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JULY 2020

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## LOCAL NEWS

### Dear Covid...

■ Grade Six students at Niverville Middle School have been penning personal letters to help them come to terms with the disease and its effects.

Details on Pages 10-12



## LOCAL NEWS

### New Perimeter Interchange to Improve Traffic Flow

■ Construction will begin in 2021 on a new interchange at the corner of St. Mary's Road and the South Perimeter, a measure that should will the dangerous intersection safer.

Details on Page 15

## SPORTS & RECREATION

### New Bike Skills Park

■ The new feature in Niverville's Hespeler Park has been attracting dozens of mountain bikers every day. More phases are expected in the future.

Details on Page 18

## ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

### Country Artist Releases New Single

■ Singer-songwriter JR Charon has released a new single. His full debut album is expected to drop later this year.

Details on Page 19



# Drive-In Niverville Convocation Strikes Thoughtful Chord

»» DETAILS ON PAGE 6

JOEY VILLANUEVA

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The undeveloped lots along Breckenridge Drive that have courted controversy.

by CARA DOWSE

## Fifth Avenue Residents Concerned About Property Value

By Sara Beth Dacombe

✉ sdacombe@nivervillecitizen.com

In early June, a group of Niverville residents with homes in Fifth Avenue Estates requested an emergency meeting with the Town of Niverville to bring up concerns about property value and traffic along Breckenridge Drive.

Part of their concern revolved around town council previously approving a redesign of 24 lots along Breckenridge, in the process creating 40 smaller lots on that street. That meeting, on April 7, was held at the height of the Province of Manitoba's stay-at-home public health orders.

This part of Fifth Avenue Estates has resulted in public disputes many times. The developer, Cornell Friesen, has been trying to make changes to the Breckenridge Drive lots for years. Friesen says he hasn't been able to sell the lots, which are categorized as lakeside walkout lots in the development's master plan.

### HOW WE GOT HERE

In 2017, Friesen requested permission from council to rezone the lots from single-family dwellings to multi-family. A public hearing was held and council didn't approve the rezoning due to a public petition against it.

Later in 2017, Friesen requested rezoning the lot sizes to 40 feet from 50 feet. The minimum lot size at the time was 50 feet, so a public hearing again needed to be held. Council voted against that proposal as well.

In 2018, the Town of Niverville conducted a routine zoning review, as is required every five years by law. Provincial engineers were brought in to review lot sizes and traffic. The professional review ultimately made the recommendation to decrease the minimum lot size to 40 feet, thus bringing Niverville in line with other surrounding towns. The review also noted the change would make new

development in town more competitive, including the outstanding Fifth Avenue Estates lots.

In December 2018, council held an open house to present the plan to the public. The subsequent town council meeting included a public hearing at which they approved this change.

Thus on April 7, 2020, Friesen submitted a revised subdivision plan, including 40-foot lots along Breckenridge, and council approved the proposal. Revised plans, as opposed to requests for rezoning, don't require a public hearing as long as no new public road is being created.

### CONDUCTING TOWN BUSINESS DURING COVID-19

Jonathan Schmidtke, who lives across from the empty lots on Claremont Drive, was reviewing town council meeting minutes when he saw the approval pertaining to Breckenridge. He became concerned that council had approved a developer's plan that so obviously permitted that which residents had been trying for years to prevent.

After speaking with other residents in the area, many of whom had also been against the developer's changes since the initial rezoning request in 2017, Schmidtke contacted the town. He alleged that the town had held the delegation meeting with the developer at a time when it would be challenging for the public to participate, in the midst of a pandemic, in order to grant rezoning approval with minimal opposition.

Once Schmidtke suggested the residents would involve a lawyer to bring a case against the town, council mobilized to call an emergency meeting on Tuesday, June 9 at 8:30 a.m. to address their concerns.

As representative for the residents of Fifth Avenue, Schmidtke presented their concerns, clarifying that their intent was not to sue,

but to ensure the public was made aware of what had happened at the April 7 meeting.

"I want to address Mayor Dyck and town council for accommodating us and allowing us to have a live conversation, to be heard. My intent is not to sue," said Schmidtke. "My biggest intent is to bring transparency to the issue, that a decision was made out of the public eye, without opportunity to question, without opportunity to rebuttal... that council is moving away from what it told the public."

Schmidtke said that the town had communicated previously that the issue of waterfront properties had been closed, not to be revisited, and that it was an ethical and moral breach to move away from that position.

"When we were told that Cornell would not be able to change the sizing of the lots... that was misleading," said Schmidtke. "Changes to approve the 40-foot lots was done in the middle of COVID. I'm an essential services worker and all I read was one line in The Citizen."

Mayor Myron Dyck, who chaired the June 9 meeting, acknowledged that the spring was a difficult time to conduct town business. While following social distancing guidelines, the town had continued to meet publicly and hold public hearings. Meetings were held at the arena instead of at the Heritage Centre. Public delegations have been permitted to appear in person, with chairs placed six or more feet apart. Delegations have also been received by alternative means, including email.

But Dyck pointed out that because the revised subdivision plan did not require a public hearing, no public notices needed to be posted. He also maintained the importance of town business needing to continue during COVID-19.

(continued on page 4)

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## IN BRIEF

## Niverville Chamber Hands Out Awards

By Evan Braun

✉ editor@nivervillecitizen.com

On a sunny day in Hespeler Park in late June, members of the Niverville Chamber of Commerce gathered at the picnic shelter to hold an outdoor ceremony to honour the winners of the annual business awards.

There are three awards: Outstanding Customer Service, Business of the Year, and the Alex Fast Sr. Memorial Award.

The Outstanding Customer Service Award went to RuffMutts, owned and operated by husband-and-wife team Amanda MacLean and Guy Britten. RuffMutts has grown quickly in the past several years, leaping from a home business to its first storefront. Less than two years later, the business expanded into its second storefront, where they now offer grooming, self-washing, and dog daycare in addition to selling pet food and supplies.

A key component of the customer service award is comments and votes from the public, and the business received a deluge of praise from their base of loyal customers.

For Business of the Year, the Chamber awarded Done Hair, Skin and Nails, owned by Karen Albaugh. Done has been in business for five years, offering a range of beauty care products and services.

"We aim to provide a stress-free, fun, welcoming atmosphere where our clients can leave work behind, leave family obligations behind, and just focus on some self-care," says Albaugh. "Our goal is to have them leaving look and feeling great."

The final prize, the Alex Fast Sr. Memorial Award, seeks to acknowledge either a business or individual who has made outstanding contributions to the community.

This year, the award went to Henry Friesen of Blue River Group. Friesen has operated his financial consulting business in Niverville since 2004. Throughout his time in the community, he has been quick to help people in need, providing hours of pro bono financial advice to those who can't afford it, and becoming involved in various charities and local outreach programs.

(continued from page 3)

"Regarding a plan of subdivision, this is something that council deals with on an ongoing basis, if not once a month," said Dyck. "To Jonathan Schmidtke, I thank him for taking the time and seeking information. We want to be transparent and to work with the public in all instances that affect them. If people would like a better understanding of how these things work, council is very open to having a conversation or having a coffee to help people get the information they require."

### PROPERTY VALUES CONCERNS

At the emergency meeting, Schmidtke and other residents took the opportunity to review their pre-existing concerns surrounding additional housing being developed on Breckenridge. Schmidtke spent considerable time reviewing how Fifth Avenue Estates homeowners are required to submit to design criteria guidelines to maintain a "well-coordinated subdivision." The guidelines include specifications on garage sizes, ceiling height, and detail on the front of homes.

"A home that is built on a run-down street will not hold the same value as a home in Tuxedo or Wellington Crescent," said Schmidtke. "I need to maintain my value [to make sure] the home that I built has that value for other buyers. If you make housing affordable, usually then people who are going after those properties don't have money to put in things that go along with a brand-new house. It will change the exterior requirement, and you lose detail and things like that. You lose minimum standards... Everybody up to this point had to stick to the original requirements, which seem to be abandoned. Citizens like myself are concerned about their value... We are taxpayers on properties that are worth between \$450,000 and \$600,000 and up. We pay considerable taxes and that should buy us a voice."

Schmidtke added that the lots were intended to have homes with walkout basements, homes priced at around \$450,000, and he believes this should be maintained.

### TRAFFIC CONCERNS

The group presented a secondary concern: traffic.

"The side streets are already very busy with traffic, so the infrastructure is not planned [to accommodate] an additional 20 houses," said Schmidtke. "I don't understand how that road is going to handle traffic."

Dyck took some time to address these traffic concerns, explaining that the provincial civil engineers had considered traffic volume

and flow when reviewing the new zoning bylaws in 2018. These civil engineers had known about the additional lots that would be made possible in both existing and foreseeable developments when they supported the plan to rezone lots to a smaller size.

"Traffic is set by engineers," said Dyck. "It's not council that decides on the plan. We always have an extra set of eyes at the provincial level."

Town CAO Eric King confirmed that a general traffic assessment was done for the entire town in 2018.

"Every part where you could go to from lower density to higher density was evaluated by the planners," said King. "The planners knew about the 40-foot lots on Breckenridge and gave the go-ahead."

According to developer Cornell Friesen, who also attended the emergency meeting, the streets in Fifth Avenue Estates are wider than most residential city streets.

"In order to do a zoning change, a public hearing must be held and one was," said Dyck, who reviewed the procedures surrounding the rezoning. "We're govern by what is called The Planning Act, which is set by the Province of Manitoba. We went the extra mile and held an open house for everyone in the community at that time. Now on April 7, 2020, it's construction season... should we have held everything up? We did our best to conduct business amidst COVID, amidst a pandemic."

### TOWN RESPONSIBILITY VS. DEVELOPER RESPONSIBILITY

"Some of the things we have to deal with on things like this are facts vs. conjecture," continued Dyck. "There's a perception that somehow on these 40-foot lots, that things are going to change. We have been given no indication that the houses that will be built are going to be any different. The design guidelines are a contract between the property owner and the developer. The town is not a part of that agreement. To our understanding, there is no change as to the [quality of the] homes that will be built on Breckenridge."

Schmidtke again expressed concern for the look and appearance of the neighbourhood. "When you're starting to look at 'affordable homes,'" he said, "you're starting to look at cutting down on detail and size."

At this point, Cornell Friesen spoke up. "The town approves building permits, that's what holds me to task," Friesen replied. "I'm held at task for every single thing that happens in that subdivision. I've met all the regulations."

Schmidtke had additional

concerns for Friesen, alleging that the lots hadn't been offered up for sale at the original price and therefore Friesen couldn't say for certain that he'd had trouble selling the lots.

Friesen replied that he had never withheld a lot from any interested builder or any individual.

"The sizing of the lots is going down so that the developer can sell the lots so he can develop them," said Schmidtke. "But I've talked to other people who are interested in the lots, but they can't buy them because the developer is dragging his heels to sell them at our expense."

Dyck, who lives in Fifth Avenue Estates himself and happens to be a property appraiser with Red River Group, recommended that anyone with concerns about property value contact an appraisal company. He briefly spoke to his expertise in this area, saying that larger properties typically sustain their value next to smaller homes in new developments and that smaller lots are currently more in demand given the present real estate market.

The mayor then redirected the discussion back to the town's overall strategy for growth.

"There has never before been a hearing where property values have been brought up where the properties have dropped in value," said Dyck. "We asked developers, 'What do you need to compete?' They said they need the smaller lots to compete with Île-des-Chênes and St. Adolphe... If we don't go with smaller lots, the developers will go to different communities. So government has to be careful that we don't control business. We're trying merely to set the table where the developer wants to develop and the homeowner wants to live. We need homeowners just like we need home developers."

Councillor Nathan Dueck then weighed in. "[Our] responsibility as a town has been filled. Our responsibility to the developer and to our citizens hasn't changed. The town and its staff have upheld its responsibility. If you have concerns with the developer, then you need to talk to him."

### FEARS AND ASSURANCES

As the June 9 meeting extended into its second hour, residents' fears over traffic and the introduction of affordable housing continued—as did their fears over talking to council in general.

"I need to point out that there is a lot of fear from people of reprisal," said Schmidtke. "Everybody has ties to this council. I've talked to people, I've talked to contractors, I've talked to realtors. I had one realtor that he suspected this would happen. As a man of faith, I

like to vote for like-minded people. Mayor, I voted for you. Out of the entire council, I expect higher standards."

Later Dyck chose to address preconceptions about people's understandings of the word affordable.

"Maybe we need to throw that word out," said Dyck. "We're trying to come to an understanding as to what we have the authority to decide on and what we don't. We cannot decide things based on emotion or fears. We're trying to allay those fears here today. We believe that similar homes are going to be built and that the design guidelines and agreement are to be followed. And if they are not, then we will withhold permits."

Friesen confirmed that the new homes on Breckenridge will not have walkout basements, but they will have large basement windows. They will be smaller than the existing Breckenridge homes, likely priced around \$385,000, and the exteriors will be in keeping with the aesthetics of other homes in the development.

"They will be a smaller footprint, but they will be beautiful and the outsides will be all consistent," said Friesen.

### NEXT STEPS

Following the meeting, the town issued a letter to residents explaining that the Fifth Avenue Estates developer is bound under the development agreement signed between himself and the town in 2012.

The letter assured residents that if the developer didn't operate under the parameters of the development agreement, council had the authority to withhold a building permit.

As to the threat of legal action, Schmidtke has since been asked whether he intends to follow up on his initial intent to sue.

"If we had signed something legally and we want to fight this, then I can't afford to take this on," Schmidtke says. "The town has clearly said, 'This is between you and the developer,' and the papers had been signed. I would love to still get an end to this, but I don't think that signatures are going to get this changed. It's not that I'm suing the town, but we are taxpayers, and I want to make sure that council is taking care of us."

Does Schmidtke plan to pursue a further meeting with the developer? He says that he does.

"The town, I'm thankful that they did make time for me," Schmidtke says. "If I would say anything to anyone about all this, know what's happening in your town. Go to the open houses. Get involved."



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# Middle School VP Promoted to Principal

By Evan Braun

✉ editor@nivervillecitizen.com

Niverville Middle School will be getting a new principal starting in the fall, following the recently announced retirement of Principal Michael Koester. The school division has decided to hire from within, promoting the current vice principal, Craig Cumming, to the big chair.

Cumming began his teaching career in 2000 when he joined the staff at Niverville Collegiate, where he stayed for 12 years. He was then appointed vice principal at Landmark Collegiate for one year before transitioning back to Niverville where he has served ever since.

"The transition from teaching to admin was definitely eye-opening," Cumming says. "There are many scenarios that arise on a day-to-day basis that you haven't even considered when you're new to the role. I guess the greatest challenge was getting used to the fact that my schedule could change on any given day depending on what would arise. Whereas in the classroom, there was far more consistency."

He says his time as vice principal has helped in many ways to prepare him for the principalship.

"I have always had an inquisitive mind and always take time to observe and reflect," he says. "Those qualities have allowed me to 'watch and learn' from colleagues in terms of what a principal role might entail."

After so many years at Niverville Collegiate, he was heavily involved in the school's transition to a middle school in the months leading up to September 2019, when half of the school's population moved over to the new high school.



Craig Cumming will take over as middle school principal.

✎ HSD

"The extensive planning that was done to make the transition from NCI to NMS was challenging and rewarding altogether," says Cumming. "There was a lot of work done leading up to the opening of NMS back in September. Once things got going and you sensed the feeling of a true middle school, that was such a great feeling! And the work continues. We are constantly making adjustments if we see there is a need."

Cumming says there is so much to look forward to at the middle school in the coming years, and he's excited to be right in the thick of it.

"I'm looking forward to continuing the process of refining our school culture to fit the needs of our kids in a middle years environment. We have an extremely strong staff here at NMS and very supportive parents and community members, so I'm very excited at what the future

holds. My leadership style draws on a team approach. We, the staff, are stronger and more effective collectively than individually. We will work together and draw on each other's strengths to create an environment of belonging and becoming for our students."

With the COVID-19 pandemic having forced students to stay home since mid-March, however, he admits that a lot is still up in the air.

Classrooms are gradually opening back up right now through the Hanover School Division, with students visiting the school on an appointment basis.

But the lingering uncertainty means that nothing definitive can be said what in-person classes will look like come fall.

"Honestly, I don't know anything for certain about the start of next school year at this point," he says.

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Grads and their families assembled for an outdoor, socially distanced drive-in convocation.

BEN FUNK

# Drive-In Niverville Convocation Strikes Thoughtful Chord

By Evan Braun

✉ editor@nivervillecitizen.com

The first-ever graduating class of Niverville High School walked the stage—well, the parking lot—to collect their diplomas at a unique convocation ceremony on the evening of Wednesday, June 24.

To accommodate social distancing, the 52 grads and their families pulled into the school's parking lot in an assortment of cars, vans, and open-top convertibles to enjoy the ceremony drive-in-style.

Principal Kimberley Funk began by acknowledging the surreal nature of the event—and indeed, the last several months.

"I've gotta be honest, never in my wildest dreams did I imagine a scenario quite like this," Funk said. "You were thrown into a new situation in your last year of high school and then, to top it all off, faced with a global pandemic. Remarkably, you took it all in stride and handled it with maturity. As a group, you have been kind, modest, humble, and hard-working. You have quietly gone about your studies and activities without demanding attention or any spotlight even though you've experienced many great accomplishments."

Her remarks focused on the unprecedented challenges and obstacles faced by the graduates in the final stretch of their high school experience.

"We've been separated in ways we've never experienced

and we're facing a world that will never be the same," she said. "But it's a world that needs you. These challenges can make it difficult to remain hopeful, but it is important that you continue to look forward. You are the next generation. We need poets and builders, scientists and artists, engineers, firefighters, teachers, and entrepreneurs. It's time to take the torch and make your mark in the world. Put your stake in the ground and take the first steps toward your future. Maybe it's baby steps, maybe it's a leap of faith. Either or, it's important to make a move. You may be tested, you may falter, but keep going. Believe in yourself."

Instead of applause, the assembled vehicles honked their approval.

The rest of the speeches had been recorded beforehand and assembled into a video presentation, beginning with greetings from the Hanover School Division, delivered by first-term trustee Carisa Klassen.

Outgoing superintendent Randy Dueck was also in attendance. He took in the convocation from his Mini Cooper in the back row of the parking lot.

Next up was a tribute video in which the high school staff singled out each and every graduate for special attention.

Special guest speaker Matt Falk then took a few moments to entertain the crowd.

"It's very weird for a stand-up comedian to be talking to the camera with

absolutely no response," Falk began. "It's like the first five years of my career!"

After a short stand-up set, Falk's comments took on a more challenging, more motivational tone.

"Who do you want to be?" he asked. "Kind? Cruel? Empathetic? Powerful? A person who stands up for others? A person who gets what they want? A champion of the marginalized? A trendsetter? Hopefully when you think about it, you want to be somebody good. A philanthropist. Someone who stands up to tyranny. But remember, you could be that person while doing anything... You can be a CEO who pays more than fair wages—and be an economic game-changer. You can be a business owner who leaves the environment better than when you found it—and be a planet-saver. Filter all of your questions through that. Who do you want to be?"

Valedictorian Graham Pinkerton then had his opportunity to address the class.

"Today is a big day. A day of success, a day of excitement, and a day of closure," Pinkerton began. "Today marks the end of one chapter, and the beginning of another. Today is also a strange day, not one that most of us would have anticipated. These are very strange and unusual times. But I am happy that we are still able to gather together for this special day and moment."

Over the course of his five-minute speech, Pinkerton took his fellow graduates on a tour of their grade school

careers, with an emphasis on high school.

"This pandemic has made me realize something that I did not pay very much attention to before: the social aspect of school is so important," he said. "The simple day-to-day conversations with teachers, staff, and friends. It is the simple things like this that make school so special. It's not always about the courses or the grades, although they have their place. It is about the memories that you make and the relationships that last. These are the connections that hold the most value."

Pinkerton closed by thanking his fellow graduates, their families, and school staff.

"Thank you to all of our teachers," said Pinkerton. "Many of you have taken extra steps during this pandemic to reach out, to teach in new ways, and to help us to learn despite our circumstances. Thank you to everyone who has worked very hard to organize and set up this graduation ceremony. It will not be one to forget."

Following a tassel ceremony, the graduates exited their vehicles and came forward to receive their diplomas from Principal Funk.

The event concluded with a celebratory parade through town, with the graduates and their families riding down Main Street, and snaking through a route that took them through Fifth Avenue Estates and the south side of town.





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## The Niverville Chamber of Commerce welcomes these new members

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## IN BRIEF

## Open Health Clinic Expands Staff

By Sara Beth Dacombe

sdacombe@nivervillecitizen.com

The Open Health medical clinic in Niverville, now managed by a committee that reports to the Town of Niverville, has been working hard in recent months to bolster its staff of clinicians, as well as the clinic's bottom line.

The clinic announced in mid-June that one new part-time doctor is set to begin work in July.

Yet another doctor, this one full-time, will start in September.

These hires are in addition to two part-time doctors who have already started working at the clinic since the spring.

Niverville Mayor Myron Dyck says the clinic is also back to accepting in-person patient visits, a practice which had been curtailed since mid-March.

"If people need to see a doctor, they're more than welcome to come to the clinic," says Dyck. "There's lots of appointments for people that if there's anything that they feel they have a need, they should come on down to the Open Health Clinic and they'd be able to make sure that they are being cared for."

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# Helping Hands Receive \$10K Turkey Donation

By Evan Braun

editor@nivervillecitizen.com

Manitoba Turkey Producers and poultry producer Exceldor Cooperative have donated \$10,000 worth of turkey to the local Helping Hands foodbanks.

As the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic continue to be felt, food insecurity remains high and the demands on local foodbanks has only increased. Niverville Helping Hands alone has seen an increase in demand of more than 50 percent.

"Thousands of families across Manitoba have been affected greatly due to the pandemic, including those in our rural communities," says Rachelle Brown, chairperson of Manitoba Turkey Producers. "We're very excited to be partnering with Exceldor Cooperative and working with our farmers to be putting back



The turkeys are delivered to Helping Hands Niverville. MANITOBA TURKEY PRODUCERS

locally produced turkey into our communities who need it most."

So how many turkeys can you get for \$10,000? That's the big question. Together, the two organizations have provided 576 whole frozen turkeys, each weighing between four and five kilograms. The turkeys were sourced from the Exceldor Cooperative plant in

Blumenort.

"In this time of uncertainty, it's important for us to give back to our community," says Rod Harder, General Manager of Western Operations at Exceldor. "We understand that many families across Manitoba have been greatly impacted by the pandemic and we want to ensure we are doing our

part the help our community."

The donation will be shared between the foodbank's three primary locations: Steinbach, Niverville, and Grunthal. These foodbanks serve a critical need by providing emergency supplies and food to people in more than 25 communities.

"Niverville Helping Hands was ecstatic to hear that we were chosen as one of the local food hampers to receive a donation of turkeys. This is a massive help to our clients," says Lillis Corriveau of Niverville Helping Hands. "Since COVID-19, we have moved to strictly a nonperishable hamper. Having properly packaged, inspected, and frozen meat allows our clients to use the grocery vouchers we provide them to purchase fresh veggies, bread, and cheese or whatever else they are lacking. It helps make both the hampers and vouchers go further."

## École-Collège Régional Gabrielle-Roy Postpones Grad

By Brenda Sawatzky

bsawatzky@nivervillecitizen.com

Staff at École-Collège Régional Gabrielle-Roy in Île-des-Chênes have had to get creative this spring in order to make plans for their school's still-upcoming convocation.

The school will be graduating 52 young people this year, but getting them across the finish line has been, to put it mildly, a bit complicated.

The grads and parents of Gab-Roy overwhelmingly voted to postpone their traditional convocation and banquet. Their plan is to hold the event just like they normally would, only delayed until the fall.

"We have booked November 12 for our convocation at La

Cathédrale de St-Boniface and our grad banquet and dance at the Victoria Inn the following night, Friday, November 13," says Gab-Roy's vice-principal, Joel Mangin. "This is during university reading week, so we should be able to have a good participation at the festivities. We expect to have our valedictory address, administrative speeches, and official photo opportunities for our scholarships at that point."

The March school closure had happened before formal graduation photos could be taken initially. Once provincial restrictions eased, all the grads were invited to cap-and-gown photo sessions on June 18-19 at the school. Students also had the option to take the cap and gown home for a weekend of

family photos.

Scholarship winners received notifications via personal phone calls from either the donor or a designated school staff member.

"Twenty-one out of 52 [of our] students have qualified for an entrance scholarship at Université de St-Boniface," says Mangin. "This speaks to the academic success of the group as a whole, as 40 percent of the class has qualified for a bursary because of their grades."

This, he adds, happened in spite of losing the final three months of in-class education.

"University isn't the answer for everyone, but when two-thirds of the class will attend university in the fall, it shows how strong a group it is," Mangin says. "Most of the remaining one-third will

be enrolling in a skilled trade or apprenticeship program which shows how, across the board, this group cares about getting a valuable education and has big plans for the future."

While Gab-Roy grads have no assurances that their fall celebratory plans won't be spoiled by a second wave of pandemic restrictions, Mangin says the school's administration already has a backup plan.

"I have nothing but optimism for this group of grads," says Mangin. "As much as it is unfortunate that they had to deal with all of this uncertainty, it is a group that is extremely well equipped to overcome uncertainty and achieve their goals."

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# Dear Covid...

*Grade Six students at Niverville Middle School have been weighing in on the pandemic, penning personal letters to help them come to terms with the disease and its effects.*

**By Evan Braun**

✉ editor@nivervillecitizen.com

The brunt of the COVID-19 pandemic has been hitting people where it hurts. Many people have lost their jobs. Other people's jobs have gotten more intense and stressful.

No one seems to know quite when (or if) their lives will return to the status quo, although with the case loads in Manitoba remaining at manageable levels at the end of June people are taking tentative steps toward normalcy.

But what about our young people? The graduating class of 2020 has been through the wringer, but younger students have been thrown a curveball too. It hasn't been easy for anyone to cope with what's going on.

In the late spring, the Grade Six students at Niverville Middle School processed their feelings in a unique way. A trio of middle school teachers—Lynn Albig, Tammy Peters, and Kelley Heintz—encouraged their students to express themselves through letters.

The recipient of these letters? Covid itself.

"The goal of the writing assignment was to give students an opportunity to reflect on a truly unique experience," the teachers say. "Using a bit of humour to express their frustrations, their discoveries, and their hopes for the future. Also to create a primary source for what will surely be a significant part of history."

Along with the letters, each student was to provide a photo which depicted what the students most valued or depended on during the pandemic.

In coming up with the assignment, Albig, Peters, and Heintz were inspired by Libby Beaty, a teacher in Korea.

"[Beaty wanted] her students to showcase items that have been important to them during home learning, and then [she] shared them on Twitter," they explain. "This assignment was also based on the work of photographer and artist Gregg Segal. His series of

photos was entitled 'Daily Bread' and showed what children around the world ate in a week."

In the letters, it came as no surprise to the teachers that their students missed their social groups, their seasonal traditions and activities, and in many cases even school itself. On the flip side of all the disappointment of lost opportunities, many students wrote that they appreciated the extra time with their families—and the chance to slow down a bit.

"We as teachers did write our own letters as well. Our message carried a lot of the same points as our students. We miss being together in our building, and we long for time together with our loved ones. But also that this too shall pass, and COVID-19 wouldn't keep us down forever. We look forward to really appreciating some of the things we have taken for granted."

The teachers have also been reflecting on the various ways in which people in their profession have been forced to reimagine their jobs and reinvent how they do things.

"Challenging is a good word for it, but it has also been a learning experience and an opportunity for growth," they say. "Our school came together as a strong team, determined to provide the best learning experience possible for our students. It pushed us to think creatively about how we could reach our students, stay connected with them, and to focus on what was most important. We do, however, very much look forward to being back together in the same building with our students soon!"

This month, we add some new voices to the public record—our young people, in their own words.

**KAYLEE ROSE DALUPANG**

Dear COVID-19,

As you should know by now, I am at home with my family, having a new daily routine. You have really affected me and I have gotten to know you a little better. It has been about 2 or 3 months since my life has changed, and I think I am getting



used to it. My family and I can't really go out as we normally would, like going shopping, or having celebrations with other family members. The people around me, started to stay away from me, not long into your career.

I feel like you have worked really hard lately. I would highly suggest you go home, retire and self isolate. If you get bored, plant a garden, start a new hobby, and watch the news to see how the world feels about you retiring. The whole world would probably be happy for you, and happy that we can slowly start getting back to how we were before you started your career.

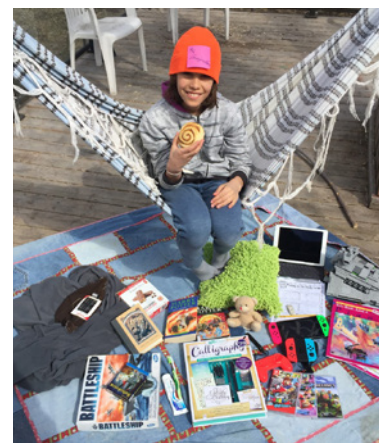
You have affected so many lives, in so many ways from your hard work. From your hard work, many people are currently unable to see their family the way they normally would. People now have to wear masks, sanitize, and be very cautious of what they do or touch because of your work. Many people have lost their jobs, but the ones who still work have been affected too. People's health has also been impacted. Many people got sick, and the unfortunate even lost their lives.

I feel like I have learned so much about you in the few months that I have known you. I understand that you are something new that not many people knew about at first. When you first started to work and started affecting people, you got the attention of many scientists that must be working with you right now. I now know that you cause people to have symptoms of other illnesses

like the flu. Symptoms such as dry coughs, sore throat, fevers and tiredness. I have learned from research that the people that are affected the worst by you are people with low immune systems or people who already have problems with their health. For example, people who have diabetes or asthma.

I don't know if your hard work has really paid off. I believe the whole world is quite mad or frustrated from your work. I know that your work won't bring me down. You will probably help bring me up. Knowing what you have done makes me feel grateful for what I have, and for this time at home that has really helped me reflect on myself and made sure that I try to make the best choices while doing things. You might be wondering "How is this helping bring you up?" Well because of you, the time that I have spent thinking has made me a better person in my eyes. Knowing things that make me grateful everyday reminds me that I am lucky and that I have to cherish the moments while they last.

I know I shouldn't tell you what to do, but in the end I think you should go home, retire, and reflect on yourself. I hope that if you do choose to retire, make sure that you are happy, and that you are enjoying yourself.



**LUCAS HOLOWKA**

Dear COVID-19,

I am writing to you because I want to remind you of the things you are causing.

First of all, I am one of thousands of kids in this country who do not

get to see their friends, family, and hilarious teachers at school anymore because of you. Lots of my friends from school I can't see at home, at all. I mean, thanks to technology, we can still sort of talk, but face to face conversations don't get glitchy, now do they! Also, I can't get up early, looking forward to a busy day of school, can I? I can't walk to school with my friend(s), having a good conversation until we get there and the bell rings to come inside.

Speaking of that, who else (from NMS) has that kind of a field to play, other than our farmers, who give us our food? On that thought everyone is stocking up on food, so it is hard to find the stuff we need! Aside from groceries, I miss walking through the hallways of NMS, going to different classes while our teacher has prep. Just walking through the school feels awesome inside, for me at least. Now before I move on, there is one more thing I need to tell you, Coronavirus, I miss going to the library and having the sight of hundreds, and maybe, just maybe thousands of books in front of me. 'Cause that, at least I think, is the eighth wonder of the world.

Now, there is something else I ought to tell you. There were a few things that were going to happen this year that did not happen because...

Of... YOU! CORONAVIRUS! It was you who cancelled my piano lessons and the concerts that came with it! It was you who did not let me play with my friends for several months in a row! It was you who stopped all of my friends from coming to my house for my birthday! It was you who cancelled school, stopping everyone from doing work at school! It was you who stopped me from going to church, where I learn about our creator who died for our sins! It was you who stopped me from going to Youth Group which is so much fun! It was you who delayed all of my family road trips and our plans! There is one more thing, though. I wished that you, COVID-19, died this year. You did not though. Not yet, at least.

You have taught me a few things,



though, Covid. You taught me to appreciate the things I have and the things I can do. For an example, you have killed many people around the world. They did not have very much time left to live. This has taught me to use the time I have wisely, and to make the best of it. So when I go back to school, I will use the time I am given wisely to get my work done. If I am going to make the best of my time in the future, I am going to learn even more than I have in the past years. When I go back to school, I will try to be the best friend and leader that I can be. I will be those, because friendship is very important to me and I know that leadership is a strong building block of life. Now, there is one more thing. When I go back to school, I am going to try to always be ready and one step ahead 'cause that is important, very important.



#### ERIK HUNTER

Dear COVID-19,

I don't really like you because you are killing a bunch of people. What did we do to you? Well I mean a guy did try to sell an exotic animal in a market and you did your part protecting the animal and yourself. But do you really have to kill more people?

The good thing is that you do get me to play with my family and help me focus better on my school work. I do not have people talking and bugging me when I am trying to do my work like I do at school.

The bad thing about you being around is that I don't get to play with my friends. I want to play with my class and see my family and give hugs but you took that away. I

want to have birthday parties with my friends, play at the park and most importantly see my Nana. She means a lot to my family. We spend as much time with her as we can. I also want to see my cousins and play together outside. I also miss hugging my family when we see each other.

COVID when you are gone we are going to have the biggest party in the world! I am not going to play video games as often as I am now and I will be more creative with projects and have more activities to do at home with my family. I really want people to stop dying and getting really sick because it is so sad for other families and nobody can be with the people they love when they are sick or dying.

COVID you need to stop making people sick and making people die. You are making so many people sad and angry. I want you to go away forever so people can be happy again. I also want people to feel happy that you are gone so that they can be less worried and scared.



#### EMMAH KOSLOWSKY

Dear COVID-19,

It's been a long journey getting to know you but I think that I'm ready to go back to normal.

COVID-19, I don't want to stay at home anymore. I want to see my cousins again, I want to go to school, I want to see my teacher, I want to go to Winkler Bible Camp, I want to go to friends houses for sleepovers, I want to play soccer, I want to go to VBS to help with the kids, I want to have big family gatherings, I want to go to the Niverville Fair and the Red River Ex. But I can't, because of you!

I am mad at you for taking away

all of the stuff that I was looking forward to. I am also mad at you for taking away so many lives and vacations. You made people scared to be by other people, other than their families, and to go out of their houses.

COVID-19, I do like how you got me to spend more time with my family and how you made Ten Thousand Villages give 80% off most of their stuff, you also made my grandmas come to my house multiple times with cookies and buns. We also got a lot of free stuff, like oil changes, sandwiches and coffee because my dad is a front line worker, he is a nurse and the best dad ever! When my dad goes shopping at SuperStore he gets to skip the line.

I really wanted to go to Winkler Bible Camp and to VBS and to go play soccer but I can't, maybe it's for a good reason. Maybe my family and I will do something really fun other than going to the Red River Ex and camp.

Well COVID-19, that is all I have to say to you, for now. Maybe you will stick around for a couple more months. (Not that I want you to).



#### HUDSON SAKWI

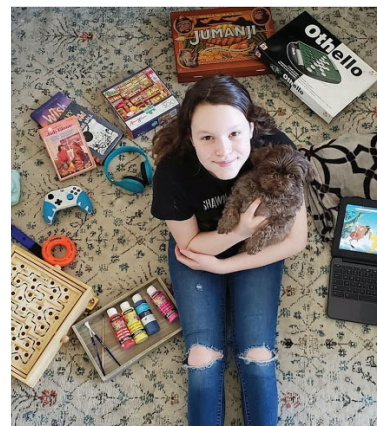
Dear COVID,

I do not like you. You took away my school. I was not able to see my friends. I miss them. Hey Covid, you are so awkward. Please go away. Love, Hudson.

#### HARPER WALKER

Dear COVID-19,

Dear Covid, I remember when life was normal when we could hang out



in big groups, go to school, travel, etc, and now I can't do anything because of you. You've really changed my school life. I miss being at school where all my friends are and where I can talk to my teacher face to face. But now I talk to everyone from a distance or through text. When my parents got an Email saying that school would be closed for 2 weeks, I didn't know what to do or what to say, I just thought I was going to have the time of my life because I could do online school and I thought that it would be super fun. School is now through a screen and it feels super different.

COVID-19, you ruined my summer. I was supposed to go on my first plane ride to Edmonton and go to the mall, eat at new places, go to the waterpark and the amusement park. That is now cancelled and the fair is cancelled too. I was really looking forward to that because every year it is so much fun, you eat lots of mini donuts and cotton candy and ride in the Zipper. Also it was a great weekend to hang out with friends but now I can't do any of that. I am really upset because Soccer got cancelled and that is something that I love to do during spring break, guess what... that is cancelled just like everything else.

But I want to thank you for helping me get closer with my family. We have been going on lots of road trips together and adventures. I guess that part is pretty good. COVID-19 I just want to let you know you're not that bad, you still let us learn which is good, most stores are still open so that helps people get their groceries, you have made me realize there is so much to do outside like going

for walks, playing basketball and football and now I really have been outside a lot more.



#### ASIA REIMER

Dear COVID-19,

I hate you. You've messed up my whole year. 2019/20 has already been a bonkers year, but then you came in and made everything worse. I've never been on a plane before so I was really excited since me and my family were planning on flying out to Ontario to see family that we haven't seen in a long time. I was super excited to fly for the first time but because of you I most likely can't go. Not to mention our spring play and the Niverville fair are both cancelled. Don't even get me started on homeschooling. I was really enjoying school and getting to see my teacher and friends every morning, and now I wake up and open my Chromebook and sit on the couch all morning doing work. I miss seeing people and I just don't understand why you did this. Do you find it amusing to watch our planet go through a crisis like this?

I guess a few good things came out of this crisis though. Me and my family have spent a lot of time together and it's definitely brought us closer. I think it's been bringing lots of families closer. And I think we've taken lots of things for granted (like hugs). But now that we know what it's like to not be able to see people for a few months we will learn to be kinder to others because you never know when you won't be able to see them again.

(continued on page 12)

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## CITIZEN POLL

**The pandemic has negatively affected the mental health of a child I know.**

- ☐ I strongly agree.
- ☐ I agree.
- ☐ I neither agree nor disagree.
- ☐ I disagree.
- ☐ I strongly disagree.
- ☐ Do you have an experience to share? Send us a comment and let us know.

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**LAST MONTH'S RESULTS:**

Have you ever changed your mind on a subject because of a debate you had, or new information you encountered, while on the internet?

**Yes: 92%**  
**No: 0%**  
**Other: 8%**

**YOUR COMMENTS:**

I haven't changed my mind on a subject because of a debate, but I've sometimes softened my view of people who have a different opinion when I can see how they got to their mindset.

(continued from page 11)

So even though there are quite a few downsides from this and lots of deaths, we can still learn a good lesson from this. So COVID, I guess you're not that bad, I think we just need to look at you in a different way.

But just to be clear, when you do leave, please don't come back ever again!

**HOLLY POETKER**

Dear COVID-19,

I'm not going to lie—there've been more exciting things in the world than you right now. I don't want to be mean, but I'm not a big fan of you. I'm sure other people can agree. You have taken away other people's time with their family, sports, clubs, and just plain fun. And because of you, I can't get a pool this summer, nor go to any rodeos, never mind enter in one!

COVID-19, I am NOT impressed with you. You have taken the lives of so many good people. Honestly, you should be ashamed of yourself.

Because of you, I'm missing out on church, Son City lunches, and track and field. On another note, because of you, I don't have to choke down soggy sandwiches, cold spaghetti, and bruised bananas. So thanks.

You have also cancelled school. Although I'm pretty cool with being able to spend more time with my animals, yard, and family, I'm kind of bummed that you cancelled it right when I was enjoying it. After all, I will never get another year with Mrs. Peters again, nor to

enjoy another year being a part of 6C. Another really important thing for me this year was to become a better rider, and to get some more barrel racing lessons. But because of you, that's not going to happen. Thanks a lot, COVID-19.

On the bright side, you have helped me to realize how blessed I am to be able to go to school. I'm guilty of dreading school and not looking forward to it. I can guarantee that, although I will enjoy summer and milk it for all it's worth like usual, I will be looking forward to going back to school, interacting with people again, and playing with my friends. Thanks for real this time. You have helped me to get a new perspective.

Although things are beginning to become better, I'm not so sure we won't be seeing you occasionally, maybe lurking in the corners of a grocery store or some place like that. After all, you are pretty sneaky. But don't get too confident, because one day, whether you like it or not, the scientists working hard to defeat you will come up with a vaccine. You'd better watch your back, COVID!

**MAX DOWSE**

Dear Covid-19,

At first when you closed our schools I wasn't very sure of what school was going to look like. Then my teacher started posting work online and I took my time going through it. Now a few months later I have been loving home school because I can do my work whenever I want and wherever I want on a daily basis. I usually do my work in the mornings in my pj's so I have

the rest of the day free. Since you have been here I have more free time than I usually do. With that time I get to spend more quality time with my family and golfing. Thank you for that.

You have also given me more time to think about my new passion of mountain biking that I might have not have come across without you. I have been thinking about starting a bike business, building and fixing bikes. With a lot of my spare time I have been researching and learning about mountain biking parts. I am trying to decide if I should build my own bike, or buy a new or used bike. There are so many options available, carbon vs aluminum frames, full suspension vs hardtail, etc. Bikes are awesome, Covid-19 is not!

Covid-19 you have wrecked my perfect spring break. We were going to go to the U.S.A to pick up our new RV, go to Wisconsin Dells and watch the Toronto Raptors play the Milwaukee Bucks at the Fiserv Forum arena. Instead you made us stuck inside our home. There is no way that staying at home is even close to as fun as that would have been Covid-19. (Not cool at all)

I realize if you stay too long, home school will become a full year and I am probably going to want to go back to school and see my school friends and teacher. I would miss lots of my favorite sports like hockey and basketball. I'm looking forward to going somewhere other than my house and seeing more friends and family. I hope that you will leave soon so I can live a normal life again.

For the rest of the time that you are here I have nothing nice to say about you.

Good riddance!

**DANIEL MCLENDON**

Dear COVID, can you go away?

Ever since you came I couldn't see my friends. I miss my teacher, she made math so fun!! Sure, it was fun anyways, but she made it more fun!! I loved it when everyone went to Son City, it was much quieter in the classroom. Now I can't talk



to my friends at lunch anymore. I can't even go to parks anymore because they are all closed. I want to go visit my friends, but we have to do all kinds of social distancing and stuff. I like talking to my friends on Gmail and Messenger Kids, but it's nicer to talk to them in real life. I wish me and my classmates could play sticks together outside. I really liked that game. But now I can't play it with them, and our yard is way too small to play it.

COVID, you are making me mad.

I was going to have an awesome birthday at Souris with my friends. We were going to go rock hunting and do all kinds of fun stuff. But then everything started closing so now I can't. It makes me sad. I can't visit my friends either, which is also sad. I really want to go to a thrift store or an antique shop with my dad and find some cool antique stuff. I miss going to restaurants with my family. That was fun. I can't go to school anymore either, lots of people would be happy they don't have to go to school, I like school, so I like going to it. Now I can't. For some reason, everyone wants toilet paper, why? Do they want it because they think someone else will get it before them?

Well, now I think that when I get back to school, I will appreciate the quiet tests and peaceful reading periods. I really like peace and quiet. I like being funny, but I like quiet more than anything. I will appreciate the time with my friends and teachers.

Goodbye COVID, you make me mad.



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# Senior Undertakes Extensive Walkathon

By Sara Beth Dacombe

sdacombe@nivervillecitizen.com

John Plett is a 94-year-old resident of the Heritage Life Personal Care Home, where he has lived since May 2019. His wife Annie was also a resident there until her passing in August 2019.

John and Annie were turkey and grain farmers in the Blumenort area for many years. John, who has congestive heart failure, continues to be active and insists on walking every day he can.

When John's family heard about a remarkable fundraising effort by an isolated senior in Britain, they approached him with the idea of doing something similar. John agreed and began to count his steps to measure what distance he could accomplish.

Today, John is committed to walking 2,500 steps per day, and the Plett family has helped him organize a campaign through the Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) to raise \$9,400—\$100 for each year of John's life—for food relief around the world.

John's walkathon gives him and his family something to pay attention to besides the hardships caused by COVID-19.

"He'll say he has the best room and he is well taken care of," says Elizabeth Plett on behalf of her father. "He makes a really strong effort to be positive about everything, even if it's hard."

Elizabeth says the family used to make sure he got a visit every day, but during the pandemic he's had to go without visitors for quite a while.

"We would like to go back to going everyday and taking him out," she says. "Safety is a number one issue, for sure, but mental health is important, too. I think we're a bit torn between keeping him safe and keeping him mentally well."

As John lives through these lonely times, he enjoys going for walks, especially since health issues keep him from enjoying other common distractions.

"His vision is poor," says Elizabeth. "He has macular degeneration, so he can't read or watch TV well, and he is kind of limited in what



John Plett alongside PCH aides Grace and Li.

ELIZABETH PLETT

he can do in his day. He has congestive heart failure, so his breathing is really tough, but he is completely self-motivated to walk. He has always been a walker and he would tell you you have to start early; 80 is too late."

John's walkathon was off to a bumpy start when the weather turned chilly in May, and he had to walk for a few days in a parka and mittens. When the weather gets bad, he walks inside, seven days a week, never missing a day.

That is, until last week when both his walker and his phone had to go in for repairs. But it was the walker that delayed John's progress, not the phone, since he counts all his steps manually.

Elizabeth describes John's attitude toward walking as contagious and the family has in the past joined him on his walks—if he wasn't already done when they came to visit. At his previous residence, his neighbours often walked with him too.

"He liked it when other residents would walk with him [at his previous home] in Steinbach. Right now, there is nobody who really walks with him. And we can only visit with him outside by appointment," says Elizabeth. "But hopefully soon we could walk with him or other residents

could join him."

John and his family have been inviting friends and neighbours to get involved by donating to MCC's international food relief program. The Plett family is happy to see something positive come out of this challenging time.

"Dad has always believed in sharing what he has with others and helping the less fortunate, so I gave him a call to ask him where he'd like to donate to," Elizabeth says. "There are so many good options to donate to, so we gave him a few options and he chose MCC, which has a reputable giving registry."

According to the MCC website, more than 790 million people do not have enough to eat.

"It's not that there isn't enough food in the world, but disaster, poverty or unfair policies mean people can't access it," says the MCC website. "A gift of food gives families new ways to expand harvests, increase income and improve nutrition."

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

■ You can find out more about John's walkathon, and contribute to the cause, here: <https://donate.mcccana.ca/registry/john-pletts-walkathon-food-relief>

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# For Businesses, the Struggle Is Real: Wedding Vendor Edition

By Brenda Sawatzky

bsawatzky@nivervillecitizen.com

It's easy to empathize with the bridal couples of 2020 whose wedding celebrations have been curtailed by the pandemic. But the trickle-down effect of all these downsized or postponed events is that every wedding-related business has been impacted too.

## WHITETAIL MEADOW

The region in and around Niverville and Ritchot has become well known throughout the province for its selection of wedding venues. Whitetail Meadow, located at the corner of Highways 311 and 200, is one of the most recent to make a name for itself.

Catering primarily to wedding parties, their last booking took place on March 7. Since that time, the facility has been closed to all tours and events due to COVID-19.

While Whitetail Meadow lost a number of bookings that couldn't be rescheduled, most bridal couples have been understanding and rebooked their events for the summer of 2021.

"The hardest part for me is feeling the disappointment and stress that our clients are under," says Jenn Neufeld, events coordinator. "Not being able to offer brides a firm timeline as to when things will open up is so difficult. It's not having any concrete answers for them. We are all in limbo and feeling like we are trying to navigate with a blindfold on."

For the owners and staff, it's also difficult to see the beautifully decorated barn, manicured grounds, and honeymoon suite sit vacant during what should be its busiest season.

Now, as the government eases up on restrictions, Neufeld looks forward to trying to fill the many gaps in their calendar.

"We are hopeful that we will be able to book smaller, more intimate weddings, family reunions, and maybe even community events," Neufeld says. "We'll have to wait and see how long the restrictions remain, but it feels as though we can now see the light at the end of the tunnel and look forward to opening the doors once again."

Some couples still wish to marry this year, and they're getting creative when it comes to social distancing, she says. For example, Whitetail will host a number of small wedding ceremonies this year, with



A couple ties the knot at the Heritage Centre in Niverville.

TRISH PALUD PHOTOGRAPHY

receptions to follow in 2021.

At least one grad party will take place at Whitetail Meadow this summer, too.

"We are currently in the planning stages with Steinbach Christian High School to host their grad," Neufeld says. "Their convocation ceremony will be held in the parking lot while guests sit in their vehicles and watch their graduate receive their high school diploma up on the balcony that overlooks the parking lot."

Along a similar vein, drive-in movie nights may become a feature at Whitetail this summer. Neufeld says people should watch their Facebook page and website for details.

"Ultimately, this year looks very different than what we had planned, but we are so grateful for the local support."

## THE HERITAGE EVENT CENTRE

Niverville's Heritage Centre has likewise been closed since the beginning of March. Because the campus also includes four levels of seniors housing, management found it prudent to indefinitely close the event centre as well as Hespeler's Cookhouse and Tavern to protect their vulnerable residents.

Unfortunately, these both provide

significant sources of revenue for the seniors housing facilities under the same roof.

"To me, the most challenging day was when we had to lay off the restaurant and event centre team members," says Robert Manchulenko, Chief Officer of Hospitality and Support Services. "Just weeks before, people were talking about their plans for summer, upcoming trips, visiting family members, buying new vehicles, and their education goals. This was about to change and it was hard to send that message. Everything else we can try to plan or adapt for, [but] the impact on our team members was out of our control and a lot of sleep was lost trying to find a way out if possible."

The centre's event organizers were kept on staff to manage the many calls, questions, and rebooking of the 2020 events that would have otherwise made this the centre's busiest year to date. These staff served double duty during the early months, assisting with food services and entertainment for residents as well.

Manchulenko says that while they lost a few key events booked for the summer, most were able to be rescheduled for some time in the

future.

"[Another] major challenge is dealing with the mental health impact that COVID-19 placed on everyone," Manchulenko says. "The instant lack of activity at the Heritage Centre was different. Days before, there were community members and visitors of all ages in the centre adding life and movement. When the COVID-19 restrictions were introduced, this activity stopped. The once busy common areas were now bare and deserted. This was very different for everyone."

He adds that management has been providing professional counselling services to staff who've been working extra hard to ensure the well-being of the many senior residents.

"We hope to [have the event centre and restaurant] back in operation soon," Manchulenko says. "This will take careful consideration to ensure we can do so in a safe and effective manner."

## LITTLE FLOWER SHOP

Peggy Wiebe is the owner of Little Flower Shop, situated on a rural lot between Niverville and Île-des-Chênes. "Panic" is one of the words she uses to describe the worry and

confusion brought on during the early stages of pandemic restrictions.

Like others, she saw the bulk of her 2020 wedding orders get postponed until 2021, apart from a select few intimate gatherings this summer.

"Many of our growers worldwide have been shredding [their floral products] due to lack of sales," Wiebe says. "It has become mulch, sad to say."

For florists, this means not having access to the wide range of products they're used to. For Wiebe, it has meant getting creative with the stock she's been able to get her hands on.

With wedding arrangement orders on the decline this spring, Wiebe needed to be creative on the marketing side as well. She provided curbside pickup and delivery options, and her advertisements focused on the many other reasons to give flowers to the people you care for.

"We actually saw this virus through Easter and Mother's Day in sell-out mode," Wiebe says.

## TRISH PALUD PHOTOGRAPHY

Trish Palud has made a name for herself in the world of event photography. Graduations and weddings consume an enormous amount of time during her typical summer.

"My business came to an immediate halt as my profession was deemed non-essential during the initial stages of COVID-19," Palud says. "Not only were my scheduled weddings completely cancelled or postponed from March to August, I was unable to book any photography sessions for families, graduates, or other events."

While restrictions are beginning to ease, she says there's still a lot of uncertainty over hosting any events this summer since social distancing protocols make gathering in larger groups very difficult.

Even so, Palud is confident that her business is not at risk. Even before COVID-19, she was able to provide an acceptable distance between herself and the client using special lenses and equipment. Consultations, she says, can take place as easily over Skype or a phone call.

"I feel for my couples that have been planning their weddings for years," Palud says. "It's sad for them and their families, but despite COVID and the postponements, all my wonderful couples have been in great spirits. Love conquers all!"



# New Perimeter Interchange to Improve Traffic Flow to Southeast

By Sara Beth Dacombe

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Commuters, take note: on Monday, June 29, the Province of Manitoba announced the construction of an interchange at the intersection of St. Mary's Road and the South Perimeter Highway.

"The safety of the South Perimeter Highway has been a priority of our government," said MLA Ron Schuler, Minister of Infrastructure as well as the representative for Springfield-Ritchot. "With residential, commercial, and industrial growth in south Winnipeg and communities south of the city, it is time to build the South Perimeter Highway to a freeway standard."

Schuler said the South Perimeter is intended to become a "limited access corridor." So far, 24 mud or gravel roads that meet or cross the Perimeter have been removed. Decreasing these intersections improves safety. However, having fewer access points to the highway also means increasing the amount

of traffic funneling onto major roads.

Schuler noted that the Perimeter/St. Mary's intersection has a high rate of vehicle collisions and sees upwards of 52,000 vehicles at peak use.

The communities of Ritchot, especially St. Adolphe, will feel the impact. Ritchot Mayor Chris Ewen, who also serves as a board member for the Maple Grove Rugby Park, located to the immediate northwest of the intersection, is familiar with the dangers of the area and its high-volume traffic.

"We get a lot of commuters coming that way and it's a beautiful drive. It's a great entrance to Ritchot," says Ewen. "But at Maple Grove Rugby Park, that's a death trap going in and out. For the five to six o'clock rush hour, it's almost impossible to get on and off St. Mary's... I'm so glad to see that developed into something safer for commuters or even tourists coming into Ritchot, to our corn maze in St. Adolphe, etc."

Niverville Mayor Myron



Caption.

CREDIT

Dyck is similarly enthusiastic.

"I knew the province was looking at the South Perimeter when they were doing their studies," says Dyck. "I knew that for the residents of Niverville and our greater area, it has been a dangerous intersection with many accidents, so I'm glad to see it happening."

Dyck acknowledges the safety benefit, as well as the new construction jobs likely to come to local businesses and individuals.

"It's a good thing to see development like this in south Winnipeg, which affects the surrounding areas and will have come with a benefit Niverville will feel," Dyck adds.

That said, with a project of this scale, construction is bound to last a long time and impact traffic for years to come. Commuters will have to deal with new hazards, like detours and road closures.

"I think Ritchot is fortunate enough to have residents who know how to be flexible with their travel routes," says Mayor Ewen. "We're along the floodway and we see the Red River rise annually and have circumstances where we do need to reroute individuals frequently. Our residents know there is always an alternate route and it's just a quick turnaround to the 75 or 59 to get to us. I hope it doesn't interfere with the

long-term positive effects that it's going to have in the short-term. It's too early to see how difficult those reroutes will be, if any."

Minister Schuler says that traffic volume from communities close to the Perimeter from all across southern Manitoba was taken into account when the province conducted the functional review surrounding the South Perimeter. The review also considered the flow of vehicles travelling interprovincially that essentially just need to get around the city.

"As part of the Trans-Canada Highway, the South Perimeter Highway is one of Manitoba's most important trade corridors and plays a strategic role as it also connects with PTH 75, our major route to the United States," said Schuler. "A new interchange will improve reliability and efficiency of Canada's international and interprovincial trade flows and support the growth of our economy."

In 2018, the province developed a South Perimeter Highway Safety Plan,

which included closing some uncontrolled access points and median openings. It also launched a long-term South Perimeter Highway design study to eliminate all at-grade crossings from the Trans-Canada Highway West interchange at Portage Avenue to the Trans-Canada Highway East interchange at Fermo Avenue, replacing them with interchanges and overpasses.

Construction is expected to begin in 2021, to be completed by 2023 following a design-build model. The exact layout of the interchange is not yet known and the budget has not yet been set, as the province awaits tenders from construction companies.

Funding for the overpass is part of the \$500-million Manitoba Restart Program, an economic stimulus package to help restart Manitoba's economy and ramp up construction in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. Within the stimulus package, the province has set aside \$65 million for major highway projects like this one.

**Congratulations  
Grads of 2020**

**Ron R. Schuler**  
MLA for Springfield-Ritchot  
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Niverville Town Council would like to acknowledge Lewis Russell and Leonard Falk, local residents who volunteer their time to support beautification efforts in the Town. Lewis Russell moved to Niverville in 2015 and reached out to the Town to volunteer his services in the area of grounds keeping. His volunteer role has evolved into him taking responsibility for the mowing in the Heritage Cemetery on Main Street. Lewis noted that as he has been given the opportunity and ability to give back, he is more than willing and is thankful. Leonard Falk, a resident of Niverville since 1980, began volunteering his services with the Town in late fall of 2017, when he began collecting garbage and recycling while out walking around Town. Over the years, Leonard's picking "zone" has increased, and he says his "job is done with gladness in a world of COVID sadness". Council on behalf of the Town extends their sincere appreciation for the personal contribution that these volunteers have invested into our community. Their involvement benefits both residents and visitors alike. Thank you to Lewis and Leonard for a job well done!

**Lewis Russell**

**Leonard Falk**

If you are a resident who is looking for a volunteer opportunity with the Town, please send an email to feedback@whereyoubelong.ca together with your contact information and indication of the area of service you would like to volunteer in.

"Alone, we can do so little; together, we can do so much" – Helen Keller.



# Commentary

## Shining a Light on Gaslighting

By Daniel Dacombe

Relationships can be a struggle. This is true of friendships, marriages, and even the parent-child relationship. Every time two human lives interact over a long period of time, there's bound to be conflict. It's natural, just part of the cost of doing business on planet Earth.

In some relationships, though, one person finds themselves constantly undermined by the other party. You might find yourself faced with facts that contradict the other's stories, and are made to feel guilty when you question it or express doubt. You start to notice little lies adding up, but when confronted they deny ever making those statements. You question your memory, your perceptions, and your judgment. You get told you're crazy when you bring up concerns about their actions or words, and after a while you might even start to believe them.

If this sounds familiar to you, either in your own relationships or in relationships close to you, you may have experienced or witnessed a form of psychological manipulation known as gaslighting.

The term gaslighting originates from a 1930s British play, *Gas Light*, in which an abusive husband slowly

convinces his wife she's going insane. In the decades since, the term has been adopted by psychologists to refer to a pattern of behaviour in which one person attempts to undermine another's faith in their own reason, observations, and memory.

The behaviour often occurs over a period of time and might be very subtle, though the gaslighter is often extremely confident in their statements. They may be so confident, in fact, that it causes you to doubt yourself.

Make no mistake: this is not normal behaviour. It's psychological abuse.

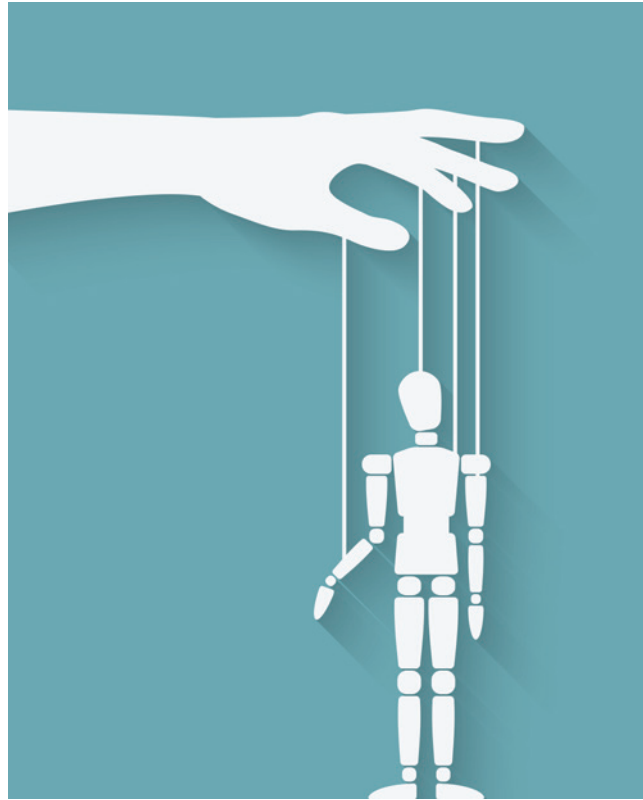
Gaslighting is a tactic employed by many different types of people in many different ways, though there are a few classic examples.

A controlling parent may try to manipulate their children's feelings, dismissing their unhappiness or trying to convince them they don't feel the way they do.

A physically abusive partner may deny any physical abuse took place, even when there is ample evidence.

A financially controlling spouse may hide years of debt with outlandish explanations for how money is always gone, and quietly poison their partner against friends and family who reach out in concern.

Some favourite statements of gaslighters include: "I never



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said that," "They're lying to you; you can't trust anyone but me," "You're crazy," "Don't be so sensitive," "You're over-reacting," "You need to listen to me," "I was only joking," or "Don't be so paranoid."

According to psychologist Dr. Elinor Greenberg, author of a popular book on the subject,<sup>1</sup> there are generally three goals of gaslighting: they're attempting to hide

something from you (often infidelity or financial indiscretion), they're trying to change something about you (your appearance or behaviour), or they are trying to control you (isolating you from others who may disagree with them).

Regardless of the motivation, the common theme is seeking power over another person, often in harmful or manipulative ways.

Generally, gaslighting occurs as a result of the gaslighter's insecurities. Many people who gaslight others grew up in homes where they experienced this treatment from their parents, though it's important to know that not all who experience this as a child will grow up to inflict gaslighting upon others.

In some cases, the gaslighter may have a serious condition known as Narcissistic Personality Disorder (NPD), characterized by grandiose behaviour, manipulative relationships, and a lack of empathy for others. NPD is notoriously difficult to treat, as individuals who are affected by the disorder have great difficulty acknowledging that their behaviour is problematic, and their relationships are often tumultuous and high-stress.

It's important to be aware of gaslighting in our own relationships and others'. But there is another context in which we need to watch out for this behaviour.

Consider a situation in which a prominent politician makes questionable or false statements on television, only to tell people later, "I didn't mean that," "It wasn't that bad," or "I was only joking." Such a politician's supporters may also repeat these denials of reality. And if they are repeated often enough

and confidently enough, it can make people question the evidence of their eyes and ears—which is, after all, the point of gaslighting.

Whether in your own relationships or when hearing political arguments, there are a few things you can do to protect yourself from gaslighting.

1. Recognize the pattern of behaviour—the secrets, the lies, and the attempts to undermine you.

2. Trust the evidence of your eyes and ears—and trust your judgement and the judgement of people who care about you.

3. Realize that it isn't about you—it's about them and their attempts to hide, change, or control.

4. Seek professional help if you find yourself feeling undermined, controlled, or lied to in a relationship.

Remember, relationships can be a struggle. But they shouldn't be controlling, manipulative, or abusive.

### FOR MORE INFORMATION

■ For confidential help and information on physical, psychological, or other forms of abuse, call the Manitoba Domestic Violence Line at 1-877-977-0007, which is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

■ <sup>1</sup> Elinor Greenberg, Ph.D., *Borderline, Narcissistic, and Schizoid Adaptations* (Scotts Valley, CA: CreateSpace, 2016).



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# Sports & Recreation



Mountain bikers from Niverville and the surrounding area have been keeping the new skills park hopping.

■ BRENDA SAWATZKY

## Bike Skills Park Comes to Niverville

By Brenda Sawatzky

✉ bsawatzky@nivervillecitizen.com

A new feature in Hespeler Park should help keep the restless youth of Niverville busy and active this summer. On June 12, thanks to a collaborative effort, a bike skills park was installed on the berm next to the picnic shelter.

Designed by local avid bike riders, phase one of the three-part plan includes a staging area at the top of the hill where riders can access the entrance to the track.

The track loops around the hill and features banked turns and a return route which takes the rider back up to the staging area.

The eventual additions of phases two and three will introduce bumps—or “rollers,” in bike track terms—helping riders keep

their momentum around the banked turns. As well, jumps will be added to provide skill-building opportunities. The end concept is to have a track that allows riders to build up enough speed to carry them through the entire course without peddling.

The final phase is expected to appeal to mountain bikers. A variety of rocks and logs will be installed, creating an obstacle course for the advanced biker.

The inspiration for the bike skills park began with 13-year-old Owen Poettcker of Niverville.

“He is the type of child that is more into individual sports and not a team sports kind of guy,” says Owen’s mom, Denise. “He thought that a bike track would be a great activity for kids of all ages and something to do in the summer months. We were riding

our bikes through Hespeler Park and thought that it would be an amazing space for this type of activity.”

The Poettcker family has been keeping their kids active for a few years now through a program in Winnipeg called Kids of Mud. With the help of coaches, kids learn the fundamentals of cycling etiquette and safety while navigating a variety of terrains.

Thanks to the program and their connection to the Manitoba Cycling Association, the family has been able to experience a variety of bike paths and special riding tracks in many Manitoba communities.

“Morden put in a bike track that became so popular, they expanded it,” Poettcker says. “Steinbach has also put in a bike feature, as well as Altona. Bike parks have one of the widest socioeconomic

demographics of any park facility. They appeal to kids up to seniors and from beginners to professional cyclists.”

Poettcker says that the Town of Niverville has been very supportive since the idea was introduced about four years ago. They immediately put the Poettckers in touch with Darren Sakwi, a Niverville resident and former competitive mountain biker.

Together they developed a formal proposal and worked together with the town’s recreation department to apply for grants.

While grant money hasn’t yet been secured, a number of locals responded to the idea with enthusiasm.

This month, Grant Dyck of Artel Farms and Bryan Trotter of Trotco Electric pooled their resources, equipment, and time to assist in the construction of phase one.

“We were limited with what resources we could use, so we utilized the dirt that had been piled at the base of the large berm,” Poettcker says. “Funding is a limiting factor here... but we have to start somewhere. Progression is the key to the design of a bike skills park to allow kids to learn safely, advance their skills, and be able to move onto more advanced features or to be able to confidently ride in other locations... It also keeps kids returning to the park since there is always something new to work on.”

So far, she says, the response to the feature has been amazing. The heavy equipment had barely vacated the site before kids were arriving from every direction to try out their skills.

“According to the 2016 Stats Canada census, there are 1,575 children between

the ages of zero and 19 currently residing in Niverville,” says Poettcker. “That is 34 percent of the Town of Niverville’s growing population. So any kid that owns a bike [can utilize it], but the skills park would be accessible to riders of all ages and genders and increase the use of Hespeler Park.”

She adds that helmets are mandatory to the track’s use and other protective gear is highly recommended.

Parents should check the site for debris or hazards before allowing their children to ride it.

“Know your limits and ride safely,” she concludes. “More experienced riders, please help out the new riders. Use of the park in wet conditions increases your risk of injury and will damage the track.”

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# Arts & Entertainment



JR Charron at his home in Niverville.

SARA BETH DACOMBE

## Local Country Artist Reveals First Single

By Sara Beth Dacombe

sdacombe@nivervillecitizen.com

Like many people during the pandemic, JR Charron's commute is shorter than ever now that he's working from home—although there's an additional challenge in his case: his home office doubles as his music studio, and he's entirely surrounded by distractions. It can be tough to focus on either financial consulting or his music career, especially when his recent single has achieved considerable success online.

"It was pretty tough to start with, just adjusting my studio space to be an office at the same time," says Charron, who lives in Niverville. "But I've kind of found a happy medium now that we're a couple months into it."

Charron has played in different bands for years and until recently provided wedding entertainment. He has also been working on an EP, which was initially planned for release in early May.

COVID-19 pushed back the album's release, however. Instead he and his band released the first single, "Song for You."

Charron submitted "Song for You" to the Canadian Indie Country Countdown (CICC), a fan-based voting system where songs are ranked according to how many votes they get per week.

Upon its release, "Song for You" very quickly placed in the top 50.

The song has since climbed nearly 10 spots.

Recording styles differ from band to band, and it's tough not to feel disappointed when life results in recording delays.

"There's what's called Tennessee or Nashville recording, where you all get together in a circle and you'll all play at the same time," says Charron. "Or there's traditional recording, where you get together at separate points and record like that. And, well, COVID has put a damper on getting together, that's for sure... The big thing for the release was, we just wanted to have that big show. We just wanted to be able to play with everybody, for fans and people, to actually enjoy that moment because you only get one first EP release."

The full as-yet-unreleased EP is called *Impression* and will feature several brand-new tracks in addition for "Song for You."

"I wrote 'Song for You' a couple years back," he says. "It only took me about 45 minutes to write the song, front to back. I wrote it about my dad. He passed away in 2014 and it pays homage to him and tribute to everyone who's lost someone in that situation."

Charron recently submitted the song for radio play on Golden West and CBC and other local Winnipeg stations.

"The support is very organic. I've noticed tons and tons of social

media shares. It's a whole other level how it's grown by itself. It's really cool."

Charron's fans used to be primarily Winnipeg-based, but he's noticed a fanbase emerging from all over North America. He credits his online music presence on Spotify and iTunes for getting on people's radar, and he muses about how the pandemic has affected people's listening habits.

"A lot more people are listening to music while they're working from home, so they're looking for new playlists and that kind of thing," he says. "I think there was a period of COVID where people weren't listening to music as much. It seemed like it was more of a depressing time and people were down on themselves, but it seems like now people are listening to music now more than ever."

During these strange times, Charron is thankful to be living in Niverville where the community is known for celebrating musicality.

Charron moved to Niverville in October 2018 after having grown up in Binscarth, close to the Saskatchewan border. After moving to Winnipeg to attend school, Charron took a job as a consultant at Bold Commerce in Winnipeg, eventually relocating to Niverville with his wife Amy.

"We were living in the city for years and we wanted out," Charron explains. "We're both small-town people, so Niverville was a

good option as far as the commute was concerned for work... It feels like home."

He adds that the Manitoba music scene is booming, and that it's been underrated as far back as the 1970s, when artists like Neil Young, The Guess Who, and BTO were getting big.

"It may be underground, but you look at things like Live at the Roslyn, people are coming to Manitoba to play music and to record," he says. "We've got some of the best producers in the world here and people don't even know they're here. In Niverville, we've got a world-class recording studio right in town."

Charron has previously played with bands such as Jump the Clutch, whose single "Day Worth Living For" ranked in the top 15 across Canada and the U.S.

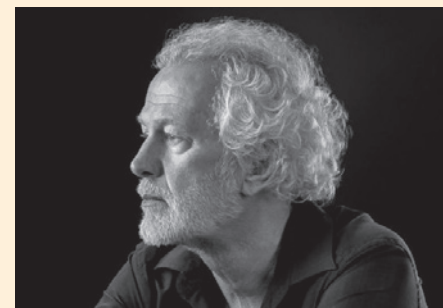
"We were beating out the Tim McGraws of the world and the Florida Georgia Lines and those guys, so that was the first kind of claim to fame, but as far as ['Song for You'] is concerned, it's my first solo release as an artist."

Charron has another single coming in July, with the full EP coming in August.

### FOR MORE INFORMATION

Find him on his website, [www.jrcharron.com](http://www.jrcharron.com), at online music platforms, and on social media.

### IN BRIEF



## Prov Sociology Professor Publishes Second Book

By Evan Braun

editor@nivervillecitizen.com

Dr. Dennis Hiebert, a sociology professor at Providence University in Otterburne, has just published a new book. *Rationality, Humility, and Spirituality in Christian Life* from Cascade Books presents three interconnected essays on how Christians are to express and live out their faith when confronted and humbled by their limitations and human finitude.

This is Hiebert's second book. His first, *Sweet Surrender: How Cultural Mandates Shape Christian Marriage*, came out in 2013.

The latest book explores the cultural shift from religiosity to spirituality in society generally, and in Christian life particularly.

"I hope readers will be able to comprehend the excessive rationality that modern society has built into both the cognitive structure (how we think) and organizational structure (how we live) of contemporary Christian life," Hiebert says. "I hope they will then hear the call to live out an authentic attitude of humility."

Although a sociologist, the book draws from a wide array of disciplines, including psychology, philosophy, history, cultural studies, and religious studies. And although it's written from an academic perspective, it also has pastoral undertones.

The book identifies three aspects of Christian life that are problematic. The first aspect is the extreme rationalization of action and rationalism of belief that have come to characterize modern Christianity. The second is the need for Christians to live with intellectual humility that overbearing rationality makes less likely. The third is the question of how Christians today practice faith. Is it as more of an externally determined and regulated religiosity? Or as an internally differentiated and open spirituality?

In addition to being a professor of sociology, Hiebert serves as the department head of Arts and Sciences at Providence. He is also editor of the *Journal of Sociology and Christianity* and a past president of the Christian Sociological Association.





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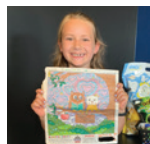
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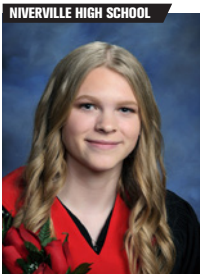
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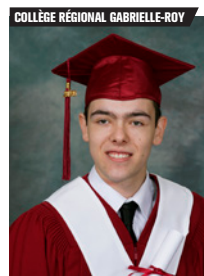
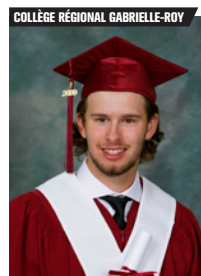
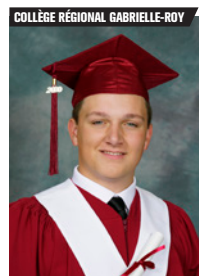
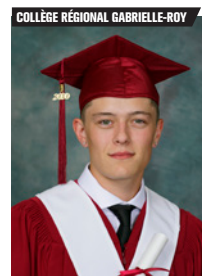
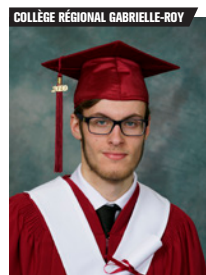
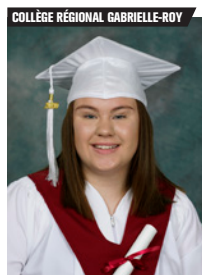
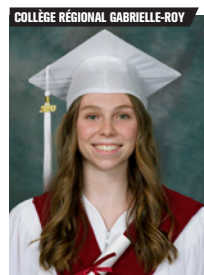
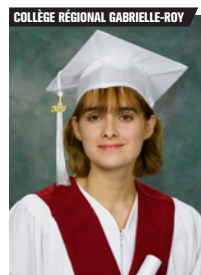
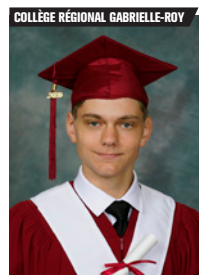
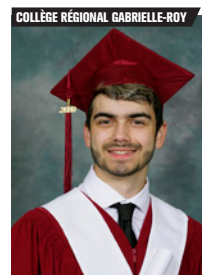
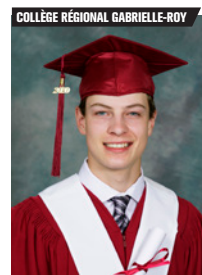
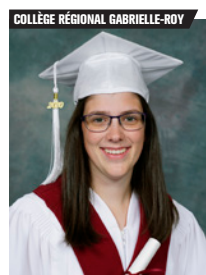
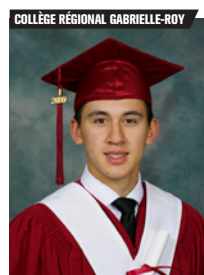
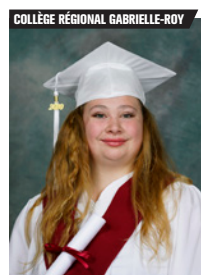
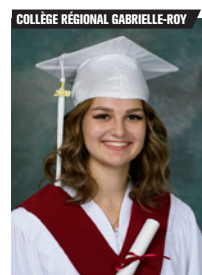
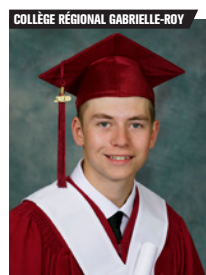
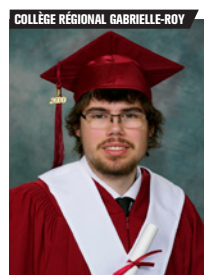
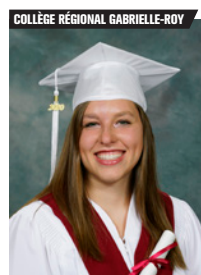
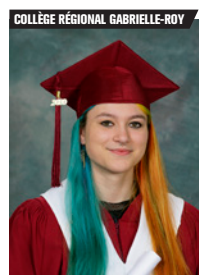
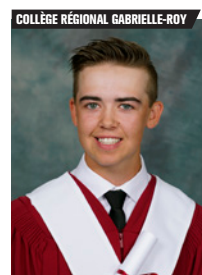
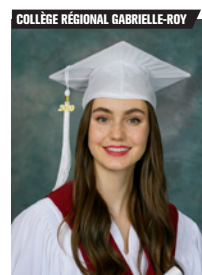
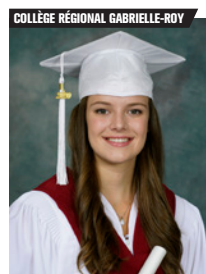
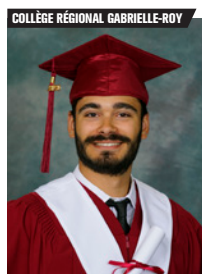
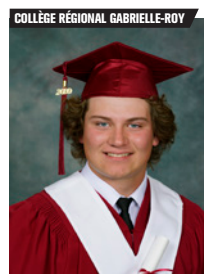
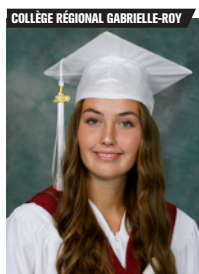
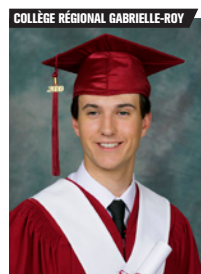
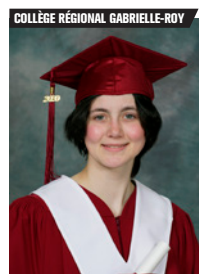
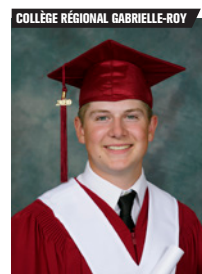
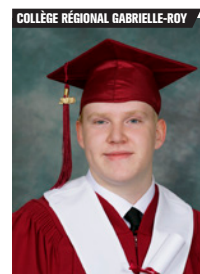
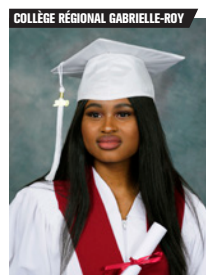
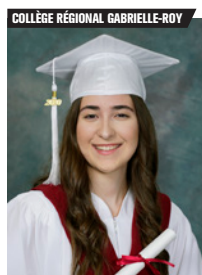
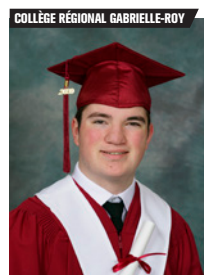
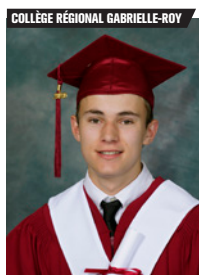
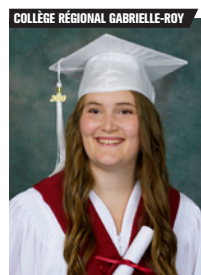
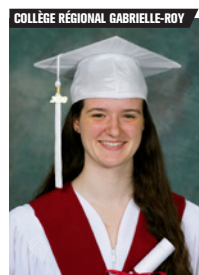
KADEN  
**WOYTOWICH**



ARABELLA  
**ZEILSTRA**



## COLLÈGE RÉGIONAL GABRIELLE-ROY

ZACHARY  
ARNALMERCEDES  
AUDETTENOAH  
BARTLETTERICK  
BERARDTUNDE  
BERENGSÉBASTIEN  
BOISJOLITARA  
BOULANGERMATHEW  
CAMARAÉMILIE  
CHIDLOW-CHARTIERCAROLINE  
COUGHLANEMMA  
COUGHLANDORIANE  
COURCELLESPEYTON  
CUILLERIERJUSTIN  
CURÉSACHA  
DELAQUISSAMUEL  
DEQUIERSYLVIE  
DESHARNAISTANNER  
DILLABOUGHALEXANDER  
DOANÉMILIE  
DORNEZGABRIELLE  
DOSTIE-CHARETTEKAITLYN  
DUPUISÉMILIE  
ESPENELLMEGAN  
FILLIONJACLYNN  
FIOLACOLBY  
FRIESENDENIS  
GAGNONVINCENT  
GAUDREAUCHRISTINA  
HARBOWAYKATARINA  
HEINEMBER  
KLAASSENLUC  
LAGASSÉALEXIE  
LEPAGEZOE  
MACLEANCHLOÉ  
MANAIRESAMUEL  
MARKWARTEVAN  
MONTSIONSOPHIE  
MORRICEHAYDEN  
MOYLE-WILSONRACHELLE  
PERSCHELMIGUEL  
SORINCOLE  
ST. LAURENTALEXANDRE  
STEVENSONNAOMI  
SUMAILICHLOÉ  
TETREAULTMAEL  
TOUPINJONAH  
TREMBLAYMEGHAN  
TREMBLAYÉMILIE  
VACHONGABRYELLE  
VERMETTELYNNE  
WALLACKRILEY  
WEIR



# BUILDING MATERIAL BLOWOUT

PRICES VALID UNTIL AUGUST 30TH OR WHILE SUPPLIES LAST

## 4' x 8' - 1/2" Ultralight Drywall

- Cash and carry price



**\$12<sup>48</sup>**  
SHEET

#D12408

## Halo Exterra®

- Exterior applications
- Breathable, walls stay dry & healthy
- Built-in weather barrier
- Perforated laminate allows vapour to escape the wall assembly
- 4' x 8' x 1/2"



**\$19<sup>98</sup>**  
SHEET

REG. \$25<sup>12</sup>  
#E154X8

## IKO® Dynasty Shingles

IKO Dynasty shingles offer quality laminated performance, peace of mind and protection from inclement weather. PLUS they look fantastic, boost curb appeal and can potentially increase the resale value of your property.

IKO Dynasty shingles are manufactured with ArmourZone, a 1-1/4" wide nailing surface for correct nail placement reinforced by a tear-resistant band that provides even more fastening strength over a wider surface area of the shingle. Nails applied in this area are optimally positioned to help resist nail pull-through and shingle blow-off, even in high winds.

Bigger than most competitors' comparable product, they offer greater exposure to give you a dramatic-looking roof that really stands out from the ordinary



**SUMMER BLOWOUT**

**\$25<sup>48</sup>**  
BUNDLE

AVAILABLE COLOURS:  
Glacier, Castle Grey, Cornerstone,  
Pacific Rim, Biscayne,  
Appalachian, Brownstone

## Moistureshield® Composite Decking Vantage™ Series

**VERSATILE, DURABLE & DEPENDABLE**

Composite decking board that works better than pressure treated lumber. There's no material that cuts, rips or bends better, while still maintaining its integrity.

There is no need for painting, staining or yearly repairs with this decking option that's resistant to moisture, rot and warping.



**SUMMER BLOWOUT**

**\$2<sup>98</sup>**  
LN. FT.

EARTHTONE COLOUR ONLY