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LOCAL NEWS

COVID Casts a Pall on New School Year

■ The time has come to send kids back to school, and once again the pandemic is creating anxiety and confusion.

Details on Pages 3-4



LOCAL NEWS

Manitoba's First Wildlife Veterinarian Hospital Opens Near Île-des-Chênes

■ In August, Wildlife Haven opened the doors of its brand-new veterinarian hospital, a first-of-its-kind facility in Manitoba that is designed to provide medical care to injured wildlife.

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COMMENTARY

Why Do We Do Good?

■ This month, columnist Daniel Dacombe explores the origins of altruism. Why do we help others when there's no tangible benefit to ourselves?

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SPORTS & REC

Daycamps Keep New Rec Centre Hopping

■ Niverville's CRRC, which opened in July, has been kept busy all summer with young daycampers.

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CONSERVATIVE
TED FALK
CONSERVATIVE PARTY OF CANADA



Liberal
TREVOR KIRCZENOW
LIBERAL PARTY OF CANADA



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Get to Know the Candidates in This Year's Federal Election

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Going Back to School Under the Pall of COVID

As plans for the upcoming school year change, everyone involved—whether parents, teachers, or administrators—struggle to cope with the unfolding reality.

By Jennifer Lavin
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The new school year is nearly upon us and once again COVID-19 is wreaking havoc on parents and staff as they prepare to return.

As of this writing, approximately 78 percent of Manitobans who are eligible to be vaccinated have received both of the recommended doses. An even larger number, about 82 percent, have received at least one dose.

These figures rise daily, but the rate of increase has slowed as misinformation and confusion about the vaccines continues to circulate in the face of the fourth wave.

Late in August, in a move that came as a surprise to many, Premier Brian Pallister mandated vaccinations for all eligible Manitobans who work in the government or with vulnerable people.

This had an immediate impact on the school system, since it means all school employees will need to be vaccinated or face up to three COVID-19 tests per week.

In the same announcement, Pallister brought back the indoor mask mandate. As a result, school will once again begin with masked students, teachers, and administration.

The Citizen spoke with a number

of parents in the rural southeast regarding their feelings about sending their children back to school. Many parents were willing to speak on the record but wanted to remain anonymous, since masking and vaccination have proven to be such polarizing issues.

One anonymous mother, A1, has children in Grades One, Four, and Six. She has concerns about the upcoming school year. Last year, she decided to home-school.

"We live in an area with disappointingly low vaccination rates, so there is concern about community transmission at school," says A1. "If the numbers head south leading into the school year, I will likely pull my kids to home-school again."

A second mother, A2, who has also chosen to remain anonymous, has two high-school-aged children, although she is concerned for entirely different reasons.

"I am concerned that there will be too much peer pressure or judgment placed on the children for the decisions their parents have made to vaccinate or not," she says.

A2 adds that she wants her children to be in school and feels that home-schooling last year didn't work out well for her family at all.

"I watched last year as my A+ average students became D- students

during COVID-19."

Another local parent, Michelle Laarissa, has two daughters attending Manitoba's French-language school division in the fall. She is cautiously optimistic.

"There is hope on the horizon that this year might be closer to normal than the past two," says Laarissa.

A third anonymous mother, A3, has children at Niverville Middle School and Niverville High School. Until very recently, she says that she was calm about her children going back to school.

"But I'm getting nervous now with the cases of children contracting COVID-19 rising in the U.S.," says A3. "I'm also concerned about the effects of the recent brief lifting of mask mandates."

The next anonymous mother, A4, has one child entering Kindergarten. She is both excited and nervous for her son's first school experience.

"I'm not so nervous about my son contracting the virus," A4 says. "We follow the rules as a family and don't spend a lot of time in public places outside of school and work. I'm more nervous about him having a bad school experience due to COVID-19. The early years are so fundamental and you can't get that time back."

(continued on page 4)



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(continued from page 3)

Through interviewing so many parents, it became clear that their number one issue concerned the use of masks.

Amber Klassen has one child in preschool and reports that she has been able to breathe easier ever since the indoor mask mandate was reinstituted.

Many of the others—including A1, A2, A3, and Laarissa—say that their children would have been masked even if it hadn't been mandated.

But not everyone agrees. A fifth anonymous mother, A5, has a daughter going into Grade One at Niverville Elementary School and she has some lingering concerns.

Principally, she feels that the previous policy—in which children in Grades One through Three would have worn a mask only if it was their parents' choice—was better.

"For students that young, it should be parental choice," says A5. "Young children often have a hard time keeping a mask on and I don't think it's healthy for young children to breathe through a mask for extended periods of time. But if other parents are concerned about their children's health or feel like their child is okay with wearing a mask, then it should be their choice."

A5 also feels that wearing a mask at such a young age may give people a false sense of security. Having worked with young children, she recalls how often they touch everything around them.

"A mask won't change that, or maybe will only slightly reduce it," she says. "Children touch masks, pull it down to wipe or pick their noses, and then put it back on to proceed to touch everything around them, trade them with each other... How is that preventing any virus from being spread amongst a class of 25 Grade One students? It won't! I think from the outside, those very concerned about this virus for their children will feel comforted seeing all the children with masks on at school. But in reality, will it actually help stop Delta from spreading amongst children?"

A4 feels differently. She points out that the early years of school, in particular Kindergarten, are very social experiences and that the children often learn through play.

Last year's policy of social distancing as the method of choice for preventing COVID-19 transmission was, in A4's opinion, not really practical for young children and took away from the experience.

"I'm sure teachers did the very best they could, but I almost don't see the point of Kindergarten if the kids can't interact with one another or freely explore and are contained to a table spot," A4 says. "With the implementation of mandatory masks, my hope is there will be less emphasis on social distancing and possibly a more 'normal' Kindergarten experience. I hope they can play with each other, sit together during carpet time, sing, and play tag."

As for vaccinations, all the

parents who spoke to *The Citizen* were basically on the same page.

A1 says that her children are currently too young to be vaccinated but that they will be as soon as they're old enough.

She was strongly in favour of the new mandate from the government requiring all employees in the school system to be fully vaccinated.

A3 and Laarissa both say that their eligible children have been vaccinated and their younger children will be vaccinated as soon as they're old enough.

BIGGER THAN ANY SCHOOL DIVISION

Shelley Amos, interim superintendent of the Hanover School Division, says that she has received a lot of correspondence from people on both sides of the mask and vaccine debates.

Amos would like people to understand that she is not the one who makes these policies, nor is she the one who will decide the consequences for those who choose not to follow the rules.

"I think for some people there is some misinformation, or there's a belief that Hanover School Division has made some of these decisions, or even that Hanover School Division has input into some of these decisions," says Amos. "We don't. We are legally obligated to follow the public health order as it stands, so it's much bigger than any one school division."

Amos points out that often-times she and her team hear the

public health announcements at the same time as the rest of the province. Because of this, many of the questions that are directed to her office in the immediate hours and days following press conferences can't be answered for the simple reason that the answers don't yet exist.

As of this writing, Amos says that the division is still awaiting input from the provincial government on multiple issues related to COVID-19, as well as from the Manitoba School Boards Association and from their legal counsel.

When asked about staff members and potential push-back regarding the vaccination mandate, Amos says that she has received some general inquiries from staff members but no one has, as of yet, officially said that they intend to go against the policy.

She refers to what she has received so far as "vague initial correspondence."

An anti-mask rally was held on Monday, August 30 at the division offices in Steinbach.

Amos had heard about the plans and that there wasn't much the division could do about a gathering taking place on public property.

Approximately 300 people showed up at the rally, including a number of children to protest the pandemic mandates. The RCMP were called in.

"Once again, I want people to understand that it's not the Hanover School Division's decision to implement [the policies regarding] the mask or the vaccination or the testing," says Amos. "Those

are decisions made by Public Health. I would just encourage people to be peaceful and understanding, compassionate and collaborative."

She adds that she fully understands that there are many different opinions about all the mandates and policies and COVID-19 in general.

"Despite everything that is going on, our students are coming back into our buildings and we are really looking forward to welcoming them back... in person, in classrooms with teachers, where we know that our kids learn best," Amos says. "We know how hard and trying this has been on the mental health and well-being for everyone over the last 18 months and so we want those relationships with our kids in our schools."

A DIVERSITY OF OPINION

When asked what they would like to see happen in our local schools for the upcoming year, the parents we spoke with had many thoughts.

A3 says she hopes that if mask mandates are lifted at some point in the future, her children won't feel singled out for continuing to wear them.

A2 also has concerns about kids being singled out.

"The cohorts are only beneficial for limiting contact, not stopping it, and that pressure on students needs to stop," says A2. "We are teaching our children to discriminate against others because of age, group, vaccination choice, or more... Let's be real: the students eat lunch with their friends with no masks and see each other outside of school

with no masks. Let's not make it so they can't sit in a class properly without a mask while sitting alone at a desk."

Klassen believes that everyone involved has so far been doing their best to deal with the difficult hand they were dealt.

"No one has lived through a pandemic before, so I didn't have many expectations," says Klassen. "I'm glad to see people in power mandating masks again and putting restrictions in place to keep kids safe. My family, along with myself, have worked so hard and tirelessly to keep us all safe, listening to the restrictions, and being diligent. It was a huge slap to the face knowing that so many did not care and only listened because they had to."

For her part, Laarissa spoke about the impact that the pandemic has had on the world—impacts that we are only beginning to understand.

"Our children are the future, and the lessons they are learning now about thinking of others, being kind, being generous, being helpful, and persevering through this challenging time will have a lasting effect," Laarissa says. "I truly believe they will be stronger and more resilient as a result. I don't envy the decision-makers at this time and am thankful for the hard work they have done to walk us through these unprecedented times. I am thankful to live in a country that has provided free access to vaccines, testing, and medical care when needed. Many in the world do not have this privilege."

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NIVERVILLE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE



Lawyer Opens New Practice in Niverville

By Evan Braun

✉ editor@nivervillecitizen.com

A new law office is opening in Niverville and its sole practitioner is looking forward to serve the community.

Chidera Anadi-Mbanefo is the founder of CAM's Law Office, located at 18 Third Avenue in Niverville, and she's just getting her practice off the ground.

Born in Nigeria, she immigrated to Canada with her family in 2018.

"Prior to landing in Canada, my sister-in-law lived in Niverville," says Anadi-Mbanefo. "The community became my home from the day I landed in Canada. I find peace in this community. Niverville is filled with great people who are very accommodating, and I choose to remain here and practice here. Having watched Niverville grow within the last three years, I definitely want to be part of this growth."

Anadi-Mbanefo obtained her law degree (LL. B hons) from Madonna University Nigeria and has practiced in her country of birth since 2015.



Chidera Anadi-Mbanefo, founder of CAM's Law Office.

In 2019, she began the process of getting licensed to practice law in Manitoba.

"With a lot of hard work, I received my qualifying certificate from the National Committee on Accreditation of the Federation of Law Societies of Canada in less than a year," Anadi-Mbanefo says. "I then successfully articulated in

Winnipeg and was called to the Manitoba Bar this year."

Her primary areas of specialization are real estate, family law, immigration law, wills and estate law, and civil litigation.

"My articling year exposed me to how law is practiced in Manitoba," she says. "Having been practicing in Nigeria,

I have carved out my own approach to practicing law. When people think of lawyers, they only imagine the courtrooms. Lawyers do not only have advocacy skills but problem-solving skills. I have seen cases where lawsuits are won but the problem is not solved. I have a collaborative approach to practicing law, which the judicial system encourages. I do not just see it as a necessity, but as an approach that leads to prompt results. The best solutions are actually found outside the courtrooms. That being said, when the court is the only available option, I am strategic, effective, and on my client's side."

She adds that it has been a long-time dream to own and operate her own practice.

"I always wanted to have my own practice, as I am a strong believer in growth," Anadi-Mbanefo says. "I am definitely looking forward to growing, employing staff, and attracting people to this great community."

Although she is currently the only lawyer at her new practice, she is in the process of hiring part-time help.

IN BRIEF



New Food Shop Bursts with Eastern European Flavour

By Zoe Pelletier

A new business in Île-des-Chênes is turning heads. KraveMore Foods, which focuses on Eastern European specialty foods and dessert, recently opened a physical storefront after operating as a delivery service throughout the summer.

The business is located in the same building as the bar on Lacroix Avenue.

Owner Arie Kravets started his venture two and a half months ago by making deliveries to Winnipeg and the surrounding area.

The physical store is only two weeks old, but Kravets says that so far he's received nothing but positive feedback from the community. He is excited for more people to come and experience his new business.

"Offering deliveries has definitely helped with sales [through the pandemic], and with a \$100 purchase, delivery is free," says

Kravets. "It has also given people an opportunity to try out our products."

KraveMore Foods offers a wide range of products, including baked goods, meat and deli, fish and seafood, coffees, teas, pantry items, and even some housewares. They also offer keto-friendly options.

Of course, the past year has been challenging for everyone—never mind for those looking to branch out and start a new business.

"It's been tough starting a new business during COVID, and difficult to find staff, but it's new and exciting," he adds. "People seem to be well receiving of what we're doing and of the European products we offer."

So far, he says his most popular products have been cakes and coffee. When customers visit, they can expect to be greeted by a warm and welcoming atmosphere with plenty of interesting new foods in stock.

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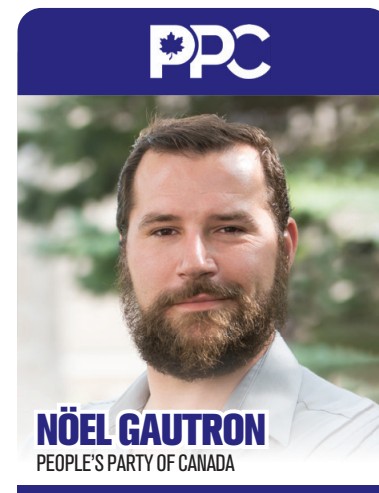
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Getting to Know the Candidates

On September 20, Canadians will elect a new federal government. To help make that decision, The Citizen has reached out to all five local candidates.



By Sara Beth Dacombe

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Canadians from coast to coast will go to the polls on September 20 to elect a new federal government. The announcement came on Sunday, August 15 after newly installed governor-general Mary Simon approved a request by Prime Minister Justin Trudeau to dissolve Parliament.

According to law the next election didn't need to occur until October 2023, so this election has come about two years early.

This will be Canada's forty-fourth federal election and will have a 36-day campaign, the shortest campaign allowed by law.

Dates have already been set for a pair of televised debates between the national leaders. The French-language debate will come first, on September 8, followed by the English-language version the following evening from 8:00–10:00 p.m.

Here in Provencher, several candidates have been announced. To help you make a decision, *The Citizen* has reached out to the candidates.

Now, let's get to know them.

TED FALK, CONSERVATIVE

Falk, along with wife Irene, has three adult children and ten grandchildren. He is a member of Steinbach Mennonite Brethren Church and describes himself as "family-focused, fiscally-focused, and community-focused." He is actively involved in the local community and enjoys volunteering his time with local organizations or operating his small business.

As Provencher's MP for more than eight years, Falk has served on several parliamentary committees, including Public Safety and National Security, Justice and Human Rights, and Natural Resources. He has also served as the Conservative Party's Deputy Shadow Minister for Employment, Workforce Development, and Labour

and as a member of the National Security and Intelligence Committee of Parliamentarians.

He currently sits on the Standing Committee on Finance.

Campaign plans. Falk says he has a robust schedule. While he is trying to connect with as many in the community as possible, he won't do the customary door-knocking.

"More of what we are doing is trying to hit every door with some literature letting them know we were there," says Falk.

He is among the candidates taking part in a live broadcast public debate on September 16. He also encourages constituents to find out more about him on social media.

Goals/values: economy, security, and pro-life. The Conservative campaign platform includes a focus on bringing Canadians out of recession and rebuilding the economy.

"We've seen the reckless spending of the last five years of Justin Trudeau,

and that's something we're working to be able to undo by bringing security in jobs and job creation," says Falk. "From the get-go, Canada's Conservatives presented a complete, detailed platform to Canadians. It's all there in black and white."

Falk released a press release outlining the Conservative plan to secure jobs, improve accountability, and address mental health.

"Conservatives wasted no time bringing forward our plan because we know families, businesses, and workers are struggling," he says. "We're focused on helping our families and communities come back stronger by creating jobs, increasing wages, and getting Canada's economy back on track."

Falk wants his supporters in Provencher to know that he differs from Conservative leader Erin O'Toole on abortion rights. O'Toole recently declared that he was pro-choice.

"That certainly seems to be Erin

O'Toole's position," says Falk. "But as the Conservative Party of Canada, we are the only party that supports thought and opinion. We're the only major party that allows for diversity of thought on matters of conscience. We are a big family. We don't always agree on everything. And abortion is something we may not always agree on."

The vaccination question. One of the most top-of-mind issues with voters this year has to do with COVID-19 vaccines. Falk is one of a handful of Conservative candidates who has declined to confirm whether he is vaccinated.

Doing so, he says, wouldn't be beneficial toward creating unity and harmony in the riding.

"That is a position that I will not share. I believe those are private health decisions made between a private individual and their physician," says Falk. "The Trudeau government, history will record, is a government



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that has created a lot of division and dissension. They've divided people by race, class, financial status. So much divisiveness in this Trudeau government... and I've seen the COVID vaccine create a lot of division even among friends and families in Provencher. And I'm not going to be part of that divisiveness."

Falk also says he will encourage people to have those medically sensitive conversations with their healthcare providers.

"People should do their own research," he adds.

He was also asked whether he supports federal policies, including some shared by the Conservative leader, mandating vaccines or regular vaccine testing.

"I don't support any mandatory vaccine policies," Falk says. "I think that is an issue of free choice."

Chance of victory. The Conservatives have held the Provencher riding for more than 20 years. Falk says the most exciting thing about the current election is that there's a chance for his party to be in power once again.

"The polls seem to be indicating that the Conservatives are increasing their support among all Canadians and that we may have the opportunity to be in government again and govern the country to make laws and move toward unifying the country from coast to coast," says Falk. "I'm excited for the possibility of being in government representing Provencher and restoring what I think has been the mismanagement of our finances and representing strong and traditional family values."

TREVOR KIRCZENOW, LIBERAL

Kirczenow, 36, lives with his husband and two kids on their small farm near Dugald. He has an honours Bachelor of Arts in Political Science from the University of British Col-

umbia and is a professional musician, having performed full-time with the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra.

On their farm, the family raises goats, turkeys, and chickens. Kirczenow is currently the breed registrar for the Ojibwe Horse Society, a national not-for-profit which aims to preserve Canada's only Indigenous-developed horse breed.

After the births of their children, Kirczenow initiated and led a research study funded by the Canadian Institutes of Health Research about the experiences of transgender parents with pregnancy, birth, and infant feeding.

He is the author of *Where's the Mother? Stories From a Transgender Dad*.

Kirczenow is also an advocate for diabetes awareness.

"I led a health research study that looked at the experiences of transgender people with building their families," says Kirczenow. "I've authored academic articles and a memoir, and this past year I've been involved in a successful grassroots diabetes campaign that pushed the provincial government to improve coverage for life-saving diabetes supplies."

Campaign plans. Kirczenow plans to knock on doors in the Niverville and Ritchot areas, while maintaining safety protocols.

"I wear a mask and I knock, but then step more than six feet away to keep the social distance," he says.

He says that voters can go online (<https://event.liberal.ca/en/events>) to find out about planned door-knocking events near them. They just need to enter a postal code.

Voters can also find out more about him by visiting his website, www.trevor-liberal.ca, or by tracking him down on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, or TikTok.

Kirczenow plans to take part in a public debate organized by the Steinbach

Chamber of Commerce. The live, broadcast-only event will not include members of the public in the audience.

That said, Kirczenow says he is concerned about spending time indoors with other candidates, two of whom are either publicly confirmed as non-vaccinated or non-disclosed, given how many touch points candidates have during campaigning, and with COVID cases rising again in southeast Manitoba.

"I am so grateful for all organizers involved. I had the opportunity to debate the Conservative representative in 2019 and I would certainly welcome it again," says Kirczenow. "However, I have young children in my household, one of whom has diabetes, a health condition identified as high-risk if the individual contracts COVID-19."

Kirczenow recognizes that this issue is playing out among many people in society and that it affects friends and family members who have different views on vaccines.

"It's a challenging issue facing many of us right now, for sure," he says. "For the health of an individual in my care who is high-risk and ineligible for a vaccine right now, I must make decisions very carefully."

Goals/values: environment, childcare, and healthcare. As the Liberal Party candidate, Kirczenow's goal is to represent the diverse voices in Provencher as best he can.

One of the top issues for him is climate change and making adjustments to our economy by adopting environmental best practices. He feels the Liberal government has developed, and continues to develop, programs that help support corporate accountability and incentives that benefit the environment.

"I have been hearing from constituents that they are worried about our environment and climate change, and that's a big issue for me,

too. I appreciate the progress we have made in the last few years, but I want to see that continue even more quickly," says Kirczenow. "We now have the Green Homes Grant, Agricultural Climate Solutions, and Agricultural Clean Technology programs up and running. All of these programs provide support and incentives to those who want to invest in clean energy and climate solutions, such as better insulation, new windows and doors, solar panels, planting and protecting shelterbelts, and making use of cover crops. These programs create new jobs, as well as help us tackle the climate crisis. I would like to see us do more to protect our water at the federal level through our new Canada Water Agency that is currently being developed."

In April 2021, the Liberals introduced a plan to build a Canada-wide, community-based system of affordable early learning and childcare for an average of \$10 per day.

Healthcare is another top priority for Kirczenow. He takes seriously the long-term healthcare cost of COVID-19. He is also passionate about access to healthcare and the affordability of prescription medications and medical devices.

"National universal pharmacare is in the Liberal Party platform, because Canadians should have access to needed, life-saving medications, regardless of where they live or their socioeconomic status," he says. "Making this a reality will require hard work and cooperation with the provinces and territories, but we can't afford not to do it. When someone has to make tough choices between medication and other essentials, or they simply can't afford to take their medication, it's harmful to the individual's health and well-being, and it also costs our system down the road when that person ends up

(continued on page 8)



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(continued from page 7)

needing more urgent, serious care for something that could have been prevented."

The vaccination question. Kirczenow is upfront about his vaccination status and is fully vaccinated. He says he is willing that everyone know his vaccination status because federal employees working with the public should be transparent.

"I am proud to say I've been fully vaccinated," he says. "I think that those seeking public office have a responsibility to lead on this issue, and to set an example. We need to protect our community, especially those who are unable to be vaccinated due to age or medical fragility. I support the policy of requiring proof of vaccination in order to take part in certain types of activities... We need to take care of our most vulnerable."

For those who are vaccine-hesitant, Kirczenow recommends talking directly to a healthcare provider. He understands that everyone has the right to know what is being put into their body.

"To someone who might say, 'But I want to have control over what goes into my body,' it's important to note that if you're not vaccinated, and you catch COVID, that virus is going to go into your body, and you won't have much control over how your body copes with the infection. You can gain some control by choosing to be vaccinated, because we know that vaccination dramatically lowers your chance of dying or experiencing serious complications from COVID."

Hope for local change. Kirczenow desires to bring his energy to work for the people in Provencher.

"I am passionate about being a voice for a broad diversity of Provencher constituents in Ottawa," he says. "I have a lot of energy, I'm a problem-solver, and I'm ready

to work!"

The Conservatives have represented Provencher federally since 2000, but Kirczenow says that even though the Conservatives have held this region for a long time, there is hope for change.

"I don't think any party should take any riding for granted, ever. The people of Provencher have a choice, and they will have their say," says Kirczenow. "I'm working hard to reach as many voters as I can, and I have an ever-growing team of enthusiastic volunteers."

JANINE GIBSON, GREEN

Janine Gibson lives on a solar powered cooperative farm south of Steinbach. Living and working with nature has nourished her responsibility to protect health through protecting soil, water, and community health.

Gibson also works for the International Organic Inspectors Association, where she currently serves as a peer evaluator, trainer, and international VP. She has education in psychology and human ecology.

She builds organic agriculture in Manitoba through her business, Creative Health Consulting, and serves as the executive secretary of the Organic Food Council of Manitoba.

As a proud mother and grandmother, her emphasis on sustainable agriculture addresses many of the social, environmental, and economic challenges currently faced in Provencher.

Campaign plans. Gibson says that she stays in touch with her supporters year round, and together they represent the green activists in Provencher.

She adds that people are welcome to get to know her through her website (www.greenpartyprovencher.ca).

Goals/values: environment, economy, and diversity. As the Green Party

candidate, Gibson's goal is to represent everyone in Provencher.

She highlights the issue of basic maintenance of water and soil quality in our area.

"Almost all of our communities in the southeast here depend on groundwater and wells," she says. "The Can-White Sands mining programs in Vivian, Manitoba threaten our aquifer, which supplies water to our groundwater and wells. There is not enough knowledge among our leaders to see that this is an issue affecting all of us here in the southeast."

In fact, she sees this as an international issue, since highly toxic water will be returned to the aquifer through this mining process.

"Issues like logging and ensuring our soil quality are also important. We need to move toward a form of agriculture that is resilient, that will get us through these intense weather pattern changes... to produce a stable food source."

She is glad that environmentalism and climate change have recently been highlighted in global politics.

"We are glad that the other parties listen to our concerns and speak to environmentalism as well, because our issues are fundamental," she says. "Likewise, the Green Party ensures they are fiscally and economically minded. I'm pro-business. I've run my own business for 32 years. I know that it's not just about saying we should stop subsidies to destructive industries; it's about a sound plan to create green jobs. Doing business with environmental best practice is not going to result in job loss. We wouldn't abandon workers. We need to shift how we work to regenerate the damages done. In sectors that would slowly shut down, we would ensure there is employment and income for workers who would join in the jobs that would be created in

sectors that support nature."

In both her environmental and economic focus, Gibson speaks of diversity being the way forward for sustainable living and job creation.

"Firstly, the importance of diversity means there needs to be more women voices," says Gibson. "The Green Party supports diversity. The concept of diversity is a principle of everything we've built on. We respect cultural and religious diversity."

One of the federal solutions Gibson would be in favour of is universal basic income. She says that the initiative has been shown to target social issues like poverty, mental health, and crime, which she says is on the rise in Provencher.

"If we used this social financial tool, we could overcome poverty," Gibson says. "Overcoming poverty is shown to overcome addiction, improve crime rates, improve focus on education, and further enable all the contributions our citizens are able to make."

The vaccination question. Gibson is upfront about her vaccination status and is fully vaccinated.

"I know vaccines work and we've seen them work," she says. "Vaccines are allowed in organic agriculture because they prevent disease and death. It's the same with people... We need to come up with a system that reflects the needs of everyone while also addressing the individual concerns that people have, encouraging vaccines as broadly as possible."

Gibson says she knows the pressure on the Manitoba healthcare system from hearing directly from friends and family who are nurses and doctors.

"I want to work with my friends and neighbours who are vaccine-hesitant to address their concerns. We need to talk to those who are hesitant about vaccines so they know more about vaccines and know what

happens when they make the effort to wear masks and get vaccinated, and that is we can all protect healthcare workers and the most vulnerable, and we should. We need to ensure they are protected."

Passion. What really makes Gibson come alive is working to keep environmental issues at the forefront for Canadians.

"The lack of proper government oversight in the areas that are affecting Provencher is inexcusable. Companies say one thing—and when we look a little deeper, we know the checks and balances aren't there. What they say they're doing, it's not what they are doing. It's my job to verify that what they say they're doing is what they are doing. I also have a moral responsibility to point out when neighbours aren't being so thoughtful, and this means holding corporate neighbours responsible for the community costs that we pay for as a group while they profit as individuals. We can and should be holding each other responsible to ensure our children and grandchildren will have a future."

Even though the Conservatives have held the Provencher riding for so long, Gibson has represented the Greens in seven federal elections and she feels she is up to the job of representing the area.

"Some newspapers have said we have the most conservative riding in all of Canada," says Gibson. "But when I look at the voter turnout and percentage who are voting Green, I also see Provencher has the national average of voters voting Green, so that encourages me to continue to run. Democracy doesn't work if we are all complacent citizens. People with diverse opinions should be able to exercise their political voices. People who come from different perspectives are valuable. Yes, we all want to love our neighbours as ourselves, and to me that means participating

in discussion about our drinking water, safe injection sites, vaccinations, and more.

She says that the Conservatives have an out-of-touch attitude regarding health issues, criminal issues, and environmental issues.

"We are and will continue to be leaders in raising awareness of these issues, which are all about how we treat each other," Gibson adds. "We are all part of each other's world and we can't pretend that we're not."

NÖEL GAUTRON, PPC

Nöel Gautron has lived his entire life in Provencher and cannot imagine putting down roots anywhere else. He has worked for the past seven years in the field of logistics as both a driver and a dispatcher.

Gautron's family has lived in Manitoba since long before Confederation and he grew up hearing about his ancestors' way of life. This has stirred his passion for both history and politics and has provoked a desire to serve the community.

He says three words that describe himself would be steadfast, honest, and vocal.

Campaign plans. Gautron plans to canvas as much of Provencher as possible during the short campaign, with at least one event in Steinbach and/or Niverville.

"Given the tight window we're working with, it may not be possible to meet everyone I would like, so I would encourage people to visit the party website for reference to the platform."

Voters can read more about the People's Party of Canada at their website (www.peoplespartyofcanada.ca).

Gautron has also agreed to take part in the September 16 live-broadcast public debate.

Goals and values: opposing vaccine mandates. "The biggest concerns of the PPC right now are the vaccine mandates and proposed passports, which threaten the fundamental Charter rights



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of all individuals and drive a wedge into the society," says Gautron. "The federal government, and indeed all governments, should not attempt to coerce individuals into making healthcare decisions that are and should remain personal. Therefore, the PPC is focused on opposing these draconian and unconstitutional mandates and other various COVID-19 policies which serve only to divide society."

The vaccination question. On the issue of COVID-19 vaccination, Gautron freely confirms that he is unvaccinated by choice.

"I am indeed unvaccinated," says Gautron. "I myself, as well as the PPC, adamantly oppose any and all mandatory vaccination programs or policies on the part of the federal and provincial governments. These policies serve only to divide the citizens of our great nation and contradict fundamental Charter rights. As it is a personal medical decision, I would encourage people who are hesitant to consult with their physicians to come to a decision that is right for them as individuals."

Time for Change. Gautron's passion includes a distinct focus on fighting to preserve Canadian values and culture and to fight to preserve liberties and values.

"The Canadian value that I most want to preserve and restore are those freedoms contained in section two of the Charter," says Gautron. "This section of the Charter protects individuals' right to expression, association, and religion. These form the backbone of our Canadian society and culture, and essentially form the basis for most of the other rights found in the Charter. The values of section two are critically important to the Canadian identity. These values have been under siege for the last year and a half as we have been dealing with COVID-19."

Gautron says that if he were elected, he would be a strong voice for the constituents of Provencher in Ottawa and that he would "tell Parliament that their fundamental rights are non-negotiable."

Although support for the Conservatives has been strong in this riding for many

decades, Gautron encourages those looking for a change to act now.

"Now is the time to take real action to preserve your liberty," he says. "You have the opportunity to have your voice heard and help change things for the better. The time to act is now. We are blessed to have a democracy in which our votes still count, so there is always hope."

As a noteworthy addendum, the leader of the People's Party of Canada, Maxime Bernier, made national headlines this past June when he was arrested locally after speaking at rallies in Niverville and St. Pierre that went against Manitoba's provincial public health regulations at the time.

OTHER CANDIDATES

Unfortunately, *The Citizen* was unable to get in touch with the recently announced local NDP candidate, Serina Pottinger, in time for publication. However, a profile on Pottinger will follow on our website as soon as possible.

An independent candidate, Rick Loewen, will also appear on the ballot. His profile will be available online shortly.

CITIZEN POLL

Which are the most important campaign issues to you? Please choose up to three.

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LAST MONTH'S RESULTS:

Do you think the province is opening up too quickly?



YOUR COMMENTS:

Yes and no, I think we need to re-open for the economy but that they shouldn't leverage vaccinations on people by limiting access to those unvaccinated. Also, I think the masks should have stayed when we originally reopened to allow a few weeks to "normalize" at that level.

I think the province probably did a bit too much, too fast with the easing of restrictions. However, it really depends what aspect of "opening up" you look at in my

opinion. It is definitely time to get the economy back into gear, but it can and should be done safely and responsibly. Businesses have gone through enough hardship in the last two years and with improving numbers in case counts, hospitalization, and vaccinations, I think we can move away from blanket restrictions and perhaps move to a more targeted and local approach when the need arises. That said, mandating vaccines is utter nonsense. Discriminating against unvaccinated people is nonsense. Giving the government the authority to mandate what goes into your body is a rabbit hole that we should all fear more than the virus itself. It scares me that so many people support such an idea. I am pro-vaccine, to be clear, but that is a step way too far.

I am so relieved that the government is opening us up. Every day I wonder if the government will get some good sense and they finally have.

I would rather open things up slowly than have more mandates as a result of opening up too quickly.

I think it's good to remove some restrictions re: socializing etc, but... we really shouldn't have removed capacities and masking. Especially not at the same time.

After the mask mandate was lifted, I gave local businesses a chance to do the right thing by our kids, the vulnerable and those that can't be vaccinated at this time due to medical reasons (cancer treatment for example). I was mortified by how quickly everyone shed their masks and dropped the distancing protocols here in town... I can't support local at this time because the vast majority of local businesses are operating without consideration given to those ineligible but wanting vaccinations. If the most basic of principles are being ignored (mask wearing, distancing, sanitizing upon entry), then I'll take my business to Winnipeg where some stores are operating with these considerations in mind. This really is a southern Manitoba cliché, and certainly doesn't help stabilize the health of our community.



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Summer Contest Celebrates Exceptional Lawn Care

By Evan Braun

✉ editor@nivervillecitizen.com

A new contest in Niverville this summer is primed to recognize residents for their lawns—and especially this year, with the intense heat and dry conditions, maintaining a well-manicured lawn has required an unusual amount of tender love and care.

Local lawn enthusiast Rhett Schramm started up the contest, called Lawn of the Week, and has partnered with D&M Ground Services to make it a reality.

“I wanted to highlight people’s hard work,” says Schramm. “During these crazy times, people have had time to focus on their lawns and I thought the contest would help form a sense of community. I’ve been hoping that the weekly winners would go knock on the door of the next week’s winner and meet another lawn geek and maybe meet someone new in town.”

Producing and recognizing really beautiful lawns is a special passion for Schramm, one that goes back many years.

“My dad always has had nice grass, so maybe it’s genetic,” he says. “I just think a nice lawn is important for curb appeal. It shows pride in homeownership. In Manitoba, we only have five months to have nice grass, so I give it my all.”

When he bought his first home in 2009, Schramm decided that he wanted to do something a little out of the ordinary. Instead of a standard lawn, he decided to plant fairway turf. This allowed him to get the low cut he wanted, reminiscent of a golf green, without any of the maintenance headaches.

“When I planted my new lawn in the fall of 2014, I used the same seed and fertilizer program I was following previously and applied the knowledge I had gained on the smaller yard, but applying it on a larger scale,” he says. “I mow 6,500 square feet of grass—and until two



Rhett Schramm of Niverville is passionate about lawn care.

▣ RHETT SCHRAMM

weeks ago, I was using a 14-inch-wide manual push mower, cutting at three-quarters of an inch. It was exhausting, to say the least. I recently upgraded to a 22-inch electric reel mower that has definitely been a gamechanger.”

Not everyone, of course, is willing to put this much effort into their yard, but taking a look at Schramm’s property demonstrates how much the work can pay off.

He says he spends a lot of free time maintaining the yard, as well as researching lawn care on the internet.

“I mow a minimum of four times a week, which takes about an hour each time,” he says. “Mowing is only part of it. Trimming and edging occur every second mow or so. Between fertilizer applications, water, and other supplements, I can easily spend most weekends working on the lawn. I also have a fairly active

Instagram page for my lawn that has me interacting with followers who want to pick my brain or just want to chat.”

Although it’s a lot of work, he is hardly alone in his devotion to lawn care.

“I went for a drive the other day and I was very surprised to see as many green lush lawns as I did,” Schramm remarks. “It hasn’t been an easy year for lawn care, with the drought and the water restrictions imposed by the town. We have been lucky, though. I know some lawn guys in other RMs and they can’t water at all... The goal is to develop a healthy lawn, and a healthy lawn will bounce back from drought and stress with minimal effort. Thick, healthy lawns help keep soil cool, which minimizes moisture evaporation, which minimizes water use.”

He points out that taking good care of your lawn during such a dry summer can be tricky, but

there are plenty of solutions out there. For one thing, there are supplemental products which can be highly effective, aside from the typical nitrogen, phosphorus, and potassium fertilizers.

He is partnering up with D&M Ground Services to provide customers with more specifically tailored fertilizers, as well as better mowing and lawn care than is otherwise available right now in the area.

“The goal with our programs will be proper nutrients and moisture management. And as always, with any fertilizer program, the focus is on feeding the soil, not the plant. The more you do for the soil, the better success you will have with your grass.”

In the meantime, Niverville residents who are proud of their lawns should take note of the Lawn of the Week contest. Schramm says that it’s easy to get the contest’s attention if you want to be in the running for some well-deserved recognition.

“In order to bring attention to their lawns, residents can tag photos they post [on social media] with #lawnoftheweekniverville or simply send photos to @lawnsofniverville or @dmrentals,” he says. “We would love to highlight lawns in Niverville, so please send us your photos. The hope is that each Lawn of the Week winner will be selected by the previous week’s winner. We are out and about scouting on a regular basis for nice lawns, so we are aware of where they are!”

Weekly winners of the contest will get a sign to place in their front yard. They’ll also be given a gift certificate to a local business.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Check out Rhett Schramm’s Instagram account: @myreelkickgrasslawn, which was established to document his personal lawn care activity.

Cannabis Producer Given Local Permit

By Jennifer Lavin

✉ jlavin@nivervillecitizen.com

On Tuesday, August 17, a second public hearing was held in front of Niverville’s town council regarding a conditional use permit for a horticultural processing facility at 440 Schultz Avenue.

The facility would be used by Rogue Botanicals, a local cannabis producer.

Several members of the Rogue Botanicals team were present to answer questions and address concerns.

Graham Taylor, the company’s president, informed council that they plan to use the existing building as an extension of their facility across the street. Automated equipment will be brought in to package cannabis products.

Councillors had several questions about this proposal, most of which were related to the site’s security. The Rogue Botanicals team made clear that they are operating under very strict guidelines from Health Canada regarding all aspects of their business.

According to Health Canada, one hundred percent of the exterior of their building needs to have security camera coverage and tight security measures must be maintained at all times.

Councillors also expressed concern about potential environmental impact or noise from the production area, but Taylor reassured them that the equipment used is not loud and that they pride themselves on being a very environmentally conscious company.

Council members passed this motion unanimously.



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Manitoba's First Wildlife Vet Hospital Opens in IDC

By Jennifer Lavin

✉ jlavin@nivervillecitizen.com

Wildlife Haven in Île-des-Chênes has been lovingly caring for injured, sick, and orphaned animals since 1984. And as of August 4, they are officially home to Manitoba's first wildlife veterinary hospital.

The newly accredited Wildlife Veterinary Hospital is now even better equipped to help Manitoba's unique and precious wild creatures.

The hospital has a full-time licensed veterinarian, diagnostic equipment, and an operating room. They also have many enclosures, habitats, and safe places to monitor animals as they recover from illnesses or injuries.

Wildlife Haven was originally formed by a group of environmentally concerned citizens. At that time, it was known as Manitoba Wildlife Rehabilitation Organization. The group started in their own backyards but moved to the University of Manitoba's Glenlea Research Station in 1993.

In 2003, MWRO started operating as the Wildlife Haven Rehabilitation Centre and in 2008 they moved to a retired dairy barn in Île-des-Chênes. It was only a few years ago that they transitioned to their current, permanent location.

Over its lifetime, Wildlife Haven Rehabilitation Centre has cared for more than 44,000 animals. So far in 2021, they have treated 2,300 patients, an increase of 21.5 percent over the last year.

Now that their veterinary hospital is officially open, they hope to see a significant increase in survival rates.

The opening of the Wildlife Haven Veterinary Hospital also marks the creation of a new partnership between WHRC and the National Wildlife Centre of Caledon, Ontario.

This partnership has led to the creation of a wildlife veterinary



The new wildlife veterinarian hospital at Wildlife Haven.

WILDLIFE HAVEN

internship position at Wildlife Haven.

The first recipient of this one-year internship position is Dr. Sayrah Gilbert, originally from Houston, Texas. Gilbert will be mentored and trained by Dr. Sherri Cox, who is a wildlife veterinarian and the medical director at the National Wildlife Centre.

Many of the animals at WHRC are found by members of the public. If someone finds a wild animal they think is sick, orphaned, or injured, they can contact Wildlife Haven Rehabilitation Centre over the phone.

"We have a trained intake team that answers all public inquiries regarding animals they have found," says Kathryn Gibb, the centre's administrative assistant. "Our team gives them advice on how they should proceed with the animal, whether that's leaving it be, monitoring it, or bringing it directly to the centre. We also have lots of information on our website, including tips on what to do if you find an animal, ways you can help, and updates on what's happening here at the centre."

If the intake staff deem it necessary for the animal to be brought in, the caller may bring it in—or if they can't for any reason, there are people ready to help.

"We are lucky to have a dedicated team of volunteers that are trained to contain and rescue

wildlife, in addition to a network of conservation officers and other community partners that help in rescuing and transporting animals to our centre for care," says Gibb. "It's thanks to a whole community working together that we can care for animals from all across Manitoba."

There are certain animals that the WHRC cannot care for, owing to strict provincial and federal regulations.

According to their licensing, WHRC is not able to care for skunks, bears, wolves, or hooved animals. They also do not take in deer mice. This is a precaution, since the mice have been known to carry hantavirus which could pose a health risk to other animals.

Gibb says that the eastern cottontail rabbit is their most common patient.

That said, they get their share of more unique guests. Currently, they have a North American river otter.

"The otter was admitted to us in May as a baby with gastrointestinal complications from a protein build-up in the stomach," Gibb says. "Our medical team administered medication for 48 hours and followed up with a specialized otter milk formula and [the otter] has been growing stronger ever since."

WHRC has a mission to rehabilitate all wildlife that comes

through their doors, sending them back into the wildlife after their treatment is complete, and their team works tirelessly to make that happen.

But, of course, that isn't always possible. The centre is home to a number of animals which aren't able to survive on their home. Therefore, they remain at the WHRC and serve as "education ambassadors."

"Each of these animals has a unique story that highlights the consequences of human interference with wildlife," Gibb says.

These animals are often showcased in the education program the facility conducts through community outreach. These presentations are done with the goal of showing people the importance of Manitoba's wildlife to our entire ecosystem.

The rehabilitation centre isn't open to the public right now, but they do offer tours when certain events take place. The next opportunity will be an open house scheduled for October 1-3. Tickets will cost \$5 per person and further information will be posted on their website when they become available for purchase.

"We are so excited to welcome people to the Wildlife Haven campus and show them what our community has helped us build," says Gibb.

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GET OFF THE TRACK!!

Travelling through Indiana one summer we discovered the Indianapolis Race-track Museum to be a reasonably priced family attraction. The museum is located in the centre of the large circular track which includes spacious grounds and a golf course. To access the museum, you drive into a tunnel which dips under the racetrack. As we came up out of the tunnel, I was blinded by the sun directly in my eyes. As I glanced to the right, I noticed a single lane road but did not notice the "Absolutely No Admittance" sign. I made the quick exit and as I travelled this short, curved roadway it soon opened onto the most magnificent wide highway I had even driven on. It was flawlessly smooth and perfectly sloped for the high-speed corners and so by instinct I pressed down on the gas peddle of my 2007 Pontiac Montana. Within a few seconds my children all came to the same conclusion. "Dad, we are on the racetrack" they shouted, as we accelerated past the bleachers and heavy wire safety netting. This pleasure soon came to an end, with a large black security vehicle behind me and the public loudspeaker blaring "**Turn around and get off the track immediately!**" This story reminds me of the broad road in the Bible where its travellers get the exact same warning, but this road leads to eternal death and separation from God. The Bible tells us this road has many travellers; in fact, we are all born on this road, and we all must get off. **WHERE ARE YOU HEADED?** You might be pretty sure where you will be later today or tomorrow, but can you say for sure where you will be next week or next year? The uncertainties of life make it hard to know where we are headed; the farther away something is, the more unpredictable it becomes. Maybe this is why so many people are unsure of where they will spend eternity—it can seem so far away. But is eternity really a mysterious unknown? **CAN WE KNOW?** Can we know that we are on the right road, the one that will bring us safe and secure to Heaven? Yes, this precious information is given to us in God's "road map," the Bible. It says that we can know, positively, where we are going to be throughout all eternity. According to the Bible, there are people who, right now, are saved from the wrath of God: "*The preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God*" (1 Corinthians 1:18). These people **know** that they have eternal life: "*These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life*" (1 John 5:13). In John 10:9 Jesus said, "I am the Door; by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved." We come through HIM because he is the only access to God. "For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus. (1 Timothy 2:5) Ron and Nancy Burley www.sermon4u.com

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Reminder that **September 30th, 2021 5:00 p.m.** is the deadline for property tax payments in the Town of Niverville.

Please consider using one of the following contactless options for submitting your payment:

MAIL TO: (along with the bottom portion of your tax statement(s)) to:
Town of Niverville, Box 267, Niverville, Manitoba R0A 1E0.

DROP BOX: located at the front of the Administration Office at 329 Bronstone Drive. The drop box is checked Monday to Friday and at 5 p.m. on the due date. **Payments dropped off after 5 p.m. on September 30, 2021 will be considered late and will be subject to a penalty.** Please make cheque or money order payable to the Town of Niverville.

INTERNET BANKING: electronically through some financial institutions. To ensure electronic payments will not be subject to a late penalty, **please allow at least 3 business days for bank processing.**

ONLINE PORTAL: <https://niverville.ws.townsuite.com/>. Sign up key is provided on the back of your water/sewer bill.

**Statements currently showing arrears will have additional penalties – please call the Town Office or log into your eServices account for a current balance. Note that penalties are posted on the first of each month.

Also offered this year on September 30th during regular office hours, is the curbside payment drop off option. Watch for signs when you drive up.

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IN BRIEF

Tragic Car Accident in Ste. Agathe Claims Two Lives

By Evan Braun

✉ editor@nivervillecitizen.com

A devastating two-vehicle car accident in Ste. Agathe on Sunday, August 8 has ended in tragedy for a family with ties to the local area.

In the early afternoon, around 12:50 p.m., the RCMP were called to the scene of the collision at the busy intersection of Highways 75 and 305.

A vehicle driven by a 17-year-old woman from Roseau River was traveling westbound on Highway 305, along with a 15-year-old passenger, when it entered the intersection and was struck by a northbound semitruck, being driven by a 54-year-old man from Winnipeg.

Both young women were taken to hospital where they were subsequently declared dead.

The driver of the semi was uninjured.

The victims were later identified as Sophie and Acacia Goertzen. The sisters had been on their way to a family wedding shower in nearby Sanford.

According to a family friend, when the sisters failed to arrive, their father went looking for them and came upon the site of the accident.

Sophie and Acacia had both been involved with the Roseau River Bible Camp, and members of that community have helped raise money for the family in the wake of the tragedy.



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St. Adolphe Market Organizers Make Community Donations

By Evan Braun

✉ editor@nivervillecitizen.com

The team behind the monthly St. Adolphe Market, in addition to working hard to create opportunities for vendors in the area to find local customers, is intent on making meaningful donations to the community.

With every month's market, volunteer organizers Kira Bodnarchuk and Donna Moroz say that a portion of the vendor fees goes right back to the community.

"The St. Adolphe Market has done numerous donations to our community since we have begun our little market," say Bodnarchuk and Moroz. "We have donated to our school, the daycare in town, and the senior citizens."

But they say this next donation is the most meaningful so far. The idea started when Moroz and her family went for a walk down the Friendship Trail in St. Adolphe.

"The trail is so beautiful," the pair say. "If you've never been on it, I highly encourage you to take your family out and explore it."

While exploring the trail recently with her boys, Moroz took note of the many birds who frequent the area and wondered whether it would be feasible to erect a series of birdhouses.

She and Bodnarchuk then purchased the birdhouses and recruited the smallest members of the community, those from the St. Adolphe daycare, to paint them.

"These birdhouses will now be hung on the Friendship Trail for all to enjoy," they say. "This donation means the most to us because our whole community gets to enjoy it for years to come, including the children who got to paint them. Our personal hope is that the children who decorated these birdhouses will want to go out in nature and explore to find their birdhouse."

The Friendship Trail began a year ago when local resident Rick Colette and his wife Henriette decided to clean up a stretch of the



Donna Moroz and Kira Bodnarchuk showcase the new birdhouses destined for the Friendship Trail. **✉ DONNA MOROZ/KIRA BODNARCHUK**

bank of the Red River, gradually developing it into one of the town's most well-known attractions.

Many other members of the community have contributed to the trail since those earliest days, including Jerry Lagasse, Bill Gibson, and Richard Breaut.

The trail is currently home to several distinct areas—teeter-totters, a car made out of logs for kids to enjoy, a memorial rose garden, campfires, and of course the main trail itself which is open year-round.

As for the St. Adolphe Market itself, there is still one upcoming summer event: September 26. It will be the fifth event of the season.

Attendance at the last couple of markets have come in at around 1,000 people. Each one has had 45 to 50 vendors, three or four food trucks, a coffee truck, and a lemonade stand.

"With the weather changing to fall, we will have many vendors to shop from in September," say Bodnarchuk and Moroz. "The variety is amazing."

They are now in the process of planning a Christmas market later in the year.

Starting up the market and keeping it going during the pandemic hasn't exactly been an easy task.

"Running a market during COVID has had its hardships," the pair say. "But we have had great experiences throughout it. We have had to customer count, make an entrance/exit, and make sure everyone follows the strict guidelines. We have had such support from our community, with members donating their time to help us run the entrance and exit. The greatest difficulty is receiving COVID guidelines days

before the market and having to change the way the market is run and informing all our vendors and ensuring everyone is following the orders."

They say the effort is worth it every market day.

"Our biggest highlight is the compliments we receive from our vendors and community," they add. "We love being organizers—and when people come up to us, it helps us come back each time and put on a better market."

Bodnarchuk and Moroz plan to continue hosting the market as long as they can—and as long as it remains a fun experience.

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Thanks to our supporters

The Niverville Chamber of Commerce held another successful Texas Scramble fundraising golf tournament on August 19, thanks to members who support the work of the Chamber.



The winning team for a second year running was Rod Peters, Tristan Schneider, Stephan Schneider, and Adam Tougas from Wm. Dyck & Sons. Congratulations!

The Niverville Chamber of Commerce would like to thank the following for making the tournament a success. Platinum, Gold and Silver sponsors also had teams entered in the tournament.

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Commentary

Doing Good: The Psychological Origins of Altruism

By Daniel Dacombe

When we think of how our species evolved on this planet, Darwin's famous maxim—"survival of the fittest"—comes to mind. One of the hallmarks of evolution is this idea, that the strong survive while the weak perish.

This concept is played out in front of our eyes every time we watch the Nature Channel and see a lion bring down a sick or elderly gazelle.

It can also be used to explain, in television and movies as well as in real-world behaviour, all manner of greed and selfishness. "Survival of the fittest" is said to justify many bigotries, cruelties, and other behaviours which benefit one at the expense of others.

And yet we have countless examples of the opposite—of human beings reaching out and helping others even when they gain absolutely nothing in return. Every one of us can think of times when people acted to help us, sometimes even at great expense to themselves.

This would seem to refute Darwin's proposition. After all, it doesn't benefit the strong in any way to help those who are perceived as weak.

So was Darwin wrong?

In reality, it is in evolution—and more specifically, the fields of evolutionary psychology and anthropology—where we find real explanations for our good behaviour.

Altruism is typically defined as any behaviour we engage in which is a benefit to others, and especially behaviour that doesn't provide an immediate benefit to ourselves. Donating blood, volunteering,



DEPOSITPHOTOS

delivering first aid to a stranger... none of these actions give us much in return, if anything, yet millions of people take altruistic actions every day.

In fact, we don't just see these actions in human beings.

Animals have been observed to behave altruistically both in nature and in research settings. For instance, rats will free an unfamiliar rat if that rat is trapped, and will share its food supply as well. Bats will share food with other bats if they were unsuccessful at hunting. Wolves bring meat to injured members of the pack. And monkeys will warn others of the presence of a

predator, even if it draws attention to themselves, and even if in the process they risk their own death.

These actions, in humans and animals, occur in countless settings and circumstances. They occur with family and friends—people we are motivated to care for, it's true.

But they also occur with strangers. What's going on inside our heads when we drop everything to come to the aid of a perfect stranger?

Evolutionary psychology and anthropology tell us that "survival of the fittest" doesn't just apply to individuals. It applies to groups. We are social beings and are wired for connection. Since humanity began

its evolutionary journey, we've been on this journey together and have survived together by behaving altruistically. When I help you—share my food, tend your injuries, and care for your children—it benefits the group.

Actions that benefit the group ensure the group's survival. If everyone in the group behaves selfishly—hoarding food, abandoning the sick and weak, and only looking out for themselves or the ones in their immediate family—that group will die out.

In fact, they probably did die out, time and time again throughout human history.

Those of us who behaved

altruistically survived to pass on our genetic material to the next generation, further reinforcing that behaviour among subsequent generations.

So Darwin can rest easy. His theory, and the altruistic gene, live on.

Throughout the era of COVID, the grave importance of maintaining our altruism has been on our minds.

We've frequently been called upon to take actions to benefit others that may not seem to provide an immediate benefit to ourselves. Wearing masks, social distancing, and getting a vaccine don't appear to provide visible, tangible rewards.

Most people who have gotten COVID-19 have survived, after all.

Yet more than 75 percent of Manitobans have chosen an altruistic path, getting fully vaccinated in order to protect not just themselves but to help the most vulnerable in society.

While some may find it discouraging to hear about negativity and selfishness in the world, perhaps that fact—that (so far) more than three-quarters of people in our little province have chosen an altruistic path—can encourage us.

It's certainly true that selfish people live among us, and we can all be selfish from time to time. But the choice sits with us whether to give in to those selfish impulses.

If we do, we may diminish the strength of the group in which we live—a group which at this point in history spans the entire planet.

If we do not, we can enact the altruism that is in our genes and help our species to continue to be fit enough to go on.



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Sports & Recreation

Day Camps Keep New Niverville Rec Centre Busy

By Jennifer Lavin

✉ jlavinn@nivervillecitizen.com

The Niverville Recreation team has a lot more options now that the Community Resource and Recreation Centre has opened its doors.

According to Cassandra Falk, Niverville's Camps and Recreation Programmer, there are normally eight camps for kids each summer.

This year, though, her department was busy running 17 camps.

Falk says that the majority of these camps were held at the CRRC, which has proven to be the perfect venue.

In fact, the young summer campers were the very first people to use the brand-new playground and fieldhouse.

"The kids have had the opportunity to play on the indoor playground, use sports equipment in the fieldhouse, run around on the running track, or head upstairs to do crafts and other camp activities in the multipurpose rooms," says Falk. "Our culinary camp spent hours cooking in our community kitchen and loved it."

The culinary camp, meant for kids between the ages of six and 12, was one of the three most popular camps this year.

The Junior NBA Basketball Camp for the same age group was



The new indoor play structure at the CRRC in Niverville has turned out to be a popular feature.

■ NIVERVILLE RECREATION

also a popular offering. The Kinder Camps, for those age three to six, proved to be highly sought after as well.

The summer camps filled up

quickly and Falk says she's received a lot of positive feedback from both children and their parents. She says that several families have gone on to purchase memberships to use

the playground after their kids came home talking about how much fun they had at camp.

The Recreation Department's main office is now located right

inside the CRRC.

According to Falk, it's been a bit of a learning curve for the team, but they love the atmosphere in the building.

It's also highly convenient to be onsite to answer questions and chat with the users of the facility.

Another fun side effect of this year's daycamps is that its young campers had the privilege of being the very first people to get the opportunity to make use of the brand-new arena.

The first sheet of ice was installed in mid-August and shortly thereafter went into use, with the campers getting to get out and skate on it.

"We also encourage everyone to get their memberships online and book a time to use the indoor playground, walking track, or open gym space in the fieldhouse," Falk says.

She is pleased to report that local residents can gain access by visiting the town's Eservices website (see below) or dropping by the CRRC in person.

"Our Fall Leisure Guide will be available soon!" Falk adds.

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To purchase a CRRC membership, visit: <https://niverville.ws.townsuite.com>

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The Citizen is a Niverville-based newspaper which is passionate about covering issues and events of importance to our community and our immediate neighbours. We primarily publish news pertaining to the towns of Niverville, St. Adolphe, Ste. Agathe, Île-des-Chênes, New Bothwell, Otterburne, and Tourond. We believe strongly in bringing our readers the most local and relevant news possible—in other words, the news that matters most to them and affects them in their daily lives.



To honour the life of Amy Hiebert a service will be held on Saturday, September 25th at 2:00 PM in the Atrium at the Niverville Heritage Centre.

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