

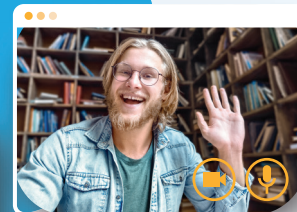
The Citizen

Free PLEASE TAKE ONE

Niverville CREDIT UNION

Come on over

We Reward You For Referrals



Refer a friend to be entered to win a \$250 GIC as well as a chance to win a grand prize at our AGM

VOLUME 8 - ISSUE 2

FEBRUARY 2022

www.nivervillecitizen.com

DISTRIBUTED FREE TO NIVERVILLE, ÎLE-DES-CHÊNES, STE. AGATHE, ST. ADOLPHE, TOUROND, OTTERBURN, NEW BOTHWELL, AND GLENLEA

D&M GROUND SERVICES

- PARKING LOT LINE PAINTING •
- PARKING LOT SWEEPING •
- SNOW REMOVAL •

- PARKING LOT SANDING •
- YARD CARE •

204-388-6577

www.dandmgroundservices.com



LOCAL NEWS

"Freedom Convoy" Has Local Rally to Protest Vaccine Mandates

■ Supporters of the truckers convoy held a rally along the Trans Canada Highway near Lorette in late January as the highly publicized caravan crossed through southern Manitoba.

Details on Pages 5-7

LOCAL NEWS

Utility Rates in Ritchot Set for Large Increase

■ The cost of water and sewer services in Ritchot are going up by about 50 percent when new rates take effect this July.

Details on Page 12

COMMENTARY

Dealing with Dark Days

■ Seasonal affective disorder (a.k.a. SAD) takes a toll on thousands of Canadians every winter. If you're one of them, you don't need to suffer alone.

Details on Page 13

SPORTS & REC

New Walking Trails Open Near Ste. Agathe

■ The Baudry Trails along the Red River celebrate local history and give people the opportunity to get back to nature.

Details on Page 16



Snow Maze Keeps Getting Bigger and Better



READ MORE ON PAGES 14-15

by SARA BETH DACOMBE

A **smarter** way to **save**

SCU

SCU.MB.CA/MYSAVINGS



- SITE FEATURES:**
- VIDEO SURVEILLANCE
 - GATED, WELL LIT COMPOUND
 - 24 HOUR ACCESS
 - AUTOMATIC PAYMENTS
 - MONTH TO MONTH RENTALS
 - NEWLY PAVED SITE
 - EPOXY SEALED FLOORS

NEW SELF-STORAGE UNITS

AVAILABLE IMMEDIATELY

NON CLIMATE CONTROLLED

\$89	5' x 10'	NON CLIMATE CONTROLLED
\$149	10' x 10'	NON CLIMATE CONTROLLED
\$199	10' x 15'	NON CLIMATE CONTROLLED
\$209	8' x 20'	NON CLIMATE CONTROLLED
\$249	10' x 20'	NON CLIMATE CONTROLLED
\$279	12' x 20'	NON CLIMATE CONTROLLED

CLIMATE CONTROLLED

\$109	5' x 10'	CLIMATE CONTROLLED
\$149	7½" x 10'	CLIMATE CONTROLLED
\$179	10' x 10'	CLIMATE CONTROLLED
\$269	10' x 15'	CLIMATE CONTROLLED
\$289	10' x 17½'	CLIMATE CONTROLLED
\$319	10' x 20'	CLIMATE CONTROLLED



OUTDOOR PARKING STALLS

\$45	10' WIDE; MAX 20' LONG
\$60	12' WIDE; MAX 30' LONG
\$65	12' WIDE; MAX 38' LONG

85% FULL

WHAT'S INSIDE

Cannabis Retailer Urban Flavours Opens This Month	3
"Freedom Convoy" Draws Support and Criticism	5
Citizen Poll	6
Canada Post Unveils New Niverville Location	6
Local Paramedics Talk Burnout, Staff Shortages	9
Niverville and Ritchot Post Record Construction Numbers	10
RCMP Officer Charged in Relation to Fall Collision	10
Regional Recycling Company to Close in 2022	11
Ritchot Proposes Large Utility Rate Increase	12
Dark Days: Dealing with Seasonal Affective Disorder	13
Local Snow Maze Keeps Getting Bigger and Better	14
St. Agathe Trail System Celebrates Local History	16
Pro Shop Opens at the CRRC	16
Pickering Shines in Swift Current, Could Be Top NHL Draft Pick	18
At Halfway Point, Jets Feeling the Pressure	18
A Trip Down Memory Lane: Celebrating the Legacy of the Niverville Northstars	19
Introducing the Niverville Nighthawks	19

The Citizen

Box 266, Niverville, MB R0A 1E0
www.nivervillecitizen.com

Managing Editor:
Evan Braun

Sales Manager:
Ray Dowse

Operations Manager:
Cara Dowse

Design/Production Manager:
Dustin Krahn

Contributors:
Evan Braun, Jennifer Lavin,
Sara Beth Dacombe, Daniel Dacombe,
Dan Hoepfner, Ty Dilello

CONTACT US

Letters to the Editor:
editor@nivervillecitizen.com

Advertising Sales:
sales@nivervillecitizen.com

Classifieds/General Information:
info@nivervillecitizen.com

Artwork/Ad Proofs/Graphics:
ads@nivervillecitizen.com

The Niverville Citizen is published monthly and distributed through Canada Post to all those with a postal box in Niverville, Ile-des-Chenes, St. Adolphe, Ste. Agathe, New Bothwell, Otterburne, and Tourond. Additional copies are manually distributed to businesses in the aforementioned communities, as well as the town of Landmark. The paper is printed in Canada by Derksen Printers Ltd. Republishing of this paper in whole or in part without prior approval is strictly prohibited.

Funded by the Government of Canada
Financé par le gouvernement du Canada

Canada

The advertising deadline is 5:00 p.m. on the 15th of each month. The paper will be distributed the last week of every month.

Our commitment to the reader is to provide a professional and reliable means of communication that both residents and businesses will value. This newspaper is 100 percent supported by those who choose to advertise within it. Readers who support the businesses who advertise in this publication are also supporting the development and circulation of future issues of this newspaper. Together, we can help build stronger communities.

FREE TO SHARE. PLEASE RECYCLE.



The owners of Urban Flavours: Said Mohamed, Harvinder Dhillon, and Harsimran Sandhu.

URBAN FLAVOURS

Cannabis Retailer Urban Flavours Opens This Month

By Jennifer Lavin
jlavin@nivervillecitizen.com

It was May of 2019 when Manitoba began the process of allowing legal cannabis sales.

Since that time, there have been many twists and turns on the way to Niverville getting a cannabis retailer of its own.

The wait is finally at an end, with Urban Flavours finally opening its doors at the end of January, a little over a year since they were given the go-ahead from Niverville's town council to operate at their location on Main Street.

Harsimran Sandhu, co-owner of Urban Flavours, says that he and his two business partners are excited to finally get their business off the ground.

Urban Flavours sells a wide variety of cannabis products beyond the standard fare, something to meet just about any cannabis user's taste.

"We are selling edibles, cannabis-infused drinks, shatter, pre-rolls, oral sprays, CBD topicals, CBD capsules, accessories, cannabis flour, and more," says Sandhu.

Urban Flavours' cannabis is sourced from across Canada,

but they also carry a product line from Niverville's very own Rogue Botanicals.

They are also seeking to carry other homegrown Manitoba products.

"We would love to support the local growers in Manitoba and ask that they reach out to us if we haven't contacted them yet," Sandhu adds.

As for pricing, Sandhu says that cannabis prices are set by the Liquor, Gaming, and Cannabis Authority of Manitoba (LGCA) and they do not allow him to disclose pricing.

When asked if they had received any negative pushback from Niverville after the difficulty of finally getting to this stage, Sandhu is unequivocal: "No. We have had incredible support and look forward to seeing our customers!"

Four local residents have so far been hired to work at the store, and Sandhu says that they plan to continue hiring locals as the need for staff arises.

Sandhu would like to assure the people of Niverville that Urban Flavours is safe in all regards.

The LGCA sets very strict guidelines for the security of cannabis

retailers and he wants people to know that Urban Flavours has exceeded those measures.

"The entire retail space, including exterior and all back of house areas, are monitored 24/7," he says. "All cannabis is stored inside a highly secure vault which has enhanced security as well. All access into the cannabis vault is controlled through employee scan cards so we will be monitoring this closely."

Sandhu and his co-owners Harvinder Dhillon and Said Mohamed have multiple other businesses throughout Manitoba. They have real estate holdings and gas stations/car washes and are involved in facility maintenance and food service.

Urban Flavours is located at 2-41 Main Street in Niverville. They are open Monday to Thursday from 10:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m., Friday and Saturday from 10:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m., and on Sunday from 12:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- www.urbanflavours.ca
- Instagram: @urbanflavours204

50% OFF ENROLLMENT

Love Yourself

50% OFF 1ST MONTH

PLUS 2 FREE BODY SCANS FOR ALL NEW MEMBERS (\$99 VALUE)

ANYTIME FITNESS

204-961-1919

40 Drovers Run, Niverville

facebook.com/anytimefitnessniverville
FOR DETAILS VISIT ANYTIMEFITNESS.COM



RED RIVER GROUP
REAL PROPERTY SOLUTIONS

Real Estate Appraisals | Property Management | Reserve Fund Studies | Real Property Consulting

1-855-371-5833 | www.redrivergroup.ca

Delaquis Antiques FURNITURE

- SALES •
- REFINISHING •
- REPAIRS •

204-388-4850
pgdelaquis@gmail.com

ColorProof
COLOR CARE AUTHORITY

ÉMINENCE
ORGANIC SKIN CARE
HUNGARY SINCE 1959

GOLDWELL

amika:

done.
hair, skin & nails
donehairskinandnails.com

MANITOBA INSTITUTE OF
TRADES & TECHNOLOGY

**START HERE
TO GET THERE**

**25+ POST-SECONDARY
PROGRAMS**

Learn more
MITT.ca/start

chamber of commerce | **CHAMBER news**

EMAIL: chamber@niverville.com PHONE: 204-388-6140

President: Amanda Wiens | Vice-President: Elvin Krahn | Executive Director: Brenda Desjardins
Treasurer: Nicholas Bergmann | Executive Member: Karen Albaugh
Directors: Bryan Trottier, Ben Dueck, Scott Wallace, Noella Andres

www.niverville.com



Executive Director Employment Posting

The Niverville Chamber of Commerce is in search of an Executive Director.

The mission of the Niverville Chamber of Commerce is to encourage sustainable economic development through advocacy for and support of local business. Our guiding principals that shape the actions and behaviour of the Niverville Chamber of Commerce include advocacy, integrity, sustainable growth, business-focus, community, collaboration and prosperity.

The Executive Director role oversees daily operations for the organization, such as; administration and bookkeeping, planning meetings and events, and building and maintaining relationships with the business community. Success factors for this position include having strengths in organization, communication, and relationship building. The individual would ideally have comprehensive computer skills, an understanding of business, and a passion for the community.

If this sounds like it could be a fit for you, or someone you know, please send your resume to nivervillechamber@gmail.com

country SNACKS
Est. 1990

Home of Manitoba's Best Soft Ice Cream!

Better Bare
ORGANIC BODY SUGARING

"I love how prickly your legs feel."
-Said no one ever

Unit F, 290 Main Street, Niverville
204.782.8610 lifesbetterbare@gmail.com
[lifesbetterbare](https://www.instagram.com/lifesbetterbare)

Building stronger leaders and healthier teams

SCOPE
LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

DARRELL KEHLER
Leadership Coach & Consultant
www.scopeleadership.com

trotco
ELECTRIC INC.

24seven
condominiums
A VENTURA Development

BRYAN TROTTER
204.371.3842 trotco@mts.net

NOW HIRING!

FULL TIME AND PART TIME
POSITIONS AVAILABLE

Join our winning team!

Contact Kari at
karwils@gmail.com

Tim Hortons

NICK BERGMANN
REAL ESTATE SERVICES

204-230-6762
nkbergmann@gmail.com

RE/MAX ONE GROUP



Vehicles take part in the freedom convoy along the Trans Canada Highway near Lorette.

MARIA THIESSEN

“Freedom Convoy” Draws Support and Criticism

By Sara Beth Dacombe

LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

sdacombe@nivervillecitizen.com

On Tuesday, January 25, crowds gathered at the Centre of Canada Park in the RM of Tache to show their support for a convoy of semi trucks and other vehicles making its way across the country in protest of a federal vaccination mandate for cross-border truckers.

Dubbed the “freedom convoy,” organizers have been trying to gain the attention of the federal government after a vaccine exemption for trucking industry professionals expired, requiring truckers who cross the border into the United States to be

vaccinated as of January 15.

As trucks from coast to coast arranged to drive together, organizers said their goal was to send a broad message to the federal government about pandemic restrictions which they feel violate our freedoms.

Over the weeklong trip, the initiative gained traction on social media. A fundraising campaign has raised nearly \$10 million as of this writing, and rallies have been organized to show support.

Canada Unity is an online forum and discussion group organizing the movement. The group bills itself as “Canada’s #1 solution to getting our lawful freedom of choice back” and says it “represents and defends

a coalition of Concerned Canadian Citizens, Permanent Residents, Indigenous Communities, Employers, Employees from private and government bodies, Institutions and Businesses at large.”

The group is opposed to restrictions and mandates related to COVID-19 for being “unlawful” and “discriminatory.”

However, despite substantial support coming from southeastern Manitoba, not everyone is in favour of lifting vaccine mandates. And reports of far-right and white nationalist groups joining the convoy clearly demonstrate that the initiative has attracted those with political aims other than to simply encourage the

federal government to repeal vaccine mandates.

The Canadian Trucking Alliance has released a statement denouncing the convoy.

“The vast majority of the Canadian trucking industry is vaccinated with the overall industry vaccination rate among truck drivers closely mirroring that of the general public,” reads the statement. “Accordingly, most of our nation’s hard-working truck drivers are continuing to move cross-border and domestic freight to ensure our economy continues to function. The Canadian Trucking Alliance (CTA) does not support and strongly disapproves of any protests on public roadways, highways, and bridges.

CTA believes such actions—especially those that interfere with public safety—are not how disagreements with government policies should be expressed.”

INCREASED SOCIAL MEDIA TRAFFIC

One thing the self-styled freedom convoy has already succeeded at doing is gaining attention through social media.

Some social media comments from convoy supporters claim that Canadians will see emptier grocery shelves, or even starve, due to a lack of truck drivers to bring food to

(continued on page 6)



Graydon
VETERINARY CORPORATION

Drs Venessa Graydon, Anne Whipple & Julia Domke
PROUDLY SERVING THE AREA FOR THE LAST 12 YEARS

St. Pierre: 204-433-7956
Vita: 204-425-3264

www.graydonvet.com

AUTOWORKS
Sparkline
SERVICE CENTRE

Alignments- Brakes-Tire-Safeties
Diagnostics-Free Shuttle and Courtesy Car

20 CEDAR DRIVE, NIVERVILLE, MB
204-388-4888 www.sparkline.ca

prairie soul
DANCE COMPANY

Full Season Program
10 Week Winter Sessions

EMAIL US FOR MORE INFORMATION!

ROYAL ACADEMY OF
DANCE
REGISTERED TEACHER

Directors:
Melanie Ducharme
Danielle Auld

info@prairiesouldancecompany.ca
204-392-5624
10 Cedar Drive, Niverville

Follow us on
f i



CITIZEN POLL

Do you support the freedom convoy that has recently made its way through Canada, protesting vaccine mandates?

- ☐ Yes. The government has gone too far in curbing our personal freedoms.
- ☐ No. Vaccine mandates are needed to keep us safe and protect our hospital system.
- ☐ Have a more nuanced opinion? Leave us a comment online.

Enter to Win

Take part in our monthly poll for your chance to win a \$10 gift card for CRU Barber & Co.



VOTENOW AT www.nivervillecitizen.com

Congratulations to last month's winner:
DON OPPER

LAST MONTH'S RESULTS:

Is Manitoba's provincial government doing enough to resolve the backlog of surgeries and diagnostic procedures built up during the pandemic?

Yes. The government has appointed a taskforce of professionals to address the problem, and they will get the job done.

1%

No. More needs to be done to ensure that not only is the backlog resolved, but it's resolved quickly.

99%



The convoy moves through southern Manitoba in late January.

MARIA THIESSEN

(continued from page 5)

grocery stores.

Others claim that the movement is unifying Canadians who are fed up with restrictions that have contributed to economic hardship.

Still others have latched on to the convoy as a vehicle to prompt riots, including violence similar to the January 6, 2021 riot at the U.S. Capitol by supporters of former president Donald Trump.

One of the freedom convoy's original organizers, Tamara Lich, serves as secretary for the Maverick Party, a federal party with roots in Alberta separatism. Lich has used Facebook to say that the positions of those with extreme political views don't reflect the position held by the majority of the convoy's supporters.

The convoy has attracted international attention with individuals in many countries sending supportive messages to the rally Canadians, including Donald Trump Jr., who encouraged the public to fight against "tyranny."

Social media has also been used to organize many stops along the way to provide drivers with rest, food, and overnight accommodations.

POLITICAL SUPPORT

Many Conservative members of Parliament have come out in favour of the freedom convoy, including Conservative leader Erin

O'Toole and Provencher's Ted Falk.

Falk says that he had the opportunity talk to the truckers and two of the promoters of Freedom Convoy 2022 when they drove through Winnipeg. He also says that he's heard from people all across Canada who have contacted him at his constituency office saying that they are vaccinated but do not support mandates prompted by the pandemic restrictions.

"These are people that are law-abiding citizens who love Canada and want to make a peaceful statement as they are

peaceful and law-abiding convoy and have clearly stated that I am opposed to these discriminatory mandates."

SOME LOCALS IN FAVOUR

Maria Thiessen organized the Freedom Convoy Support Rally held at the Centre of Canada Park, a historical site north of Landmark.

Thiessen says that she was inspired to get involved because of her extended family members who have gone through mental health challenges during the pandemic, as well as for personal

her family, not even her husband, could go see her. It really broke her."

Thiessen says that she connected organizers of the freedom convoy with her desire to celebrate her in-laws' wedding anniversary, but she never thought she would get over 700 responses on Facebook within two days.

"It really goes to show that people are really tired," she says. "They're ready to move on with their lives. They're ready for these restrictions to go away."

Thiessen says that the main message of the rally at the Centre of Canada Park is not to protest vaccinations.

"A lot of people think it's just a bunch of anti-vaxxers. It's not," says Thiessen. "This protest is not protesting vaccinations, but the mandating of them. A lot of people I know and talked to on social media are fully vaccinated and just tired of what the government is doing."

Thiessen uses the Canadian national anthem as an example that stands in contrast with how she feels the federal government is currently making decisions that take away the freedom of its people.

"The government should be here to serve the people, not force them into choices by taking away their freedoms if they don't comply," she says. "This rally is about people taking a stand against discrimination of people for their own personal choices. Our

"People are really tired. They're ready to move on with their lives. They're ready for these restrictions to go away."

Mary Thiessen | Rally Organizer

feeling unheard," Falk says. "For the last couple months, trucking companies and truckers have been contacting me regarding their concerns for the forthcoming mandates. Our trucking industry is essential to Canada's economic recovery and our supply chain. Conservatives understand how important it is to keep truckers on the road, which is why we have made a number of requests for accommodations... I support a

reasons.

"I was sitting with my in-laws and we were talking about how it was their wedding anniversary [recently]," says Thiessen. "They have had a very hard time with these restrictions. My mother-in-law was diagnosed with cancer last year and had suffered really badly at the hands of a very poor medical system. She was in the hospital strapped to a bed unable to move for five days and none of



NEW HOURS!

MONDAY - FRIDAY
8 AM - 8 PM

SATURDAY
9 AM - 8 PM

SUNDAY
11 AM - 6 PM

259 MAIN STREET, NIVERVILLE

Advertise With Us!

sales@nivervillecitizen.com

The Citizen



autopac ACCREDITED
A Manitoba Public Insurance product

George Dyck
George Dyck & Son

311 highway | Box 433, Niverville, Manitoba R0A 1E0

PHONE: 204-388-4870
EMAIL: geodyck@hotmail.com

Quality & reliable service. Over 10,000 windshields installed.



Some Things are Best Left to the Professionals!

national anthem states, 'God keep our land glorious and free.' It's in our anthem but so far from the truth in our country right now. We are not free. We have not been free for a long time. It's time we take a stand and take back the freedom we have lost."

The rally Thiessen organized on January 25 drew Manitobans from all over the southeast region, with people singing, chanting, and holding signs of support for the truckers along with messages for the Canadian government.

Thiessen says the energy was extremely positive.

"Everyone was happy, happier than I'd seen people in a long time," Thiessen explains. "It's almost like we were all family. People felt like they had a sense of hope and belonging. It was like -25 outside and that didn't stop people from standing out there for hours, because it meant they could be a part of something that mattered to them. Everyone that was there had a personal reason to be there and they finally felt like they could do something to change the state of our country."

Thiessen adds that the movement is necessary to ensure the views of people in western Canada are being fairly represented.

Despite the rallies attracting political extremists, the organizers of the freedom convoy, including Thiessen, say that the movement is committed to a peaceful protest.

"Sadly all political movements attract extremists," says Thiessen. "The organizers of the freedom convoy have condemned all forms of violence and they are doing their part to ensure that the rally remains peaceful and lawful."

Local business owner and convoy supporter Larissa Plett joined the group inside one of the semi-trucks being driven across Manitoba. Plett was part of a group of trucks that organized themselves to join the trek locally but not complete the entire journey to Ottawa.

"We just joined them for the day," says Plett. "It was important to us to show support, so we drove to Brandon to welcome them to Manitoba, and then drove with them to Ontario, turned back around, and came home."

Plett heard about the event being organized on Facebook one week before it was scheduled to come through Manitoba. Despite

the short notice, she was blown away by the turnout at the Centre of Canada Park rest stop.

"The energy and atmosphere was indescribable," Plett says. "We saw thousands and thousands and thousands of people through the entire province who were all so incredibly supportive, loving, kind, and generous. There were tears from people in the convoy being overwhelmed from the generosity and support of total strangers. There were veterans standing at attention and saluting the convoy. There were First Nations people dressed in tribal clothing banging drums, singing 'Freedom!' There was clapping and waving. There were so many people handing out food containers to people in the convoy! It was unreal to see so many people, from so many different backgrounds, all come together."

For Plett, the message of the

convoy has become about much more than the vaccine mandate for truckers which sparked it.

Krystal Jensen from Landmark says that trucking runs in the family and she has strong ties to the trucking industry, but she does not support the freedom convoy.

"My son's father drives long-haul trucks and so do most of the men in his family," Jensen says. "My aunt and uncle also have a multimillion-dollar farm and they utilize trucks and truckers regularly. I've also spent quite a bit of time riding along with my son's father. So I have multiple ties to the trucking community, as well as with people who rely on the trucking industry to move their products."

Despite having a long history of support for truckers, Jensen says the convoy is doing the opposite of its intended effect, because it is creating more disunity than ever.

"The rally is the equivalent of a toddler having a tantrum when mommy says you have to eat your vegetables."

Krystal Jensen / Local Resident

rally was less about protesting the vaccine mandate for cross-border truckers and more about a positive message of hope that would unite all Canadians.

"The message of the rally to me is hope and unity for our country," she says. "We've been so divided, and our government has created huge amounts of that division. The truckers, and all the Canadians who came out to support them, are standing for everyone having the right to make their own decisions and have their own opinions, and for that to be good enough, regardless of what those decisions and opinions are."

LOCALS AGAINST

As the convoy has picked up steam, it's expanded to become a much broader vehicle for people to express their outrage at the federal government and pandemic restrictions that they feel curb their freedoms.

As Plett acknowledges, the

ideology that causes others harm is cause for concern," they say.

They feel that the movement has made unsubstantiated claims that the COVID-19 pandemic restrictions violate individual freedoms and compare the vaccine mandates to human atrocities such as the Holocaust.

"The comparison that's being made between getting forced to take a vaccine and the very real discrimination and injustices that minorities have faced over the years is deplorable," they add.

Other local residents with trucking connections declined to comment, citing concern over possible repercussions from their associates or community members, along with concern that commenting publicly would only validate the position of convoy supporters.

CONVOY REACHES OTTAWA

Since arriving in Ottawa on January 29, the protest at Parliament Hill has been largely peaceful.

However, there have also been some incidents shared on the news and in social media, including the defacement of the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier and the Terry Fox memorial. The owners of a local soup kitchen have claimed that a security guard and a client were both assaulted and harassed by protesters.

Those incidents are being investigated by police, although their enforcement goals have been aimed at de-escalating the situation and not starting confrontations.

Far-right paraphernalia has also been on display from some individuals, including Nazi symbols and at least one person flying the U.S.'s Confederate flag.

As the weekend came to a close, some organizers were signalling that they don't plan to leave the capital until the government gives in to their demands.

Ottawa's mayor has said that the cost of policing adds up to around \$800,000 per day and that protesters should move out. He also cites the danger and ongoing inconvenience of city routes, including emergency routes, remaining clogged.

So far, the federal government has insisted that they are not considering any change to the vaccine mandate for truckers.

IN BRIEF

Canada Post Unveils New Niverville Location

By Sara Beth Dacombe

sdacombe@nivervillecitizen.com

Canada Post has opened their new location at 41 Main Street in Niverville on Monday, January 24.

Canada Post says they are pleased to be able to provide this new and upgraded post office to continue serving the community. The building has increased accessibility features as well as a fresh new look with better access to products and services.

"The relocation to this 3,000-square-foot building was undertaken to accommodate Niverville's current and anticipated growth and increased demand for postal services that would bring," says Phil Legault, director of media relations for Canada Post. "The new facility will provide local residents and businesses with continued reliable, affordable, and accessible postal services, and will include an access ramp for those with mobility issues. All existing products and services will be available at the new location, with all postal boxes residing inside the building."

Notice of the move was provided to postal box customers in early January. All existing postal box numbers will remain the same and there will be no change to addresses or postal codes.

Customers with existing boxes will be provided with new keys. Keys can be exchanged at the new post office starting on January 24.

Regular business hours at the new location will be Monday to Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., and on Saturdays from 9:15 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. The postal box lobby will be open Monday to Saturday from 6:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m.

FREE

**HOME MARKET
EVALUATION**

Katie Knebel

204-392-3030

ROYAL LEPAGE
Riverbend Realty



'Tis the season

RRSP



**Create your
retirement plan
with us.**

Caisse
Financial Group

Caisse.biz





PREVENT DAMAGE BEFORE IT HAPPENS!

ROOFTOP SNOW REMOVAL

Ken Dyck
PHONE: 204-326-7349

Kerry Dyck
PHONE: 204-371-9450







SHOP SOUTHEAST MANITOBA ONLINE!

Buy & sell in the virtual mall of Southeast Manitoba!

southeast.chambemarket.ca

SIGN UP TODAY FOR **FREE** WITH PROMO CODE: **SHOPLOCAL**

GET STARTED



CHAMBER MARKET

Manitoba Southeast COMMERCE GROUP
RITCHOT - STE. ANNE - TACHÉ
REGIONAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE



CREEK VILLAGE DENTAL

NOW OPEN AND ACCEPTING NEW PATIENTS!

Located conveniently in Sage Creek, just off of Lagimodiere near the South perimeter, we offer extended hours including evenings and weekends. We are a new, state-of-the-art clinic providing all types of general dentistry including dental cleanings, Invisalign, teeth whitening, conscious sedation, wisdom tooth removal, kids dentistry, emergency dentistry, and more.



Drs. Randy Mutchmor, Trent Lamirande, and Daniel Kolt, along with our amazing staff, strive to provide you with the highest standard of care in a comfortable, relaxed and fun environment.

All 3 dentists are graduates of the University of Manitoba College of Dentistry, and remain involved with the college instructing students part-time, as well as volunteering on different boards and associations. We look forward to meeting you and helping address any of your dental needs!

204-256-1639 Unit 511, 55 Sage Creek Blvd, Winnipeg
hello@creekvillagedental.com

I LOVE TO READ MONTH

Share a book with your Valentine!

Ron R. Schuler
MLA for Springfield-Ritchot
Ron@RonSchuler.com

Local Paramedics Talk Burnout, Staff Shortages

By Sara Beth Dacombe

LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER
✉ sdacombe@nivervillecitizen.com

Rural paramedics are facing burnout, with daily COVID-19 cases having reached record levels in January. The ongoing crisis has had cascading effects, not the least of which is the increasing degree of mental health concerns that have only gotten more serious and persistent over the course of the past two years.

Emergency responders have seen the worst of the human toll exacted by COVID-19—and recently, much of the staff at stations serving Niverville and the surrounding area have been either hit with COVID themselves or been unable to work.

The Manitoba Association of Health Care Professionals (MAHCP), the union that represents more than 800 rural paramedics, calls the situation a staffing crisis and has been sounding the alarm.

The problem has been getting worse since the MAHCP initially reported about staffing issues last summer.

On January 6, they formally asked Manitoba's government for a response.

Since that time, no response has been received.

The most recent MAHCP report points to some staggering figures.

There have been more than 17,000 hours when ambulances were out of service and unavailable to assist Manitobans in an emergency.

This troubling statistic is a five-year high, and there's no sign of the trend improving due to the ever-increasing demand on ambulances and



DEPOSIT PHOTOS

paramedics right when they are at their shortest supply.

"During the pandemic, rural paramedics have worked unprecedented levels of overtime and continue to do so, but they can't keep up," says Bob Moroz, president of the MAHCP. "The Manitoba government refuses to address the staffing crisis that is overwhelming rural paramedics."

HOLIDAY BURNOUT

Two local paramedics can confirm the prevalence of burnout facing many exhausted emergency responders. They agreed to share their experiences with *The Citizen* on the condition of anonymity.

Paramedic One says that over the holiday season calls for emergency services typically rise, but December 2021 was even busier than usual for a number of reasons.

"Things over the Christmas holidays were much busier

than past holidays for the following reasons: the increase number in COVID cases and the new provincial protocol to move patients from city hospital to rural hospital," they say of their workload. "City paramedics are not running patients out here. Rural medics are expected to pick up and drop off these patients."

They also report that staff are calling in sick with either COVID-like symptoms or debilitating mental and emotional fatigue.

"Things always get busier over the holidays," agrees Paramedic Two, who adds that there was also increased call volume this year due to a spike in opioid overdoses. "We were also plagued with illness this year, making us more short-staffed than usual. The general challenges are fatigue and lack of support."

Paramedic One confirms that the province's southern region sometimes sees eight

trucks pulled at once because there is no one to staff them.

EXCESSIVE OVERTIME

The staffing issue is the largest challenge facing emergency personnel, and it's one that already existed before the start of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Paramedic One explains that rural Manitoba has always lost paramedics to the city because the city pays on average \$8/hour more. When COVID-19 hit, it turned a bad situation into one that was much worse.

Shared Health has provided no relief, they say.

"Paramedics have left over the last year or two for other opportunities," says Paramedic One. "However, Shared Health has made the decision to leave those positions vacant. They are left vacant and a small group of full-time floats, in addition to a small group of casual paramedics, are sent out to fill the

void. There has only been one hiring effort in the last year or two at most."

In general, the rural paramedics left carrying the responsibility of responding to rural Manitobans in the southeast are working overtime as the rule, not the exception.

Paramedics in the southern region are working multiple 24-hours shifts per week, trying to cover for others who are out sick. They say that staff are doing their best to pick up shifts to fill the void and are regularly working 60 to 72 hours weekly.

"People who become paramedics care deeply about others and worry that they will not get the help that they need if trucks have to be pulled," says this paramedic. "The cycle of working so much extra time with the intention to ensure that our neighbours will have the help they need, when they need it, is the fuel

that burns a paramedic out. It takes a large toll mentally and physically working so many hours, especially if those hours are concurrent without any break. Especially 24-hour shifts. It's not often that we have the opportunity to put our head down in the early hours of the morning after a call to get a nap in."

OVERWHELMED AND AFRAID

Overall, these two paramedics zero in on the message that they want the community to know what it's like being a paramedic during a pandemic: they are overwhelmed and afraid that they won't be able to be there when rural Manitobans need them the most.

"It is a challenging time to be a paramedic," says Paramedic One. "We respond to calls where we see some of the sickest COVID patients. We do everything in our power to help, but there have been so many patients who we haven't been able to help. We've had to take patients to Winnipeg and as far as Brandon as of late because there isn't enough room in our hospitals to house every sick patient who needs our help. Our system is so incredibly overwhelmed and EMS is exhausted."

Paramedic Two concurs: "I am pretty sure we are all burnt out. I know I am. The call volume has increased significantly. There is no room in the hospitals. I really don't know what to say. COVID is a severe illness or it can be mild. I've seen the sick people. I've seen the backlogs. It needs to be treated with respect."

HEAVY TRUCK, TRAILER & EQUIPMENT SALES

N&A
TRUCKING
& LEASING LTD.

Box 458
Niverville, MB.
ROA 1E0

PHONE: 1-204-388-4509
FAX: 1-204-388-6283
EMAIL: nandatrucking@hotmail.com

REPAIRS & PARTS ON ALL MAKES & MODELS

NEW **B's** CAFE
AND STORE

20 CROWN VALLEY ROAD WEST
NEW BOTHWELL

(204) 388-9585

Take n' Bake Meals
CHECK ONLINE FOR PRICING



newbscafeandstore.com

IN BRIEF

RCMP Officer Charged in Relation to Fall Collision

By Evan Braun

✉ editor@nivervillecitizen.com

An internal investigation has concluded that an on-duty RCMP officer may have committed an offence related to a collision at a local intersection.

Last year, on September 10 at 6:36 p.m., the officer in question, Constable Jean Christophe Martin, was involved in an accident at the corner of Highways 59 and 311. Two individuals sustained serious injuries in the incident.

The civilian director of the Independent Investigation Unit (IIU), which is tasked with investigating criminal matters related to the police in Manitoba, has determined that there are reasonable grounds to believe an offence occurred under the Criminal Code.

Martin has been issued a summons to appear at the provincial court in St. Pierre-Jolys on March 22 to face two counts of dangerous driving causing bodily harm.

The investigation had begun on September 13, and now that the matter is before the courts the IIU has advised that they will not comment further.

Niverville and Ritchot Post Record Construction Numbers

By Sara Beth Dacombe

LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

✉ sdacombe@nivervillecitizen.com

The RM of Ritchot and the Town of Niverville both had record-breaking construction years in 2021.

Ritchot saw an estimated \$74.5 million in building permits issued compared to \$41.3 million in 2020—an increase of 55 percent—bringing the region's construction activity to its highest level in more than 10 years.

In total, 270 building permits were issued for various projects including swimming pools, renovations, commercial builds, and accessory buildings.

New housing increased as well, though not at the same rate as other projects, with 84 permits granted compared to the previous year's 68.

Niverville's construction remains strong with 2021's building permits showing a value of \$56 million, a \$30 million increase from 2020. According to the town, 2021 had 80 single-family home starts, 77 multifamily units, and 12 commercial and industrial starts.

Myron Dyck, mayor of Niverville, says the town's considerable residential growth shows once again that the area appeals to many young families who are attracted to the idea of living in a community where they can know their neighbour.

"The area around Winnipeg continues to see growth because of the value buyers see," says Mayor Dyck. "Many do not know their neighbour in Winnipeg or other places they move from. They feel they can in places like Niverville."

The town has also grown to the



House construction in Niverville.

JOEY VILLANUEVA

point where there are more jobs in the community and activities to enjoy without having to leave.

"As the community grows, more people can live and work in town," Mayor Dyck adds. "There are good schools, parks, the Community Resource and Recreation Centre, and places to spend time with family and friends. It's the proximity to still have connection to a big city without being in a big city."

Doug Dyck, owner of Heritage Lane Builders, has extensive experience building in both Niverville and Ritchot. The building company is the single largest builder outside the City of Winnipeg. With approximately 110 permits pulled in 2021, 63 were in Niverville alone.

Currently, Heritage has approximately 30 builds on the go locally, with approximately 12 in Niverville.

Doug Dyck is pleased that the largest concentration of homes they build is in Niverville. Their typical builds range in size from a townhouse rental or duplex to single-family houses with no garage, as well as medium homes

and even large homes with walk-out basements. He says there is no sign of demand slowing down.

"There are several reasons as to why people are gravitating to rural communities such as Niverville," says Doug Dyck. "Some of these reasons are that, because of COVID, people have been restricted to stay close to home. This has caused people to re-evaluate what is a priority in their lives. If travel is limited, then our homes and yards are where we will spend more of our time."

He points out that homebuyers are asking themselves many questions, like, "How do we want to live in our home? What is important to us? What do we need to feel the need for space indoors and out?"

Forecasting the needs of potential homebuyers in Niverville can be challenging, but Doug Dyck says there are skilled individuals working in the community who are doing a good job of planning for expansion. He credits the town's leadership for making things happen with a mindset toward growth.

"Our land developers, along with the Town of Niverville, have

done an excellent job of forecasting growth and the needs of those that call Niverville home and those coming to be part of this wonderful forward-thinking town," says Doug Dyck.

When asked why Niverville continues to enjoy such considerable growth in southeast Manitoba, Doug notes many similar attributes to what the mayor sees. He says Niverville has something to offer every demographic, and businesses are also able to move into the readily available spaces on Main Street and in the industrial park.

"As time goes on, there is less and less need to travel to Winnipeg for your needs," he says. "And if it is Winnipeg you need, it is just a short commute away. From cradle to twilight years, there is something for everyone and a place to reside."

He also points out that, according to a recent study across Canada, Manitoba's housing prices are affordable.

"That sets us apart from other provinces. There is room for growth here. Manitoba has, for the most part, been in steady growth through the years. Rural Manitoba offers so much. More than any other time in history, this is an exciting time of growth, for sure."

But it's the community, with its amenities such as great schools, fitness centres, and restaurants, that will continue to foster consumer confidence, which is key to successful growth according to Doug Dyck's experience.

"This is a community one can be proud of. I like to say that we are a little community doing great things."



Katie Knebel
204-392-3030
ROYAL LEPAGE
Riverbend Realty





- Real Estate Transactions
- Corporate Law
- Agriculture Law
- Wills
- Estates
- Succession Planning
- Civil Litigation

SMITH • NEUFELD • JODOIN LLP
LAW OFFICES

Unit B - 62 Main Street, Niverville
Tel. 204-388-9300 | Fax: 204-388-9350

www.snj.ca




Thinking of Buying or Selling?
Call me for all your Real Estate needs!

STACEY HEIDE | 204-914-2522
staceyheide@shaw.ca
www.staceyheide.com

Local Niverville Realtor




Regional Recycling Company to Close in 2022

By Jennifer Lavin

✉ jlavin@nivervillecitizen.com

After 29 years in business in south-eastern Manitoba, enVision's Eastman Recycling Services (ERS) will be closing its doors.

However, they will not close immediately.

Instead ERS will wind down their operations throughout 2022, allowing them time to finish out contracted terms and, hopefully, find new jobs for the enVision clients who are employed with the company.

EnVision Community Living created ERS in 1992 for two reasons: they believed in the concept of bringing curbside recycling pickup to southeastern Manitoba, and they wanted to create jobs for their clients.

"All along, enVision's core purpose at ERS was to create meaningful work for people who live with an intellectual disability," says Jeannette DeLong, enVision's executive director. "And we have done that for many years."

DeLong says that the company started modestly.

After the idea of ERS was conceived, enVision employees went



Eastman Recycling Services is set to close down its operations this year.

ENVISION

door to door in Steinbach informing residents about the potential for curbside recycling services. This was a remarkably successful tactic and they signed up 575 households who each agreed to pay \$48 annually for

the service.

Today, ERS has four municipal and town contracts and picks up recycling at 10,781 households.

Over the course of its lifetime, ERS has provided employment for more

than 60 individuals living with an intellectual disability. At this time, nine of those employees remain.

Since the business's inception, however, recycling has changed dramatically. There is more automation

now and much less need for human intervention in the process.

It was this new model of recycling that spurred enVision's decision to cease operations.

"In recent years we have seen the recycling industry move into a highly automated model while we have continued to operate with hands-on labour," says DeLong. "Keeping up with the industry, along with increasing operational and capital costs, and managing increased liabilities, is pulling us away from our original purpose."

DeLong stresses that enVision's board of directors and leadership have not made this decision lightly. She says they remain firmly committed to providing purposeful employment opportunities for their clients.

"While it's been a tough decision, we know it's the right decision for our organization," DeLong adds. "We are very proud of what we have achieved at ERS over the years, together with staff and the people we support. We look forward to conversations about how recycling will continue in the region, and the possibility of the sale of ERS."



Urban Flavours

CANNABIS

NOW OPEN!

10% Off All Accessories & Merchandise until March 1

Monday - Thursday: 10am-8pm
 Friday & Saturday: 10am-9pm
 Sunday: 12pm - 6pm

• FLOWER • EDIBLES • VAPES • OILS • TOPICAL •
 • INGESTIBLE • CONCENTRATE • BEVERAGES •

info@urbanflavours.ca **204.890.7074**

NIVERVILLE

autobody Collision & Glass

COLLISION REPAIR AUTO GLASS REPAIR & REPLACEMENT

direct repair

Ferd Klassen
 Phone: 204.388.4657
 Fax: 204.388.4394
 Email: info@nivervilleautobody.ca

www.nivervilleautobody.ca

autopac ACCREDITED
A Manitoba Public Insurance product

Ritchot Proposes Large Utility Rate Increase

By Sara Beth Dacombe
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER
✉ sdacombe@nivervillecitizen.com

Residents of the RM of Ritchot will soon see utility rates rise as much as 56 percent over three years, according to a proposal put forward by council. The increases are notably higher than the current rate of inflation.

The change affects water and sewer utility charges, which will increase dependent on an individual's consumption rate measured in cubic metres.

Individuals who are using the least amount of water will be charged the highest increase while greater volume users will see an increase of 49 to 51 percent.

The rate change also coincides with the RM's plan to combine all utility charges into one rate which will be applied across the entire municipality.

While this is already the current practice in Ste. Agathe, residents in St. Adolphe and Île-des-Chênes will no longer see a sewage fee listed on their annual tax statement.

Instead water, sewer, and service charges will be combined into one fee entitled "water consumption" and applied on the quarterly utility invoices sent by the RM.

The proposed changes are still before the Public Utilities Board and, if ultimately approved, would take effect after July 1, 2022 and increase annually for three years.

REASONS FOR CHANGES

The RM says utility rates have not been raised in about two decades and the proposed changes are needed to counter a deficit incurred by the utility services every year.

"The rates have not changed since 2002, nearly 20 years," says Chris Ewen, mayor of Ritchot. "During this time period, some of the individual utility groups have been running deficits and these deficits require PUB approval. If too many deficits occur, the PUB will be requiring the municipality to look at their rates."

The RM also says that these rate increases are necessary to support the municipality's current infrastructure as well as planned development projects.

"The proposed rates are for operational and future capital projects, in anticipation that borrowing will not be required for these projects and the utility is self-sustainable," says Ewen.

RESIDENTS CONCERNED

The RM conducted the first reading of the proposed bylaw in July 2021, but many residents were surprised



and concerned by the notice they received in early January 2022.

St. Adolphe business owner Keith Pearce said he was concerned, not only about the rise in rates but how they were communicated.

Many residents said they first learned about the proposed rates on a community Facebook page.

"Up until I saw it on Facebook, I really hadn't heard about it, how bad it was, or what it was exactly," says Pearce. "So they haven't really done a very good job of advising people what is coming this year, the year after."

The RM welcomed questions from residents who wanted to find out more about the increases and request help figuring out what their bill will be come July.

Pearce says that he reached out to the CAO, Mitch Duval, directly and received a detailed breakdown of what the three years of increases will amount to for him individually.

"He took our readings from last year and did a spreadsheet of what we paid and what we would be looking at a one-year, two-year, three-year type of thing. It was really nice of him to do that," says Pearce. "That's when he told me it was because the rates hadn't been raised in 20 years."

The increase is substantial, but Pearce feels the rates would be better accepted in the community if people understood the deficit the RM has been incurring for water consumption for years.

"They could've said that in the letter to explain things a bit better," he says. "Generally what I'm hearing is nobody heard that, which would

go back to poor communication. If they're asking for rate increases and nobody knows about it, and then doesn't know why it is necessary, then it's just going to go through with anger and that was one of the reactions people had."

For Pearce, he says his household doesn't use much water and doesn't anticipate to struggle with the increase in rates. He also agrees with the RM's intention to combine the utility fees into one bill.

"The rates have not changed since 2002, nearly 20 years. During this time period, some of the individual utility groups have been running deficits."

Chris Ewen / Ritchot Mayor

"Previously the sewer rates have been tied to our taxes, but I think your sewer rates should be tied to water usage," Pearce adds. "I know the city does it that way, like the sewer isn't separate from water, so I think I'm supportive of it. It's just a proper way of calculating what a person should be paying. The next door neighbour, he doesn't have a swimming pool and we do, so we're going to pay more than him and we should pay more than him."

Pearce says that it may be hard for some people to see why the increase is necessary for three years in a row, and wishes the RM could be creative in finding other ways to tidy up the budget and ensure money is being properly spent.

"There's a lot of places, if they're

looking for money, that maybe they should go through the expenses of running something like that and find out why things are the way they are, and why they cost so much. Are there areas of the expenses that can be trimmed back?" asks Pearce.

Not raising the rates in 20 years was a surprise, but Pearce said he can see why it's necessary now especially given the recent residential and commercial developments ongoing throughout the municipality.

"Yeah, they're probably finding themselves in a bit of a jam. There's quite a bit of new development in Ste. Agathe and St. Adolphe. Grande Pointe's had a lot and Île-des-Chênes's had a lot."

If the municipality didn't foresee the need to increase water rates over the last 20 years, Pearce also wonders if the RM has raised them enough or if the people will be seeing increases more frequently from now on.

Given the recent rise in inflation, with the cost of water rising along with a lot of other goods and services, many household budgets may be put under pressure in the near future.

"I'm worried about inflation even after this," says Pearce. "I can see inflation causing increases in almost anything, so if there are increases on top of this yet, this will be pretty out of line though. I'm concerned they'll want it again next year and the year after that."

Ron Rochon, who also lives in St. Adolphe, will see his rates rise as well. He feels that the RM did a poor job of communicating the proposed rates and is planning to write a letter

to the Public Utilities Board enquiring about the process the RM has enacted when proposing the change.

"That's the one thing I'm not necessarily happy with," says Rochon. "It's actually a big chunk of change... I'd love to have no price increase or maybe a cost of living increase that would be more reasonable. And maybe they could've told us that there wasn't an increase for almost 20 years. Maybe the issue is nobody wants to be the one to give bad news and say that things have to increase. I didn't hear about it until I got it in my water bill at the end of the year and then on Facebook."

But Rochon also acknowledges that he understands the reason for the rate change. And because their household only has two people, he feels they don't use a lot of water and the increase will be fair.

"When I take a look at the numbers, I guess I don't think that it's a big deal," he says. "It's not a lot of money. I guess any increase is a big increase, though... It's similar to what happened with Manitoba Hydro. They went so long without price increases and now they have to catch up. I also understand that developments cost money, and there's been a lot of development in the community."

Rochon calls the step-by-step increases reasonable and agrees that the RM needs funds if they're going to maintain and properly take care of things.

"If the RM is running a deficit every year, it has to be taken care of," Rochon says. "I understand why this has to happen."

RM RESPONSE

The municipality says it had provided the Public Utilities Board with a rate study as well as a proposal regarding the 2022–2024 rate request.

"In order to implement these rates, PUB approval is required," says Mayor Ewen. "[The] PUB is an independent administrative board that will review the application and receive comments and complaints on this application. Pending these comments/complaints, the board may hold public hearings to know more about the proposal or determine it to be in the best interest of the stakeholders."

When asked if increases will be proposed more frequently in the future to keep the utility rates more up to date and to prevent deficits from happening, Ewen agreed with the concerns of residents.

"In the future, I encourage councils to review rates of all types, be it water utility, tax mill rates, etc., to be evaluated more frequently so a 20-year gap does not happen," says Ewen.

Commentary

Dark Days: Dealing with Seasonal Affective Disorder

By Daniel Dacombe

The winter months can be hard. Short days, long nights, cold weather, and shoveling metric tons of snow can all be demoralizing—especially when the snow falls again a day or two later. It's normal to feel a little down when we can't be outside sunning ourselves like lizards on warm rocks.

However, for some people the winter months are a season of true darkness. Their personalities change, their lives shrink, and even the winter sunlight can't seem to warm them.

The experience of winter for these people is more than just a challenge. It can seem like a switch has been flipped, changing their perception of the world and of themselves. Then, just as suddenly, when the days lengthen and spring has sprung the mood lifts like fog burned away by the rising sun.

If this sounds familiar for you or someone you care about, you could be dealing with a case of a short-lived but still very real mental health issue.

Seasonal affective disorder, sometimes abbreviated as SAD, is a term coined by South African psychiatrist Norman E. Rosenthal. Rosenthal moved to the United States to practice psychiatry, and he first described this disorder during his research in the 1980s. Interestingly, it was his own move from the warm climate of South Africa to the more variable climate of New York that led to his interest in the subject.

Thanks to his research, many people who were dismissed as just having the “winter blues” were taken seriously, and now seasonal affective disorder is an acknowledged reality for many people, especially here in



the Great White North.

Seasonal affective disorder can include many symptoms that are generally associated with regular depression, but with a unique twist: they only show themselves between the fall and winter months.

During this period, people struggling with seasonal affective disorder may experience the following uncharacteristic symptoms: frequent and persistent low mood, excessive tiredness and lethargy, sleeping more than usual, loss of interest in previously enjoyed activities, difficulty concentrating or “brain fog,” weight gain, feelings of

hopelessness or worthlessness, and suicidal thoughts.

The key criteria for seasonal affective disorder is its uncharacteristic nature; it seems very divergent from an individual's normal functioning. During warmer months, or when taking trips to sunnier climates, people struggling with this experience tend to experience a return to baseline—to their normal way of functioning.

While this is a good thing for the travel industry, not all of us can afford a trip to Cuba in the midwinter to bring our moods up.

Thankfully, there are less

expensive options for mitigating these symptoms.

Treatment for seasonal affective disorder is closely aligned with its proposed cause—a change in the amount of environmental light. Rosenthal, as well as many other researchers, drew a connection between the change in light and temperature in winter and the increased lethargy/decreased mood of people with this disorder. This is consistent with the experience of many animals during winter, even those that do not hibernate. They are slow, move less, sleep more, and consume more calories in order to stay warm and sated

during times of cold, dark weather.

In order to undo these feelings, we have to simulate a return to spring or summer, inspiring our highly evolved (yet still mammalian) systems to start up again.

For this reason, light—specifically, the use of bright light therapy (BLT)—is a treatment of choice for many practitioners. While research into its use has been limited, some evidence does suggest that sitting with “full spectrum” lights has a marked benefit on one's overall mood.

Recent research suggests that antidepressants may have some benefit as well, but in some cases the medication is no more effective than BLT.

Talk therapy (speaking to a counsellor or psychotherapist) has also been indicated to have some positive effect. It can be helpful to have an outside voice bring perspective to the uncharacteristic and sometimes overwhelming feelings of hopelessness and worthlessness this condition can bring.

Most importantly, acknowledging how you feel is the first step towards anything getting better.

Sometimes people are afraid they would be a burden if they disclosed that they were experiencing a mental health struggle. Especially in the dark of winter, with its accompanying unwelcome and uncharacteristic feelings of despair, we are all too ready to believe that fear.

Discussing your mental health concerns with people who care about you gives you the chance to start getting better and gives them the chance to help you, which may, in turn, help lift them out of their own winter blues.

 **HERITAGE CENTRE**
A gathering place for the entire community

nivervilleeventcentre.com

204-388-2150

Engaged?

A beautiful all-inclusive venue for your big day
We take care of everything!

Sports & Recreation



The annual snow maze at A Maze in Corn near St. Adolphe is off to a great season.

SARA BETH DACOMBE

Local Snow Maze Keeps Getting Bigger and Better

By Sara Beth Dacombe

✉ sdacombe@nivervillecitizen.com

A Maze in Corn opened its annual snow maze on Saturday, January 29 after weather delayed their original start date by a week.

The maze is celebrating its twenty-fifth anniversary this year with their most over-the-top maze experience yet, bringing together local artists and makers to wow guests from all across Manitoba.

Home to the Guinness Book of World Record's largest snow maze, the venue north of St. Adolphe offers a unique atmosphere where you can enjoy a walk through the maze, play jenga with wooden blocks, group-snowshoe (five people on one set of wooden plank "snowshoes"), climb the hay bale pyramid, toboggan (sleds provided), warm up by the bonfires, and take in a fire-juggling show and other entertainment—all for the price of admission.

Extra activities are available for additional fees, such as the

horse-drawn sleigh ride and giant luge (a truly huge sled run). Mini donuts, hot chocolate, and adult refreshments can be found at the snack shack or snow bar.

It takes approximately 45 minutes to navigate one's way through the maze at a leisurely pace, taking time to find all five snow buildings. The five buildings each showcase a different theme: an "animal cracker" house, movie theatre, church, Valentine's, and winter wonderland room.

Proof of vaccination is required to enter, and masks are required in certain locations throughout the venue, such as inside all pathways and snow buildings because of the likelihood of being closer than six feet to others.

Owners Clint and Angie Masse host the family-friendly attraction, which started off as a fall corn maze and now offers entertainment nearly year-round.

UNPREDICTABLE WEATHER

This year they were intending to open the snow maze on Sunday,

January 23, but were delayed by several logistical challenges, including the weather.

"It looks like everybody is having fun. It was a great turnout for our first day," says Angie. "However, today is a very beautiful winter day, especially after the last five weeks it seems, which was one blizzard after another."

Snow is obviously integral to building a snow maze, but Angie says there was just so much of it recently that it ended up causing problems.

"This year we've had way more snow than last year, but it actually ends up being in the way," she says. "It is certainly beautiful because it paints a picture everywhere you look, but in terms of being a help to us? Not really!"

The logistics of building the snow maze began weeks ago. As they prepared to open, staff had to continually clear away the snow Mother Nature kept dumping. Keeping the maze paths clear is crucial to the safety of guests and their ability to

enjoy the maze.

Angie also sees the highway conditions as a challenge for people to overcome to get out to their St. Adolphe location.

"It took us two days just to blow out the snow from the snow maze after all those days of big storms," says Angie. "The best scenario would be just nice little sprinkles of snow, which is pretty and sets the stage for a nice winter day, but obviously too much snow and it makes it hard for people to get out here. We have the machinery to move it and push it and get it to where it needs to go. And now that the build is done, then it's easier to focus on just that."

Angie is also focused on enjoying the snow maze season, despite being hampered by the province's ongoing public health restrictions which cap the outdoor venue at a maximum of 250 people.

While the safety of her guests is the priority, the business could certainly use a boost by lifting the maximum attendance if at all possible.

"With COVID, we are limited. We can only have 250 people here," she says. "We are looking forward to the future. It's been two years running the corn maze, haunted forest, sunflower exhibit, and snow maze under restrictions and it's a challenge, because 250 people just doesn't seem like very many people. For us, with the snow maze, because we only have so many weekends in a season."

Angie says the snow maze is only viable for a short window of time.

They expect to be open for the month of February and into the beginning of March, but how long they can stay open is really unpredictable.

"The first year, we made it to about the third weekend in March, but last year everything melted early. We had an early spring so we only had one weekend in March."

NEW MAZE, NEW EXPERIENCE

The Masses would love for as many people as possible to enjoy the

maze because of the amount of work that goes into it every year. They spend a lot of time designing the maze differently, so that each year return customers are treated to a new experience.

"Everybody is just always amazed that we somehow make it bigger and better every year," Angie says. "With the maze, we change the maze every year. We make the buildings and carvings different every year, so that way if you come again and make it your tradition to come to the snow maze, it's going to be different."

Local artists and makers also contribute to the world-class experience A Maze in Corn is able to offer.

Local designer Glen Paa-vola helped design the maze, as he has done for A Maze in Corn's haunted forest and other attractions.

Award-winning snow sculptor Lyle Peters, who has been sculpting snow for more than 25 years, is the creator behind the beautiful church at the centre of the maze; his work has been featured at Festival du Voyageur.

John Wade's 30 years of ice sculpture artistry skills add a signature touch to many features in the snow maze's rooms.

Allan Fogg, a former art director and graphic designer, has competed in snow sculpting for over 15 years and contributed his talents to this year's maze.

From animals to trees, pulpits and pews, to ice hearts and giant "diamond" rings, sourcing staff and artists to craft the walls, structures, and add artistic detail takes an enormous amount of energy and becomes a labour of love.

And love is certainly the right word. The impressive

atmosphere is so fun and memorable that last year A Maze in Corn was the site of at least one marriage proposal.

Angie says she wouldn't be surprised if it happened again this year since they are open over Valentine's Day.

The church at the heart of the snow maze, with its shimmering ice-block backdrop and pulpit, seems to beg for the lucky couple to return, ready for an iconic Canadian wedding.

"We're actually waiting and wanting to host something like that! Yes, we would absolutely be open to it," says Angie, laughing. "It's a small room, but of course weddings have to be small anyway right now, so why not make it super memorable? Call us!"

TRIBUTE TO STAFF

While COVID has presented some challenges for their business, Angie credits their staff for keeping them afloat.

"We have amazing staff. They are so helpful. They put up with us, working long hours, and it's such a team effort," says Angie, getting emotional. "Just returning staff, that's what does it. And the new ones we add in are fantastic. They learn from the veterans. It's my staff. That's what gets me through."

Longterm employees are a hallmark of any successful business—employees like Monique Leclaire, the "grandma to the petting zoo," who has worked at A Maze in Corn since it first opened.

The business has a special connection for Leclaire as it is located on her family's homestead land.

"Monique takes good care of our animals in the summer and then, of course, in the winter, she can't get enough," Angie says. "She helps out

with the sleigh rides. She helps out with everything."

OUT IN FORCE

Families and guests of all ages were out in full force on the first Saturday of the season.

Makara Wiens and Alliyah Kowalson have been best friends since childhood and like to have fun exploring Manitoba in each other's company. They have been to A Maze in Corn to enjoy the corn maze and the sunflower exhibit, but this was their first time checking out the snow maze.

Taking a moderate pace, it took them approximately 30 minutes to see four out of the five buildings in the maze. They said they were impressed by the attention to detail in each building and they already know this is one outdoor activity they'll add to their winter to-do list again and again.

"It's so cool," says Alliyah. "I think they were so creative to build an animal-themed building, and a Valentine's Day building, and a movie theatre. I would never have thought to build a movie theatre."

Makara agrees. "It's a new thing to do in winter, 'cuz not everyone can skate and not everyone likes to go down a hill on a sled. It's something that brings everyone together outside and I think it's really important to be outside even in the winter when it's cold. I think you appreciate it a lot more, especially with everything going on. It's so good for your mental health to be outside."

"I feel like it's so Canadian, too, to have a maze made out of snow," says Alliyah. "Like, nowhere else would do this."



2022-23

KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION

REGISTRATION NOW OPEN!

REGISTER
ONLINE



Registration Process:

1. Complete the online registration form located at www.HSD.ca.
2. Provide supporting documentation to the designated school.

Online Registration

To begin the registration process, visit www.HSD.ca. For those who do not have Internet access, please call the school nearest your residence. School staff will assist in completing the first step of the registration process by phone.

Parents/Caregivers are encouraged to register their children as soon as possible. Early registration will assist schools in planning for the next school year and provide an opportunity for parents/caregivers and children to participate in welcoming events in the spring.

Eligibility

To be eligible for registration, children must be five years of age on or before December 31, 2022. Students are required to attend the school within the catchment area where they reside, which ensures balanced enrollment across the division. View catchment area maps at www.HSD.ca.

Questions? Please email info@hsd.ca or call 204-326-6471.

Online Anmeldung

Um die Anmeldung zu beginnen, gehen Sie bitte auf die www.HSD.ca Webseite. Für diejenigen, die keinen Zugang zum Internet haben, möchten wir bitten, die nächstgelegene Schule anzurufen. Um die ersten Schritte der Anmeldung ausführen zu können, wird Ihnen das Schulpersonal telefonisch zur Verfügung stehen.

Die Eltern/Erziehungsberechtigte sind aufgefordert Ihre Kinder so bald wie möglich anzumelden. Die frühe Anmeldung hilft den Schulen in der Vorbereitung für das nächste Schuljahr und bietet Eltern/Erziehungsberechtigten und Kindern die Möglichkeit an den Willkommens-Veranstaltungen im Frühling teilzunehmen.

Qualifikationen

Für die Anmeldung des Schuljahres 2022-2023, muss Ihr Kind spätestens bis zum 31. Dezember 2022, fünf Jahre alt geworden sein. Es ist notwendig, dass die Schüler an der Schule Ihres Wohnbezirks angemeldet werden, dieses wird sicherstellen, dass die Anmeldungen der Schulen im ganzen Schulbezirk ausgeglichen sind. Wenden Sie sich bitte an die "HSD catchment maps" (HSD Schulbezirkkarte) auf der Webseite.

Bei Fragen wenden Sie sich bitte an info@hsd.ca oder 204-326-6471.

FREE

**HOME MARKET
EVALUATION**

Katie Knebel
204-392-3030

ROYAL LEPAGE
Riverbend Realty

say
i love you

A gift from Mary Kay shows you're always thinking about that someone **special**. Call me today for **great ideas** that warm the heart. And spark the spirit!

Joyce Harnett
Independent Sales Director
www.marykay.ca/jharnett
204.228.3620

MARY KAY®

IN BRIEF



Pro Shop Opens at the CRRC

By Evan Braun

✉ editor@nivervillecitizen.com

Visitors to the CRRC this winter may have noticed a shop open on the main floor. Kyle Johanson, owner of Pembina Source for Sports in Winnipeg but a resident of Niverville, has opened the new location to bring some essential products and services closer to home.

"Officially we opened on November 19 for the U11 tournament, after months of training for the new staff on our skate sharpener," says Johanson.

He is leasing the space from the town, although last year it was not yet clear how long the lease would extend. "Let's just say I don't see myself moving any time soon!" he adds.

Johanson says that he grew up in a very small town and spent half his life at the local rink.

"Growing up, I wanted to either play pro sports, or own a sporting goods shop," he says. "So I can say that I guess I have fulfilled one of my childhood dreams."

He first bought into Pembina Source for Sports seven years ago, and ever since that time he has been working hard to mould it into being everything he always felt a sporting goods

store should be.

"I try to keep a positive space that gives everyone the feeling they want when thinking about the sport they love," says Johanson. "After moving to Niverville seven years ago, I noticed that we were missing a few small town staples—one of those being the buzz of a skate sharpener at the rink."

In addition to skate-sharpening, the shop offers a range of other game day necessities, including tape, laces, jocks/jills, socks, and various sporting accessories. As for services, they are able to provide the full pro shop experience, including rivets and sewing. In the future, they will also offer profiling.

"We also have items for the gymnasium, including volleyballs, basketballs, and shuttles for badminton/pickleballs," Johanson says. "We even have jerky for a post-game protein fix."

For now, Johanson is running the shop independently, but he says that one of his goals for early 2022 is to operate it as a direct satellite location for his larger Winnipeg store.

"I have still been bringing merchandise back and forth for customers as a service, to keep more people in town," he says.

Ste. Agathe Trail System Celebrates Local History

By Jennifer Lavin

✉ jlavin@nivervillecitizen.com

Denis Baudry and his brothers are so passionate about Ste. Agathe and its history that they have decided to put a 50-acre parcel of their land to the best use possible, opening it up for the public to enjoy.

The Baudry Trails are now open and you can walk, cross-country ski, or snowshoe your way through the trails—and while you're at it, take in a bit of the history of southeastern Manitoba.

The Baudry brothers—Denis, Richard, Gilbert, and Alan—have lived in Ste. Agathe for a long time and often wondered what to do with their land along the Red River.

Ultimately they decided they wanted to leave it almost exactly like it was and allow their community to explore it the way their ancestors did.

After discussing this idea with the RM of Ritchot, they agreed to lease the acreage to the municipality for a nominal sum.

The 3.5-kilometer trail system is one that was created by our ancestors, says Denis. One of the trails ends at an area of river rapids which he says was historically used as a drop-off and pick-up point for supplies.

"There's just a lot of history to this area," Denis says. "So we thought we'd leave it in its natural state."

The trails are not a difficult hike. Other than an incline next to the river, the area is fairly flat and easy to navigate.

The Baudry brothers have already created a fund that they hope to use to build a gazebo in the middle of the



The Baudry Trails near Ste. Agathe.

BAUDRY TRAILS COMMITTEE

trails so hikers have a place to rest. They're also hoping to add another resting area along the river at a scenic point.

The brothers also hope that perhaps community members could match their donations to the fund.

Other than these rest areas, though, Denis says that he and his brothers want to keep the trails as pristine and natural as they can.

"The whole idea is that this stays in the state it's in right now," he says. "The intent is to keep it as a very natural-looking property."

The trails are educational, too. Baudry speculates that they would be an excellent

spot for school trips, as they provide not only exercise but information on nature, wildlife, and the history of the area."

Denis also has other ideas for the trail system.

"We're thinking of naming the trails and having the community decide," he says. "Maybe even have a little contest! Right now we are just calling this Baudry Trails, but we hope to give each trail an historical name."

The brothers' great-great grandfather landed in Ste. Agathe in the late 1800s and the family has owned the land ever since. Denis says that the trails reflect that long heritage,

with much of the trail looking just as it did 100 to 150 years ago.

Even the trails themselves are old, having been in this area as long as humans have lived in this part of the world, perhaps going back to when the Anishinabe settled this area in the late 1700s.

"Over the years, a lot of footsteps have walked these trails," Denis says.

Baudry Trails can be accessed from Robert Road on the east side of the Red River in Ste. Agathe. There is a parking lot and a welcome sign showing visitors where to begin their adventure.

JWH
MECHANICAL
Plumbing • Heating • Air Conditioning
204-388-5366

performance insulation
Suppliers and installers of complete insulation packages
performance-insulation.ca
204-408-3310
FREE ESTIMATES

- Attic Blow in
- Spray foam
- BIBS – High Performance Insulation System
- Wall insulation

AREAS OF PRACTICE

- > CIVIL LITIGATION
- > REAL ESTATE LAW
- > FAMILY LAW
- > IMMIGRATION LAW
- > DISPUTE RESOLUTION
- > WILLS AND ESTATE

CAM'S
LAW OFFICE

2 - 18 3rd Ave S, P.O. Box 165
Niverville, Manitoba R0A 1E0
+1 431 588 2702

info@camslawoffice.com
www.camslawoffice.com

IT'S NEVER TOO
EARLY TO INVEST
IN YOUR FUTURE

Niverville 
CREDIT UNION

Come on over

Niverville: 204-388-4747
Landmark: 204-355-4035
Steinbach: 204-326-3925



"Like" Us on Facebook

NivervilleCU.mb.ca

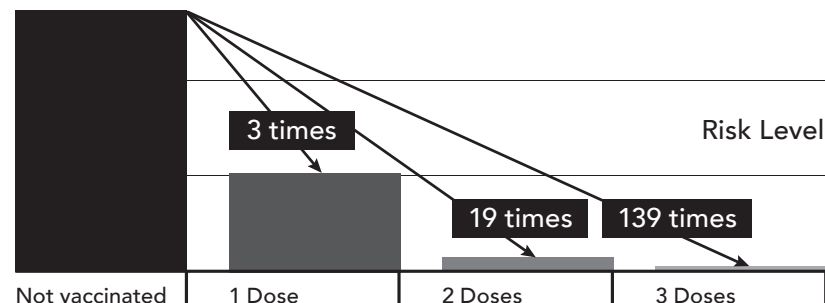
© HANDS & GLOBE Design is a registered certification mark of the World Council of Credit Unions, used under license.



RECHARGE YOUR IMMUNITY

A 3rd dose is the best way to protect yourself against COVID-19. You're **139 times** less likely to need intensive care than someone who is unvaccinated.

ICU Admissions



Fight omicron and recharge your immunity with a 3rd dose.
Schedule your appointment at **ProtectMB.ca** or call **1-844-626-8222**.

#PROTECT MB

Manitoba 



Service Your Trailer
with Just
One Company



www.metrocentreltd.com

- *Bearing Inspection & Repacking
- *Brake & Drum Inspection
- *Frame Integrity Inspection
- *Suspension Rebuild
- *Axle Replacement
- *Hitch Installation
- *Brake Control Installation
- *Trailer Tire Replacements
- *Quality Trailer Parts
- *Tonneau Covers
- *Running Boards
- *Lift Kits
- *Winches



204-237-4300

Niverville MB 41131 6th Ave. N.
Business Park

metrocentreltd@gmail.com



IN BRIEF

At Halfway Point, Jets Feeling the Pressure

By Dan Hoepfner

As we hit the halfway point of the NHL season, the Winnipeg Jets continue to search for their identity. Games have been sparse throughout January, with six home games being rescheduled due to provincial public health orders.

This means that interim head coach Dave Lowry has had a plethora of practice time to tweak the team's systems and embed his style of play.

But their performance lately has players feeling the pressure—and fans are wondering if this squad will miss the playoffs for the first time since the 2017–2018 season.

The Jets have shown glimpses of success. They recently broke a six-game losing streak that dated back to December.

On January 23, on their way to dropping their fourth game in six days, Kyle Connor and Blake Wheeler scored to give them a two-goal lead and they appeared to be in control of the game through 47 minutes against the Pittsburgh Penguins.

Like so many games recently, that control evaporated. In this case, in a span of nine seconds during the third period.

"The first one goes off a skate," said goaltender Connor Hellebuyck when asked to describe the goals. "I made a pretty good push at it, but you can't really expect it to go off a skate. I'm expecting a stick, and that's a good foot or two away from where I'm expecting that puck to go, which stinks... The second one, I just had a late decision. It looked like it was going to be icing for a second. Then when I finally decided my only play was to rip it behind the net. They just had a guy wide open right there. Just seems kind of like my luck right now."

Although the Jets didn't come out on top, that doesn't completely overshadow the good on display lately.

The Jets are making strides and becoming a hard-hitting team that's difficult to play against. In the Pittsburgh game, they outthrew their opponents 47–19 and will need to continue this style of game.

The Jets are set to play 12 games in 28 days in February, which includes a stretch of seven games in 11 days. They are five points below Calgary for the second wild card spot.

It will all come down to doing something they have struggled with this year: stringing wins together.

A busy February provides them with an opportunity to do just that.

"I know everyone wants it in the locker room but for myself, I'm feeling the pressure," Hellebuyck said.



Owen Pickering is having a stellar season for the Swift Current Broncos.

OWEN PICKERING

Pickering Shines in Swift Current, Could Be Top NHL Draft Pick

By Ty Dilello

There is a chance that St. Adolphe's Owen Pickering will become a first round draft pick at the upcoming 2022 NHL Entry Draft.

Just a few weeks ago, NHL Central Scouting ranked the 6'4" defenceman twenty-first among North American skaters for the 2022 NHL Draft.

In his second year playing for the WHL's Swift Current Broncos, the 17-year-old Pickering currently has 23 points in 39 games.

"He looks like a top 20 pick," one NHL scout recently said. "Pretty rare athleticism and coordination for a player of his age and size."

"He thinks the game extremely well," Broncos interim head coach Devan Praught recently told the *Winnipeg Free Press*. "He remembers things, whether it's a

game ago or two games ago. He can remember details of play, so he just has that sensibility."

Pickering credits his family for his hockey development from a young age.

"Hockey's a big part of our lives, so I was skating pretty young," says Pickering. "At that point, my parents always asked if I was enjoying it. I said yes, and here we are, still playing all these years later. Being from St. Adolphe helped me because of all the support from the town. It's a small town, so everyone is rooting for you, which is always pretty cool."

A lot of athletes nowadays are quick to emphasize how important it is for kids to play a variety of sports while they're young and not focus solely on one sport, at least until they're in their teen years.

Pickering is one to agree with

this sentiment.

"In my opinion, it's very important," says Pickering. "I credit a lot of my coordination to playing other sports. In addition to hockey, I was pretty fortunate enough to play baseball with the AAA Carillon team for four years and also represent Team Manitoba at U13 Nationals."

Pickering started moving up the ranks of hockey with the Eastman Selects program before transferring over to Winnipeg with the Rink Hockey Academy.

He studied at the academy for about a year and a half before joining the Swift Current Broncos in 2020–21.

"It was a difficult transition at first, but honestly, for me, it was just realizing that it's hockey," he says. "It's the same sport, just a little bit faster, and all I needed

to do was trust my abilities and believe that I belonged here. I've loved my time here so far. Swift Current is awesome, the support we get is crazy, and my billets are awesome."

Pickering tries not to think too hard about the looming NHL Entry Draft and doesn't seem to care too much about which team drafts him.

At the moment, his focus remains solely on his team in Swift Current and doing what he can to help them win games, developing into the best hockey player he can be, and letting the chips fall where they may.

"My goal for this season is to make the playoffs, and going forward over the next couple of years I want to bring a championship back to Swift Current," adds Pickering. "That would be amazing!"

MIGHTY DUCTS
CLEANING CO. LTD.

Richard Kirwan
204.392.5665
richard@mightyducts.ca
www.mightyducts.ca

RESIDENTIAL & COMMERCIAL DUCT CLEANING

SERVICE
STE-AGATHE
CENTRE

ALAIN ROBERT
President

Box 128
Ste-Agathe, MB
R0G 1Y0

alain@steagatheservice.com
PHONE: 204-882-2155
FAX: 204-882-2189

COMPLETE CAR CARE SERVICE

www.steagatheservice.com

Yvonne Grenier
purebeautybyyvonne@gmail.com

Pure Beauty
by Yvonne

Follow me on
Facebook & Instagram:
@purebeautyby.y

Spray Tans, Body Sugaring & Reiki

pure-beauty-by-y.square.site

Graceland Designs.ca
Consultant Richard A. Harder
Since 1994

Planning - Design - Engineering

Ph: 388-6454 Toll Free: 1-800-537-8495

Box 37, Tourond, MB R0A 2G0

Custom Residential & Commercial - Building Plans & Blueprinting
Homes - Cottages - Additions - Sunrooms

A Trip Down Memory Lane: Celebrating the Legacy of the Niverville Northstars

By Dan Hoepfner

The Niverville Northstars is a name not often recollected in local hockey history, but the Northstars were a force to be reckoned with in the 1980s, and according to many of the team's former players that success can be largely attributed to the coach, Brian McNaughton.

This winter marks the thirty-fifth anniversary since McNaughton stepped away from coaching the team.

The Northstars started as a Pee wee squad in Niverville in 1983. There were no tryouts or cuts, just a dedicated group of players who had signed up to play—and over the years they grew into a competitive team.

Following his tenure with the Northstars, McNaughton moved to Alberta in 1990. But memories of his time in Niverville remained top of mind.

"After I came to Alberta, a guy introduced himself to me and asked if I was the coach of that team from Niverville," McNaughton says of the team's legacy. "That guy went on to become the director of scouting for the Chicago Blackhawks and was a part of putting together the Stanley-Cup-winning teams in Chicago."

McNaughton has enjoyed a long coaching career. He led university teams and as well as teams in the Western Hockey League. He also spent years involved in the Hockey Alberta Program of Excellence as a coach and instructor.

Since moving to Alberta, his list of accomplishments is long.

He made it to four provincial finals with the Val Matteotti Golden Hawks, winning two of them. He took that same team to the Western Canadian Bantam Championships three times. He has won two Alberta Cups, taken gold for Team Alberta at the Canada Winter Games, and won the 1998

Memorial Cup Championship with the Portland Winter Hawks.

So where does the Niverville Northstars rank?

"Right at the top," McNaughton says. "That was my entry into coaching. At the time, I did this to give back. I had had a couple of coaches who really influenced me, so I wanted to do the same."

Many of the young men on his Northstars bench came away from their time on that team with a life-changing perspective.

"He instilled in me the love of the game, passion, playing as a team and not an individual," says Dave Unger, captain of the Niverville Northstars. "After coaching for a couple of years, I couldn't help but look back and fully realize how much time, energy, and money Brian



The Niverville Northstars.

JACK CARTER

spent coaching us. He must have sacrificed a lot back then."

He's not the only player with positive memories.

"I learned there were consequences to your actions," says Chadd Rempel. "If we had a bad game, I knew a bag skate was coming. I never looked at it as punishment; it was done with purpose. Good coaches

connect with their players, and I feel that was Coach Brian's strongest quality."

Rempel adds that McNaughton had a knack for knowing when a kid needed a hand on his shoulder and when he needed a kick in the butt.

"I was the latter," Rempel says. "If I were to hire a coach or personal trainer today, I think I

would be a little disappointed if they didn't shout orders at me a bit."

Other memories include the fact that Northstars played against teams in much larger towns and cities. One example was a game played against the Thompson King Miners.

"I remember at the time that this was one of those games that was as close to a junior hockey game as I could think," player Jack Carter recalls. "It was a close game, and I am sure it was a thrown-down, finish-your-check, skate-hard-all-the-time kind of game. No one was giving an inch to the other guys."

Carter remembers that the two teams were evenly matched, aside from the fact that Thompson had a population ten times the size of Niverville to draw from.

"The Northstars were up a

goal with a few miles to go, and I scored on our own net while clearing up a scrum around the crease," Carter says. "We were tied after giving them a freebee. I felt like I really blew it. But the team rallied around my gaff and while I sat on the bench trying to compose myself, [we] scored the go-ahead and eventual winner."

Carter further recalls that he won six medals with the team from 1985 to 1992.

Although McNaughton stopped coaching the Northstars in 1987, five players from the team continued to play Eastman AAA and won a provincial championship in 1989. Another legacy of the team is that three players carried on in the MJHL and won championships with the Winkler Flyers in 1991 and 1992.

Introducing the Niverville Nighthawks

By Evan Braun

editor@nivervillecitizen.com

Niverville's new Junior A hockey team officially has a name: the Niverville Nighthawks. The decision comes after an extensive public engagement process that, according to the team, resulted in an outpouring of positive community feedback.

"There's just something powerful and mysterious about the name Nighthawks," says Kelvin Cech, the team's head coach and general manager. "Our name gives me chills when I think about it. It's unique to the Canadian Junior Hockey League and captures the spirit of rural Manitoba. I love it!"

The team-naming

initiative kicked off in mid-November, launching a contest where members of the public were encouraged to submit potential team names.

The team says that, from the earliest days of the initiative, the Nighthawks was a favourite.

Once the submissions were whittled down to a short list of 12 possibilities, another round of voting took place in December.

The Nighthawks came out on top after both rounds of voting. However, before making their final decision the board carefully considered several important factors—including logo potential, marketability, and branding.

The other names in strong

contention were the Clippers, Northstars, Threshers, and Nitro.

"The board was excited by the community response to the naming contest," says Clarence Braun, spokesperson for the team's board of directors. "The Nighthawks represents the strong community support we received, and it's something that the board agrees is new and fresh in Canadian hockey team names."

The next steps, which are already underway, involve finalizing colour schemes, uniform designs, and of course the team's logo.

"The board of directors would like to express our appreciation to all those who took part in the team-naming

initiative," Braun adds. "As a board, we feel very fortunate for the amount of positive feedback and encouragement that continues to come in as we get closer to puck drop on our first season."

FIRST HIRE

In other team news, Cech has made his first hire as general manager, bringing aboard Mike McAulay, who will serve as the assistant general manager and director of scouting.

"I'm thrilled to have Mike along for the ride," says Cech. "We worked closely together at our previous MJHL stop in Winkler, and while the job in Niverville is a bit of a different story, our focus is not."

McAulay was also the assistant general manager

with the Winkler Flyers from 2019–2021, where both he and Cech worked. The Flyers finished third overall in the MJHL in 2020 despite missing the playoffs the season prior.

"We're looking for character and compete when it comes to finding the right players to come to Niverville," says McAulay. "We have our work cut out for us, but the more effort and care we take in the process now, the sooner it will pay off for our new organization."

McAulay, originally from Carman, hails from nearby LaSalle. He knows the local talent pool as well as the potential recruitment landscape across the country and in the northeastern United States.

Gan's Kitchen
CHINESE & CANADIAN FOOD EXPERIENCE

154 MAIN STREET, NIVERVILLE 204-388-6904

CPS
CONTRACT PAINTING SERVICES

204-955-5991
joe.contractpainting@gmail.com

• INTERIOR • EXTERIOR • PAINTING •
• PLASTERING • ARTISTIC MURALS •

MUNICIPALITÉ RITCHOT
MUNICIPALITY

Country Skies. City Ties.
Sous le ciel de la campagne.

MEL'S
SEPTIC SERVICES

Year round service
Serving Southeast Manitoba
24 hour Emergency Services
Residential and Commercial

call or text
204-388-4201



Worth the Investment!

At Steinbach Christian School, students receive an education that is taught from a Christian worldview in an environment that values:

Academics

Community

Faith



Call for a tour 204-326-3537
Visit www.steinbachchristian.ca