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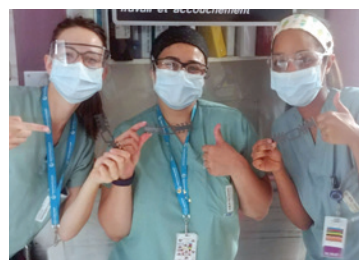
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LOCAL NEWS

Locals Produce Masks, PPE

■ In the face of major shortages of personal protective equipment, including masks and ear guards, locals have been stepping up to not only produce the needed supplies but also deliver them directly to the many healthcare workers who require them.

Details on Page 8

LOCAL NEWS

The Human Cost of the School Closures

■ So many families are dealing with the ramifications of the extended school closures. In this issue, we tell their stories.

Details on Pages 3-4

SPORTS & REC

Niverville Teenager Drafted to WHL

■ In April, 15-year-old Evan Groening of Niverville realized a major career goal: he was drafted by the Brandon Wheat Kings.

Details on Page 19

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

Jordan St. Cyr Set to Release New EP

■ On May 15, recording artist Jordan St. Cyr will release his fourth album, an EP with six new tracks recorded last year.

Details on Page 22



The Party of the Century

Marking 50 Years Since the Niverville Pop Festival >>> **DETAILS ON PAGES 12-15**

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The True Human Cost of Extended School Closures



BRENDA SAWATZKY

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As if the threat of contracting a deadly disease wasn't bad enough, the pandemic also produced a series of unprecedented calamities no one was ready for: layoffs, isolation, and business and school closures. For many, it was a perfect storm.

Manitoba's school divisions have been taking their cues from the chief public health officer, and on March 23 schools and licensed daycares were instructed to close, leaving parents to figure out how to make it all work on the homefront.

Six weeks in, the short-term ramifications of these precautions are becoming more clear.

Lisa Reutky echoes the sentiments of many parents of young children who've had to isolate their active kids from their friends. For Reutky, it's magnified by the fact that her son is an only child.

"It's heartbreaking," Reutky says. "Kids long for that connection and want to keep busy, and the first few weeks were hard having to explain... It's an emotional roller-coaster all the time with trying to keep his life as normal as possible."

Another parent has a daughter on the autism spectrum. She requires structure and schedules to keep her emotions in check.

"Just last week she had an episode because she saw too many people not following the quarantine rules [while we were] taking the dog on a walk," says the parent, who chooses to remain anonymous for his daughter's sake. "None of us are sleeping well and our stress levels are at an all-time high."

An educational assistant from the Niverville Middle School says that routine plays an important role in the lives of kids who require extra assistance in school.

"To [suddenly] wake up... and not have that routine in place is certainly going to be tough," she says. "[EAs did their] best to provide engaging and familiar material and learning tools that the students and parents could use to continue with the skills that they have already mastered as well as slowly introduce new ones... My biggest concern would be for everyone's mental health... Parents have been put into roles that the kids may not, and likely won't, respond to."

Jenn Elliot has two sons. As a self-employed person, she's had to take the boys with her to work twice a week. Adjusting to



The grads of 2020, like Dylan Peters, are in a holding pattern.

BRENDA SAWATZKY

home-schooling required her to learn new technologies so the teachers could assign daily homework and do video chats with her boys.

Effective time management, she says, took on a whole new meaning. She felt overwhelmed in the beginning, until she got a grasp on learning to teach in helpful ways.

"I was initially very concerned that my children were going to have permanent setbacks in their education," Elliot says. "However, after further discussion and thought about the situation, I realized that everybody is in the same boat. There are going to be some children who do no work at home and some that do it all, and [everyone] in between."

Shannon McConechy was already a home-schooling mom and ran a business from home. When the schools closed, McConechy anticipated it would be business as usual in her household. But that hasn't been the case.

"Our home-school life is not at all like it once was," McConechy says. "We can't go on impromptu or even planned fieldtrips to enhance their learning. Everyday interaction and free play with other home-schooled kids [doesn't exist]."

For the McConechy children, even grocery shopping used to be a regular education in math and reading. Now Mom shops alone. Essentially, all the opportunities for education outside the household have come to a halt.

"Our routine of evening activities [with other home-school families] is non-existent, and those times helped keep us on track to do

deskwork everyday at home."

At this stage, McConechy says, they're all just missing community.

"I miss adults, two-way conversations, joking around, and just plain old interaction," she adds.

Jen Lund Ervick once ran a home daycare, but with a husband and child at high risk for infection, she had to temporarily close. Home-schooling her kids at three different grade levels without enough household computers to go around has been a big challenge.

"My kids have had days where they are sad, some days they are mad, and some days they are happy to be home where they are safe," Ervick says. "I feel that it's been the hardest on my oldest child. He fully understands what is going on in the world and is worried for all his family and friends... We can definitely see a change in his spirit."

To make matters worse, the family recently experienced the death of a loved one in B.C.

"It was super hard and challenging for my family because the grieving process is different when you can't be around family or have a funeral," Ervick says.

Possibly the most challenging experience of all belongs to the Bakers, a couple who has been separated from their four-year-old son and eight-year-old daughter since March 17. The couple, both essential workers, decided the best thing for their children would be a stay at their grandparents' home in Riding Mountain. Little did they realize at the time just how long the separation would be.

(continued on page 4)

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IN BRIEF

HSD Appoints New Superintendent

By Evan Braun

✉ editor@nivervillecitizen.com

On May 1, the board of trustees of the Hanover School Division (HSD) announced the appointment of an interim superintendent, Shelley Amos. Amos will take over the post from Randy Dueck, who announced his retirement earlier this year.

Amos has 26 years of administrative and instructional experience, most recently having served as HSD's assistant superintendent since 2018. She began her career teaching for seven years in the former Transcona-Springfield School Division. For seven more years after that, she taught in Hanover.

In 2009, she was appointed vice-principal of Woodlawn Early Years School, and two years later she received a promotion to principal, a position which she held until 2018.

Amos has three degrees, a Bachelor of Education, a Postbaccalaureate Diploma in Special Education, and a Master of Education in Educational Administration.

"Shelley has demonstrated exemplary leadership throughout her career," says Rick Peters, HSD board chair. "Her experience as a senior administrator, expertise in strategic planning, and in-depth knowledge of pedagogy make her an ideal candidate for this position. We are confident that her experience, knowledge, and leadership will continue to serve our students well, and we are thrilled that she has accepted this position."

Some may wonder why her title comes with the "interim" caveat.

"That's what Manitoba Education and the province said we could do," says Peters. "They have a fiscal workforce sustainability review happening, and there was a mandate to reduce admin costs by 15 percent."

According to Peters, the province has stipulated that any management or administrative hires made by school divisions during the COVID-19 pandemic must be made on an interim basis only.

(continued from page 3)

"As much as we want them back with us, we know they are safer being in self-isolation with their grandparents," says Rachelle Baker. "They have been educating our children... with the required schoolwork, and also finding new ways to teach them important life lessons like chopping wood, baking, gardening, horticulture, and wildlife lessons."

While the kids have adjusted, Baker says it's been heart-breaking when the children ask when they'll come home. It's been hard to hear co-workers discuss the challenges of having children at home full-time.

"I was almost jealous of the stories that parents were sharing because I would give anything to be there with my kids and experience the same challenges with them,"

Baker says.

And then there are those who would be celebrating a major milestone this year: the grads of 2020.

Dylan Peters was set to graduate with about 50 of his Niverville High School peers this June. Now there's talk of having to push graduation celebrations to the fall.

"I was sad at first, but it also makes it a new experience that no one has really had before, so I find that idea cool," Peters says. "[We] don't want grad to be cancelled, and we were very nervous about that happening, but we also know that we will have it eventually."

Peters' parents are dealing with the disappointment too.

"You want your child to have the same opportunity as every other previous class, so that was a bit difficult," says his father Kelly Peters. "It became clear very quickly this whole pandemic situation was

much bigger than missing grad. Everybody is missing something important to them."

Like other seniors, Dylan's missing out on a lot more than classes this spring.

"He's also missing basketball provincials," Kelly says. "NHS was ranked as number one going in and had a great opportunity to repeat as provincial champs. The abrupt end also meant he could not participate in the provincial track meet, as well as he was planning on joining the baseball team during his last year in school. Dylan has always loved participating in all of the school sports."

In the end, Kelly feels this year's grads are learning an invaluable life lesson: never take your health or the good times in life for granted.

Robyn Jones is the parent chairperson of the 2020 NHS grad committee, and she has a daughter

scheduled to graduate. She says graduation has been in a holding pattern for a while now, and as yet the school division hasn't indicated when the ceremony will happen.

Either way, it will come with some challenges. Time is running out for grads to shop for their suits and dresses. It will also leave little time for the many details that have yet to be worked out for the big event.

If moved to the fall, Jones wonders how it will work for students who accept employment or continuing education out of province.

"Grad 2020 will be the most memorable and most talked-about year ever," Jones says. "I hope they aren't always remembered as the quarantined graduating year, but [rather] the 2020 grads that took their final year one day at a time with patience, determination, and hope."

Community General Store Coming to Niverville

By Brenda Sawatzky

✉ editor@nivervillecitizen.com

What imagery pops into your mind's eye when you think of a small town general store? If you imagine a mom and pop shop that carries a little of this and a little of that, you'd be exactly right.

And that's just the image Niverville resident Noella Andres wants you to have as she prepares to launch her unique new shop: The Community General Store.

Coming in summer 2020, The Community General Store will be well-stocked with body and skincare products, candles, pottery, plants, flowers, stationery, prints, and posters, not to mention a nostalgic collection of antiques at its location at 10 Cedar Drive.

"I really want this shop to have a community feel where everyone feels welcomed and appreciated," Andres says. "I hope that when community members have family or friends visiting from out of town, they will have a sense of pride and want to take them to the shop to show them Niverville's 'cute little gift shop,' similar to how I take friends and family to The Forks."

While the goal is to create a shop that carries a little something for everyone, Andres' vision has three main areas of focus.

The first is to provide ready-to-go fresh flower bouquets. As well, shoppers will find a lush



Noella Andres and her family.

NOELLA ANDRES

variety of house plants and decorative pots, along with a do-it-yourself potting station where custom-made potted plants can be assembled for gifts or for personalized home decor.

Andres' second focus is to provide a zero-waste refillery station offering a wide selection of non-toxic household and body care products.

"You will be able to bring any jar in and fill it with shampoo, conditioner, [liquid] hand soap, laundry soap, dish soap, bath salts, and so much more," Andres says.

"It is important to me that I do my best to reduce the amount of waste leaving my store and hopefully make a difference in the way others think about their plastic and waste consumption."

Finally, a well-curated gift shop is in store for those looking for that something special for someone special.

"It has been my dream... to open up a space that would allow me to feature [crafters and artisans] from across Canada," adds Andres. "I wanted a quaint little shop... where it felt like home

and not a big box store. Where people would feel good spending their money knowing that it is supporting not only myself but the makers [whose products] I carefully curated to carry in-store."

Andres adds that all of her giftware will be Canadian-made in keeping with her desire to help bolster the local economy and support independent entrepreneurs such as herself.

And like any mom and pop shop, Andres anticipates her family to be very much involved in the day-to-day management of the store.

"Part of the reason this venture is so important to me is that I wanted something my kids and family could call their own," Andres says. "My dad, who has a passion for antiques, will be helping to pick out the perfect items to share with the community. My husband will be right alongside me the entire time as well."

But even before the physical store opens its doors to the public, Andres plans to have an attractive and well-functioning website and social media platform set up. And she's just the person to get that done with more than 15 years experience in photography, website design, and social media administration.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

■ www.communitygeneralstore.com



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Updates from the Ritchot Chamber

Looking to the Future

The novel coronavirus has taken the world by storm and has left our communities, business and residents feeling uncertain about the future. Through all of our cooperation the curve continues to be flattened and we begin to see a decline in case diagnosis. The Province has announced that now, it's time we begin to plan for recovery.

On April 29th, 2020 the Province of Manitoba released a multi-phase plan to cautiously bring back business, services and begin to get our economy moving once again. May 4th, 2020 marks the beginning of phase 1 which will re-open services such as non-urgent surgery, retail businesses, restaurants, hair salons, libraries and outdoor recreation to name a few. We've put together a short guide to help your business smoothly return to the market.

Create Your Own Re-Opening Plan

Here are some of our tips and tricks to help you follow social distancing measures as well as ensure your staff and customers safety upon re-opening.

- Put together a re-opening plan that includes your re-opening date, staff tasks and schedules, services or products offered, maximum occupancy number and signage or floor stickers for your customers to follow.
- Create a disinfecting schedule. Much like a "bathroom cleaning schedule" this will help you ensure your workplace is being disinfected on a regular basis without the guess work.
- Ensure you and your staff are on the same page. Making your staff aware of social distancing procedures will help avoid discrepancies and keep everyone safe.
- Communicate with your customers. Encourage your customers to call in before coming to your physical location. This will help you manage occupancy maximums and avoid having to turn customers away due to a full house.

For more information, conversation, links and resources for business re-opening and recovery please contact marandarosko@hotmail.ca or call (204)270-0116.

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Tales from Quarantine

Living with MS

By Sylvia St. Cyr

While the community as a whole has been doing its part to physically distance during this time, for some people it could be a matter of life or death. For those with weakened or suppressed immune systems, it's important they remain clean and healthy.

Joanna Sallows is one such woman. She's in her mid-30s and for the most part lives a normal life, working a full-time job as a technical assistant for Manitoba Hydro.

She also lives with multiple sclerosis.

"My immune system is an overachiever, so to speak," Sallows explains. "It's fine. But then when it has to work, it goes into overdrive."

MS is a complicated autoimmune disease of the central nervous system. Each person presents differently at different stages of the disease.

"With MS you get a gamut of other issues," she says. "With it comes depression, anxiety, loss of physical sensations, and migraines."

Some days, taking a shower depletes all her strength. As a result, she lives with her mother and their dog.

Since the news of the virus and social distancing first hit, life for them has changed in profound ways. The human resources department at Manitoba Hydro requested that Sallows work from home. Initially this presented a challenge, as she didn't have a home laptop. A week later, her workplace provided one. The problem was that Sallows had to go to Winnipeg to pick it up, potentially exposing herself.



Joanna Sallows and her mother Val watch the Bombers. **JOANNA SALLOWS**

"[The trip] was full-on rubber gloves, Lysol wipes, being conscious not to touch anything, and everybody kept their distance," she says. "I got to park underground in the parkade and it was eerie with nobody there."

As far as everyday life, she has a heightened level of awareness.

"I can't go and quickly run to Bigway. With me, nothing is terribly quick, but now it's a conscious effort to not touch anybody or go near people."

When she isn't working from home in her jammies, Sallows passes the time like the rest of us—watching TV, reading, surfing the internet, and doing puzzles. Her love of puzzles came from her grandmother, who got her interested in them when she was a child. It has stuck ever since.

A "Let's Go Bombers" sign sits in the front window. As Blue Bombers season ticket holders, their thoughts turn to the uncertain future—and how long social distancing will last. The Canadian football season would normally

start in June, but Sallows has doubts it will happen.

The other major change in their lives is that they aren't able to visit family. Her sister, brother-in-law, and their children live in Steinbach.

"I would go to my sister's house many times a week for random things," Sallows says. "Now I can't."

She admits this has been the worst part of social distancing. But what about the best part of it? That would be the community's response so far.

"[I love] how people who aren't battling any illness, who don't have a suppressed immune system, are staying in their house," she says. "When you technically don't have to, but still do, I appreciate that."

The Expats

By Sara Beth Dacombe

Tyler and Heidi Wiebe moved with their two daughters to Australia in January 2020. After living in Niverville his whole life, Tyler was experiencing migraines so severe that the family decided they were



Tyler and Heidi Wiebe with their daughters, exploring Australia. **HEIDI WIEBE**

willing to change continents, attracted by the stable weather pressure systems on the east coast near Brisbane.

They moved in the first week of January and gained access to their apartment on January 16. Tyler's biosciences company, Emergent Biosolutions, is working with cutting-edge biodefence technology to address approaches to treating COVID-19. He is used to working remotely, but not necessarily under these conditions.

Meanwhile, Heidi began a job at Queensland University on January 20.

"Within a week of starting, I was experiencing people coming back from China, PhD students in particular, and they were already completing their two-week period of isolation," says Heidi. "So that's when I started to learn about what was going on and experience it as real."

According to the Wiebes, Australia's response was very quick. Restrictions on travel were imposed early, self-isolation was recommended for travellers, and hand-washing,

hand hygiene, and better cough and sneeze etiquette were all encouraged. The elementary schools have had an online learning platform available for the past five weeks, universities have held online classes for over a month, and nonessential staff has been working from home.

Similar to how it was rolled out in Manitoba, the Wiebes experienced a sequence of public health orders. The government recommendations included restricting public gatherings to a maximum of 10 people, nonessential businesses temporarily shut down, and parks closed.

But the differences could be felt in Australia's national approach, since residents were instructed not to have more than two visitors over to their homes. Children of essential workers continued going to school, and public school teachers provided supervision to help ease the burden on childcare institutions.

Interstate travel was also restricted.

She says their family

benefits from their healthcare knowledge. They were already cautious going into February and pulled their kids from school early due to health concerns.

"If you don't have personal experience, sometimes it's hard to wrap your brain around how real this is," she says. "Having worked in personal care homes and taken care of our older adults, influenza is bad enough with them. I take great heart in that our public health professionals and medical professionals are doing a great job."

After a whirlwind move, she says the family has been able to slow down and spend more time together. But family time at home during a pandemic is not the same as at any other time, and the Wiebes have experienced some disappointment from cancelling plans. The family had a vacation planned to Disneyworld and was supposed to have left for Florida on March 24.

As newcomers, the Wiebes had just been dipping their toes into life in Australia and beginning to explore their new surroundings. This situation has made it difficult to continue with regular school-work and the extracurriculars they had just begun. It's also ended their ability to physically check out their new community.

"Both our kids are in competitive swimming, which is right out. Some of their musical involvement, such as choir or instrument studies, are cancelled," says Heidi. "Because we were quite new, our kids hadn't gotten into too many activities, but as a family we had gotten out to the beach

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nearly every weekend.”

Instead of far-reaching day trips, the Wiebes have been staying close to home while still trying to explore and check out different things.

“We’ve been getting to know our little suburb very well,” says Heidi. “We’re doing lots of walking. There are lots of urban lifestyle areas around our area, with lots of paved walking paths and biking paths.”

Similar to Manitoba, many grocery stores have offered click-and-collect options to reduce community spread.

And yes, you guessed it, there was also a scarcity of toilet paper.

“Oh yeah, people went crazy. Toilet paper was out of stock here, too, at the end of February,” she says. “Hand sanitizer stocks are coming back. Cleaning supplies never ran out. At first our click-and-collect options got overwhelmed, and systems were down, but now they are getting back up and running. There are delivery options for older citizens or high-risk citizens.”

Aside from the shared challenge of finding toilet paper, Heidi says she can identify with what so many other parents are going through right now regarding working from home while providing an education for their children.

“Trying to provide some kind of quality education while both parents are working full-time from home has been very, very challenging,” says Heidi. “You can get your kids set up doing all the online stuff, but at some point they need some help and direction, such as with fractions. It’s that instructional piece that is missing. That’s a concern, if we’re looking at another term of school being affected by this.”

Their children are also



Six-year-old Aria celebrates her birthday.

JOANNE FULLERTON

trying to understand what social distancing means while dealing with the disappointment of not seeing their friends and cancelling plans.

From a practical standpoint, Heidi points out that the number of COVID-19 cases there have been trending downward.

The Birthday Parade

By Sylvia St. Cyr

Being stuck inside has its ups and downs, and a big downside rears its head when birthdays roll around. Put simply, we need to find ways to celebrate birthdays differently. While these celebrations can be disappointing, adults at least understand the reasons.

For children, it’s different.

Aria of Niverville turned six years old on March 31, an occasion which her parents, Joanne Fullerton and Damien Delfino, had been planning for since February.

“[The party] was going to be in the multipurpose room in the arena,” Fullerton explains. “Aria was counting down the days. Then the pandemic started and, not knowing what to expect or the seriousness of it all, we waited to see if we should cancel.”

By March 17, shortly after the Manitoba government declared that schools would close, the couple decided to cancel the party. For Aria, it was a big disappointment.

Since moving to Niverville a few years ago, the family has made many connections with new friends—and with the help of those friends, the couple decided to throw a different kind of party.

“Some of her friends left gifts on the doorstep throughout the day and Aria would wave from the window,” Fullerton says.

Aria’s four-year-old brother Daxton, along with her parents, celebrated by playing games, making crafts, spending time outside, and video-chatting with her two adult brothers in Winnipeg.

“Normally the [older boys] come out every other weekend and the little kids absolutely love it,” adds Fullerton. “[The kids] keep asking when their brothers are coming, and not knowing what to tell them has been tough.”

The day of Aria’s birthday turned out well, and it was capped off by a birthday parade. Close friends made signs and decorated their vehicles.

“It was really something



Darryl Wolfe and Becky Mentuck on their wedding day in April.

special, and of course I teared up realizing how blessed we are,” says Fullerton. “Thanks to the amazing friends we’ve made in Niverville, her birthday ended up being one to remember.”

Getting Married

By Sylvia St. Cyr

A wedding day is one of the most memorable and important days in a couple’s life. People spend months, sometimes years, planning out all the details.

This was the case for local couple Becky Mentuck and Darryl Wolfe, who planned to have a big wedding with their family and friends in April.

However, due to COVID-19, their wedding day turned out vastly different than what they had in mind.

Almost every week in March and April, the province’s social distancing rules changed. In mid-March, the rules stated that public gatherings had to be limited to 100 people or less. The couple made changes accordingly. Then those limits dropped to 50, and the couple decided to just invite family members.

Finally, the government brought that number down

to 10.

“Everything leading up to our wedding was pretty stressful,” Becky says. “We had to make so many changes in a span of three weeks.”

The couple ultimately decided that even though their guests couldn’t attend, it was important for them to officially get married on the day they had chosen.

“We decided our parents would stand up for us,” Becky says.

When the bride heard that her wedding would be such a small affair, she tried to quickly order a dress online and save her original wedding dress for a later date. However, the back-up dress didn’t arrive in time.

“The night before, I decided to wear my wedding dress because Darryl hadn’t seen it yet, and he really wanted to see me in it on the day of our wedding,” she says. “I got into my dress, my mom helped button me up, and we had our first look in my parents’ house. My dad set up a soundboard and speaker so we would have music to walk out to.”

To keep physical contact to a minimum, Becky did her own hair and makeup.

“The day of our wedding

was overcast and windy. We had planned our ceremony outside for 1:00 p.m. When that time came around, it had started to rain. We didn’t really notice, because we were both excited and nervous. It ended up being a beautiful day for us, regardless of the weather and circumstances.”

Although the couple had a small ceremony, they were surprised by family and friends later that day.

“Afterward, we were paraded down to the Niverville DQ by our families. They ‘dressed’ up their vehicles with balloons and wrote on the windows. We both cried when we saw they had done that for us.”

The newlyweds had booked an all-inclusive honeymoon in Mexico right after the wedding, which obviously had to be cancelled.

“The travel agency we used ended up emailing us and saying even though we didn’t have cancellation insurance, we would be getting airline travel credits and our hotel was refunding us the full amount of what we had paid.”

This was a huge relief to the couple.

Depending on when the government lifts social distancing guidelines, Becky and Darryl tentatively plan to celebrate with their friends and family at a later date, similar to how they originally planned. The venues they chose all graciously allowed them to simply move the date without losing their investment.

“We are going to have our reception/celebration hopefully in October,” Becky says of making the best of a bad situation. “We will be doing a ‘renewal’ ceremony so our friends and family can watch us get remarried.”

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Locals Produce Personal Protective Equipment for Healthcare Workers

By Sara Beth Dacombe

Leave it to locals to answer the call in an emergency—in this case, for personal protection equipment (PPE) that's in short supply.

As the fight against COVID-19 continues, many healthcare workers have found themselves without the required gear to be safe while caring for infected persons. Authorities around the world have even disagreed about what to prescribe to the general public, but the current prevailing recommendation is now to go ahead and wear a mask.

The World Health Organization says that if you are healthy, you only need to wear a mask if you're taking care of a person with COVID-19.

Earlier in April, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommended people wear nonsurgical cloth face coverings when they go out in public during the COVID-19 pandemic.¹

Amidst the confusion, the public has seemed to draw their own conclusions, and for weeks people have been buying up masks, filters, and N95 respirators (which filter 95 percent of particles from the air), leaving those in essential roles in the lurch.

As governments began to lobby for PPE from suppliers around the world, the local community had already recognized the need. Those with sewing skills have sewn cloth masks. Meanwhile, those with 3D printers have produced ear guards which reduce pressure on the ears caused by the elastic straps on masks. Those with coordination skills are bringing these locally made supplies to the areas of highest need.

Angela Stefaniuk is a nurse at St. Boniface Hospital who lives in St. Adolphe. Fortunately, she has access to all the masks and eyewear needed for her to feel safe and protected.

A few weeks ago, friends and family found out about the discomfort many nurses were feeling at the tops of their ears when wearing protective gear for long shifts. They sprung into action and now Stefaniuk delivers contributions of supplies to co-workers and other frontline healthcare workers.

"We wear PPE for the whole shift now, which has been an adjustment but important in

the fight against the COVID virus," says Stefaniuk. "After a few hours it begins to hurt around our ears and we work eight, 12, and sometimes 16 hours... 3D ear guards are pieces of plastic that go behind our head that you can hook the mask elastics onto instead of around your ears. Friends and family know I am a nurse, so they bring me the guards people give them and I get them to the frontlines... It is very heart-warming that people want to help in whichever way they can."

There are primarily two design types of ear guards, one with a softer rubbery texture and one with stiffer plastic. Both relieve pressure on the top of the ears by attaching a facemask's elastic and reaching around the back of the head to provide support.

"A group of us heard there was a need for 20,000 ear guards requested by the WRHA, for paramedics, healthcare professionals," says Waldner, a 3D printing enthusiast from Landmark. "There's a dropoff site and a list of official specifications, so I decided to try and help."

At-home 3D printing is a relatively new hobby that uses a computer to move a spool of plastic pressed through a high-heat nozzle. The nozzle moves around a platform, pushing out layer after layer until an object is created.

It can sometimes be finicky to find supplies and execute successful designs. Many hobbyists join online groups to find more information on how to improve their 3D printouts.

As with so many new initiatives these days, there is a learning curve for those involved and this is a new endeavour for many at-home 3D printers. The specifications of the printed items requested by different authorities change often, so it's hard to stay up to the minute on what type of plastic is required and what pieces are needed.

Eveline Van Bergen is a seamstress from Landmark who runs an Etsy shop selling children's clothing. She's also a nurse who recently stepped away to help her son recover from a brain injury.

When Van Bergen heard about the need for masks, she began making some and added the design to her online store. Soon she was overwhelmed

with orders.

"I sold about 100 in a few hours, so I had to take them down from my shop," says Van Bergen. "I decided to connect with the local need and give them away for free instead of profiting from it."

Van Bergen produces about 30 masks per day. Her family helps cut out the right fabric pieces for the pattern. She has had requests from both near and far, including the U.S.

"They found me through my Etsy shop," Van Bergen adds. "I started receiving messages from New York, New Jersey, and they sounded very distressed, to the point of being rude, but you have to understand what kind of stress these people are under... Every time I get a message, it kind of breaks your heart. It sounds so urgent."

No one had to teach Van Bergen how to make a mask. She designed her own based on a style her mother used to wear in the 1960s before everything became disposable.

After a few weeks of making masks, it's getting harder to find the right supplies, but as people in the community have found out what she's doing, donations of supplies have arrived right when she needs them most.

"Everyone's kind of coming together," she says. "I've had people donate supplies. I use high thread count cotton, which is a tight weave, so it's the best kind of material to use. But I started to run out, so I contacted the manager of IKEA Winnipeg and they donated a large quantity of bedsheets. There is a worldwide shortage on elastic, it seems, so someone anonymously donated a 300-metre roll of elastic. It was just suddenly there on my doorstep."

In return, Van Bergen says she has received some gifts, like pizza and wine, which makes her feel appreciated.

She has also had requests to design surgical headcaps for local nurses, headbands to keep hair back from the face, and headbands with buttons near the ears.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

¹ "Use of Cloth..." *Centers for Disease Control*. April 13, 2020 (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/diy-cloth-face-coverings.html>).

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Buy a membership from a local business for future use.	Follow a local business on Twitter.	Smile at front-line staff when you have to visit a business.	Make a donation to a local charity.	Support Niverville's resource & recreation centre.
Hire a local contractor for future work.	Mental health is important. For help check here: mbwpg.cmha.ca .	Decorate your front window with a happy picture.	Keep in touch by phone or social media.	Treat yourself after finishing this bingo card.



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For Businesses, the Struggle Is Real

By Brenda Sawatzky

✉ bsawatzky@nivervillecitizen.com

Imagine driving along your community's main street and seeing storefront after storefront dark and empty. Imagine no takeout food. Imagine struggling to find a hairdresser who's still accepting clients, or having to switch your gym membership to the big franchise in the city.

It's been many weeks since the government issued full or partial closures, and even with some restrictions being loosened in early May, many of our small-town entrepreneurs are worried. Everything they've worked for is on the line.



✉ KAREN ALBAUGH

DONE HAIR, SKIN AND NAILS

Karen Albaugh of Done Hair, Skin and Nails in Niverville shut the salon's doors even before the mandated closure.

On a Friday the 13th in March, with the announcement of school closures and isolation, her business quickly dropped off to nothing.

"At first it was our older clientele, people who are late 50s and up," Albaugh says. "We also heard from quite a few parents calling to cancel their young one's appointments. By March 16, our fully booked days had become half-booked days, and by Wednesday we were down to one or two clients each. The phone calls were all the same: 'I'm sorry, but...'"

Albaugh describes March 18 as a day that changed her. As she paced the salon and tried to get a grip on the situation, her employees wrapped up and left for home indefinitely.

"The second I heard them walk out the back door, I broke down," Albaugh recalls. "I'm self-employed and a sole proprietor, which means if your business fails, they can go after your personal assets to recover what you owe. I still have start-up debt."

Having recently gotten through her fifth year in business, Albaugh says she hoped this would finally be the year she might be able to afford

to pay herself.

Now her credit cards are maxed out due to a recent renovation and the addition of a new product line. She's not eligible to collect employment insurance and is unsure if new benefit packages will help.

In the days that followed the closure, Albaugh was stuck at home with little company apart from her thoughts, which insisted on visiting all the darkest places imaginable.

Her partner began to work from home, worried for her well-being. He did his best to console her.

"He reminded me that, just because my business is closed, the world hasn't come to an end, that it won't be easy, and that things as we know them will change," says Albaugh. "But we'll have a roof over our heads and we'll still eat. I honestly needed to be told that."

Albaugh has since been building up her online store along with some part-time assistance from an employee with skills in marketing. They are offering root touch-up and toner kits for existing clients and curbside pickup and delivery.

"While it's a start, there's still a lot I need to do to really make the online store succeed," says Albaugh. "I would say that it's brought us to just under 10 percent of what we'd have done in sales if we had been open."

She says the length of the closure will determine whether her business will survive. Bankruptcy, she admits, is one of her greatest fears.

As well, even if her business does survive, she wonders whether her clients will be left with enough disposable income to support her.



✉ CARRIE BALDWIN

PARALLEL MOTIONS

Parallel Motions Massage Therapy had been open for a mere five weeks when the government forced owner Carrie Baldwin to close her doors.

As a registered massage therapist, online sales aren't an option. Since March 20, she's had no income.



Chicken Chef owners Carl Pottinger, Laura Mulvena, and Tim Mulvena. ✉ BRENDA SAWATZKY

"This closure has been devastating financially," Baldwin says. "I had put all my savings, in addition to a small loan from family, into renovating the clinic space in February... When I got word of the closures, I put aside what I had earned... to pay for my rent and costs and scrambled for what to do next. It all happened so quickly."

Between a bit of savings and the potential for government benefits, she's hopeful she can survive till mid-summer, but she worries about the hard decisions she'll need to make.

"This stress affects all aspects of my life and our family," Baldwin says. "I look around and see so many people in the same boat. It seems unreal. You have to worry not only about keeping your family from getting sick but also how your business and family's finances will survive."

Baldwin is thankful she had no employees to let go. In the end, she feels like the government is doing their best in these uncertain times.

"My greatest fear is... that I have to give up my clinic, my dream," Baldwin says. "I love my career. I miss my space and clients so much. I love being able to help my clients and be my own boss. I worry about losing it all."

She also says the pressure of raising a family on one income is taking its toll. In the midst of it all, the Baldwins' also recently endured the stress of moving the family to a new home in Niverville.

"I would like people to really consider shopping close to home and supporting local... now and in the future when this is all over," Baldwin says. "We small business owners are going to need the support."

NIVERVILLE CHICKEN CHEF

Chicken Chef co-owner Laura Mulvena says the restaurant's shift from dining room service to takeout-only has been challenging. The restaurant is now closed during what was once their busiest time of day: breakfast.

"We had to unfortunately lay off about 80 percent of staff initially, just because we had no idea what business would look like through this," Mulvena says.

Pacing themselves for the new normal meant trying to determine which days and times of day would be busy with takeout, and then scheduling staff accordingly. They've since brought back four staff.

Like most businesses, they've had to get creative to keep takeout interesting, including offering take-and-bake pizzas and selling cabbage borscht in one-litre containers.

"Really, nothing is off the table," Mulvena says. "We are in a marathon, not a sprint. They say this is our new norm and we need to convert sales to takeout and delivery."

The new norm also includes drilling extra sanitizing protocols home to their staff to keep everyone safe.

"We want Niverville and the surrounding area to know that we are open for you," Mulvena says. "We want to be able to continue to serve our food during this time and for many years to come!"

In recent days, they've also offered grocery bundles. For the first week, their bundle provided customers with milk, eggs, ham, sausages, rye bread, chicken fingers, and a selection of pastries. It was a big success.

Niverville Chicken Chef is open for orders everyday from 12:00 noon to 8:00 p.m.

SHOPGYM INC.

If you've ever wondered how a gym can continue to operate virtually, ask ShopGym Inc. owner Crystal Stott.

"We are offering as close to an in-gym experience as possible," Stott says. "We like to say that our service remains the same, but our delivery method has changed. We've been able to offer our programming online and create... virtual classes so that people can still workout with their gym buddies and be coached."



✉ CRYSTAL STOTT

While the gym is operating below capacity, Stott hopes to maintain about 60 percent of her current membership until the restrictions are lifted. Almost all of the gym's small equipment has been borrowed to members for use at home.

"Obviously the longer this goes on, the less likely we are to retain members, but we've committed to giving all our members who were active as of the day of closure continued access to all of our online services until this is over, whether they have to pause their memberships or are able to continue to contribute financially."

The gym is missing out on the revenue spike that is typical of April. This would be the time of year that kids classes pick up steam and weekends would be busy with Ninja parties for sports team windups.

"These extras typically result in an increase in our revenues of approximately 40 percent, so that's revenue that won't be realized this year," adds Stott.

She recognizes that gym memberships don't take the priority that essentials do in a household budget, and with all of the layoffs it may be a long while before people are able to spend like they once did.

As for government benefits, so far Stott hasn't found any that are viable options in her situation.

"Most small business owners are debt-phobic and taking on more debt is not a way of ensuring long-term viability," says Stott. "Increasing debt without a corresponding jump in revenues makes servicing that debt very difficult, if not impossible."

In the meantime, she encourages everyone to continue working together to flatten the curve.

"When businesses reopen, consider supporting [the ones] you haven't in the past," says Stott. "It's going to take a long time to recover from this for most small businesses and every little bit helps."

CITIZEN POLL

Do you agree with the Province of Manitoba's decision to begin allowing certain types of businesses to reopen in early May?

- Yes. The economic consequences of the pandemic have been huge, and businesses need to open as soon as possible to begin the recovery process and get employees back to work.
- No. We are still in the early phases of the pandemic, and it might be too soon to encourage people to return to their normal lives. A second wave of the virus could hit at any time.
- Have another opinion? Visit our website to vote and leave us a comment.

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LAST MONTH'S RESULTS:

How has the global pandemic affected you and your family?

Nothing has changed. I don't have children in school and I'm still going to work.

10%

Making the best of it. I'm working from home and managing the household and family differently.

54%

It's been difficult. I've been laid off from work and I feel unsure about the coming months.

19%

This has turned our world upside down and I truly fear and dread what's happening around me.

17%

YOUR COMMENTS:

All three of our grown boys laid off, two with upcoming weddings. One in December, but the other in July in Calgary. Three April bridal showers have been postponed. Not sure what's going to happen with the wedding date!

We are retired and, therefore, have a fixed income. All of our children are essential services workers and are still employed. Other than not seeing our family and friends as much we have really not been affected except we are spending much less.

It's hard for our family. I have one who has a compromised immune system. My daughter needs structure and consistency as she has social issues. My wife works in the healthcare industry. So it's on our minds 24/7. We have all had 1 or 2 break downs in the past bit.

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In-person appointments are determined on a patient-to-patient basis through the virtual visit.

Please do not attend the clinic if you have any cold/flu symptoms, have traveled outside of the province in the last 14 days or you have been in contact with someone isolating due to COVID-19 exposure.

The lab remains open Tue/Wed/Thur mornings - subject to change.



Brenda Sawatzky

✉ bsawatzky@nivervillecitizen.com

The hippie movement was alive and well in 1970, riding the waves of the 1967 Summer of Love where more than a hundred thousand hippies converged on San Francisco's Haight-Ashbury district to celebrate counterculture music, drugs, free love, and anti-war sentiment. In 1969, Woodstock, New York became famous for its three days of peace and music.

Nine months later, hippies would once again amass—this time at a setting much closer to home. This local music event would go down in history not just for the calibre of bands scheduled to play but the memorable events that followed.

Sunday, May 24, 1970 was the day of the Niverville Pop Festival.

NIVERVILLE'S WOODSTOCK

During the 1960s and 70s, Winnipeg was a hotbed of young musical talent. One of those bands, called

Brother, was quickly rising in notoriety. Its members included Bill Wallace, Kurt Winter, and Vance Masters, and their talent established them as one of the city's hottest supergroups.

Harold Wiebe, formerly of the Niverville area, recalls a night spent in the pub of the Westminster Hotel. There, friend and band member Bill Wallace joined him for a drink between sets. Wallace shared with him an idea to recreate Woodstock right here at home.

But unlike Woodstock, Wallace

wanted this event to have a charitable purpose. Wiebe was aware of just the cause: the Lynne Derksen Oxygenator Fund.

Just one year earlier, teenager Lynne Derksen had fallen from a hayride, resulting in life-threatening injuries. Her medical treatment depended on the use of an oxygenator, a device which acted like an artificial lung.

Unfortunately, Derksen didn't survive her injuries, but the students and staff of the Canadian Mennonite

Bible College established the fund in her memory. Their hope was to raise \$30,000 to present to the Winnipeg General Hospital for the purchase of an oxygenator.

Wallace and Winter wasted no time in using their influence to pull together local deejays and musicians willing to support the cause. Wiebe became frontman for the logistical planning.

As for a location, Wiebe's parents owned an acreage southeast of Niverville, the idyllic spot for a rock



Century

Niverville Pop Festival

festival.

"Of course, we were thinking that this was going to be a small thing, but as the advertisements started coming out on the radio we realized the interest that was developing... and we knew we needed a different venue for it," Wiebe says. "You couldn't turn on a radio station, certainly not the ones us young people listened to, without hearing something about the Niverville Pop Festival coming up."

Wiebe approached his farming

neighbour, Joe Chipilski, for the use of an abandoned homestead just one mile away. With almost 60 acres of land, and much of it grassy, the band agreed to the change of location.

Parking was also covered. Another farmer agreed to let the festival use the quarter section of dirt field immediately across the road from the Chipilski land.

In the spirit of hippie culture, others, too, began offering their goods and talents for free.

Wm. Dyck and Sons of Niverville provided a 34-foot flatbed trailer for use as a stage. Garnet Amplifiers of Winnipeg, a longtime proponent of up-and-coming talent, generously supplied the entire sound system.

One of the only expenses incurred was \$34 to run in some temporary electricity.

In no time, 15 bands were booked to hit the stage, including Brother, making their last public appearance as a band before guitarist Kurt Winter left to join the Guess

Who, replacing Randy Bachman.

Hosts of the event included rock radio deejays from CFRW (now known as TSN 1290). The ticket price to attend was set at \$1.

Meanwhile, in the nearby village of Niverville, some parents and church leaders were growing concerned over rumours of the Woodstock-like festival. Resident Steve Neufeld, just nine years old at the time, recalls hearing of special prayer meetings likely dedicated to the safety of the community's young

people, who were at risk of exposure to the sex, drugs and rock-and-roll lifestyle such events were known for.

Rumour has it that the RCMP, too, went door-to-door warning residents to stay inside and lock their doors on May 24.

Unlike Woodstock, which required a change of locations not once but twice due to public outcry, the Niverville Pop Festival went ahead undeterred.

(continued on page 14)



(continued from page 13)

A SURPRISING TURNOUT

The first band was scheduled to play at 3:00 p.m., and organizers were prepared for about 5,000 attendees. Earlier that afternoon, however, young people began pouring in, arriving on Winnipeg transit buses and cars from all over the province.

Before long, traffic was backed up along Highway 59 as well as along all the approaching side roads.

"I don't think any of us really anticipated the magnitude of this thing and the number of people that would be there," says Gary Stott, friend of Wiebe and event assistant. "It seems to me back then the reports were that there was a lineup on the 59 Highway [all the way from Winnipeg]."

Traffic slowed to a crawl as the access roads to the venue became clogged. Anxious drivers began abandoning their cars anywhere they could find space, including in the ditches

all around the venue and along both sides of the highway as far as the eye could see. Attendees trekked in for miles on foot.

For Wiebe, collecting admission became an exercise in futility.

"We saw the masses coming across the fields," Wiebe says. "Every direction you looked for 360 degrees was people walking. In short order, I had to dispatch possibly a half-dozen or more of my friends with carpenter's aprons and some change... in as many directions as feasible to try and collect."

Storing the collected funds also required some creativity. Wiebe recalls taking a hatchet to the trunk of a car and creating a slot into which money could be dropped and safely stashed.

THE BANDS

Joey Gregorash of the band Walrus got the crowd warmed up with the famous Woodstock fish cheer. Echo-

ing his chant were the voices of more than 10,000 attendees and counting.

On stage, Brother performed their set, which included a few songs that would later be made famous by the Guess Who: "Hand Me Down World" and "Bus Rider."

Wiebe says bands began showing up that hadn't been on the roster, hoping to get their time on stage.

"Burton Cummings wasn't on the [playbill], but he just showed up and [played]," Wiebe says. "The Guess Who was already a big deal by then. They had [hits like] 'American Woman' and 'These Eyes,' which had been on the radio already for quite some time... He saw the weather coming and he wanted to make sure that he got on stage."

"My girlfriend and I were very cool, or so we thought," muses Linda Roy, then a 16-year-old Landmark Collegiate student. "But arriving at the festival was a bit much. I remember feeling like we were out of our league.

I'll never forget one gal was wearing a black kind of fishnet-type tanktop—see-through, and no bra. That was a bit wild for me. Something we didn't see in Landmark Collegiate."

Former Niverville resident Bob Wallace remembers attending the festival as a 20-year-old.

"When I arrived, the bands were playing on the stage... and there were several food and beverage kiosks set up, and the smell of pot was fairly obvious," Wallace says. "People were setting up for an afternoon of eating and drinking, smoking and generally having a good time. The mood was upbeat and controlled."

Both Stott and Wiebe conclude that, had the festival been able to carry on without interruption, it would have continued through the night and well into the next day.

THE DELUGE

By around 5:30, as blues rockers Chopping Block were taking the stage,

clouds moved in over the sun. As if the gods of Woodstock had been summoned, a light sprinkle of rain began to fall.

And it soon turned into a torrential downpour.

"It started to spit and some people had plastic tarps and things to cover themselves, but it just kept getting heavier and had some hail thrown in," Wallace says. "When it really opened up, people started heading for the cars to wait it out, but it didn't let up."

"I remember everyone really having a lot of fun before the rain," guitarist Ron Siwicki later told rock historian John Einarson for an article in the *Winnipeg Free Press*. "And even when everyone was sitting in their cars in the rain, they were still partying and having fun. It was pretty bizarre, like the spirit of Woodstock transported to Manitoba."

Darl Friesen attended the event as a 14-year old, along with an older chaperone.

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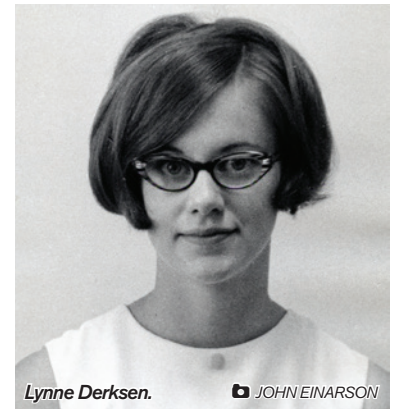


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“Looking for a quick way out of the rain and out of the festival, I squished into Clifford Kemila’s VW bug with an incredible amount of other people,” Friesen recalls. “It was like a clown car.”

It soon became evident that the rain wasn’t about to let up, and in short order the grounds transformed into a thick, sloppy muck.

Trying to access vehicles in the dirt parking lot was like slogging through quicksand.

Neufeld remembers being in the backseat of his parents’ car, driving past the chaotic scene in the downpour.

“There were cars in the ditch that had water up to their windshield,” Neufeld says. “As a young kid, I’d never seen anything like that before.”

“Everyone was up to their kazoos in mud,” Stott adds. “They would slide down [the ditches] on the Tourond clay into the mud and just enjoy the time.”

As music fest turned to mud fest, everyone got to work helping people extricate vehicles from the sticky Red River gumbo. While some could be pushed to higher ground, others were impossible to budge.

Many people who’d come in shoes left barefoot, their footwear lost deep in the mire.

Some 45 years later, soles of shoes were still being unearthed in the area by locals.

“There were people in the ditch and there was a metro transit bus that got stuck on the dirt road,” Wallace recalls. “I remember it being

absolutely useless in the mud and a group of people spun it around 180 degrees so it was headed back towards the highway and someone showed up with a tractor to tow it back to the 59.”

Audio engineer Michael Gillespie told Einarson, “I had parked my CKY-marked Montego station wagon in a field and got out onto a road only to slide sideways and tip into a ditch. The car was on its side. About 20 people lifted the car out of the ditch back onto the road.”

Many others simply abandoned their vehicles and headed out on foot. Muddy and rain-soaked, they decided to thumb a ride home.

The cars parked on high ground along the highway became taxicabs for the stranded.

“Each one was loaded down with people on the roof, on the hood, in the back of truck boxes, wherever they could hang on and catch a ride, myself included,” Wallace said. “I rode on a hood all the way to Niverville.”

THE LOCALS STEP UP TO HELP

In no time, neighbouring farmers showed up on their tractors, pulling vehicles through the mess. Some locals remember the farm truck sent by Mr. William Dyck to carry stranded young people back to his home in Niverville.

“Motivated by his care for his fellow human beings, his faith took him there to bring people back to his home and clean them up, feed them, and give them rides to Winnipeg,” Neufeld says. “That really struck a cord with me.”

Luckily for Linda Roy and her friend, they left before the rain began.

“I ended up going to Niverville with my brother-in-law Ben and I worked till 1:00 a.m. at Snoopy’s,” Roy says. “We sold every hotdog and hamburger in the joint. Lots of muddy stragglers stopped in all evening.”

Snoopy’s was a small hamburger stand situated on Niverville’s Main Street. Owner Susan Friesen told Einarson of her experience on the evening of the festival.

“After the rain, we started getting people coming to Snoopy’s,” Friesen said. “They were all tired, wet, cold, and hungry. We ran out of everything and borrowed supplies from another restaurant in town called The Pines. We used up all of their fast food supplies, then called the local grocery store to get more. They were nice enough to open for us. We fed a couple hundred people. We stayed open later than usual, until we ran out of food.”

NIVERVILLE’S CLAIM TO FAME

The next day, the Niverville Pop Festival headlined the front page of both Winnipeg newspapers.

According to Einarson, “It was even the subject of discussion at the provincial legislature when NDP MLA Russ Doern, who claimed to have been at the festival the day before, announced, ‘There was a sizeable crowd of young people there who... participated in the best manner. They were well behaved, they thoroughly enjoyed themselves, and I think they made this a great success.’ He went on

to laud the charitable goal of the event and praised townspeople and local farmers for pitching in when the rain hit. Premier Ed Schreyer suggested that perhaps the festival ought to be called the Tractor Rock Festival.”

“Without the rain, I think this pop festival would have been a huge success,” Wallace says. “I just think the rain was not anticipated and the number of people already there and on their way there when it was rained out would have totalled at least upwards of 50,000 to 100,000 strong.”

THE DONATION

Somewhere in the area of \$10,000 was collected that day and delivered to the supporters of the Lynne Derksen Oxygenator Fund. Gary Stott recalls some hesitation on behalf of the Canadian Mennonite Bible College on accepting donations derived from such a source.

In the end, though, they college conceded.

The festival planners never heard about the money again or whether the goal of the fund was ever achieved.

That is, until January 2014.

According to the website of Brother band member Vance Masters, curiosity-led Masters’ wife Bev and others to research the outcome of the fund. They discovered an inference to it in a scanned document taken from a March 1973 issue of The Mennonite Mirror.

“We contacted the Health Sciences Centre in Winnipeg to inquire if they had any information regarding the Lynne Derksen Oxygenator Fund,”

says Bev Masters. “With so many years having passed and knowing that record-keeping back in those days was nowhere near as stringent as today, we were not optimistic that we would even hear back from the facility.”

Within 24 hours, however, a director at HSC responded that they’d solicited the help of the hospital archivist. Within two days they had answers.

According to the report, “In February 1981, the Board of Trustees... of the Canadian Mennonite Bible College agreed that the fund be used for the purpose of providing specialized training for personnel in the intensive care field at the Health Sciences Centre... As of last year, this fund was amalgamated into an endowment fund with other trust accounts to create a fund for the education of nurses. The new fund will continue to have the Lynne Derksen Award for a staff person obtaining specialized training in the field of intensive care.”

Thanks to the organizers of the Niverville Pop Festival and others who donated to the cause, Lynne Derksen’s legacy continues to live on 50 years later and will keep going into the unforeseeable future.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

■ John Einarson, “Deluge Failed to Dampen the Fun at the 1970 Niverville Pop Festival,” *Winnipeg Free Press*. May 17, 2015 (<https://www.winnipegfreepress.com/local/rock-and-rain-304029211.html>).

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Commentary

Getting Real with Each Other

By Daniel Dacombe

While we're social distancing and trying our best to protect the elderly and vulnerable among us, isolation and loneliness can be incredibly taxing on our own mental health. This is why Canadians all across the country are being challenged to "get real" with each other.

Appropriately for Mental Health Week 2020, in early May, the theme is social connection even in the midst of the pandemic. The Canadian Mental Health Association and partner organizations in every province have promoted Mental Health Week with the hashtag #GetReal.

So often we ask each other what has become a throwaway question: "How are you doing?" As we all know, the standard answer is "I'm fine." Of course, we're not all fine, especially now, especially with the current circumstances.

#GetReal is intended as a reminder for us to reach out for authentic connection with each other, to go deeper than "I'm fine," to ask our loved ones how they're really doing, and to be honest with each other—about the good and the bad.

For some of us, this might be an intimidating concept. We value our privacy



DEPOSITPHOTOS

and surely our friends and relatives do, too. It may feel invasive to ask for authenticity, and we may not feel capable of helping someone if they're actually in distress.

Fortunately, you don't need to be a therapist to be able to offer support to the people you care about, and everyone can become a caring and helpful listener—with a few tips.

Dr. Carl Rogers, one of the fathers of modern psychology, was a champion of what is often called person-centred counselling. Rogers spent his career researching the best ways to listen, support, and assist people who seek help for personal issues.

After years of research, Rogers concluded there were three main attributes of

effective helpers:

1. **Genuineness.** If we want to help someone, we have to be genuine with them. Our caring must be real and our actions must reflect our feelings for the people we want to help. Or, to put it another way, our insides must match our outsides.

2. **Unconditional positive regard.** If we want to help someone, we have to care about them without judgment or condemnation, not just feel sorry for them or pity them when times are hard. We need to unconditionally care about them where they are at, not where we would like them to be.

3. **Accurate empathy.** If we want to help someone, we have to understand them and the experiences they're

going through. We need to put ourselves in their shoes and think about what life must look and feel like from their unique point of view.

Counsellors, psychologists, and therapists around the world have been following these guidelines for decades, and the evidence is clear: they work. When people can tell you're genuine, they are much more likely to open up to you. When people are cared for without judgment, they are less likely to hide their problems from others. When people feel understood, they are much more likely to find greater understanding of themselves.

Rogers's work led to improved mental health for countless people, and we can

all use it to help us improve the quality of connection we have with each other.

If you want to #GetReal with people in these difficult times, if you would like to reach out to your loved ones and authentically connect, consider following in Carl Rogers's footsteps. Be genuine, show positive regard, have empathy, and don't be afraid to ask people how they're really doing. You, and they, may be very glad that you did.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

■ Southern Health-Santé Sud Crisis Line: If you are experiencing a mental health crisis, call 1-888-617-7715. You can also attend your local emergency department for immediate assistance. The crisis line operates 24

hours a day, 7 days per week. It provides community citizens of all ages experiencing a mental health or psychosocial crisis with ongoing support, crisis intervention, consultation, or referral to resources and education.

■ The Southern Health-Santé Sud Wellness Support Line (<https://www.southernhealth.ca/en/home/wellness-support-line>) is a confidential phone number anybody can call. A mental health clinician is ready to listen, support and refer you to local resources.

■ The Mental Health Virtual Therapy Program (<https://www.gov.mb.ca/covid19/bewell/virtualtherapy.html>) is available to all residents age 16 or older experiencing mild to moderate symptoms of anxiety due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

■ Wellness Together Canada (<https://ca.portal.gs/>) provides free online resources, tools, apps and connections to trained volunteers and qualified mental health professionals when needed.

■ Strongest Families Institute (www.strongestfamilies.com): Learn skills to overcome behaviour and/or anxiety challenges in the privacy and comfort of your own home. Learn skills to manage behaviour issues (3-12 years old) and anxiety issues (6-18 years old). Call 1-866-470-7111.

■ For more information on other organizations offering free bilingual (English/French) counselling and health services to Manitobans of all ages, access this list of services: <https://sharedhealthmb.ca/files/collaboration-health.pdf>

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Sports & Recreation



The Grade Eight girls from Niverville Middle School

by CRAIG CUMMING

Middle School Panthers Girls Win Championship

By Sylvia St. Cyr

Niverville Middle School's first official school year, though shortened, has featured some particularly memorable highlights. One of those came when the Grade Eight girls basketball team took home the Zone 13 championship banner on March 10—the first of what the school hopes will be many more to come.

The girls completed their season right before the provincial

government shut down schools due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The team of nine players and one manager was coached by a pair of basketball-loving sisters, Carling Comte and Sarah Barton. Both women are also teachers at the middle school, and they grew up playing basketball. Their mother even coached varsity basketball for several years.

The team's dynamic performance on and off the court led them to post an undefeated regular season. Their only losses

came in two tournaments played outside the division, and in both cases the girls placed second.

Most junior high sports teams start in Grade Seven, although that was not the case for this team.

"Almost half the team had never played basketball on a team prior to this season," says Comte. "They all improved so much and worked very hard. With their innate athletic ability plus determination, they became a very successful team."

What brought about their incredible success?

"A focus on fundamentals," Comte adds. "They were a very coachable, smart team, and everyone came together. [The girls have] so much talent and a willingness to learn and play hard."

With four more years of high school basketball on the way for these players, there is every hope this isn't their last championship.

IN BRIEF

Niverville Varsity Boys Were on Winning Track

By Evan Braun

✉ editor@nivervillecitizen.com

With the basketball season cut short, players and coaches from Niverville High School are looking back at what might have been.

According to coach Richard Toews, the AA boys team was strong. When the season was called out, they were ranked first and one week away from appearing at Provincials.

"We were looking to compete and had the chance to win our third provincials in a row," Toews says. "We won four of five tournaments, won the Zone 13 league and playoffs, and were also on a 13-game winning streak."

He says so many different players contributed to the team's overall success in key ways.

"All players of our team worked hard this year and tried to focus on the next play as the most important one... We played at a high, intense pace, pressing the other team and trapping when possible. This style made it challenging for the other team's offence to score. Our defence was our strength. Offensively, we had great scoring distribution, with numerous players putting up ten or more points in a game this season."

Recently, it was announced that two Grade 12 players, Dylan Peters and Jackson Loep, were selected to the Manitoba Graduating All-Star basketball team.

"I had the privilege of coaching them both for the past two years," says Toews. "Jackson adopted a role in the paint, playing close to the basket, to help with floor spacing. He was an offensive rebounding machine. Dylan improved his shot selection and drove aggressively to the hoop. He played with very active hands in our defensive press and benefitted by getting numerous steals and transition buckets. Both players were leaders on the team by their example and demeanour."

Toews also wants to single out the team's second coach, Parker Davis, who also helped challenge the team, demonstrating firsthand the value of a hard work ethic.

"Without [the team's] selflessness, we would not have had the team success or individual recognition that we were blessed with," he adds. "I am truly grateful to the whole team for providing me with another great coaching experience."

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Evan Groening.

BRUCE FEDYCK PHOTOGRAPHY

Teen Drafted by the Wheat Kings

By Sylvia St. Cyr

The road to the NHL is a long one. However, it may have just got a little shorter for 15-year-old Evan Groening of Niverville. The teenager was drafted into the Western Hockey League (WHL) by the Brandon Wheat Kings on April 22, chosen as the first pick in the ninth round.

Groening has played hockey since he was five years old, like many other young Manitobans. Up until Peewee year, he played for the Niverville Clippers.

"Evan started and continues playing for the friendships and the love of the game," his parents, Jody and Rachelle Groening say. "As he got older and into his Peewee year, he started to realize that he really liked the competitive aspect of the game. His competitiveness has driven him to play at the highest level possible."

Groening is a forward and played for the Eastman Selects at the Peewee AA and

Minor Bantam levels. When he reached Major Bantam, he played for the Rink Hockey Academy out of Oak Bluff. To make this happen, he attended Shaftesbury High School last fall instead of Niverville.

Just a few short days after the WHL draft came the Manitoba Junior Hockey League (MJHL) draft, on April 26. The family received more wonderful news: Evan was selected by the Virden Oil Capitals seventeenth overall in the second round.

"It's been a nail-biting week for our family! We are obviously extremely proud of him. This has been a dream of Evan's for a long time and we know how hard he has worked to get to this point," says Jody, Evan's father. "He has earned these opportunities."

The love of the game runs in the family.

"Ironically, 55 years ago, my dad, Evan's grandfather, was asked to try out for the Wheat Kings," says his mother, Rachelle.

Once the current social distancing restrictions lift, Groening will train and skate for both clubs.

"I want to play hockey at the highest level I can, and get an education," Groening shares. "These are all great opportunities for me, but there is a lot of work to do in order for me to make it to these teams."

While playing a higher level of hockey has taken Groening away from Niverville, he also remarks that he's lucky to have a great group of supportive friends.

Being drafted means that Groening's rights are protected in both the MJHL and the WHL. Though nothing is guaranteed, it's clear to see that the future is potentially bright.

"I would like to say a huge thank you to all of my family, friends, coaches, and trainers for helping me along the way," he says. "Also, thank you to the Brandon Wheat Kings and the Virden Oil Capitals for showing interest in me."

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Arts & Entertainment

2020 Niverville Fair Called Off



EVAN
BRAUN

✉ editor@nivervillecitizen.com

For the last month, as social distancing ramped up and a wave of spring and summer events throughout the province were cancelled, the writing has been on the wall. On April 17, the news many people expected was made official: the 2020 edition of the Niverville Olde Tyme Country Fair has been called off.

The announcement, although inevitable, is also especially disappointing given that this was to be the twenty-fifth anniversary of the fair. Several special events had been planned to commemorate the occasion.

“The decision was difficult, in that it is never what you want to do after planning for so long,” says Dustin Krahn of the fair committee. “The virus is obviously a

major factor in our decision, but the tipping point really came when we got a better picture of all the economic implications that have transpired in the last month. After many discussions with our committee, we agreed wholeheartedly that it was not appropriate of us to be soliciting sponsorship and asking businesses to take on more burden given the current circumstances.”

Although the word is only going out now, Krahn says that the fair has for all intents and purposes been effectively cancelled since the end of March. Ever since,

they’ve been working behind the scenes to notify all the relevant parties. Of which there are many.

“It’s not a terribly difficult process, but it takes time given that most events and festivals are all doing the same thing at the same time,” he says. “We had already booked most of the entertainment and infrastructure, all the bands and entertainers, the stage and sound crews, and security. We’d handled the advertising, ticketing, fireworks, and gotten permissions from Manitoba Highways, Hanover School Division, etc. As for the entertainers and all the companies involved, we are quite amazed at how great they have all been to work with through this—all things considered. Their industry has come to a dead stop, but they’re all very understanding and realize that everyone is in this boat together.”

POSTPONEMENT

However, all of the legwork that has gone into planning this year’s fair will not go to waste. Krahn says that, in large part, the 2020 fair will simply be postponed until 2021.

“It isn’t all for nothing,” says Krahn. “We will wind up benefiting from a lot of this year’s work next year. In many cases, we have managed to simply move things over to next year, so there isn’t a lot to undo necessarily. The implications here aren’t huge. In the grand scheme, this should, if anything, give us more time for

planning next year, as a good chunk of the legwork has already been taken care of.”

He adds that the committee has luckily managed to re-secure this year’s entertainment to commit to instead come out to Niverville in 2021. This means that the previously announced headline acts, High Valley and Big Top Radio, will still hit the mainstage—they’ll just do it one year later than expected.

Therefore, the show will go on. The new dates are June 11–12, 2021.

High Valley is a high-energy country duo featuring two Canadian brothers, Brad and Curtis Rempel. After signing with Atlantic/Warner Nashville in 2015, they released their debut album, *Dear Life*, which includes two gold-certified singles, “Make You Mine” and “She’s with Me.” Their second album will be released later in 2020.

The Rempel brothers received two consecutive Academy of Country Music (ACM) nominations for New Vocal Duo or Group. Over the past few years, they have toured the world, opening for bands like Old Dominion as well as headlining their own shows.

Big Top Radio is a seven-piece 80s rock anthem cover band. However, they’re no ordinary cover band, as the 80s included a lot of hair spray, tight and bright clothes, and theatrics. This band brings you right back to those times of old, tout-ing an authentic and loud

re-enactment of one of rock music’s most bombastic and showstopping eras.

They not only cover songs from Motley Crue, Twisted Sister, Alice Cooper, and Queen, but they also cover each detailed look, down to the feather boas.

PREPURCHASED TICKETS

For those who have already pre-purchased tickets for the 2020 event, including individual tickets as well as the family pack pre-sale deal, the fair committee has said those tickets can be kept and honoured in 2021. However, those who would prefer to instead seek a refund can contact them by email (see below).

Krahn says that despite the cancellation, the fair committee is still looking for volunteers to help out with some work that will still need to be done this summer and fall—assuming that social distancing measures have been relaxed enough to allow groups to work together. This work includes fixing and maintaining ticket booths, build another grain bin bar, and make new kids games.

“We will be trying to use the year off to still make some behind the scenes improvements,” he adds. “Rest assured, this is a detour on our journey, not a dead end.”

FOR MORE INFORMATION

■ To seek a refund for pre-purchased tickets, contact info@nivervillefair.com

IN BRIEF

Local Author Shares Business Knowledge in Recent Book

By Brenda Sawatzky

✉ bsawatzky@nivervillecitizen.com

For Derek Loepp, success isn’t something to be kept to oneself. In his recent book, *From Broke to Success*, he and his five co-authors seek to share the life and business experiences that have paved their path to getting ahead.

“I’m a serial entrepreneur, so I work all the time,” says Loepp. “I set goals, build plans, and then execute.”

The book, he says, is for anyone who’s ever dreamed of owning their own business. It’s also for the seasoned entrepreneur, anyone committed to self-improvement, or those interested in allowing the experience of others to help them avoid life’s common pitfalls.

Loepp’s chapters focus on building, growing, and sustaining a business. His knowledge is drawn from more than a decade of experience as an entrepreneur and 20-plus years in financial services at the senior executive level.

“I specifically talk about how to build a business to grow into it, not grow out of it,” Loepp says. “How to articulate your value proposition, how to attract customers to your business, how to qualify your customers so you are spending your time and money in the right place, and finally how to ensure all your business processes and client experiences are mapped so that when a process or experience breaks down, you know why and exactly how to fix it.”

Contributions from the other authors include topics such as change and relationship management, leadership fundamentals, and building an online business. Much of the book’s insights, Loepp says, can just as easily be translated into everyday life, providing models for personal growth.

The labour of love took the team almost two years to complete. In the end, they agreed that self-publishing and self-promoting was the best way to get the book into the hands of the public.



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Photographer's Work Appears on Pop Bottles

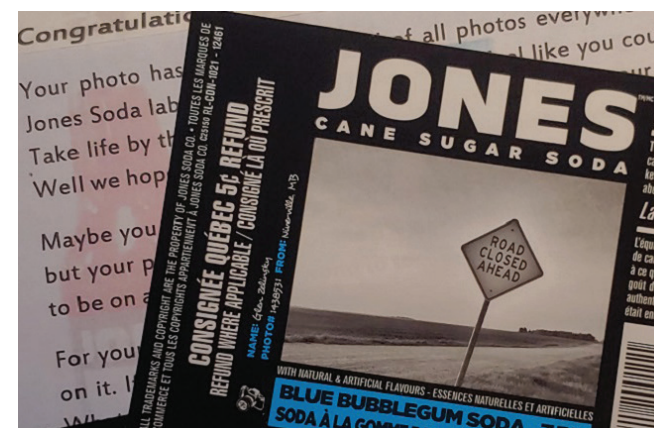
By Sylvia St. Cyr

Last week, Glen Zelinsky of Niverville received great news: one of his photos was selected to be featured on a cycle of Jones Soda pop bottles. The winning picture was taken just outside of Niverville and Zelinsky says he took it last summer.

Zelinsky, a husband and dad of three who also works for an advertising agency, recently received a letter telling him the photo will be found soon on the company's Blue Bubblegum flavour of sodas.

"At times Jones will email you to let you know you've been chosen, or you can see on their website if they chose your photo," Zelinsky shared. "But in this case, I had no idea until I checked my mail."

Jones Soda Co., based out of Seattle, has been producing unique flavoured pop since 1986. They distribute their sodas and candies all across the U.S. and Canada,



Label of the new Niverville-featured Jones Soda bottle.

© GLEN ZELINSKY

and every label showcases a submitted photo. The recognition for those photos are printed, meaning Zelinsky's name and Niverville are clear on the final product.

This isn't the first time the company has chosen one of Zelinsky's snapshots.

"I have been submitting photos sporadically over the last ten years or so," he says. "This is actually my fifth label. One of my other recent labels was a photo of my daughter

using a banana as a phone, and we actually found most of those bottles at Country Snacks here in town."

Anyone can submit photos on the company's website.

Does Zelinsky have any tips for other aspiring photographers looking to get in on the action? "I just try to submit photos I feel they may find funny, or that might catch someone's eye within the company."

Jordan St. Cyr Releases New EP

By Sylvia St. Cyr

On Friday, April 10, local recording artist Jordan St. Cyr will release the first single of his newest EP. The title of the song is "Fires," and the rest of the six-track EP will be coming out on May 15.

These songs were recorded in Nashville in 2019 and centre around the hardships Jordan and his wife have faced in recent years. The family has four children under 10, and their 17-month-old daughter Emery is struggling from a rare medical diagnosis.

"The day after our youngest daughter Emery was born, she had an MRI that revealed a rare brain condition," says St. Cyr. "What we were told next changed our future forever: the left side of her brain is dying."

The condition is a neurological disorder called Sturge-Weber Syndrome. A feature of the syndrome is a large red or pink birthmark, most often on the face, which indicates the enlargement of blood vessels near the surface of the skin.

In her first year, Emery had multiple seizures resulting in trips to the emergency room. After trial and error, the

doctors found a medication, taken twice a day, that help control the symptoms. Still, every month the family takes her for numerous appointments to monitor the disease.

While facing this uncertainty, music has been an outlet for St. Cyr.

"Fires' is a song that has become an anthem in our house," he says. "It has helped us heal and is giving us a new perspective on pain and suffering."

This will be Jordan's fourth album. Last year, he made waves in the Christian music scene when he won five GMA Covenant Awards, leading to him booking shows in Canada and the U.S.

However, plans for his upcoming shows have been disrupted just like everyone else's plans, due to the pandemic.

"A handful of events were cancelled in March and April, along with all my spring tour dates in May and June," he says. "There were 25 in total."

Meanwhile, he says the family's time in isolation has only given the newest single more meaning.

"Globally, we have been

confronted with this very harsh reality. This song is a profession of faith, believing that God has not forsaken us even in this pandemic. He is walking us through this 'fire' that we may come out the other side stronger."

Earlier this month, Jordan seized on the opportunities offered by technology and tried his first-ever Facebook Live performance—live from his living room. He says more social media content is expected in the days ahead.

"I've got conversations happening the day of the release with my Fires co-writers, Micah Kuiper and Krissy Nordhoff," he adds.

Amidst the uncertainty of his daughter's illness, and the pandemic in general, St. Cyr encourages others who are struggling right now. "My wife and I have had to surrender what the future looks like for our family and live very presently, one day at a time."

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- Facebook: @jordanstcymusic
- Instagram: @jordanstcyr
- Music available on all streaming platforms.

100

COMMUNITY NOTICE

Annual Vegetation Management Program

Every year, CN is required to clear its right-of-way from any vegetation that may pose a safety hazard. Vegetation on railway right-of-way, if left uncontrolled, can contribute to trackside fires and impair proper inspection of track infrastructure.

As such, for safe railway operations, the annual vegetation control program will be carried out on CN rail lines in the province of Manitoba. A certified applicator will be applying herbicides on and around the railway tracks (primarily along the 16-foot gravelled area). All product requirements for setbacks in the vicinity of dwellings, aquatic environments and municipal water supplies will be fulfilled.

At this time, we expect that the program will take place from May to October 2020.

Visit cn.ca/vegetation to consult the list of cities as well as the updated schedule.

Safety is a core value at CN and in the actual context of the COVID-19 pandemic, our employees and contractors are taking all measures to stay healthy and to protect the communities in which we operate. For more information, please visit cn.ca/covid-19-update.

For more information, please contact the CN Public Inquiry Line at contact@cn.ca or 1-888-888-5909.

cn.ca





COLOURING CONTEST

To enter, simply scan or take a photo of your completed page and send to: info@nivervillecitizen.com or message us on our Citizen Facebook page. The prize will be a \$25 gift certificate at a local business of the winner's choice!

April winner: Jolene Neufeld, age 6

ABOUT THE ARTIST. Cyndi Wiebe of Niverville describes herself as a lifelong artist, designer, and illustrator, trained in graphic design at Red River College. For years, she's also shared her gift through children's art classes. "I love teaching art," she says, although classes have been cancelled due to the pandemic. "I'm mostly doing design work at the moment with a couple consignment art pieces in the mix."

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