Mayor Chris Ewen says that while evacuation of residents isn't likely, there's always the possibility that residents in low-lying areas will need to leave their homes.

"St. Adolphe is always a concern because it's so close to the Red River," Ewen says. "It's the lowest point [in the RM]. That's why the province graciously worked with us to create that ring dike expansion a couple of vears ago.

For both Ewen and Schlamp,

overland flooding in areas without dike protection is of greater concern. Residents in these areas are being encouraged to take proactive steps to protect their properties. The RM already has a stock of 400,000 sandbags, the same number they had during the flood of 2009, which saw the highest levels of floodwaters since 1997.

"Due to weather conditions and delayed thaws along the Red, Rat, Seine, and La Salle Rivers, the sandbag delivery line will not be immediately operational," states the RM's current flood report. "Weather and river conditions will continue to be monitored and, once the thaw begins, we will start delivery."

The report also contains a volunteer contact number should residents require assistance in filling sandbags and erecting a sand bag dike. Homeowners receiving aid are requested to provide food and drink for the volunteers as they work.

Historically speaking, Ewen says, the Grande Pointe area is typically affected by overland flooding first, although most of the floodwater is usually contained to agricultural farmland east of Highway 59 where no homes exist.

If evacuation measures need to be taken, the City of Winnipeg, working alongside the Province of Manitoba's Emergency Social Services, will host Ritchot residents. Details on evacuation procedures will likewise be posted on the RM's website in that event.

Rural property owners with driveways built below flood grade are expected to take proactive measures to ensure they will not be cut off from an operational roadway. Failing to do so will not qualify them for evacuation support.

'We've had very fortunate weather the last two weeks," Ewen affirms. "It's been warm during the day, relieving some of that moisture, and it's been cold during the night, freezing it up. That's a great thing. We just have to go day by day and make sure our emergency coordinator is watching the forecast and working with the province in getting the

numbers."

The RM's website will continue to include flood updates as quickly as the province provides them. Ewen says RM staff will use its Connect app to notify residents of any dramatic changes to the current flood report.

### **NIVERVILLE'S EMERGENCY RESPONSE MEASURES**

"Council introduced a local Emergency Response Control Group that looks after all aspects of emergency preparedness," says Niverville's CAO Eric King, a member of the four-person team. "We have had monthly meetings to review our preparedness for this spring's flood as well as other possibilities.

King says that should the town's dike need to be closed off, pumping equipment is ready and waiting to keep the town draining to the west as snow melts and precipitation falls. Equipment has already been actively put to work to clear snow within town limits as much as weather conditions have allowed.

"We are not concerned about a flood greater than our flood protection," King says. He adds that properties outside the dike should maintain communication with their municipal representatives for further floodproofing.

He warns all travellers to stick to routes that are deemed safe by highway officials. Submerged highways pose a great risk as depth is difficult to judge and rapidly-moving water can wash a vehicle off the road.

"At this stage, unless the forecast gets worse, there is no anticipation of opening the Municipal Emergency Centre in Niverville," King says. "Should people wish to help our neighbours, we would strongly encourage reaching out to the RM of Ritchot."





The summit will take place Friday, May 3 at the Lakeview Resort in Gimli. For details, call Shyanne at 204-948-0111.

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# **Raising Children in a Digital World**



Digital technology is one of the most exciting advancements of our time. Computers, cell phones, and the internet have changed our lives in unimaginable ways. These devices have closed the global divide and simplified almost every task we perform.

Our children, too, are experiencing the trickle-down effect of all this technology.

Dr. Gordon Neufeld, world-renowned psychologist and best-selling author, is raising a red flag, reminding parents of the "insidious dangers that live in the shadows of this potent technology."

Neufeld's book, *Hold On to Your Kids*, was the focal point of a presentation he gave back on February 21 at the Steinbach Regional Secondary School. About 700 adults parents and grandparents attended the lecture.

After just a couple of decades of use, Neufeld says, digital devices have come to replace the most essential component of a healthy childhood relationship—and it's up to parents to not only recognize it but take the power back.

"The issue... is these digital devices answer certain human desires and needs," Neufeld says. "They are a quick fix to problems, but it's in the fact that it's a quick fix that the problem lies... [The devices] provide us with the solution to basic human problems that have been with us since we began to walk this earth... The essence of the problem here is that these quick fixes compete with natural solutions, and that is the concern."

Attachment, connection, food, and information, he says, are the most basic needs of any human being. The process of building physically and emotionally healthy children, who



are ready to face the onslaught of the world's challenges, begins at a young age.

Using food as an analogy, Neufeld says that parents relinquished their control over their kids' food intake with the introduction of the refrigerator. The availability of quick food has allowed our children to take charge of their own eating.

"We haven't really understood the implications for children feeding themselves and already there is a huge movement in Canada that realizes that we made a mistake about teaching our children about food," says Neufeld. "The more we don't teach them about food and the more they take it into their own hands, the more eating disorders that we have."

Similarly, parents and teachers were once the source of a child's need for information, and it was delivered at a rate at which the child could safely absorb it. Technology has replaced caregivers in that regard, too, removing them as the authority for information in a child's life. But while the cord of parenting hasn't been completely cut, it has taken a number of big hits.

"When we ingest more food than we can digest, we get sick," Neufeld adds. "When we ingest more information than we can process, we get sick."

Human attachment and connection, too, are under technological attack. While our digital devices were once useful tools for business and communication, developers eventually started marketing them to teenagers. Within a short period of time, social media sites arrived on the scene which have become our mainstay of connectedness, taking the place of family.

Neufeld also says that technology has also followed on the heels of the introduction of a peer-oriented society, a system developed in the mid-twentieth century which taught that children needed other children for social well-being and healthy development. Entire programs were created for children from the youngest age to increase their connectedness DEPOSITPHOTOS

with other kids and decrease their connectedness with parents and grandparents.

"I was one of the first generation of peer-oriented kids," says Neufeld. "What I became aware of as a university professor is that, when these students started orbiting around each other, they were being pulled out of orbit from their own families, from their churches, and around their leaders and hierarchies."

The effect, he says, is that we've moved from a parent- and grandparent-centric society to a peer-centric one, creating a world where children derive their sense of self-worth and meaning from their peers.

"Most children today don't go to school to learn about life. They go to school to be with their friends... seeking relationships in non-hierarchical [settings] rather than hierarchical ones."

Thus, the end of a school day means an intolerable separation from friends, causing intense feelings of disconnection. By putting digital devices in their hands, parents have reinforced the peer-centric notion. In turn, they are losing quality time with their kids. "If kids weren't revolving around

their peers, if they were revolving around the adults who take care of them, these would be very handy instruments," Neufeld says. "So we can't solve this problem until we win our kids back. You can't solve the problem superficially as long as you've got a kid who's revolving around his peers... If you try to intervene between the person and their attachments, you've got trouble. These are powerful attachments... We need to get back into the equation. We need to get our grandparents back into the equation. That is our challenge."

Like a plant, the health of a child's roots is key to their well-being long into adulthood. Building strong roots begins early in childhood. Unfortunately, technology is busy finding ways to provide all of the root-building components, too, leaving a child empty and searching for connection and meaning in all the wrong places.

According to Neufeld, this begins as early as the first year of life, a point at which sight, smell, touch, and hearing become the backbone of healthy development. Electronic devices today can fill all of those needs.

As toddlers, children desire a sense of belonging to something bigger—a family unit where protection and security reign. Short periods of separation become easier when that belonging is reinforced. Being connected to parents and grandparents is how a child establishes their sense of value and worth. It's how psychological intimacy is formed. It's here, in the early years, when a child forms the basis for healthy, long-term romantic relationships later in life.

These ideals aren't things we teach. They must be lived, away from the distraction of devices. When kids and parents become preoccupied with

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technology, they become less involved in relationships.

When these basic early needs aren't met, Neufeld says that children turn to technology for fulfillment. Video games, movies, and pornography can replace a parent's loving guidance. Constant access to entertainment can reduce the opportunity for parents and grandparents to tell their stories to their children; their children then listen to someone else's stories, and these stories are often lived in fantasy.

Advancements in entertainment technology can also blur the divide between what's real and what's fantasy. Addictive behavior is the result of this lack of differentiation.

"There's nothing more addictive than something that almost works," Neufeld says. "Research has found over and over again that digital intimacy is as addictive as cigarettes and alcohol. Why are [cigarettes and alcohol] addictive? Because they almost work... [They] soothe us situationally."

Therefore it's imperative, he says, that we recognize that for every advance in human or societal evolution, there is an equal and opposite loss.

"If we're going to deal with a digital device in a digital revolution," Neufeld says, "we need to get [our children's] hearts back."

The challenge, he adds, is twofold. First, parents need to exercise oversight in their children's use of digital devices. Second, they need to conscientiously provide natural solutions within the family unit to meet a child's basic emotional needs.

"If they develop a capacity for real relationship, play, and natural solutions, the attraction for digital devices will dissipate," Neufeld says. "We can reduce the attraction of that quick fix."

The how-to lies in another analogy-cookies. Cookies represent empty food, much like the empty emotional fulfillment derived from technology. Parents have long realized the importance of denying their children a cookie before supper, restricting its enjoyment to a time when their nutritional needs have already been met. So, too, do devices and screens need to be restricted until after a child's need for personal connection and family intimacy have been met. While cookies are an unhealthy shortcut to feeling full, screen time can be a shortcut to false emotional fulfillment.

The best way to achieve that, Neufeld says, is by returning to the family meal where stories are told and connections are reinforced through active interaction in each other's lives.

"The sit-down meal has to be screen-free," says Neufeld. "You cannot afford to bring the competition right into the place where you do family... You have screen-free zones, you have screen-free meals, you have screen-free playtime. Trying to get rid of it altogether is not going to work. Not in this world."

One immediate problem, he adds, is that parents can be so in love with technology themselves that they unwittingly lead their children into it rather than create a buffer from it. The normalcy of technology is masking the enormity of the problem.

On top of that, parents today seem to be experiencing a "crisis of confidence." Neufeld suggests that parents, too, are seeking information online rather than relying on their basic instincts. The prolific amount of self-help information available is blurring the truth: parents need to step up and take charge once again. "[Children] need an invitation to exist in our presence," says Neufeld. "We gave birth to them, but how will they know [they matter unless] they are invited?"

As well, Neufeld touched on a few basic principles to keep technology from dominating children's lives. Keep temptation out of their way, he says. Just as we wouldn't store alcohol in a child's room, we should keep electronics out of their rooms, too. Learning self-control at a young age will help them when faced with other addictive substances down the road.

Also, he suggests that parents work at creating a culture of family play away from devices, and give them regular reminders that they matter. Eye contact, smiles, and conversation should be a regular part of any day. Parents should know the signs of unhealthy peer attachment and learn how to redirect their attachment to the home front, and then teach their children not to use devices to share emotional intimacy. Devices can't replace real relationships.

Finally, Neufeld says that parents must use "bridging rituals" to remind children that their separation from parents is temporary. Rather than saying "Goodbye," a parent could say"I can't wait until I see you again later." The words we choose can build on a child's need for longterm attachment to the parent and provide solace against the angst of separation.

The roots of all of today's societal problems, Neufeld says, are relational.

"The challenge about raising children in a digital world is about timing," Neufeld concludes. "It's about being the answer. Its about stepping up to the plate."

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# **CITIZEN POLL**

# Do you agree with council's decision to assist the St. Adolphe daycare by creating a borrowing bylaw from the RM's surplus funds?

Yes. This was the best possible solution when considering the provincial deadline. No. A more financially sustainable

solution is needed.
 Have another opinion? Share your thoughts with us.



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### LAST MONTH'S RESULTS:

# Do you feel that Niverville council made the right decision on future policing in the community?

Yes. It's cost-effective and will provide the added protection that the community needs. 93%

No. A local independent police force would create a greater deterrence on crime. 93%

# **YOUR COMMENTS:**

The community is continuing to grow, and crime will soon be even more prevalent due to the evil nature of human desire. Policing is very much necessary, because we can not simply let offenders get away. If the only way to do this is to eventually create a local police force, then so be it. This is the difference between safety and anarchy. *A. Q. G. Rogulzinski* 

I agree with the cost-effective protection but in the event that it is not sufficient in the future than I would certainly concur to a local police force.

It is a good idea.

# St. Adolphe Daycare Gets Green Light Despite Opposition

### By Brenda Sawatzky bsawatzky@nivervillecitizen.com

On Tuesday, March 26, Ritchot's council held a vote that would make or break an initiative for a new daycare facility at 372 Main Street in St. Adolphe. The final result was 3–2 in favour of moving forward with a borrowing bylaw to finance the project.

Council was similarly divided on March 20, when the borrowing bylaw came up for its second reading. Councillors Shane Pelletier, Ron Mamchuk, and Janine Boulanger tipped the scales in favour of the project. Mayor Chris Ewen and Councillor Curtis Claydon maintained their votes against the initiative as proposed.

The idea of a borrowing bylaw, first released to the public last November, was based on a \$1 million loan from the RM to the local nursery school, a loan which was to be paid back by the nursery school over 20 years at an interest rate of 1.75 percent. Along with Manitoba Hydro and provincial grants, as well as a fundraising initiative by the daycare committee, it was anticipated that the total estimated cost of almost \$1.8 million could be achieved.

Last fall, the proposal's first reading ended with a unanimous vote in favour from the mayor and all councillors.

Now, four months later, many residents were shocked to learn that two council members, Ewen and Claydon, had changed their minds.

# **COUNCIL VOTES**

So what swayed their votes against the project? "I would like to remind council that we around this table are the ones borrowing the million dollars for this project," said Councillor Claydon at Tuesday's meeting. "It's not the daycare that is borrowing the million dollars, [it] will simply be the leaseholder... and we as council are here to ensure the municipality remains fiscally

responsible as we oversee transactions that are [unique] in nature. We... will be held accountable for our decision for many years to come." Claydon's concern revolved

around an unconventional plan that would see the RM acting as both lender and borrower. The daycare would simply lease the building. In this scenario, the RM will be responsible to pay the



### The future location of the St. Adolphe daycare at 372 Main Street.

million dollars back into its own surplus fund over the next 20 years, whether or not the daycare succeeds. The RM would, presumably, also assume responsibility for cost overruns on remediation and reconstruction of the building, expenses which could exceed the nominal contingency fund.

As it stands, the building is aging and has the potential for toxic contamination due to its previous uses as a car and RV dealership. Without a complete deconstruction of the concrete floor, roof, and walls, Claydon contends that there's not enough certainty regarding asbestos in the interior and waste oil contaminants in the soil beneath the building, let alone fumes and odours in the walls.

Councillor Boulanger felt more certain, having previously reviewed documentation presented by the architect and geotechnical engineer for the project. In the end, Boulanger felt confident that affordable options are available and that the nominal contingency monies will be enough to allow for reconstruction overruns that would meet the province's daycare codes.

"My biggest concern that we still haven't come to an agreement or conclusion on is what happens if the daycare defaults on payment," said Mayor Ewen. "This may not happen over our time as council, but for future council, are they willing to make a tough choice and take legal action [against] a daycare? ...I don't believe that this is the right type of bylaw or the right type of loan for this project."

"To be honest, this has been a struggle," Boulanger countered. "But, as in all other council decisions, I have to stick to the facts that have been presented to me... I have confidence that the daycare will make this work. Of course, there's that question of 'What if?' but... all parties have done their best to address as many unknowns as possible... It is the best option considering the time constraint that we are in. If we don't do anything, we will lose the government funding and there are no guarantees that future government funding will become available."

CAO Mitch Duval was asked to weigh in on options council might have should they be faced with a default on the loan down the road. While he had no firm answers, he suggested that provincial daycare subsidies could help alleviate some of that concern.

"When it comes to the numbers, if we were talking a private business, I would say a definite no, but that is not the case here," Duval said.

Pelletier, too, felt that council had done their due diligence to ensure the daycare's long-term viability.

"I'm confident that we've made a lot of the right decisions that will alleviate as much of the concerns about the building as we can," said Pelletier. "I think it's a win situation for us."

Councillor Mamchuk stuck to the sentiments he had previously shared at the March 20 meeting.

"Things change, life changes, everything changes," said Mamchuk. "We've got to move forward."

# **CONFIDENCE SHAKEN**

For all that was shared at the public meetings regarding the daycare initiative, much was also left unsaid. At least two Ritchot residents BRENDA SAWATZKY

say their confidence in council has been shaken through this ordeal. Both requested anonymity in order to share their concerns.

"At the third reading of the bylaw, you made a choice," one resident relayed to council in a recent email. "Not only a choice that supported a daycare project, but also a choice to ignore the financial implications of this bylaw and a choice not to inform your constituents of all of the risks associated with it."

While this resident applauds Ewen and Claydon for seeing the bigger picture, the resident is disappointed with the councillors who pushed through a proposal that is unlikely to set the daycare up for long-term success.

"Just because you 'believe' in something, it is an abysmal argument, especially when you are aware that the numbers aren't there," the resident explains.

Like the mayor, councillors, and most residents, both of these individuals are firmly in support of better daycare options in St. Adolphe. They have children of their own in daycare. But they both currently sit on a local daycare board and work as chartered professional accountants, giving them insight others may not have.

After council's November public meeting, these residents began to crunch the numbers, creating spreadsheets with a variety of different scenarios provided by the daycare's and the RM's proposed financial plans. The reality, they said, looked bleak, if for no other reason than the project would saddle a not-for-profit entity with a million-dollar repayment expectation.

In December, they met with council to relay their concerns.

They said that council's financial analysis of the project was missing data integral to understanding the big picture. For example, they said council wasn't considering the \$600,000 that the municipality had already invested in the building upon purchase. Other costs seemed to be ignored as well, including renewal of the driveway and grounds and ongoing sewer costs.

These residents say that answers to their questions weren't forthcoming. They can only assume now that the RM will take care of the costs of potential utility overruns and is willing to forego the property tax revenue they might have collected had the building been sold or leased to a business.

As well, they question council's decision to apply such a low interest rate to the loan. Typically, they say, the RM would apply interest at market rate to debentures added onto the residents' property tax bills.

"We're not making much interest revenue on the surplus, but we are making two percent, so we're already losing.25 percent by taking it out of the surplus fund," says one of the residents.

As an alternative, they say many daycares solicit donations from local residents and businesses to fund their building projects, since they can offer charitable receipts.

"Daycares aren't built with hopes and dreams, they are built with money," said one of the residents to council prior to their final vote. "They aren't built overnight, they take years of proper planning. I expect council to continue supporting the daycare project. However, I urge you to go back to the drawing board and

FOUR86@SHAW.CA

come up with a more responsible plan to mitigate financial risk, as the funds being used belong to the ratepayers."

# **PLEA FOR ALTERNATIVES**

Lease payments for the St. Adolphe daycare have been set at almost \$60,000 per year and utilities are estimated at around \$18,000 a year for a total cost of about \$78,000.

Further to that, the daycare will be looking at ongoing costs related to staffing, insurance, cleaning services, and a reserve for the replacement of expensive equipment such as commercial appliances and specialty items with a relatively short life cycle but which are mandated by Manitoba's health and safety regulations.

Aside from managing all these costs, the daycare board has committed themselves to short- and long-term fundraising to make the project viable. Initially, council challenged the committee to raise \$100,000 for the project. At Tuesday's meeting, council voted unanimously on an amendment to the partnership agreement between the RM and the daycare. The \$100,000, once raised, will be applied directly to construction costs.

The committee will then need to raise another \$110,000 to furnish and equip the facility. According to the residents, an ongoing fundraising bar of \$24,000 per year was factored into the feasibility of the daycare's financial plan. This still doesn't address the need for playground equipment, which can often run from \$75,000 to \$100,000 for a play structure alone.

Amidst this, the St. Adolphe daycare will be working with a fee structure that is strictly regulated by

the provincial government, leaving no option for amendments to individual daycare fees to make up for losses.

As Councillor Claydon eluded to at the March 20 meeting, most daycares never run at 100 percent capacity. This isn't for lack of children on the waiting list but rather due to ensuring that registered children continue to have spots in the daycare as they graduate through the programs. If a spot comes available in the school-age level, for instance, they must take into account the children that are already enrolled in the infant program who will be needing that spot down the road.

The residents had hoped, through their initial contact with council last year, to steer them in a direction to look for alternatives

"We want to see this project succeed," the residents said. 'We absolutely support the obvious need for a daycare in the community of St. Adolphe. Saying no to this bylaw is not saying no to the daycare project; it just means that we need to come up with a better solution to ensure the longterm success of this project."

### **DAYCARE COMMITTEE** RESPONSE

The daycare board had only one short comment regarding Tuesday's vote.

The daycare board is looking forward to continuing our work with the RM on the daycare development project," says Michael Hiebert, member of the St. Adolphe daycare board and a committee member on the RM's daycare development project team.

No other comments from the committee were made available.

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# WE ARE MOVING!!

The Town of Niverville Administration Office will be closed Friday, May 3, 2019 and Monday, May 6, 2019 while we move into our new facility.

> Regular business hours will resume on Tuesday, May 7, 2019 at our new office, 329 BRONSTONE DRIVE

Please note phone services may be disrupted during the move.

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### The Hanover School Division but operational costs are expected to hit \$2,986,000. (HSD) Board of Trustees has coming school year. The new released details on their re-Another \$694,400 can be Niverville High School will added through an increase be responsible for \$550,100 cently approved 2019-20 in taxation, but that increase budget. In spite of a provinof additional operating is capped at two percent. The costs. As well, French educial funding increase of 1.6 percent, as well as a \$320,000

result is a deficit of \$1,530,200. In order to help compensate for the coming shortfall, education tax levies will see a small rise this September. Property owners in the division can expect to see their education mill rate set at 15.17, up from last year. In dollars and cents, this will amount to approximately \$2 more per house assessed at

\$761,400 to the coffers,

the fact that the provincial \$250,000. funding increase only adds

Tax Hikes and Cutbacks in Hanover School Division Budget

Even so, it's not enough to cover an almost \$3 million rise in operational costs for the cation fees, paid out to other school divisions, went up by \$511,100. Other increases are associated with enrollment growth, collective bargaining agreements, utilities, property insurance, IT infrastructure, and the addition of a reading clinician. In order to meet provincial

budget guidelines, the board will resort to expenditure cutbacks to the tune of \$1.2 million and use \$320,000 of surplus funds from previous years. Cuts will include \$340,000 from bus replacement, \$500,000 from school maintenance projects, and \$370,200 from existing divisional programs and services.

The board's goal was to ensure that a minimal impact would be seen in the area of classroom instruction.

"The 2019-20 budget reflects a commitment to excellence in education," reads a statement from the division, "while ensuring Hanover School Division's administrative costs are among the lowest in the province."

# New Hespeler Park Playground Receives Big Grant

### **By Evan Braun**

ditor@nivervillecitizen.com

**By Brenda Sawatzky** 

⊠ bsawatzky @nivervillecitizen.com

surplus from previous years,

the board has had to be cre-

ative in the face of a budget-

gently to find budget solu-

tions that address enrollment

growth during a time of fiscal

challenge," says an HSD news

The problem stems from

'The Board worked dili-

ary squeeze.

release.

The Town of Niverville is continuing to make progress toward building a new playground in Hespeler Park, designated for the one-acre parcel of land immediately west of the splash pad, across the walking path. On March 26, the town announced that it had received a grant of \$100,000 from the Government of Canada's Enabling Accessibility Fund Program. The new playground, the town says in a press release, will be fully accessible.

A portion of the grant will also be used to install automatic door-openers for the splash pad change rooms.



"The projects will be completed during the summer of 2019," says the press release. "This project will create a new playground facility for children and families of those with disabilities, as well as further the town's commitment to improve current facilities to be accessible for all."

\$100,000 is the maximum allowable amount for projects funded through the Enabling Accessibility Fund Program's small projects category.

"This project as being deemed important by council as it continues to strive to make Niverville a community where all know they belong,"

says Niverville mayor Myron Dyck. "This funding will go a long way in helping council accomplish this goal. I thank the federal government for their continued partnership with the Town of Niverville in projects of mutual importance."





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President: John Magri | Executive Director: Dawn Harris EMAIL: chamber@niverville.com PHONE: 204-388-6140 www.niverville.com

# **Business excellence in action**

At its recent annual meeting, the Niverville Chamber of Commerce named its 2018 business award recipients. Niverville is fortunate to have strong, local businesses that offer quality, innovation, and dependable service to their customers.

Alex Fast Sr. Award for

Ferd Klassen, Niverville Autobody

has made a significant contribu-

Ferd was a member of the Niverville

Fire and Paramedic Service for 26

years, serving as chief from 1996 to

**Outstanding Business of the Year:** 

In its 31st year of building homes,

Heritage Lane Builders is a family run business that places a high

value on quality and relationships. One member of the judge's panel commented, (The company's) growth over time and the develop-

ment of COR status is a testament

to a business that has the right

checks and balances in place.

This award is presented to a business person or business that

community service:

tion to the community.

Heritage Lane Builders



Carl Fast, whose late father the award recognizes, presents the Alex Fast Sr. Award to Ferd Klassen for 2018.

2014. He is involved in many local causes. He's has made contributions to community groups including Youth for Christ, Teen Challenge, Imagine, and the Niverville Fair. He is also generous with his time and experience in helping other business people.



Doug Dyck, president of Heritage Lane Builders, receives the 2018 Outstanding Business of the Year Award from John Magri, Niverville chamber president.

Also nominated for the award was The Citizen. Its owners were commended by the judges for their initiative, drive, flexibility, and business acumen.



Ryan Hamm (L), BSI regional branch leader, and Trevor Lux (R), protection specialist, BSI, accepts the 2018 Customer Service Award from John Magri, chamber president.

# **Outstanding Customer Service:**

# BSI Insurance, Niverville

Customers noted that BSI staff are welcoming, focussed, knowledgeable, and work efficiently.

Also nominated for the award were Dollhouse Design and Ben Sawatzky Electric. Dollhouse Design was recognized for the individualized attention given customers, while Ben Sawatzky Electric was noted for customer commitment.

The recipient of this award is determined partly by customer comments and information about the company provided to the judges.

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.







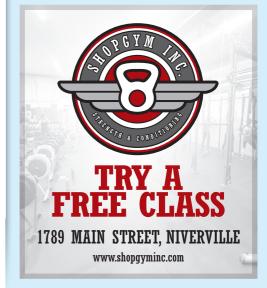
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# Health Foundation and Firefighters Ball a Glowing Success

# **By Brenda Sawatzky**

⊠ bsawatzky@nivervillecitizen.com

March 8 marked the second annual Niverville Health Foundation and Firefighters Ball. The fundraising event provides the public with a fun evening out while creating an opportunity to make a charitable donation to local healthcare and fire service needs.

About 110 people enjoyed the multi-course dinner and dancing with a live band at the Heritage Centre. Niverville Health and Community Foundation board member George Sawatzky says that while attendance numbers were down from last year, they were still able to contribute \$5,000 to Niverville's Fire and EMS Services. An additional \$2,500 donation was made by the Niverville Credit Union.

Niverville Fire Chief Keith Bueckert is pleased with the donation, which will be channelled toward the purchase of more self-contained breathing apparatuses (SCBAs) and refill bottles. While the



Andrew Neufeld and Ken Rempel of the Niverville Health and Community Foundation board present a donation to Fire Chief Keith Bueckert. D BRAD WASILINCHUK

department already owns 14 SCBAs, he hopes to increase that number to 20 in the next few years, enough to provide almost every member with a unit.

Sawatzky says that the Niverville Health and

Community Foundation recognized this need when the firefighters were called out to a fire at the Great Canadian Dollar Store while it was still under construction last year. A limited number of firefighters were able to safely enter

the building due to a lack of of them." SCBAs.

"That was a small fire," Sawatzky says. "If it ever happened that, God forbid, one of these larger apartment buildings or the life lease went up in smoke, they'll need more

The TransCanada Pipeline company also stepped up with a further donation of \$10,000.

'The TransCanada donation will be used to properly equip our new rescue [vehicle

to carry] our rescue and medical equipment and SCBAs," says Bueckert. "The proper shelving and trays will be purchased to have the truck functional and safe for our members and equipment."

The event also provided an opportunity to honour local firefighters and EMS volunteers with long-term service awards. Two recipients received 20-year service awards, firefighter Greg Rempel and EMS volunteer Susan Shaver for her combined commitment to both the Swan River and Niverville departments.

Merrick Sandulak, Jason Hudson, Steve Kehler, and Eric Turenne all received their five-year service awards.

"Niverville Fire and Emergency Services is extremely grateful to the ongoing support of the Niverville Health and Community Foundation," Bueckert says. "Also to TransCanada [Pipeline] for their support again."



# **Old Drovers Run Under New Management**

### **By Lorelei Leona**

⊠ lleona@nivervillecitizen.com

Old Drover's Run is undergoing some spring-cleaning after changing their management company in mid-March.

The Golf Mentor Management Group, owned by Adam Boge and Glen Sirkis, took over the Niverville golf course last month and are hoping to implement some changes that will improve the course's traffic this season.

'We hired a new golf professional and superintendent," says Boge, who said they would also be looking to add more personnel in the future.

The Management Group also operates the Maplewood Golf Club and St. Vital Golf Centre in Winnipeg, where they offer a teaching academy as well as specialized programs such as ladies-only leagues and junior divisions. Programs such as these are some of what Boge and Sirkis are hoping to add to ODR.

"We want to add more leagues and tournaments, as well as bring the teaching academy here to offer more golf instruction, specifically for junior programs and ladies only," he explains. "We have owned [the company] for ten years and have found



Old Drovers Run golf course.

that ladies are taking more interest in golf but may be intimidated attending a teaching with men. We started a program about three years ago in St. Vital and have had to add more classes every year because it is so popular."

Boge also notes that they are wanting to create a juniors program in Niverville by working with the elementary and high school, in order to get more kids involved in the sport.

According to a press release, patrons can also expect memberships, tengame packs, family programs, and other additions this season.

OLD DROVERS RUN

"We want the community to support the golf course," Boge says of their vision for ODR. "We also want to start getting the golf course known in the south end of Winnipeg and get some traffic out from the city. We want to be able to showcase that Niverville is not only a great spot to play golf in, but also a great place to live."

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**Niverville Recreation Offers Lullaland Classes** 

# **By Lorelei Leona**

⊠ lleona@nivervillecitizen.com

Niverville Recreation has added a new program to its spring line-up, introducing Lullaland to their programming for the first time.

The Winnipeg-based program offers sensory classes for newborns and toddlers and their caregivers in a relaxed yet multisensory environment. The program, according to the Lullaland website, offers instructor-led classes that are tailored to children's development stage with activities and interactions that stimulate their senses through colours, lights, and sounds.

The program offers two streams, Lullanewborns and Lullababies. Both programs will be run from the south end of the arena from April 27-May 25 and will cost \$90 for the five-class session.

Lullanewborn classes recognize that a lot is happening in a baby's first year of lifefrom their own developments to their caregiver's navigation through all the changes. Through music, smooth movement, and fluffy textures, the Lullanewborn program will help pre-mobile babies explore their senses and embrace tummy time. Infant massage is also incorporated into each session to further the bonding time between parent and child.

Lullababies. on the other hand, is geared towards babies who are already sitting and moving, and even taking their first steps. The program encourages language

acquisition and interactive play. As the children experience more mobility during this stage, the class allows time for socialization with other babies. Repetition is key in this class, as children explore language and baby sign language through upbeat music, gentle movement, props, and exploratory play.

Similar to Lullanewborn, each Lullababies class ends with dim lighting and calming music, allowing parent and child to strengthen their bond and leave the class ready for a midday nap.

# **FOR MORE INFORMATION**

To learn more about how to register for these programs, visit www.nivervillerecreation.com.

# uestions Arise Over Ritchot Landfill

# brenda

For many residents, what happens to their garbage is of little concern to them after it leaves their driveway on pickup days. It's a generally accepted belief that the government's environmental agencies, and the companies licensed to manage our waste, practice sound strategies to ensure that our landfills have the smallest possible negative impact on the environment.

Typically, landfills are located well away from residential communities.

Out of sight, out of mind, as they say.

But for many residents of Îledes-Chênes, the Ritchot dump site is neither out of sight nor out of mind.

The Ritchot dump is located one mile west and 800 meters south of Île-des-Chênes, and at least one resident of the newer developments along Habitant Road say the landfill has grown significantly higher in height since they moved there.

He and others are also concerned about the constant coming and going of highway haulers as well as the steady movement of equipment at the dump, which they say indicates that this site has a purpose beyond just dealing with the municipality's trash.

"When we moved to Habitant Road five years ago, the whole dump was 13 feet, eight inches lower," says resident Dan Masse. "Now that the dump is certified as a Class 1 landfill, it is able to accept 75 kilotons per year. Right now, they haven't even met 54 kilotons, so they can ramp it up almost another third."

What Masse refers to is a partnership that was created between the RM of Ritchot and MidCanada Environmental Services Ltd. in approximately 2001. Currently, and possibly from the outset, the RM shares



Garbage collects along the Seine River Diversion

the assets and potential profit with MidCanada in a 63/37 split. The RM maintains the 63 percent.

### **INCOME FROM THE SHARED** LANDFILL SITE

Before 2001, the site served as a small-scale landfill for the RM's use and contained no safety liners for leachate filtration, says Ritchot's CAO Mitch Duval. Today, under MidCanada's management, the site has become a full-scale Class 1 licensed waste facility, receiving industrial, commercial, and institutional (ICI) waste. Also located on site is a licensed soil treatment facility and a residential recycling collection station.

"ICI solid waste is accepted from anywhere, not just within the RM of Ritchot," MidCanada's website states, although the company's manager, Stephen McCabe, says that they limit incoming refuse to areas within Manitoba only.

In the eyes of council, outsourcing the management of the landfill has been the answer to the increasing environmental legislation placed on waste managers. It also provides an additional source of income for the RM to the tune of approximately \$1 million per year without the RM incurring any expenses.

"[MidCanada has] a formula that, once they reach a certain plateau with their payables... and they have their cashflow at a certain threshold, they can then ask to reduce that cashflow... based on a 37/63

ratio, which they split [with us]," Duval says.

Masse and other residents say they have been led to believe that this extra million dollars in revenue creates a property tax break for RM homeowners.

"Council said if you had a \$200,000 house, it would cost you \$200 more per year for taxes without the offset of landfill revenue," Masse says, "and I think probably almost everyone in this area would say, 'Bring it on!' Because they would rather pay the money than look at that dump.

But Duval clarifies that the revenue goes into the RM's general reserve and is not allocated directly to reducing residential taxes.

"There's different projects out there and there's not only the landfill revenue that goes into the reserve," says Duval. "So to say that Ritchot residents are benefiting because of it [through a reduction in taxes], it's a hard question to answer. There's too many moving parts to it."

But Masse is also frustrated with the disparity of the situation. While the revenue from the dump is shared with the entire municipality, Île-des-Chênes residents are the only ones who have to deal with the problems associated with having a landfill in their backyards.

### LANDFILL RAMIFICATIONS

While council sees mostly pros in this scenario, some Île-des-Chênes residents are calling it



The Seine River Diversion, adjacent to the landfill

a "cash cow" that has the potential for serious ramifications now and into the future.

Four years ago, Dan Masse made it his business to search for answers to his many growing concerns. He spent hours researching environmental laws, MidCanada's site alteration requests, and questioning council and other sources.

In August 2018, Masse and a group of Île-des-Chênes residents filled council chambers. Masse presented a lengthy PowerPoint presentation, showing recently obtained pictures from the landfill site, which is bordered on the north by a farmer's field and on the south by the Seine River Diversion.

Photos showed plastic, Styrofoam, and other debris collecting in the diversion and flowing toward the nearby Red River. According to the photos, fencing on the north and south side of the dump site appeared to be inadequate, despite the claim on MidCanada's website that a 25-foot fence was being utilized to contain blowing litter.

McCabe says that fences are located along the entire north property line as well as along a shorter portion of the south property line. The south fence can be moved to accommodate for active cells on that side, although the last two active cells being utilized have both been on the north half of the

property. "All cells that aren't active have been

covered with clay, and only one cell is ever active at a time," says McCabe. "There is no regulatory requirement for a fence of this magnitude. We have gone above and beyond the requirements in order to minimize the release of any wind-blown debris."

McCabe adds that active cells are regularly compacted and covered to further minimize risk. As well, the company hires an independent contractor to collect debris outside the landfill boundary. most typically after severe windstorms and following the spring thaw.

### A LANDFILL NEXT TO A WATERWAY

Further questions have arisen regarding the dump's proximity to the Seine River Diversion. While a municipal road creates a nominal buffer between the dump and the diversion, it's nowhere near the current required setback of one kilometre, as laid out in the provincial government's standards for landfills in Manitoba.

In today's day and age, and with our greater understanding of the damage done by toxic pollutants, Masse and other residents question the wisdom in creating a dump so near a waterway that feeds into some of our province's most important waterbodies, including the Red River and Lake Winnipeg.

Water runoff from the dump site needs to go somewhere. A docu

ment created in 2015 by D. Ediger Consulting Services for the RM and MidCanada outlines the site's drainage plan.

"A small percentage of surface run-off will be picked up by the drainage ditch along the main access road going through the approximate centre of the area," the document states. "On the south side... run-off will enter a municipal drainage ditch on the north side of the road adjacent to the Seine River diversion. The majority of run-off entering the ditch will flow east and enter the diversion via a culvert under the road... A smaller volume of run-off will flow west and enter the diversion near the southwest corner of the closed Class 2 waste disposal ground."

For Masse and others, to knowingly allow any amount of toxic leachate or run-off into waterways is unacceptable when these same waterways are sources of life for animals and humans. The Manitoba Environment Act describes pollutants as anything "that is foreign to or in excess of the natural constituents of the environment" and affects the quality of the environment or is likely to be injurious to health or safety of persons or property, or plant and animal life.<sup>1</sup>

Penalties for such a pollution offence, the Act states, include a fine of up to \$500,000 for a first offence and up to \$1 million for each subsequent offence.

"In my mind, it's either pay now or pay later," says Masse. "If we have an issue where we're leaching contaminants into the waterway, who's going to be paying for it? It states in The Environment Act that whoever is responsible for the pollutant is responsible for the cleanup. So, since the RM has accepted the garbage, does that means that we as people living in the RM would be accountable for paying for the cleanup, or at least part of it?'

McCabe assures



Ritchot residents, though, that measures have been taken to ensure that the only water running off the site and draining into ditches is clean precipitation that has not come into contact with contaminated soil or solid waste.

"All water within the soil facility is contained in water storage areas within the bermed area," McCabe adds. "All water that runs through garbage is contained within our leachate collection systems that is monitored and tested on an annual basis."

While MidCanada doesn't test soil or water offsite, he says the landfill's discharge design is such that no contaminated water is able to leave its storage area. As well, the site is surrounded by groundwater monitoring wells to ensure the safety of underlying water aquifers. Testing of these wells is undertaken on an annual basis by an independent engineering firm. Surface water which has the potential for contamination is collected and stored safely on site.

### **SOIL TREATMENT FACILITY**

Another issue for Masse and residents is the soil treatment facility on the Ritchot site which, according to MidCanada's material acceptance application, will accept soil from petroleum storage sites, industrial sites, spill sites, and other sources.

As well, the recycling collection station accepts used oil, used oil filters, paint, electronic waste, pesticide containers, tires, fridges, and freezers before they are hauled to appropriate recycling facilities.

"Many materials that end up as waste contain toxic substances," reads an article entitled *The Problem with Landfill* on the website of Environment Victoria, a charity in Australia that has been campaigning for environmental issues for 50 years. "Over time, these toxins leach into our soil and groundwater, and become environmental hazards for years. Electronic waste is a good example. Waste such as televisions, computers and other electronic appliances contain a longlist of hazardous substances, includingmercury, arsenic, cadmium, PVC, solvents, acids and lead."

McCabe says that every load of soil entering the facility must be accompanied by a soil analysis.

"The generator of the soil has to fill out an application that needs to be approved by the regional manager for emergency spills like a highway accident," McCabe says. "The soil is then segregated and we take soil samples for a lab analysis. There is specific criteria in our soil license for what we can receive."

McCabe adds that once MidCanada has treated the accepted soil, a third-party engineer takes samples which are sent to a third-party lab. If the analysis indicates toxin levels below landfill criteria, MidCanada can use it for cover over the landfill. If the analysis indicates that levels are still too high, further rounds of treatment and testing are done until it meets criteria.

### RECYCLABLE MATERIALS CRITERIA

As to recycling collection, Mc-Cabe says that sealed tanks or totes are used for paint and oil products, and pesticide containers are not accepted unless they have been triple-rinsed and even then, only from local farmers within the municipality. All containers of toxic materials are shredded offsite by a qualified contractor.

"The transfer station is frequently monitored by staff to ensure proper protocols have been followed," says McCabe. "Signage [for proper disposal] is provided at the transfer station and is posted in both English and French."

### EXPANSION OR RELOCATION

One landfill concern that everyone does seem to agree on is that the dump is nearing its maximum potential and that expansion or relocation is inevitable.

Duval estimates that the

current site will only provide space for waste collection for another four to eight years.

"Back in 2001, my assumption would be that if the province wouldn't have wanted us there as a Class 1 [landfill], they would not have granted the licensing for it," Duval says. "As they changed their regulations, things got grandfathered in. Now, if we need to look at expansion, do we fall under the old license or will a new license be required? That I don't know. We're working with the province in order to figure that out."

Council has been proactively looking at options for expansion at the immediate site, but should the province not relicense the landfill due to its proximity to the diversion, they are as yet unsure where they would relocate.

concerns is that we're going to go closer to their [residential district] and that's really not the case," says Duval. "We can't go north because of environmental setbacks because of development."

"One of the [residents']

acres

In preparation for the closing of the current site, Duval says that two accounts were set up a number of years back—a Ritchot Closure fund and a Soils Closure fund. The former is intended to cover the cost of closing the landfill and the latter the cost of contaminated soil remediation. Each fund contains \$500,000.

"Those funds are in place in case the day comes, but we've got enough money there now," says Duval. "So now anything that comes in will go straight

"In my mind, it's either pay now or pay later. If we have an issue where we're leaching contaminants into the waterway, who's going to be paying for it?"

# Dan Masse | Île-des-Chênes Resident

If expansion is a possibility, consideration will be given to decommissioning the old lagoon, which borders the landfill on the east side, and repurposing that area as a dump.

In order to do this, the new lagoon on the south side of Twin Creek Road would need to be expanded to accommodate Île-des-Chênes's needs. As well, the old lagoon would require a potentially expensive remediation process to eliminate contaminants according to provincial standards.

Another option may be to expand the dump to the south, across the municipal road and next to the new lagoon site. Duval says that the RM already owns 78 acres of land in this area and has been granted first right by the current property owner to an additional 67 into the general reserve. Council then decides what they want to do with that reserve. If we need to acquire more land, that's where they'd go get the money from."

But Masse says that it's still a short-sighted approach when there is no reserve in place for mishaps that could occur and result in large fines and toxin clean-up costs, especially when dealing at arm's length with a company the size of MidCanada, which was bought out by a multinational company, GFL, in 2011.

"One way or another, we're going to pay for it," Masse says. "Either we're going to pay through surface water pollution, ground pollution, or groundwater pollution. If we had a spill in that waterway and it got into the river, can you imagine the

costs? ... If we had to deal with an environmental impact issue, \$1 million would be gone in a heartbeat. Where does the money come from after that's gone?"

Duval was unable to provide The Citizen with a firm answer to that question.

### THE QUESTION OF PROPERTY VALUES

In the meantime, Masse and residents in the nearby development wonder how their property values will be affected as the dump keeps growing in size, both in height and in area. For years now, residents have been exposed to the sights and noxious smells of a very busy Class 1 landfill site. They also say that noise from heavy equipment has awoken them at 5:00 a.m. on a regular basis.

Who, Masse asks, would want to buy a property near that?

"The noise [problem] has come to my attention a few times," says Duval, "and I've tried to communicate that to Stephen McCabe, so we're trying to improve on that."

McCabe says that the only time equipment would be required during off-hours is when there has been significant snowfall overnight which would prevent access to the trucks arriving that morning.

As to the industrial lighting installed at the landfill, McCabe says that it's there for safety and security reasons, helping prevent trespassing and providing emergency after-dark lighting for staff and first-responders. Recently, he says, the lights were angled downward to prevent light from spilling into the surrounding area more than necessary.

### A NEW CONTRACT WITH MIDCANADA

Currently, MidCanada's tenyear contract with the RM is up for renewal. Council is in talks with them for a new agreement, the details of which cannot be publicly shared until all parties have signed on, Duval says. He assures residents of Îledes-Chênes that clear hours of operation will be included in the terms of the new contract.

According to Duval, the length of this new contract is also still under negotiation. Masse says he's been told it will likely only be a four-year term this time around, which opens up several new questions for him. Is MidCanada worried that the province won't approve an expansion once the landfill is full? What if MidCanada doesn't re-sign after this term? Will Ritchot be left to deal with the landfill's issues on their own?

Duval says that as far as he's aware, council hasn't given any consideration to what would happen if MidCanada doesn't recontract.

"I think it's [because of the] long-term relationship that Ritchot has had over the years with MidCanada," Duval concludes. "There's a comfort there."

McCabe says that Mid-Canada is unable to speculate on the future of the site, as the matter is under the province's control.

"Waste management facilities are permitted, licensed, inspected, and monitored by Manitoba Sustainable Development," Ritchot Mayor Chris Ewen assures residents. "Together with the department, we strive to make sure waste is handled in a responsible way that protects the environment and we are proud of our track record of compliance. Working with others, including the Winnipeg Metro Region, we in Ritchot continue to look for better ways to manage and reduce waste. Council's focus is to ensure our team is leading the field to see to it that quality and quantity is both maintained at a top-notch level, and every year, our landfill team continues to do so."

### REFERENCES

<sup>1</sup> Province of Manitoba, *The Environment Act.* March 27, 2019 (https:// web2.gov.mb.ca/laws/statutes/ ccsm/e125e.php).



## THE CITIZEN | APRIL 2019

# 🖨 IN BRIEF

# **Speed Signs to Be Upgraded**

# **By Brenda Sawatzky**

Niverville's two electronic speed signs will be undergoing upgrades to include a Bluetooth function that will allow town staff to collect and record data. To date, the signs have only served as a speed deterrent.

Town staff will be able to download the data to their devices for monitoring. Information collected is expected to help council not only monitor speeds on a particular street, but also determine the times of day that speeds might be higher. This could aid the RCMP in knowing when and where to set up speed traps. It would also provide the data necessary to determine where speed bumps would be beneficial.

"It gives [us] the ability to make some decisions," says councillor Kevin Stott, "whether it's for infrastructure or policing."

The total cost to install the Bluetooth upgrades will come to \$2,356 plus tax for both signs.



# Niverville Chamber Hands Out Annual Awards

# **By Evan Braun**

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The Niverville Chamber of Commerce held their annual general meeting on the evening of Thursday, March 7, where they announced the winners of their annual awards.

There are three award categories: Outstanding Customer Service, Business of the Year, and the Alex Fast Sr. Memorial Award. The winners were determined by a three-judge panel who took into account the information provided by each nominated business, as well as comments from people in the community, in the case of the customer service award.

For Outstanding Customer Service, three business were nominated, including Ben Sawatzky Electric, BSI Insurance, and Dollhouse Design. Ben Sawatzky Electric was

recognized for its strong corporate culture, committed staff, and high integrity. The owner of Dollhouse Design, Kelsey Kosman, was commended for her flexibility and passion in working with clients of all different types and budgets.

The winner was BSI Insurance. The judges pointed to the fact that the company has built up its brand in the community well over the years, while also noting that they excel at working with their clients at times when those clients are often going through some of their worst life experiences.

Two businesses were recognized for Business of the Year:



Mayor Myron Dyck, Ryan Hamm and Trevor Lux of BSI Insurance, Doug Devan BRAUN Dyck of Heritage Lane Builders, Chamber VP John Magri, and MLA Shannon Martin.

Heritage Lane Builders and The Citizen. The judges took note of The Citizen's exponential growth in a short period of time and their willingness to adapt to challenging market conditions.

The award went to Heritage Lane Builders, which began as a renovation company in 1987 and has since come to excel in the custom home market. Recently, the family-run business has branched out into commercial, multi-family, and condo properties.

"They have been able to strike a great balance of growth without sacrificing their foundation," remarked one judge.

The final award of the evening, the Alex Fast Sr. Memorial Award, seeks to acknowledge either a business or individual who has made outstanding contributions to the community. This year's award was given to Ferd Klassen. owner of Niverville Autobody.

Klassen was unable to attend,

because he was busy that evening doing the very thing the award was meant to recognize: volunteering as a chaperone for a Grade Four class field trip.

The judging panel pointed to Klassen's hours of volunteer service over the years and his generosity in helping other businesses and businesspeople succeed.

Other highlights of the evening included a conversation between Chamber vice-president John Magri and Stefan Maynard, one of four owners of Bold Commerce. a large-scale internet commerce business which began operations seven years ago in an Île-des-Chênes garage and currently employs 300 staff at its Winnipeg headquarters.

# **CHAMBER OFFICES**

In conjunction with the Town of Niverville, the Chamber made another significant announcement at this year's AGM. As has been

previously reported, the Town of Niverville will be transitioning from the current municipal building on Main Street to a much larger space at 329 Bronstone Drive.

It has now been revealed that the Chamber of Commerce will also occupy office space there.

"For some time, the Chamber board has felt that the Chamber needs to be more visible to the community," said Magri. "We were very pleased when we were told there might be room at the new town office for a Chamber office. That has now been confirmed... I would like to thank Mayor Dyck and the council for this opportunity."

Mayor Myron Dyck was on hand to turn over the keys to the Chamber board.

"The town council has always appreciated the work of our Chamber," Dyck said in his remarks. "In the last number of years, we've seen continued growth as to the strength of the Chamber and the work that the executive has done, the executive director and the board members, and the town is grateful for all that work. We understand that the Chamber represents the business community and the business community needs their voice, and it's a voice that council needs to hear. So we look forward to the feedback that the Chamber will be giving to us."

Dyck added that he expects the town to move into the new offices in the first week of May.



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# Niverville High School Vice-Principal Announced

# **By Brenda Sawatzky**

⊠ bsawatzky@nivervillecitizen.com

Following a review of applications, the Hanover School Division board has awarded the position of Niverville High School vice-principal to Graham Sereda, a senior years teacher at Niverville Collegiate Institute (NCI). Sereda will work alongside the recently appointed principal, Kimberly Funk.

"I put my name forward because I thought it was such an exciting opportunity to basically lead a brand-new school and to set a new culture," says Sereda. "And even just to re-examine assumptions in education, like, '[How] do we assume a school should run?' So I'm super excited that we have this chance to look at things and say, 'Is this the best way?"

Since he learned of his appointment on March 5, Sereda has met with Funk and is looking forward to upcoming conversations regarding enhancements they can make to student learning and staff culture. After their initial meeting, he's confident they'll complement each other in their roles.

He believes that one of the reasons he was awarded the position was due to the way his educational philosophies line up with hers.

"We are very much in alignment with our priorities for the school and so I'm really excited to work together with her," Sereda adds.

The duties of vice-principal will only fill part of his time. The balance of his time



Graham Sereda.

at the Niverville High School will be determined before the new school year begins this coming fall.

Sereda began his teaching career at NCI in 2010. In 2013, he became the lead teacher for the school's science department and later began assisting in the Turning Point Learning Program, an alternative education initiative introduced at the school a number of years earlier. The program caters to Grades 11 and 12 students who Sereda describes as "academically capable but disengaged for one reason or another." The program focuses less on classroom time and more on community building and internships at local businesses for hands-on learning experiences.

Sereda, a St. Vital resident, says that he's grown to love small-town life since teaching in Niverville. He doesn't discount the idea of a move to the community in his family's BRENDA SAWATZKY

future.

"I went to a big urban high school [as a teen] and so it was really neat coming here and teaching in a small rural school," muses Sereda. "Just to see the differences between the types of schools, I found that I love this setting. At grad time, for every single kid that walks across the stage, I know something about them. I might even know their families... so I really like that."

Officially, Sereda's new position doesn't begin until September, which gives him plenty of time to consider his dreams for the new school.

"This is a really great step for the town, I think," he says. "I'd really like this school to be more than just a school. I'd love it to be more than just a place where kids go because they're legally mandated to. I want it to be a place where kids want to go and want to spend time."



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# Seniors Spotlight: Regina (Jean) Neufeld

### By Brenda Sawatzky bsawatzky@nivervillecitizen.com

When spending an afternoon with Jean Neufeld, it may not occur to you that this vibrant lady with a sunny disposition just turned the odometer on 100 years. Her quick wit, sharp hearing, and mobility suggest someone 20 years her junior. Her memory, too, is just as sharp as ever, and with a century of experience behind her belt she has many stories to tell.

Jean loves a good party, and that's why her children helped her celebrate not once, but three times on her big day: March 1. Each party hosted different collections of family, friends, and neighbours whom Jean has built relationships with over the years, including her friends from her home at the Niverville Credit Union Manor.

"Mom is a party girl," says Jean's daughter Lorna. "She got that honestly from her mother. She loves to entertain. That's her strength. She just loves everybody coming together."

And when Jean's family comes together, they number more than 100 people. With eight children, 24 grandchildren, and more than 40 great-grandchildren, the Neufeld clan is a veritable army, a testament to the legacy of love she and her late husband built over the years.

Jean lost the love of her life 25 years ago, but she recalls the events of her husband's heart failure with clarity. "[He died] very suddenly," says

Jean. "I didn't expect it." The couple met as young people,

growing up in large families on neighbouring farms. The children from each family would play competitive games of baseball on one of their yards.

"We actually met in church, but I was too shy to talk to him," Jean muses. "But when you play ball together, then it doesn't matter."

Jean has many vivid memories of growing up on her parents' farm two and a half miles south of Niverville. She was a middle child of 12, playing beneath the trees where she and her sibling would make playhouses from whatever they could find.

"When I was five years old, I used to love to play with dolls. But we didn't have dolls, so I made them from pillowcases and whatnot," she says.

Growing up in the Dirty Thirties was hard, she says, and she doesn't care to spend a lot of time reliving those years. Like most families at that time, they were very poor. There were food shortages and the large family had to subsist on the bare essentials they could grow or raise on the farm.

When the war struck, the family received food stamps to buy sugar, one of the few staples they couldn't supply for themselves.



Jean Neufeld.

The oldest six siblings shared one bedroom in their two-storey home. A curtain was drawn across to separate the boys from the girls. As far as Jean can recall, not everyone had a bed, but they all had a blanket. The only other bedroom was shared by her parents and youngest six siblings. Those children slept on the floor around their parents' feet.

"When we had nothing at all [to eat, my mom] made soup with water and little fried pieces of meat... She would make milk and flour into crumbs that were like little noodles. And that was our supper."

The early years of Jean's education were spent at the Carmichael School, a one-room schoolhouse two and a half miles from her family home. She walked with her siblings to school every day. In winter, when the weather made walking difficult, her father would hook up the horsedrawn sleigh and drive them.

One of her fondest memories is of a particular school picnic.

"Usually the trustees gave all of the students a quarter to spend at the picnic," Jean recalls. "That year, it was very poor, so we only each got a nickel. Mr. Wiens brought a store to the Carmichael School... I saw this big bunch of bananas, and I hadn't seen bananas for years. I wanted this banana... but I didn't eat it. I just smelled it."

Before long, she spotted a little girl with an enticing chocolate bar. Young Jean went back to the storekeeper and asked if she could trade the banana for a chocolate bar. They made the exchange, but all too soon she spotted another child with an ice cream cone.

"Oh yeah, I want ice cream," she remembers thinking. "So I went and exchanged [the bar] for an ice cream. But then I had to eat it."

Nearing the end of eighth grade, Jean knew that she wanted to be a teacher. She was good with children, having helped raise numerous younger siblings, including a baby brother with a cleft palette. But another part of her inspiration came from her Carmichael teacher, Mr. C.D. Toews.

"He was gentle and everybody listened to him," says Jean. "We had respect for him. He was a Christian and he treated us like children should be treated."

She diligently studied ninth and tenth grades by correspondence, since the local school didn't offer them. By that time, her oldest sister Agnes had settled into a home in Winnipeg. Agnes paid the ten-dollar fee for Jean to enroll at Kelvin High School to attend Grade Eleven. She also helped Jean find room and board in the home of a Jewish couple on Wellington Crescent. In lieu of rent, Jean became nanny to the couple's two-year-old son.

"During the day, [his mother] was home, but they went away every evening of the week except Thursday," says Jean. "[That was] my evening, so I went to Bible school... I had to [grab] everything I could while I had money."

But Kelvin's education discontinued after Grade Eleven, so Jean moved on to Gretna for twelfth grade. From there, she returned to Winnipeg for her teaching education—one year of training in what was known as Normal School. She then moved on to her first employment as a teacher in Kleefeld.

Jean recalls some of the parties her mother used to plan during her later years at home.

"My mother had siblings that

🗅 BRENDA SAWATZKY

lived about ten miles from our house," she says. "My mother had to have a birthday deal every [year]. We had big birthday parties... I still remember how they laughed and talked and, oh, it was just very busy."

It was around this time that her neighbour, John Neufeld, stole her heart. But since teaching was her second love, she made it clear to him that she would work ten years as a teacher before marriage was an option. He was prepared to wait. Within four years, though, the waiting was over and the couple married and moved to a farmstead of their own in Tourond.

Jean continued to substitute teach occasionally, alongside mothering her own children and supporting her husband in farm life. Over the years, she also taught Sunday school in their home church, religious instruction at the Niverville Elementary School, and English in the evenings for the many new immigrants settling in the area.

"I don't remember that we had a hard time ever," daughter Lorna recalls. "I remember Mom sewing until late into the night so that she could get outfits made for us, but it didn't dawn on us that they couldn't afford to go and buy us all clothes."

In spite of their meagre income, Jean and John believed in sharing what they had. A regular stream of visitors came and went from their home, the result of John's outgoing and magnetic personality.

"The people that came were connections that Dad made, but Mom didn't necessarily know them," Lorna says. "So Mom would do a lot of the entertaining, and when she would get completely worn out with it all Dad would pack her up and they'd go [on a road trip]. He would make sure that she was rested."

"Saturdays was baking day," daughter Audrey adds. "We always had fresh buns and lots of baking. She filled the freezer, and then invariably somebody would come over on Saturday afternoon and just about clean us out and poor Mom was so upset because then the next day, Sunday, she had company and had to get creative."

As times improved, John installed a swimming pool at their home. That, too, was frequented by invited strangers on a regular basis.

Family times were special, too. The children accompanied their parents on regular trips to Steinbach. Each child would be gifted a few pennies to spend at the Five and Dime. Dad would buy bread and wieners, making for an unusually tasty treat when they got home.

Each Christmas Eve, the family tradition mandated that every child place a bowl under the tree. On Christmas morning, they'd awake to one unwrapped gift and a bowl full of candy.

Birthdays were special, too, as Jean entertained the kids' friends, serving birthday cakes with pennies baked into the batter.

As the children grew, some of Jean's fondest memories go back to the many road trips she took with her husband in their sleeper van. There were no worries on those trips, she says.

"I think we've been in every state that there is in the United States," Jean marvels.

She lost her longtime love in 1994. The farm had already been sold to two of their sons, so Jean packed up and moved to Niverville Place—and then, eventually, the Niverville Credit Union Manor on her ninety-third birthday.

Jean threw herself into landscape painting, a talent she'd had since childhood but only really invested herself in at the age of 65. Over the years, she's gifted many of her art pieces to family and friends. The last paintings she completed were at 97 years of age. Paintings of her childhood home frame the wall of her suite. Others line the corridors beyond her doorway.

She would still be painting today if not for the macular degeneration that has stolen much of her eyesight. Her children have commemorated her artwork by creating calendars with copies of her finest pieces.

Still dedicated to her faith, Jean continues to attend Fourth Avenue Bible Church every Sunday. She's been a member there for 83 years. As for her general overall health and longevity, Jean says she credits it all to God.

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# Commentary Weathering the Weather

# **By Greg Fehr**

20

The temperature is warming, and grass is peeking out from long-unseen lawns, bringing on grateful thoughts of spring as those of us in the True North bid au revoir to a long winter.

Though the statistics don't support it, it seems as though winter gets longer with each passing year. So the coming of spring has the ability to change most of ours moodsand minds.

We watch weather forecasts not with the dread of January but with the optimism that comes from seeing numbers that don't have a minus sign in front of them.

This is all deeply rooted to the love-hate relationship we have with the land we have chosen to live on.

And its climate! We as Canadians, and specifically as Manitobans, take a sometimes unhealthy pride in our ability to "weather the weather" and the adversity it

brings. Yet for those living in the fertile valleys and lakebeds of the former Lake Agassiz, discussions of the daily weather are supplemented with flood forecasts and discussions around late-season snowfall and the pace of the melt. Predictions are reported and compared to past years.

Inevitably, we think back to what happened in 1997 and 2009. And of course the elders of our communities remember floods from even further in the past.

While long-time residents of our area have become as proficient as hydrologists at predicting floods, both official and unofficial monitors of our shifting water levels are destined to struggle. We live in an era of unprecedented weather patterns-or lack of patterns-brought on by climate change.

Note: deniers of climate change can stop reading here. At this time of year, people

often have discussions about

the prudency of living on a flood plain and whether this continues to be a responsible choice.

When we analyze the amount of preparation that goes into flood protection, and the resources we are forced to use in the process, we have to ask some tough questions.

Is this the prudent use of our collective time and money?

Historically, the settlement of this area was driven by agricultural realities. Our fertile fields offer some of the best growing conditions in the province, and so towns were built around these agrarian enterprises to service the needs of those who settled here.

It may be a sore and sensitive subject for many to contemplate, but if we had known then what we know now, would we have still chosen to locate our population centres in the same locations? Likely not. The locations of our towns and cities were based on factors like transportation along water routes and proximity to farms.

Obviously the idea of shuttering our communities and moving them is neither palatable nor practical. It's true that in the early stages of railroad development, many towns were in fact "transported" a few miles down the road to be better situated, but this was at a point when those towns were little more than a tiny collection of houses and buildings built by speculators.

Our communities today are not only larger and more established but have also significantly invested in flood protection.

As such, our discussions centre more around future investment in flood protections

These ever-increasing investments come at the expense of the taxpayer, of course, and so the struggle

will continue in the coming years-and more questions will be raised.

To date, our investments will cover us in the event of once-in-a-century flood events, and so perhaps these questions are moot for many.

Yet we know that we are not covered for the eventual "big one." By tracking the historical record, we know there will be a flood coming large enough to breach even our best-prepared levees, just as people living atop fault lines are aware of an impending earthquake that will heap devastation on them.

The rapid rise in extreme weather, and the difficulties associated with predicting it, make this question increasingly current and relevant. We see the effects of this on our infrastructure all the time, although on a smaller scale.

For example, think of window wells that are properly engineered yet overflow in the event of extreme rain. Or consider our storm sewers, which meet all specifications yet still back up in a torrential downpour.

This lack of predictability may challenge our flood controls sooner than we think.

Speaking as a resident of this flood plain, these concerns don't make me want to abandon my community. But they do fill me with a sense of pragmatism when it comes to issues of community development, government expenditures, and risk management.

It's not a sense of doom, but rather one of caution and vigilance.

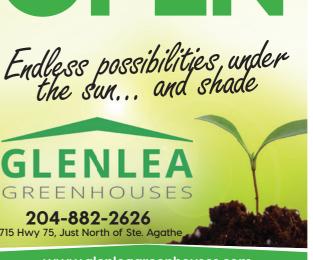
Everything we do comes with varying levels of risk, and this cannot be avoided. We should view the constant risk of flooding like everything else in our lives and eliminate risk where practical and be prepared to minimize risk, and face tough choices, otherwise

Even when those choices aren't palatable.

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# Clippers Clinch All Three Atom Championships

## **By Lorelei Leona**

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The Niverville Clippers saw three of their Atom teams win their Eastman championship banners in late March.

The A, B, and C Atom teams all came out on top after sweeping the first two games in their bestof-three series.

Atom C, coached by Pat Guenette, won in their semifinal matchup against Beausejour in overtime, pushing them through into the finals, where they faced off against Lac du Bonnet.

"We headed out to Lac du Bonnet and stunned them on their ice 6–3," says Guenette. "[We] tied it at three early in the third, [and] our team took over the pace and finished strong. In game two in Niverville, we jumped out to an early 3–0 lead and never relinquished any part of that game, [winning] 5–2 final." Cousineau, Jason Hudson, and Raymond Dowse, won their semifinal games against La Broquerie in two straight, before going on to defeat Steinbach in the finals. The team won their first game against Steinbach in a blowout score of 6–1 in Niverville, before clinching the championship in game two at Steinbach in double overtime with a score of 8–7.

Atom A, coached by Eric

"I think that the reasons why our team was successful in the playoffs and in the championship series are [their] great team work, dedication, coachable players, good leadership, and most importantly great team chemistry," says Cousineau. "Our focus in preparing our team throughout the season has been on quick transition in the defensive and neutral zone. We also worked at becoming efficient skaters while carrying the puck and forecheck in the offensive zone." Completing the trifecta was Atom B, coached by Jay Roberts, Rick Saurette, and Garett Hildebrandt, won their final against Mitchell in game two with a score of 7–3, after having clinched their first game 2–1.

"Our team did a very good job of neutralizing their threats while focusing on our own strengths," says Roberts. "Our philosophy all year was to work hard and play smart, and that is exactly what our players did during the playoffs. We limited Mitchell's chances, and created our own by working hard and playing smart."

Roberts, who won a junior championship alongside Rick Saurette and Mitchell's head coach Colin Campbell 18 years ago, used the depth of the Atom B team to pull ahead of the Mitchell, eventually leading to victory.

"Winning a league championship doesn't come easy, and there aren't many minor hockey associations that can say they have swept an entire age group the way ours has this season," says Roberts. "To be a part of this is extremely special and I am very proud. We are a small community where everyone knows each other. Our kids all go to school together. They are friends. During the winter, they live at the rinks, and although they play at different levels, on different teams, they are all Clippers, and they are champions."

Cousineau adds that the three Atom teams winning the championship shows the great development offered in Niverville's minor hockey association, not to mention the countless hours put in by volunteers.

Of note, the Clippers had a second team in the C division that deserves recognition as well. They placed just behind their winning counterpart, coming up a little short during the playoffs.

# 🖨 IN BRIEF



Eastman Flames Claim Ringette Gold, Will Represent Manitoba at Nationals

# **By Lorelei Leona**

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The U14 AA Eastman Flames, a ringette team from eastern Manitoba, have claimed their Provincial title.

The Flames, which include a players from Niverville and Ste. Agathe, clinched the Provincial title after sweeping the Winnipeg Wild 8–3 in a best-of-three series. The Flames won gold in game two.

The Flames not only managed to capture the medal but did so by possibly setting a local record—going completely undefeated in their league, as well as at Provincials.

"Many factors [led] to our success," says Flames coach Lynette Penner. "[We have a] very talented group of young women, both in their defensive and offensive game."

With 11 of 15 players returning from last season, the Flames were primed for a successful year. They dominated almost every tournament they were part of. The team won gold in both the Eastman and Regina tournaments, and took home silver and bronze in Edmonton and Winnipeg, respectively.

"We continue challenging the players with new defensive and offensive systems," Penner says of how the team managed to adapt their play to match their opponents. "[We also] entered tournaments to play against other teams we normally don't play, [and that] helped a lot to learn how to adapt to different styles."

Provincials took place March 27–30 in St. Albert, Alberta and saw many exciting match-ups. Each province sent their gold and silver medal teams.

Team Manitoba came out of the tournament having played some of their best games, ultimating winnig the bronze medal.

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# **Atom A Clippers Seize Provincial Title**

### **By Lorelei Leona** Ileona@nivervillecitizen.com

The Niverville Atom A Clippers ended their season as double champions, following up their Eastman league championship with the Provincial Atom AA title in Portage La Prairie.

The Atom A team went undefeated during their Eastman playoffs a few days earlier. They went on an undefeated stretch that dates back to February 10, with the team not losing a single game for the final five weeks of the season, including a sweep of the Eastman playoffs as well as the Provincial championships, according to assistant coach Ray Dowse.

The Rural AA Provincials includes the highest-level teams in Manitoba outside the city of Winnipeg. With only the top two teams in each division advancing to the final, the Clippers needed to defeat the other highly skilled teams within their pool—Winkler, Dauphin, and Brandon. They started the tournament Friday evening with an 8-6 win against the Winkler Flyers, who had gone undefeated in their regular season in the Pembina Valley Minor Hockey League.

That set the tone for what would be a series of tight games for Niverville.

Dowse says that the team's biggest strengths were teamwork and resiliency.

"This group peaked this weekend and worked so well as a team," Dowse says. "We were down in a couple of games, but they just never stopped!"



Atom Rural AA Provincial champions.

The Clippers faced off against Brandon on the Saturday of the tournament, winning by a score of 4-1, before playing their final round-robin round against Dauphin.

that match with five minutes to play in the third period before scoring two goals within a 30-second span to tie the game," says Dowse.

They went on to score the winning goal in the last "The team was down 4–2 in minute of play to secure the victory and top spot in the took the lead early in the division.

In Sunday's semifinal game, the Clippers faced off against their Eastman rivals, the Mitchell Mohawks, who they beat by a score of 5–2, clinching their spot in the championship game.

The championship game saw Niverville matched against MacDonald, who had also won their regional championship banner. The Clippers had only played this team once before, at the beginning of the season, where they fell 4-2 to MacDonald.

In what was anticipated as a tight matchup, both teams were serious about earning the title of Provincial champs. This led to a back-and-forth game for the first 30 minutes of play. Ending the first period with a 2-2 score, MacDonald

second before the Clippers came back and scored three unanswered goals. With one second left in the second, Clippers goaltender Zaiden McDonald-Horvath made an unbelievable save to keep the Clippers ahead with a score of 5-2.

The third period saw the Clippers score one more goal before both teams went scoreless for the remainder of the game.

"The feeling on the ice after the game was elation [from] players, coaches, parents, [and] fans," Dowse says of the proud moment. "The kids performed their team dance to 'Juicy Wiggle' at centre ice after the game with big smiles and their medals hanging proudly around their necks."

# NCI Varsity Boys Win Provincials

# **By Lorelei Leona**

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The Varsity Boys basketball team from Niverville Collegiate represented at the AA basketball Provincials this year and walked away as champions. The team had gone undefeated in their regular season before qualifying for Provincials, which took place March 14-16 in Warren.

Leading up to the tournament, the Panthers hadn't held a full team practice, as most of the team was away for a band trip, so their opening game against Green Valley proved to be one of the more challenging games of the tournament.

"Both teams played with great intensity and it was a back-and-forth game that was only decided towards the end of the fourth quarter," coach Richard Toews said. "It wasn't our best shooting game and we had moments where individuals forgot about the importance of the next play being the most important one and dwelling on the previous one. However, as a team, they encouraged and redirected one another."

The Panthers ended up winning the qualifiers with a final score of 61-53, before moving on to take out McGregor in the next round by a whopping 93-39.

"We played with excellent ball movement and effort our first game against Mac-Gregor," says Toews. "As you progress through any tournament, you will end up playing teams that will be around your team's level of ability ... We tried not change our style of play as our overall game plan remained the same each game, regardless of who we played. We just had different

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points of emphasis and strategy depending on the opponent's strengths. We tried to do our best each and every play."

Niverville and Frontier were matched in the semifinals in a back-and-forth game, ending with Niverville victorious by a small margin of 67-60.

A couple of players from NCI were recognized during the tournament for exceptional play, namely Kress Schmidt (Player's Choice, Tournament All-Star, and Player of the Game), Joel Dueck (Most Valuable Player), Dilan Braun (Player of the Game), and Nathan Rempel (Player of the Game).

Toews says that Kress and Joel, specifically, worked as a team throughout the tournament, as well as the season, in what some may say is the NCI equivalent of Stockton and Malone. According to the

coach, the duo has a complementary skillset, with Kress having the ability to impose himself with solid post moves and tenacious rebounding, and Joel serving as the team's first line of defence, leading to fast-break layups.

Kress suffered a minor injury during the final game, rolling his ankle in the first quarter and having it taped up before going back to the court to finish out.

"The most satisfying thing to watch is when they work together," Toews explains. "A play seen throughout the

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season is when Joel drives to the hoop, drawing in the defence, and then lays off a short bounce pass to Kress, who has perfectly positioned himself to get open close to the hoop and is able to lay it in."

The Carman Cougars, who play in Zone 4, went head to head with the Panthers in the championship game. NCI had played Carmen only once, during the Nighthawk Invitational, where Carmen defeated Niverville in a tight game.

defeat the Cougars by a score of 69-56 to win the championship.

'[It was] deep satisfaction and contentment knowing that each member of the team contributed to the team playing its best," says Toews of the win. "The team accomplished success because we played near our very best possible and overcame adversity... We were very content knowing that throughout the season we worked and improved in order put ourselves in a position to experience the success of playing our best."

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# Are the Jets Barrelling or Skidding Down the Runway?

# By Nicholas Anderson

With just under a week remaining in the 2018–19 NHL regular season, there's still plenty to be worked out—so much so that the Jets could end up in a round one series against the Nashville Predators, which would be insane, and would definitely have fans and players galore protesting for a change in the playoff format. Again.

But let's slip back into reality for a moment and focus on the Jets' play as of late.

On Monday, the team bested the Chicago Blackhawks 4–3 in overtime, more or less putting an end to their playoff hopes while picking up the critical extra point.

The game was Dustin Byfuglien's second one back after being out for nearly two months. Buff already appears to be morphing himself into playoff-Buff mode. With 12 seconds remaining in the third period, Byfuglien once again added to his highlight reel, manhandling Chicago forward Drake Caggiula. This can only be good news to Jets fans. A well-rested Dustin Byfuglien, who already seems to be back up to game speed, heading into the postseason, spells bad news for the opposition.

With a Josh Morrissey return imminent, this Jets team, which has seen a decent share of poor play at five-on-five in his absence, should be fully equipped heading into the postseason.

Kevin Hayes scored the overtime winner, officially giving him a signature moment as a Jet. Despite getting off to a slow start, he's turned it on recently. Since the trade deal last month, he's notched 12 points in 17 games.

Overall, the Jets were 8–7 in March and were particularly bad at the end of the month, losing three straight in regulation on home ice. But thanks to two huge wins against their division rival Preds, the Jets continue to sit atop the Central

FutureFutur

Division.

Quite frankly, the fact that the Jets remain atop the division, having been without their top two defensemen at such a critical juncture of the schedule, speaks to just how deep the team is. I'd also be remiss not to mention the job Paul Maurice and his staff have done this season, especially considering how well Maurice has utilized his depth throughout the year.

The race for the Central Division crown isn't the only nail-biter out west: the race for the second wildcard spot is down to its last three contestants, all of which will play the Jets to close out the regular season—the Avalanche, the Wild, and the Coyotes.

In other words, the Jets will play an immense role in determining who they're going to face in the first round. In this final stretch, winning is going to have to be the goal, since the red-hot Blues (7–2–1 in their last ten games) are right on their tails. If they were to pass the Jets, the aforementioned Preds-Jets first-round series would occur.

If the playoffs were to start today, the Jets would face off against the Dallas Stars. In the four games they've played this season, the Jets went 1-3 against the Stars, under rookie head coach Jim Montgomery. They've gone from a team that used to only be able to score goals to allowing the second fewest goals in the league.

A matchup against the Stars would be a very entertaining firstround series. Given the way the Jets have played of late, it's not impossible to envision this going to six games or more—but hopefully ending with a Jets victory. Knock on wood.

It may also be a bonus for Patrik Laine, who was heavily scrutinized for his lack of production during last season's playoff run. In 13 career games against the Stars, Laine has 15 goals and five assists, including two hat tricks against them in his rookie season.

Nonetheless, it will be important for the Jets to focus down the stretch, close out strong, and head into the playoffs hot, much like they did last season.

Finally, I couldn't end without pointing out that if Blake Wheeler registers one more assist before the season's end, it will be his seventieth, making him the franchise leader for assists in a season, passing Marc Savard, who put up 69 assists in 2005–06 with the Atlanta Thrashers.





JAMES BARKER BAND

# James Barker Band to Headline Niverville Fair

# **By Lorelei Leona**

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Niverville's Old Tyme Country Fair has announced that the James Barker Band will headline this year's fair, scheduled to open June 7-8. The James Barker Band will hit the mainstage Saturday night.

The James Barker Band only came together six years ago, but in that time they've taken the country music world by storm. Their most recent single, "Good Together," was the most-spun Canadian country music song of 2018.

Ontario, previously won the Boots and Hearts Emerging Artist Showcase in 2015 and were signed to Universal Music Canada soon after. They then returned to the Showcase in 2016 to open for Thomas Rhett.

The Old Tyme Country Fair has a great history of supporting Canadian bands, previously hosting artists such as Brett Kissel, Aaron Pritchett, and Washboard Union.

Canadian country artists are picking up steam across the border, too, with more and more of them being played on American

The quartet, hailing from radio. The James Barker Band's first number-one Canadian country radio hit, "Chills," reached the forty-seventh spot on the American airwaves in 2018, making them the first Canadian country artist not signed to a U.S. label to make it that high.

The group has won a number of awards, including Single of the Year and Best-Selling Canadian Single at the 2018 Canadian Country Music Association (CCMA) Awards. They also took home the Country Album of the Year award at the 2018 Junos.

Kendra Kay, a Manitoban, will open for the headlining band on

Saturday night. The small-town country girl comes with big vocals and a five-piece band, as well as her own set of accolades. Kay was recognized with the 2018 Manitoba Country Music Association Fan's Choice Award and the 2019 Canadian Independent Music Video of the Year Award for Best Country Video. Her highenergy songs are the perfect way to kick off this year's Saturday night concert.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION** www.nivervillefair.com

# 🖨 IN BRIEF

# **Arts Festival Turns** Spotlight on Prairie Soul Dancers

# **By Lorelei Leona**

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Prairie Soul Dance Studio recently participated in the Southeastern Manitoba Festival (SEMF), a month-long arts festival held in Steinbach.

According to its website, the festival offers amateur musicians, dancers, and speech performers from across the region the opportunity to perform, attend workshops, compete for awards, and be adjudicated by experts. This year, the Niverville dance studio sent all of their competitive program students to participate alongside other rural schools and organizations.

"It is an excellent learning opportunity in a positive and encouraging environment," says Prairie Soul's artistic directors/owners, Melanie and Danielle. "[It] increases confidence."

The dance portion of SEMF is held over two weekends in March, and sees participants compete for trophies, as well as \$100 dance scholarships. During the festival, students perform their piece and receive a verbal adjudication and mark, and then on the last Sunday, select dancers are asked to perform again at the Dance Highlights evening.

"Our dancers performed ballet, pointe, jazz, tap, modern, lyrical, hip hop, stage dance, creative movement, and open," explains Melanie and Danielle. "We had 49 pieces entered ranging from solos, duos, and group dances. We have a large number of students involved in our competitive program ranging in age from five to early 20s."

On March 29, the last day of the festival, a few Prairie Soul dancers participated alongside the other trophy winners from the different disciplines in the Southeastern Stars Gala, a final showcase featuring the best from the festival.

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Caption.

# BRENDA SAWATZKI

# Snow Maze Takes World Title

# By Brenda Sawatzky

Clint and Angie Masse of A Maze in Corn say it's official, and they've got the Guinness World Record certificate to prove it. Upon completion, the snow maze near St. Adolphe measured 2,789.11 square meters, beating the previous recordholders in Thunder Bay by more than 1,000 square meters. "It's mostly a big win for Mani-

toba," says Angie Masse. "That's what we're excited about. [It's great to] get people excited about winter. It turned into not only a neat world record but a great winter venue that people just came out to enjoy." On February 10, the couple

hired Barnes and Duncan surveyors to measure the maze and document the results, which were then submitted to Guinness World Records. Notification of their success finally arrived on March 4.

Masse says, based on the support they received this year, they expect to do it again next year and they are already contemplating ways to improve it.

"If you know us at all, we will probably always want to try and keep the record," she says. "Unfortunately, we're [both] competitive and that's why we get really excited about it. Clint, of course, likes building things bigger and I'm the one who logistically thinks of what customers enjoy."

In addition to the snow maze, it's the site's Snow Mountain that's been a big highlight for kids. The massive mound of snow has kept children busy with climbing and high-altitude play. Next year, the Masses hope to add a toboggan slide to the feature.

The maze has drawn in visitors from around the globe. So far, the couple has met people from Argentina, France, and England. Groups and individuals have driven in from Saskatchewan and the United States. One couple drove all the way from Pennsylvania just for the unique snow maze experience.

But those aren't the only interesting visitors they've entertained. In early March, a film crew showed up to use the site as a backdrop for their movie set.

"It all happened on the same day," Masse marvels. "We got the official word from Guinness and then we got the official word that [a production company was] going to film this exciting movie [here]. It's not Hallmark, but they're along the lines of a Hallmark film. It's got pretty good actors in it and we're really excited."

The production company and actors are filming on every area of the grounds, including in the maze and the Masses' house located to the east.

Unfortunately, it's meant that the family has been temporarily evicted from their home until the movie shoot is complete. It's been disruptive but exciting all at the same time, she says.

"We might be some of the stunt doubles," Masse jokes. "I'd like to say that I could be a stunt double for the [actress] because she's super cute."

The movie is expected to be out for Christmas 2019. For now, it will help cover the costs incurred in building the snow maze. Otherwise, Masse says, they would have just broken even.

"It was a very cold winter," Masse says. "We started off with a bang coming in, which was wonderful, because that really helped out financially... Otherwise, I think we'd be pretty discouraged. You can't blame people for not wanting to come out when every weekend it seemed like there was a cold weather warning."

And, like the corn maze, it's a

short season. The couple anticipates that it will be all over once above-zero temperatures linger for longer periods of the day later this month. The concern is not for the stability of the maze walls, which are two feet thick, but rather the grounds and parking areas that will inevitably turn swampy.

To prepare for corn-seeding in early May, they expect to bulldoze the maze and spread the snow to aid in melting and runoff.

Spring flooding is always a concern for the couple, too. The Masse family was forced to evacuate the property in 2009, 2010, and 2011.

"We're in the worst place here," says Masse. "We've got the [Seine River] diversion and the Red River and everything backs up right here. We're getting really good at preparing for a flood."

In spite of that, they've never had to miss a season of seeding. For a few more weeks, though, they can keep revelling in their recent world record accomplishment.

"People are just very appreciative of the hard work it was to put this thing up," Masse affirms. "I think that's why people are very supportive of us getting the record."

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