

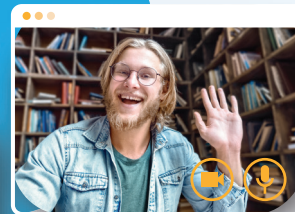
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VOLUME 8 - ISSUE 7

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LOCAL NEWS

A New Neighbourhood in IDC?

■ More residential development may soon be on the way in Île-des-Chênes. A tract of land to the south of town has been targeted by developers. Last month, a series of open houses were held to give area residents more information on the proposed project.

Details on Page 4

LOCAL NEWS

Ritchot Council Votes to Raise Their Own Pay

■ In response to a salary review process, Ritchot's council has voted to substantially increase their rate of pay.

Details on Page 19

SPORTS & REC

Former NCI Coach Makes VB Hall of Fame

■ Volleyball Manitoba has inducted Don Dulder, who taught and coached at NCI for 37 years, into its Hall of Fame.

Details on Page 24

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

Niverville Fair Sees Large Attendance

■ 15,000 to 20,000 people packed into Niverville for this year's highly anticipated Olde Tyme Country Fair.

Details on Pages 28-29



Congrats, Grads of 2022!

» READ MORE ON PAGES 14-18

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NOTICE OF REGISTRATION OF PROSPECTIVE CANDIDATE FOR GENERAL MUNICIPAL ELECTION TOWN OF NIVERVILLE

Please be advised that a general municipal election will be held on
Wednesday, October 26, 2022.

Prospective municipal election candidates must register with the Senior Election Official (SEO) during the registration period before they may begin to accept contributions, incur expenses, fundraise or borrow money for their campaign.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that I will be receiving candidate registrations as follows:

For the office of head of council: Between May 1, 2022 and September 20, 2022

For the office of councillor: Between June 30, 2022 and September 20, 2022

at the Town of Niverville Administration Office, 329 Bronstone Drive, Niverville, Manitoba, during the regular hours of business.

To obtain a registration form, contact the SEO at the email or telephone number listed below.

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The Niverville Citizen is published monthly and distributed through Canada Post to all those with a postal box in Niverville, Il-des-Chênes, 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

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The Niverville Credit Union.

BRENDA SAWATZKY

Cyber Security Threat Closes Manitoba Credit Unions

By Brenda Sawatzky
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER
bsawatzky@nivervillecitizen.com

The Niverville Credit Union was one of many credit unions across the province, and even the country, to close its doors to members in mid-June. The reason? A potential breach to a key cybersecurity system.

The red flag incident, which occurred on June 8, resulted in the implementation of a crisis response plan by Celero Solutions, a Calgary-based company that provides digital technology services to credit unions and financial institutions across Canada.

The incident was described by Celero as “unauthorized access to the company’s systems.”

“We immediately convened our incident response team and took a number of security measures,” the company said in a statement to the CBC on Monday. “We have received assurances that our network and systems are secure.”

On Friday of last week, two days after the incident occurred, Celero told the CBC that there had been no evidence that any member data had

been compromised at that point.

“The ability of some members to access online services may be impacted due to individual credit union’s actions as part of the ongoing investigation and response into the incident,” the company said.

Ken Rempel, CEO of the Niverville Credit Union (NCU), says that, out of an abundance of caution, some of their systems were immediately taken offline and in-branch transactions were paused.

Even so, Rempel says that NCU’s three NCU branches, located in Niverville, Steinbach, and Landmark, were able to continue to provide telephone service, online and mobile banking, ATM, Point of Sale service, and e-transfer services.

“On Monday, June 13, our Niverville and Steinbach branches opened to provide cash transactions and loans administration services, as well as continuing to provide telephone services,” says Rempel. “On Tuesday, June 14, our Landmark branch opened to provide these same services. We are making progress by the day, and we will share updates as relevant information becomes available.”

As to whether Rempel feels NCU members have any cause for concern, he says that the response to the threat was rapid and security measures were amped up upon discovery of the incident.

“Our primary focus is to secure systems and protect member information,” Rempel adds. “We will provide an update to any individual members should one be warranted.”

Amie Warkentin is the director of strategic communications for Credit Union Central of Manitoba. She says that credit unions are highly regulated and take cybersecurity very seriously.

“The integrity of member data is a top priority for credit unions at all times,” Warkentin told the CBC. “Credit unions take action on an ongoing basis to ensure the safety and security of their systems.”

According to the Celero Solutions website, the company boasts a cybersecurity rating of 86 out of 100 and they describe themselves as “a complete security solution that allows financial institutions to prepare for, defend against, and respond to cyber attacks.”



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Concept Plans Revealed for New IDC Neighbourhood

By Brenda Sawatzky

LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

bsawatzky@nivervillecitizen.com

Pending approval by the RM of Ritchot, residents of Île-des-Chênes may soon see the rise of a new residential development to the south of the community.

The area proposed for the first phase of development includes 71 acres of a 161-acre parcel of land. According to concept plans drawn up by Landmark Planning & Development Inc. (LP&DI), this phase would include a cross-section of single-family, two-family, and multi-family homes.

Details related to the final concept plan were presented at public meetings held on May 30 and June 1. Approximately 70 people attended the meetings either virtually or in-person.

Apart from finalizing a few more details, the next steps for LP&DI will be to submit a development application to the RM of Ritchot on behalf of the developer, Terracon Development Ltd.

To approve the plan as it stands now, council would need to rezone the area from General Residential 8 so that the developer could include multi-family units and vary the lot sizes.

"The objective of the plan is to have different forms of housing so that all kinds of people from the community don't have to move out to get the kinds of housing they want," says Donovan Toews of LP&DI. "Île-des-Chênes can accommodate all different walks of life."

As for commercial development in phase one, LP&DI planners haven't allocated any space for it. It may be up for consideration in phase two, but for now they chose to be mindful of the commercial spaces that already exist in the community.

LISTENING TO PUBLIC FEEDBACK

Between February and June, LP&DI made it their mandate to involve local residents in the process. An initial meeting was held earlier this year with the immediate stakeholders, those whose properties abutted the proposed development or were within its sightline.

A follow-up meeting in April grew to include any residents who may be



Residents of Île-des-Chênes attend an open house to learn more about a new residential development.

BRENDA SAWATZKY

affected by construction disruptions and by additional vehicular traffic on their roadways.

Resident feedback gleaned from both meetings helped the planning team to develop and finalize a design that they feel comes as close as possible to addressing most of the concerns they heard.

"Generally, input doesn't result in us going away, in the case of people who are not happy about a particular project," Toews says. "But we do want to make sure that there's communication and we've heard everything and considered everything."

RESIDENT CONCERNS

Steven Petznik has owned property on the south side of Rosybloom Lane in Île-des-Chênes for 13 years. His backyard faces the land proposed for phase one development. Petznik is worried about drainage, as well as the amount of setback between his home and the new ones being planned.

"The way our homes [on Rosybloom] are built and how low the grade is compared to how high up our homes are, anyone with any sort of yard space currently either deals with a drastic slope or has to build a retaining wall," Petznik says.

According to Toews, Terracon Development is required to thoughtfully engineer the land for drainage so that neighbouring properties will not be negatively impacted. One way they will do this is by creating retention ponds which also serve as aesthetic features in the new neighbourhoods.

"If you see lakes in subdivisions these days, it's because they are required," Toews says. "You need to be able to retain stormwater in your [development] so that you can keep the pipe sizes smaller and more manageable and less costly to maintain."

Proper grading of the land from the outset will direct excess runoff to the retention pond, and from there it will be pumped away to the Seine River Diversion.

To address property setbacks between the existing homes and newly built ones, LP&DI have designed the most northerly lots to be deeper than most. As well, the multi-family and two-family homes have been intentionally placed away from the existing streets in order to maintain cohesiveness between old and new neighbourhoods.

Of course, the inevitability that this development will bring a

significant jump to the local population poses concerns for people worried about increased traffic.

Shaylene Hawthorne is no exception. Her property is on Lamoureux Road just east of Île-des-Chênes.

"[Lamoureux] is already a busy road with local traffic, commuters, school buses, and lots of local construction company trucks," Hawthorne says. "It's like a back door to town. I can't imagine what this will look like with a proposed entrance to the development near the Arnould and Lamoureux junction. Let alone the flow of traffic through the school zone once in town on Lamoureux."

According to Brennan Johnson, a planner for this project, an in-depth analysis was done to determine increased traffic volumes on the major trunk roads leading to the development. He says it's safe to predict an additional four vehicles per minute during the peak morning rush hour and five vehicles per minute during the peak evening rush hour.

Within the development, streets have been aligned to slow traffic down and prevent cut-through traffic by closing access from Dufault Drive. This would divert incoming traffic down Rosybloom Lane instead.

Petznik isn't pleased with the decision, saying his street already feels traffic-heavy at times.

"The real advantage... is the traffic is discouraged from going up Dufault," Toews says. "One of the objectives from a traffic point of view is to try and get the maximum number of vehicles to go towards Old 59 rather than going directly north."

COUNSELLOR COMMENTS

As the municipality's counsellor for Île-des-Chênes, Shane Pelletier has been watching the rollout through the eyes of a resident—and this will remain true until an actual application from the developers crosses his desk.

Still, he's able to look pragmatically at some concerns that have been expressed and offer feedback based on experience.

As to unease about the potential for overcrowded schools, Pelletier says that both of the school divisions have been informed of the impending development. All decisions regarding timing on school expansions is strictly under the divisions' jurisdictions and not something that the RM or a developer can fast-track.

Some residents have also questioned the validity of investing in a new development when some of the older sections of town are falling into disrepair. To this, Pelletier assures residents that all costs of this development will be borne by the developer and not the RM.

"Most of the concerns regarding the older part of Île-des-Chênes are usually directed at Dumaine Road, Main Street, and La Croix Street, all of which are owned and maintained by the province," Pelletier says, adding that council has been appealing to the province to release control of those streets for some time now.

In terms of the buildout of the new development, Terracon has not been clear on whether they will choose to handle the construction themselves or sell sections to other builders for that purpose.

"Terracon plans to [set out] architectural controls and what those will do is ensure a cohesive design throughout the neighbourhood," Johnson says. "So, whoever is building, whether it's single-family or multi-family, it'll be subject to those policies and guidelines."



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IN BRIEF



JOEY VILLANUEVA

Ritchot Roads, including St. Adolphe's Main Street, on Province's To-Do List

By Brenda Sawatzky

LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

bsawatzky@nivervillecitizen.com

St. Adolphe's busy Main Street will soon be under much-needed construction. The province has announced that they're getting ready to begin patchwork repairs to this busy commuter route.

Jon Lovlin of Manitoba Transportation and Infrastructure (MTI) says that, while some of the street's worst potholes have already been addressed, the balance of the work is scheduled to begin early this summer following flood clean-up efforts, which are still currently underway.

Despite the rough condition the street fell into after this year's spring thaw, Lovlin clarifies that this will not be the year for a complete renewal of Main Street. Instead the usual hot mix asphalt patching is planned.

"Currently, MTI does not have plans to resurface PR 200 in St. Adolphe," Lovlin says. "However, as our province grows, traffic patterns change and evolve, and the department continually reviews and reassesses road safety across the provincial highway network. MTI will consider surface reconstruction on these routes in the

future capital plan. In the meantime, our regional staff will continue to monitor and maintain these roads in safe condition."

Lovlin suggests that similar patching will be done this summer on other provincially controlled streets within the RM of Ritchot to keep them serviceable.

"The Province of Manitoba has supported all small communities in the province by constructing and maintaining provincial access roads to commercial and industrial areas in these communities," Lovlin says, speaking to the responsibilities of the province to maintain the roads they own, versus those that are owned by the municipality. "These roads support the heavy vehicles that are necessary for commercial and industrial activity in these small communities."

He adds, though, that the province will look at any request from a municipality that wishes to assume financial responsibility for construction and maintenance to their roads.

Mayor Chris Ewen declined comment except to say that the RM is currently in negotiations with the province regarding road infrastructure in St. Adolphe and Île-des-Chênes.

NHS Students Reflect on Becoming More Active Global Citizens

By Brenda Sawatzky

LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

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A baker's dozen Grade 12 students have wrapped up their final year at Niverville High School, having gained new insight on what it means to be global citizens.

Much of this new mindfulness is thanks to an elective course the students participated in called Global Issues, Citizenship and Sustainability, taught by Adrienne Happychuk.

Happychuk says that the course was introduced into the high school curriculum just over ten years ago.

The goal, she says, is to teach young men and women that being citizens of a community, a country, and the greater world means taking responsibility for making the world a better place in which to live.

"It's about finding something that they're interested in that's a current issue and then [determining] how they can become agents of change," Happychuk says.

The course is broad in scope, providing few limitations in terms of the types of local or global issues each youth can get involved in. With so few constraints, the students are exposed early on in the course to the almost unlimited number of issues facing the modern world.

From there, they are at liberty to choose an issue that speaks to them on a personal level. Their own passions drive them forward.

Students begin the five-month course by researching the issue that resonates with them and then looking for ways to get tangibly involved.

They may choose to partner with a local or international organization, or they might take the initiative in implementing new ideas of their own.

It's expected that hours will be spent outside of classroom time to volunteer, organize fundraising events, or develop awareness campaigns.

Their final grades are based on a take-action project which is a compilation of their entire experience from start to finish.

"It's all on them," says Happychuk. "One hundred percent them. They have to problem-solve, figure out how to implement a plan, and in the end they basically do a reflection piece, reflecting on what were the successes, what were the challenges, what were the goals. And then they present it to their peers."

A number of students this year chose to focus their attention on issues involving lovable four-legged friends.

"When I was looking at different topics that I could choose, animal abandonment stuck out to me the most and I was the most passionate about it," says Jazmin, who chose to volunteer in her spare time at the Winnipeg Pet Rescue. "I wanted to do something more hands-on."

MacKenzie, another student taking part in the class, had a similar outlook, but she chose the Animal Services Agency as her charity.

Others, like Caitlyn, felt drawn to issues involving the plight of abused women.

Caitlyn advertised in and out of the school, putting out donation boxes for feminine hygiene products and small toiletry items which she eventually delivered to Agape

House in Steinbach.

"I'm a feminist and I really wanted to do something along the lines of women's rights and something locally as well," Caitlyn says.

Aiden chose the same charity as Caitlyn, but for a different reason.

"I had to stay at that place a while ago, so I just figured I'd give back," Aiden says, who raised both awareness and money for the cause.

Similarly, Carly was drawn to the plight of women in crisis due to unexpected pregnancy, domestic abuse, or single-parenting on a shoestring budget. She partnered with Life Culture, also based out of Steinbach, and raised an impressive \$9,525 in donations thanks to a number of very generous donors.

"It's a current issue," Carly says of domestic violence. "The executive director [of Life Culture], Susan, shared stories with me and talked about, even through COVID, how domestic abuse incidences have increased."

Steinbach Family Outreach were the beneficiaries of Jessie's project. He held a food and clothing drive to aid families experiencing poverty and homelessness.

Jersey collected donations of women's and children's clothing for Klinik, a Winnipeg-based organization providing primary healthcare and mental healthcare services, especially to those impacted by discrimination or oppression.

On top of that, Jersey raised \$250 in cash which was matched dollar for dollar by the Klinik board.

Mitch confesses to having taken the easy route by volunteering ten hours of his time

at the local MCC Thrift Store.

Why was that considered easy? Only because volunteering at the store was something he had already been doing long before the course began.

For Ethan, his passion for sport and compassion for fellow students meant that his donation of \$600 would stay in the school's Phys Ed department to help students who want to play the game but don't have the means to cover the fees.

Ethan organized and advertised a basketball game between rivals Niverville Panthers and SRSS Sabres and sold tickets for two dollars each.

The Citizen wrote about this initiative more extensively back in May.

By the end of the course, all the students agreed that their individual experiences had made an impact on them that would continue well beyond the classroom. For some, volunteering with the charity of choice would carry on after graduation as well.

"It made me more aware of what's happening in the world," says Mitch.

"It's easier to make a difference than you think," adds Carly.

In Caitlyn's opinion, the entire course was a highlight from start to finish. "It was fun. I never dreaded coming to class to work on it. I liked being in the implementation stage the best."

Jazmin summarized the course by recollecting the human emotion that results from doing good for others. "You get the feeling of knowing that you helped people and just seeing the relief on their faces."

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RCMP Respond to Safety Threat at Gab-Roy

By Brenda Sawatzky

LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

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Early June saw some anxious days for students, parents, and staff of École/Collège régional Gabrielle-Roy in Île-des-Chênes. It began on June 3 when a threatening note was found by a student in the early years student washroom and turned in to school staff.

On Monday, June 6, a 17-year-old male was arrested. He is awaiting an August court date on charges of uttering threats.

Sergeant Paul Manaire, Media Relations Officer for the St. Pierre-Jolys RCMP detachment, says that the anonymous planted note, while somewhat vague in nature, led to concerns that an incident involving a knife or gun may be expected at the school on Monday, June 6.

Daniel Preteau is the Director of Student Services at Division scolaire Franco-Manitobaine (DSFM), the school division overseeing Gabrielle-Roy.

Preteau says that school staff acted quickly, contacting the RCMP and the division office immediately after the note was discovered.

"Threats are always taken seriously and we collaborate with RCMP to investigate the threat," Preteau says. "We rely on our partnership with RCMP to determine the severity of the threat. We also collaborate with NACTATR [North American Center for Threat Assessment and Trauma Response] to guide us with the analysis of the threat/risk evaluation."

Based on discussions with the RCMP, Preteau adds that the school staff activated a hold and secure response. This means that the threat was perceived to be external and not from within the school itself.

In a hold and secure, exterior doors are locked and no one is



allowed to enter or leave the building. The school day continues as usual.

During this time, parents of students received an email through the School Messenger app informing them of the occurrence. As well, each child went home at the end of the day with a letter. Both messages indicated the details that were known at the time and the fact that a police presence would be expected at the school on Monday in order to ensure everyone's safety.

The principal and vice-principal actively fielded many calls and emails from concerned parents that day.

Over the course of the week-end, RCMP officers worked together with the division to investigate the source of the note.

On Monday morning, RCMP arrived at the school along with their Police Dog Services unit to conduct a thorough search of the property before students and staff were allowed to enter.

One Île-des-Chênes resident with children in Grades Six, Eight, and Nine at Gabrielle-Roy says that, to his mind, the substantial police presence with dogs at the school on Monday morning was more than a little off-putting for

his kids.

The resident, who requested to remain anonymous, will be referred to as Joe.

Joe says that his kids were relatively nonchalant about the affair after Friday and agreed on a return to school as usual for Monday morning. Before the regular bus arrived, though, Joe received a phone call from the bus driver, querying whether a stop at his house would be needed.

The children boarded the bus and arrived to what they say felt like a school almost void of students. Before the first school bell had rung, Joe got a phone call from his oldest child requesting that they be picked up.

According to his 15-year-old son, each of the three kids had been subjected to a patdown search. The 15-year-old had been pulled aside for questioning.

Joe says it doesn't help that his son already suffers from some level of anxiety on a regular basis. Being pulled aside, though, triggered an even greater anxiety reaction from his son, who later told his dad, "I knew at that point I was being interrogated."

Joe says that he's a big proponent of the RCMP and how they handled the situation to that point.

But, he adds, with the number of police cars onsite and police presence with dogs, his kids were simply overwhelmed.

"Don't make the 499 students who weren't suspects feel like victims for going about their day after [you've] reasonably assessed the situation," Joe says.

Preteau says that the division is proud of the Gabrielle-Roy staff for their leadership and dedication to the wellbeing of their students.

Afterward, staff showed up early in the mornings to review daily safety plans and hold debrief sessions again at the end of each day.

"Following discussions with RCMP and NACTATR, both agreed that the school staff worked in unison and responded well to ensure a calm yet rigorous response," says Preteau.

Sargent Manaire says that the youth responsible for the threatening note is a student of Gabrielle-Roy. He has been conditionally released from custody until his court date. Manaire is unable to comment on the nature of the conditions.

"We feel confident that the matter is being handled correctly," says Manaire.

IN BRIEF

Niverville Council Approves Local Daycare Grants

By Brenda Sawatzky

LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

✉ bsawatzky@nivervillecitizen.com

Local licenced daycares could soon benefit from recently announced grant funding courtesy of the Town of Niverville.

At a June 21 public meeting, the town's council approved a motion for a new initiative to provide up to \$20,000 to potential daycare provider applicants.

"We recognize that we have a lot of young families, which means we have a lot of children," says Mayor Myron Dyck. "Also, it's to help our [business sector]. We know that they need employees. And if people had access to daycare, would that mean some might be able to enter the workforce and help?"

The one-time grant has the potential to be portioned out to a maximum of ten applicants at \$2,000 per applicant.

The hope is to encourage new licenced daycare start-ups or current daycare provider expansions.

In the case of expansion, daycares would need to be apply to the province and be approved for a minimum of five additional spots in order to qualify for the town grant.

Council will provide few restrictions on how the funds are to be used. It could prove helpful in cases where improvements such as fencing and play structures are needed.

The grant could also assist with overhead costs when additional daycare spots are created.

According to Niverville's CAO Eric King, there are currently three licenced daycare facilities operating in the community, if the entirety of Growing Minds is considered to be one facility.

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IN BRIEF

Niverville Moves to Electric Powered Maintenance Vehicles

By Brenda Sawatzky

LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

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The Town of Niverville recently announced its intent to switch all of its gas-powered vehicles and equipment to electric-powered over the next few years.

Council already took its first step in this direction when they purchased an electric ice maintainer for the new arena at the CRRC. At the same time, four charging stations were installed on the CRRC grounds.

At this point, there are no target dates for the full switchover. It will be dependent on grants that become available, as well as whether the electric-powered vehicles become a viable financial alternative.

"Some residents are concerned about cost," says Mayor Myron Dyck. "So I want to assure people that, where the cost of the purchase plus the operating costs are equal to or less than what is currently being used, then those items would be up for discussion at our planning session for change. This is not change for the sake of change."

Mayor Dyck says that a full cost analysis, including the cost of adding more charging stations, will be ready for council's review at the November 2022 planning sessions.

In the end, he says the decision to go electric is about cost savings, but it also comes from a desire to proactively prepare for the inevitable changes that are coming.

Memorial Forests Take Root in Niverville

By Jennifer Lavin

jlavin@nivervillecitizen.com

If you're looking for a way to honour the memory of a loved one, a new program in Niverville may just be for you.

The Memorial Forest Program, in partnership with the Town of Niverville and Niverville Communities in Bloom, is an opportunity for people to commemorate the life of a loved one in a special way by planting a tree.

"A living tree symbolizes a new beginning and a living tribute," reads a description on the town's website. "By planting a tree, you not only pay a significant tribute to a loved one or family pet who has passed, but you also benefit the community and the environment."

Each tree will have a memorial plaque on a stand placed next to it.

Terry Martin, a member of Niverville Communities in Bloom, came up with the idea of launching the program in Niverville.

"We had seen this kind of a project in other communities," Martin says, "and we thought this would be a great way to increase the canopy in the town—especially the park."

Martin adds that the Town of Niverville has been helpful right from the beginning, taking payments, supplying topsoil and mulch, and just generally being



Locals plant trees in the new Memorial Forest.

TOWN OF NIVERVILLE

on board with the whole concept.

Niverville will actually be home to two Memorial Forests. One will be located in the southwest corner of Hespeler Park.

"This forest should eventually create a kind of transition between the ball fields and the more naturalized area of the park," Martin explains.

The other one will be planted in the Niverville Dog Park, which is currently undergoing a significant

renovation.

Those who wish to purchase a tree for their loved one can choose either location. They can also choose to purchase more than one tree.

This program isn't just for residents of Niverville. Anyone from the surrounding communities can donate a tree as well. Also, family or friends living elsewhere may donate a tree in memory of their loved one who lived in this

area.

There are four different species of tree to choose from: Discovery Elm, Prairie Horizon Alder, Delta Hackberry, and Greenspire Linden. Each tree costs \$300 and will be placed when it is approximately seven to nine feet tall.

The program is administered by the Town of Niverville's Recreation Department and they have chosen these specific varieties and locations to minimize potential disease issues.

Each tree donor is invited to help plant their tree on an annual planting day in mid-May. The first planting day was held on May 27 and seven memorial trees were planted. Around 40 people attended a short ceremony and planted the inaugural trees.

If you wish to order a Memorial Tree and plaque, you need to have the order placed by September 30 in order to qualify for the spring-planting ceremony.

Once you have placed your order, you will receive a confirmation letter, tax receipt, and an invitation to help plant your tree and watch the plaque be installed.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

■ For more information or to order your tree visit: <https://www.wheretheyoubelong.ca/recreation/programs/memorial-plaques>

Niverville Council Seeks to Freeze Water Utility Rate Hikes

By Brenda Sawatzky

LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

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In an effort to ease financial burdens for Niverville families in the coming year, council announced at their June 21 public meeting that they will recommend that the Public Utilities Board (PUB) freeze water utility costs in the coming year.

However, it may not be in their

power to do so.

A review of the water utility will be completed in 2023, following the completion of the water treatment plant's ongoing upgrade.

"We can only suggest to the [PUB] that we think the rates are adequate," Councillor Kevin Stott explained. "If they say that we need to raise them, then we have to raise them, because the rates are controlled by the PUB, not by the town. The PUB is there

to make sure that we always have sufficient amounts of cash in the bank to support our sewage and our water systems... They monitor that annually."

In the meantime, in order to more immediately ease the burden of ever-increasing costs, council made another announcement at the meeting, this one about arena ice rental costs.

For the 2022–2023 season, all youth-related ice rental costs will

be maintained at the previous year's rates.

"Recognizing inflationary pressure on young families, this is a way that we still want to see families be able to provide opportunities for their children," said Mayor Myron Dyck.

That being the case, a five per cent increase will be applied to all adult use rentals or bookings by non-locals for the coming season.

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Ritchot to Probe for New Water Supply

By Brenda Sawatzky

LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

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The initial results of a Ritchot water supply study are in and the message is clear: to prepare for the municipality's future, action needs to be taken right now.

Landmark Planning and Design Inc. (LP&DI) is the Winnipeg-based company hired by Ritchot's council to perform the study alongside Friesen Drillers of Steinbach. The goal was to determine the sustainability of Ritchot's current water resources and, if necessary, locate new well sites in order to support the municipality's future needs.

"The RM will need to consider looking for an alternative water supply as one of its priorities in order to sustain the viability of the community," the study states.

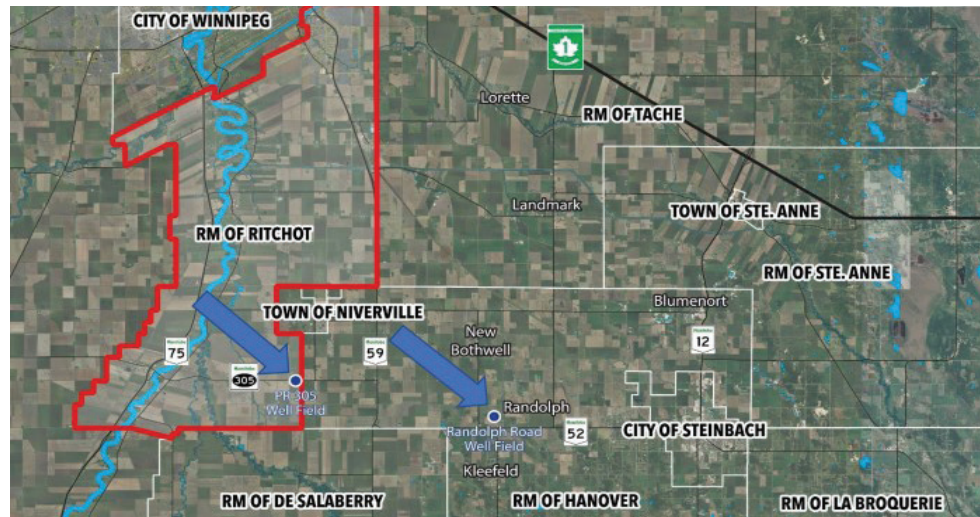
A number of factors led LP&DI to this conclusion, not the least of which is the rapid population growth experienced by the RM over the past 20 years. Data derived from the most recent census indicates that Ritchot saw a 22 percent increase in population between 2001 to 2016. Comparatively, Manitoba averaged 5.8 percent growth while the country as a whole averaged only five percent during the same period.

According to data collected by the RM, that upward trend appears to be continuing. Since 2013, building permit requests have been on a steady incline for both residential and commercial builds.

If council is to continue to sell the municipality as a place for new families to put down roots and for commercial and industrial business to thrive, it will be of prime importance to guarantee a strong and reliable water supply.

EXISTING WATER SUPPLY

For decades, Ritchot's water has been sourced from two separate well fields. From these locations, it is piped to the water treatment plant and distributed



The location of Ritchot's two water sources.

LANDMARK PLANNING AND DESIGN INC.

throughout the municipality.

One of the well fields is located in the agricultural district of Randolph, located a few kilometres south of New Bothwell. The well field was originally created as a means to release groundwater pressure in order to prevent the hydraulic rupture of one of the RM of Hanover's major drainage conduits, the Manning Canal. The excess flow from the well field was subsequently directed toward the Red River where it was discharged, unused.

Some time after, the RM of Ritchot made a bid to collect that water for their own use rather than have it go to waste. There are no pumps at the Randolph site and water is ejected by natural pressure.

A second well field was later established to supplement the Randolph well field, which was experiencing a gradual decrease in groundwater pressure. The second well field is located in the southeast corner of the municipality, next to Highway 305. This site uses pumps to extract water.

"The aquifer [from which the Randolph well field draws water] is constantly recharging with rainwater and snowmelt," says Donovan Toews of LP&DI. "If used sustainably, the aquifer can be tapped indefinitely and never run out. That said, we do not yet know what a sustainable

rate of pumping for this location is. That's why we need to carry out the planned testing."

FRESH VS. SALINE GROUNDWATER

The next stage of the study was to identify the best possible areas in which a new water source may be found. For LP&DI, this means having some expertise in hydrogeology, the study of groundwater and the subsurface aquifers that contain it.

With some minor exceptions, most of the water in the aquifer beneath Ritchot is of a high saline (salt) content, making it unfit for human consumption. In areas east of Ritchot, freshwater can be found in much greater abundance.

In Manitoba, it is not uncommon for municipalities to be serviced by water sources outside of their region.

The province has the ultimate authority over groundwater, however, and a special permit must be obtained before drilling and testing can begin.

The initial study area selected by the project team at LP&DI is a large section surrounding the current Randolph well field.

Since January of this year, LP&DI have been involved in a well inventory program which lays out a map of the existing wells in this area and seeks to determine how they would be

affected by the drilling of an additional well.

The team met with individual landowners in the area to get an idea of the quantity and quality of their water source. Thirty existing wells were identified and 21 landowners were interviewed. These stakeholders will be consulted throughout the process.

According to Toews, the landowners who participated in the program were, for the most part, engaged in the process and positive in their feedback.

"The program is important so that both the well owner and the municipality understand current conditions and to help avoid the possibility of future conflicts related to water supply," Toews says.

In the coming weeks, Friesen Drillers will begin drilling a number of test wells in a variety of locations and will monitor the results carefully for capacity, flow rates, and impact on neighbouring wells.

"Following this testing, all monitoring data will be reviewed and compared against decades of historical data, and once that assessment is complete we will return to the community to share the results of the assessment," Toews concludes.

Toews expects the process to be complete in four to six months.

IN BRIEF

Niverville Recreation Moving to Online Bookings

By Brenda Sawatzky

LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

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The process of booking a timeslot at Niverville's recreation facilities is about to change.

The town will soon launch a new online booking tool that allows residents, coaches, and managers to view the availability of each facility and more easily nail down spots.

Mayor Myron Dyck says this move will remove some of the bottlenecks that make the current call-in system slow and labour-intensive.

As well, he notes that the tool should help the town ensure improved scheduling for maintenance staffers who are hired to prepare the fields, ice surfaces, change rooms, and meeting rooms before and after events.

Warren Britton, Niverville's recreation facility manager, says that the town

employed nine full- and part-time maintenance people last year between the Community Resource and Recreation Centre and the Centennial Arena.

He anticipates that number to increase as the facilities get more use due to improved booking options.

"We are in growth mode in terms of programs and amenities," says Mayor Dyck. "Our recreation staff have many great ideas and are busy with providing many opportunities to as many people as possible. Our goal as council for our recreation manager is to keep our facilities, fields, and amenities full."

Town staff have been undergoing training on using and managing the booking software, but Britton is hopeful that it should be ready to deploy in early August, just prior to the ice going in at the new arena.



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IN BRIEF



Dr. Brooks Barteaux of Clarity Vision Niverville. JANELLA MACINTYRE

Optometrists Open Office in Niverville

By Jennifer Lavin

jlavin@nivervillecitizen.com

Niverville is now home to its first optometric office. The new venture, Clarity Vision, is open for business at Unit C2-10 Cedar Drive.

Dr. Brooks Barteaux is the primary optometrist and co-owner of Clarity Vision. Barteaux was born and raised in Birtle, Manitoba and now lives in the south end of Winnipeg with his wife and two little boys.

Barteaux graduated from the optometry program at the University of Waterloo in 2009 and has practiced in southern Manitoba ever since.

Barteaux has partnered with Dr. Andrew Aiken, who founded Clarity Vision in Winkler in 2013.

Since that time, Aiken has expanded the business with locations in Portage la Prairie, Selkirk, Winnipeg, Stonewall, and now Niverville.

The Niverville location already has one employee who grew up in the area, but Barteaux says more are on the way.

"We are actively recruiting locally and have been interviewing several outstanding candidates to add to the roster in the near future," Barteaux says.

He adds that Clarity Vision is a full-service optometric office.

"Patients receive comprehensive eye health assessments using computerized diagnostics, surgical referrals and co-management, spectacle dispensing, and contact lens services."

Barteaux says that he can examine the eyes of children

as young as six months old, although he generally advises a first examination by age two, assuming that there are no issues being noticed.

He is also able to examine those with special needs or developmental delays.

"I have a fair bit of experience examining patients of all ability levels," he says. "We have techniques of objective assessment to help examine those who are pre-verbal."

Clarity Vision does direct billing with most major third-party insurers, such as Blue Cross, GreenShield, GreatWest Health, Aetna, Cigna, and Sun Life. They also accept government insurers like NIHB and EIA.

These days, it's quite easy to buy glasses and contact lenses online, but Barteaux says that there are many benefits to bringing your business to Clarity Vision instead.

"Buying local grants the ability to try on frames and get advice on the selection of lenses so that the performance of your glasses is as good as it can be," he says. "You also have ready access to troubleshooting if your correction isn't working as anticipated. You can be assured of the suitability and authenticity of the products you buy, especially with regard to contact lenses."

Barteaux points out as well that supporting local businesses boosts the economy and helps the area to thrive.

"I think [that] is a sentiment that is well-understood here in Niverville," he says. "We are so pleased that we are finally ready to see patients here!"

Seed Library Boxes Sprout Up Around Ritchot

By Brenda Sawatzky

LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

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Gardeners are participating with enthusiasm in a new seed-sharing program that sprouted in Ritchot this spring.

The seed libraries are the brainchild of Liam Harder, Ritchot's program coordinator, and he says that it didn't take a lot of advertising to see that the interest was there.

"Our initial post to Facebook and Instagram took off like crazy," Harder says. "It's probably one of the best we've seen so far."

Free seed libraries follow the same model as free book libraries. Generally speaking, free book libraries consist of a wooden box with a glass door. The box is mounted atop a pole and provides a place for passersby to take or drop off a book for someone else's benefit.

It's an exchange, essentially, but not with an accompanying quid pro quo of having to leave something in order to take something.

Harder wants residents to think of the seed-sharing program as an act of "borrowing." If they take seeds in order to grow some tomatoes, his hope is they will harvest and dry a few tomato seeds to donate



Liam Harder, Ritchot's program coordinator.

BRENDA SAWATZKY

back for next year's program.

"Our plan is to keep [the seed boxes] outside in the beginning of the year for planting season," he says. "Then we'll take them back inside and in the fall towards harvest season we'll put them back out for people to use as a seed drop-off point."

In Ritchot, there's a seed library box in each community. St. Adolphe residents can find a box mounted near the door of the RM office. In Île-des-Chênes, it's located just inside the lobby of the TC Energy Centre. Ste. Agathe can find theirs in front of the community centre. The picnic shelter in Grande Pointe also has a seed library box.

To kickstart the local program, Harder located some

reclaimed wood and window glass and constructed each box by hand.

The first of the seed packets were graciously donated by Van der Meer Garden Centre in Île-des-Chênes and Sage Garden Greenhouses just south of the Perimeter. RM staff and some residents also made donations.

Harder equipped the door of each box with a clicker-counter so he could see the level of use each received. So far, he says, seed stock is remaining steady with generally more seeds being contributed than taken.

Donations of starter packets of seeds, he says, are also welcome. If a resident needs only a few seeds they can take what they need and return the

rest, getting the maximum mileage out of each packet.

"The whole thing is designed to be for more than just seeds," Harder adds. "There are larger trays in the bottom so if you have little bags of fertilizer, seed potatoes, or bulbs, that can all go in the miscellaneous tray."

For Harder, the idea came about when he noticed that COVID-related supply chain shortages affected the availability of garden seeds. Store shelves were emptier than usual, and some seed was virtually impossible to find.

As well, he was inspired by one St. Adolphe senior who for years had been growing her own gardens and philanthropically sharing the spoils with others, both in terms of the garden produce she grew and the seed she collected from her harvest.

In the end, Harder sees the seed share library as a sound solution to the skyrocketing cost of grocery store food and hopes the idea will catch on all across the country.

"We want people to eat healthy, but how can you eat healthy when a head of celery costs more than a Big Mac?" Harder muses. "So we're hoping we can encourage people to take free seed and grow their own free salad."

Ritchot Approves Disaster Mitigation and Preparedness Reserve Fund

By Brenda Sawatzky

LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

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On June 23, Ritchot's council voted unanimously in favour of opening a reserve fund which will be used for projects or expenditures that help mitigate the effects of local flooding in future years.

The opening deposit to the account will come to just over \$50,000 and is the result of a recently established initiative of the provincial government called the Mitigation and Preparedness Program.

"This program is quite unique and special," says CAO Mitch Duval. "I think we can do a lot of work in Ritchot with that kind of dollars."

Duval explained that, after any major flood event of the past, the RM has been able to apply to the province for reimbursement of expenses incurred by the municipality for flood relief efforts.

The province, operating similar to an insurance company, reimburses the RM a certain percentage of their claim, holding back a portion as a deductible. The deductible withheld is calculated based on the RM's population.

Under the new program, an RM can apply to receive the deductible back as well, thus receiving a one hundred percent reimbursement of any money spent on flood relief efforts.

Unlike the principal payout, the returned deductible must be put into a reserve fund and used specifically for the purpose of future flood preparedness and mitigation.

"The first sum will likely be around the \$54,000 mark, which would represent the deductible for our 2020 flood event," says Duval. "So that money would come back to the municipality and be put into the reserve for future use."

Duval says that, since the RM made no claims for flood relief in 2021, the next time he'll be able to apply for the deductible reimbursement will be after their 2022 claim has been fully processed.

The province is allowing municipalities a five-year

window in which the reserve fund must be spent, although Duval is confident an extension would be easily granted if council wanted to consider a longer-term project which might exceed the deadline.

Whatever council decides to allocate the reserve fund to—whether it's pumps, generators, engineer studies, or other things—Duval suggests the spending should be kept to items or projects that fall under municipal jurisdiction.

Projects like dike expansion, he says, fall under provincial jurisdiction and separate funds would be available from the province for that.

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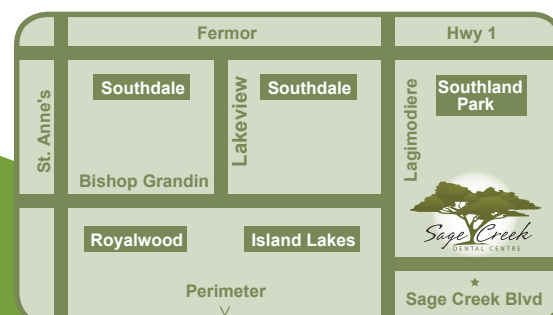
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IN BRIEF

2022 Graduates Celebrate in Pre-Pandemic Style

By Brenda Sawatzky

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For the first time in three years, graduates of the École/ Collège Régional Gabrielle-Roy and Niverville High School were rewarded with the return of long-held graduation traditions.

Gab-Roy's celebration took place over two days, on June 23–24. Niverville High School grads memorialized their special day on June 27.

GAB-ROY

The historic St. Boniface Cathedral was the setting for this year's Gab-Roy convocation.

One day later, grads and family members gathered at the Victoria Inn for the dinner and dance reception that grads of 2020 and 2021 were forced to forgo.

A total of 51 students donned cap and gown, many receiving almost \$68,000 in bursaries and scholarships.

Graduates Alexis Bartlett and Rheyenne Vermette shared in the valedictory honours.

Daniel Lothar of the Division scolaire Franco-Manitobaine (DSFM) describes the young ladies as "well respected among their peers for their success in the classroom as well as their leadership in extracurricular activities."

Both gave back in their spare time by either coaching or tutoring other students.

"Overall the staff, parents, and students were extremely excited to be able to celebrate together once again," says Lothar. "We are extremely grateful that the parent committee, as well as staff members, worked extremely hard to plan this graduation for our students. They did an amazing job and the students were extremely grateful and thankful."

NIVERVILLE HIGH SCHOOL

The gymnasium at Niverville High School was filled to capacity on June 27—the first time such an event had occurred since the school celebrated its grand opening in the fall of 2019. Nearly 600 attendees packed into seats to watch the grads accept their diplomas.

Principal Kimberly Funk

addressed the 75 graduates, a majority of whom went on to receive recognition of merit, awards, and scholarships.

"It takes courage to change and face new challenges, and I see that courage in each one of you," Funk told the graduates. "I know there were times within the past couple of years where you all had to reach deep within yourselves to stay motivated to do school and persevere through some tough times... but these experiences and adventures define who you are. You all persevered and made it here today... You stayed the course and you made it through a global pandemic. And if you can do that, I'm guessing there's not much that's going to stand in your way in the future."

Carisa Klassen, a local trustee for the Hanover School Division, lauded this year's graduates for demonstrating the standard of excellence and authenticity that the division strives to encourage in its students.

"Ultimately, we hope to have imparted you with tools for critical thinking, collaboration, problem-solving, and creativity," she said. "These attributes will always serve you well."

This year's valedictorian was Jordan Buys.

"If I can leave you with one last thing, let it be this," Buys concluded in his presentation to fellow students. "Today we will walk out those high school doors for the last time, and as you leave you will be given the best gift the world can give you. You will leave today with a clean slate. From this day forward, you have the opportunity to build your life off the foundation and framing you have done within these walls. You will have the opportunity to be the change you want to see in this world—to push society forward, however that may be. Any mistakes you have made or things holding you down that are tied to this building no longer matter... You are in control."

The class of 2022 rounded out the evening's festivities with dinner and a safe grad party at Evergreen Village along with family and invited guests.

By Evan Braun

✉ editor@nivervillecitizen.com

Another year of high school has come and gone, unleashing a fresh crop of graduates into the world. In addition to crossing the Grade 12 finish line, a noteworthy group of students from Niverville High School ended the year by receiving valuable awards handed out by the town, local businesses and organizations, and individuals in the community.

The first prize given out at this year's convocation was the Town of Niverville Award, given each spring to a student with a full course load and high academic standing, someone who is involved in both school and community life and plans to pursue a postsecondary education. The winner of this \$1,000 award is Jayelle Doell.

Another graduate, Elin Jeong, is taking home \$1,000 for the Niverville Credit Union Award, given to a student with a 75 percent average or better and who is registered for a full-time postsecondary program in the fall.

The year's Wiens Young Leader Award goes to Jonathan Hiebert, also in the amount of \$1,000. The award is intended for a well-rounded graduate who takes their studies and responsibilities seriously while maintaining an eager outlook. There is no postsecondary requirement.

The Hanover Teachers Association (HTA) Award has been given to Ashley Dumaine. This \$1,000 prize is given every year to a student who maintains a high grade point average and demonstrates excellent communication, interpersonal skills, and leadership ability. They must participate in school activities, be involved in the community, and attend a postsecondary institution in the fall.

Two graduates were chosen to receive \$1,000 for the Imagine Award of Excellence: Madison Trippier and Kaiella Muckosky. In addition to being seen as ambassadors of the school who volunteer and offer peer support, this award gives preference to those who intend to pursue studies focused on psychiatric



Michael Katotoka receives the Ron R. Schuler Citizenship Award.

✉ BRENDA SAWATZKY

and mental health, as well as those who have coped with mental health issues and thrived.

Another \$1,000 prize is the Chown Centennial Scholarship, given this year to Jaxon Peters. The award is reserved for an "all round" graduate, and someone who is registered to attend the University of Manitoba full-time. The winner must achieve a minimum 85 percent average in at least five Grade 12 credits.

This year's recipient of the Lana Dyck JOY Award is Mitchell Berens. The \$1,000 award is meant to go to a student who doesn't necessarily have high marks or plan to attend college but rather shows selflessness and love to others, seeking to better people's lives without the need for personal recognition.

Kendra Wahl has been honoured with the Andrew Grant Memorial Scholarship, also for \$1,000. This scholarship targets students who intend to go to the University of Manitoba full-time, preferably to study the sciences.

The David Alan Grant Memorial Scholarship, in the amount of \$1,000, has gone to Levi Sigurdson. The award goes each year to a student who has an ambition to continue their studies by learning a technology trade.

This year's winner of the

\$500 Niverville Firefighters Award is Dayna Funk. This prize goes to a top graduate with a full course load who demonstrates leadership and plans to either pursue postsecondary studies or go on to serve in emergency services.

Another \$500 prize, the Niverville Family Chiropractic Award, has been granted to Allison Friesen, an example of a grad who exhibits excellence in character and academics and plans to continue her education.

There are two recipients of this year's MCC Thrift Store Award, both receiving \$500: Hannah Hiebert and Samantha Moffit. This bursary, to be applied towards the cost of a program that involves volunteer work or postsecondary education in general, recognizes a student who volunteers their time for the betterment of the school or community.

The BSI Insurance Award has gone to Tanarai Woytowich. This \$500 award is intended for a grad with a positive outlook who shows a strong passion for service and displays good ethics.

Jordan Buys is the recipient of the Manitoba South East Golf Classic Award, for \$500. This prize is given to a student who plans to study to become a first responder—whether it's in the areas of policing,

firefighting, nursing, emergency medical services, or medicine.

The Ivy Friesen Memorial Award for \$500, given out each year in honour of a beloved former Niverville teacher, goes to Autumn Neufeld. The award seeks to recognize someone who is enrolled in a postsecondary program and has a positive outlook on life, someone who leads by example by demonstrating selflessness, a good work ethic, and inclusiveness.

The annual Raj Raichura Award, also for \$500, goes to Brianna Ginter. This prize targets a grad who is motivated and hard-working and exhibits strength of character. They must also be heading into a postsecondary program.

A pair of graduates, Jaxon Peters and Melissa Zapp, were honoured with the Niverville Physiotherapy Athletic Award, each receiving \$350. The award recognizes two athletic grads each year, a male and a female, who excel in at least two Varsity sports and are headed for a postsecondary program in the fall. The award gives preferences to those who intend to study in medicine or sports-related faculties.

This year's Parent Advisory Council (PAC) Award is split between two grads, Ella Fixe and Carly Loeppky. Each have been given \$250. Recipients of this award must have achieved a minimum of 75 percent in all Grade 12 courses, have good attendance, and display positive citizenship and character. The students should also be planning to pursue postsecondary education.


The \$250 Ron R. Schuler Citizenship Award, granted by our local MLA, goes to Michael Katotoka. The award is intended for someone who demonstrates volunteerism, school involvement, leadership potential, honesty, perseverance, friendliness, and dependability.

And finally, there are three winners this year of the Niverville Guardian Pharmacy Chemistry Award: Melissa Zapp, Autumn Neufeld, and Allison Friesen. This award specifically goes every year to the top three graduates of Grade 12 chemistry.



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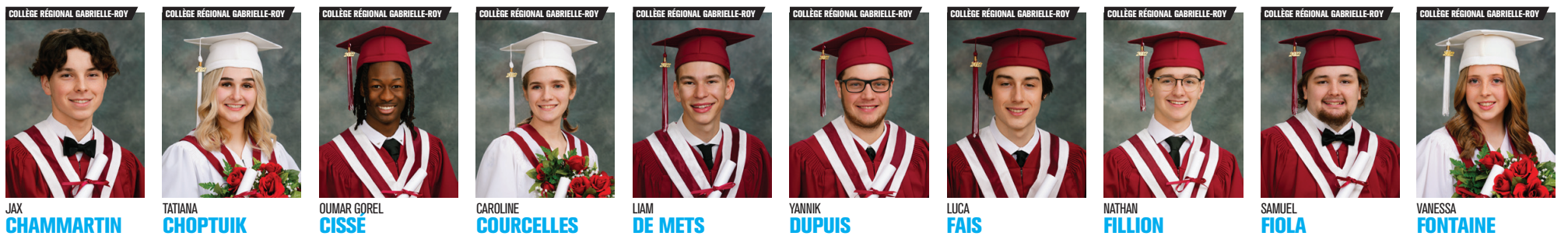
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Ritchot Council Salary Review Proposes Substantial Pay Hike

By Brenda Sawatzky

LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

✉ bsawatzky@nivervillecitizen.com

At a June 7 public meeting, the RM of Ritchot's council was presented with the results of a formal review undertaken to assess council salaries and determine where the bar should be set for the next four-year term.

St. Adolphe resident Ron Rochon, speaking on behalf of the Ritchot Community Indemnity Committee (RCIC), made a report to council. The RCIC is an ad hoc team pulled together for the sole purpose of determining council's base salary beginning in 2023.

After much review, the RCIC has resolved that a substantial salary increase is due for both councillors and the mayor. Following the presentation, council voted unanimously to accept first reading for the proposed salary adjustments.

Later, on June 22, council unanimously voted again to accept these new salaries, making the change official.

The RCIC has six members, including one resident from each Ritchot ward. There was also one business/landowner and one former council member, although that council member may not have been from Ritchot.

At the end of their analysis, the RCIC agreed that increases should be proposed on both the monthly indemnities and hourly salaries paid to councillors and the mayor going forward. From these new base rates, regular cost of living adjustments could be made in each of the three years to follow.

Rochon told council that this amounted to about a 10 percent increase.

Under this proposal, as of January 1, 2023, the monthly indemnity paid to each councillor would increase from the current \$1,895 to \$2,286. The mayor would also see an increase from the current \$3,365 to \$3,981.50.

At the outset, these figures suggest more like an 18 percent increase for the mayor and an almost 21 percent increase for each councillor.



Ritchot's council meets for a public meeting.

✉ BRENDA SAWATZKY

Rochon explains how the RCIC came to these figures.

Until now, salaries have been calculated based on the monthly indemnity plus an additional hourly salary for every meeting council members attend, including those that were a part of their regular monthly routine.

Under the new system, meetings that the RCIC deems a part of the essential role of a council member will shift to indemnity pay. These include monthly planning, public works, and council meetings as well as less frequent sessions held with various RM departments or in regard to finance and personnel.

Rochon says that the extra pay above and beyond the 10 percent increase he reported at the public meeting is a result of factoring in the amount of time council members invest in essential meetings, which he says adds up to about eight hours per member per month.

The hourly salary for mayor and councillors will also see a significant rise. The councillors' hourly rate will jump from \$23.37 to \$30 and the mayor will go from \$26.75 to \$35 per hour. That equals an almost 31 percent increase for the mayor and just over a 28 percent increase for each councillor.

This hourly rate will be applicable to meetings, conferences, and meetups which are extraneous to the regular duties of a council member.

"The new 2023 rates, from what was said by the

committee delegate, is a reflection on what [the RCIC] expect from a council, what the ratepayer expects from a council, and the ability to subsidize the lost hours, vacation days, and regular workdays from a councillor or mayor's regular career," says Ritchot Mayor Chris Ewen.

The RCIC also considered other areas of remuneration, such as mileage, which the review team agreed should continue to be adjusted according to the National Joint Council rate.

Meals while out of town on council business will be covered based on receipts submitted and the technology allowance will remain the same at \$100 per month.

"I view this more as an adjustment to keep up with the cost of living than a salary hike," says Councillor Curtis Claydon. "There were no adjustments made to mileage for council and we are now seeing fuel prices more than doubling, including the cost of vehicles and maintenance."

According to Rochon, the RCIC's primary resource in determining the new rates was the use of 2021 comparative data attained from other neighbouring councils.

When spread over a one-year period, Ritchot's new monthly indemnity for the mayor will climb from \$40,380 to \$47,778 plus hourly and go from \$22,740 to \$27,432 plus hourly for councillors.

For comparison, *The Citizen* reached out to the Town of Niverville and the

RM of Tache to learn their 2022 indemnity salaries for members of council. Both of those municipalities pay their members of council less, even before Ritchot's proposed increases.

In Niverville, the mayor receives an annual indemnity of just \$26,000, the deputy mayor collects \$19,000, and \$17,000 is paid to each council member. In lieu of hourly wages for meeting attendance beyond the essentials, a nominal lump sum is paid out when attendance at an out-of-town meeting is required.

Similar to Ritchot, the RM of Tache provides their council members with both a monthly indemnity and hourly salary for special meetings that are extraneous to council's regular duties. The Tache mayor's annual indemnity amounts to \$27,807 while the council members receive \$19,642. Both the mayor and councillors are eligible for an additional \$23.40 in hourly salary.

It should be noted that there are a number of variables that come into play when determining what a council salary should look like, and those include the size of the municipality and the taxbase rate.

In light of an upcoming election, though, Rochon says that the RCIC determined that a fair compensation package needs to be offered if quality people are to be attracted to run for these positions.

"One of the things that was unanimously [agreed upon] was that we all see council as a valued group of people that we need strong support and representation from," Rochon concludes.

Mayor Ewen says that council made the decision a number of years back to have an independent committee assess council salaries every term. This is the first time that the RCIC opted to make an open presentation to council, providing detailed commentary on their decision.

The mayor welcomes any residents of Ritchot to reach out to the RM office to have their names added to the list for RCIC membership duties in the future.

CITIZEN POLL

Do you feel that the members of your local municipal council receive an adequate amount of pay for the work they do?

- ☐ Yes. The current level of pay is appropriate.
- ☐ No. Council members should receive a pay raise.

Have a more nuanced opinion? Leave us a comment online.

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LAST MONTH'S RESULTS:

Are you concerned that the new rules for paramedic accreditation could negatively impact service at the local level?

Yes. The increased time commitment required to become a first responder will discourage people from signing up.

76%

No. Requiring paramedics to have more on-the-job experience is a good idea and our local programs will have to cope.

24%

YOUR COMMENTS:

Seems like another example of bureaucrats having too much time on their hands so they think up new rules as some justification for the existence of their job. Is there some huge problem with how the current first responder services operate? What prompted this change? Typically changes and solutions are offered as a response to a problem, but I do not understand what this is in response to. We can all agree more training is better, but I've had nothing but great survive from first responders and they are an invaluable service to the community. I think the government should stop meddling in things that work, and maybe focus on where actual issues exist, like the never ending healthcare issues and short staffed hospitals, for starters.

Back to Basics at the Cheyenne Summer Fest

By Sara Beth Dacombe

sdacombe@nivervillecitizen.com

On July 15–16, Ste. Agathe will welcome people back to the Cheyenne Summer Festival. Like most other events, the festival suffered back-to-back cancellations for the past two years due to the COVID-19 pandemic, but organizers are excited to once again offer family fun and local entertainment.

When bringing back the well-loved event, the organizing team knew the community would want to see some of their favourite activities.

“This year our program will largely consist of activities that we are known for: our Cheyenne Parade, our déjeuner aux crêpes, our baseball tournament, family and children activities, the Saturday night social, and so on,” says Eric Gagnon, chair of the Cheyenne Summer Festival organizing committee.

But Gagnon says they have updated the festival to bring

it into a new era and says residents should check out some of the new additions to the festival line-up, especially the Cheyenne Feud.

“We have decided to retire our annual Pioneer Games as the main event on the Friday night,” he says. “Instead we will be inviting families to enter teams in our new event, inspired by the trivia show *Family Feud*. Ours is the Cheyenne Feud! We encourage folks to follow our social media pages on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter for more updates on the Cheyenne Feud and all of the other exciting events we will be offering this year.”

Ste. Agathe hasn’t been able to host a full-fledged Cheyenne Summer Fest since the thirtieth anniversary edition of the festival back in 2019, and Gagnon says there are many new faces among the organizers. Along with many new committee members comes a lot of new ideas, but ultimately the team



Cheyenne Summer Festival 2019 parade

DAVID ROBIN

decided their goal was to keep things simple.

“With this new team of dedicated community volunteers, our focus was to go back to basics and stick to the core of what makes the Cheyenne Summer Fest so special,” says Gagnon.

When the committee started thinking about the 2022 Cheyenne Summer Fest

in January, organizers weren’t sure what the public health measures would be like. They wanted to make sure they would be able to safely run an in-person event.

“As the public health measures surrounding gathering sizes began to ease up,” he says, “we, too, began to feel more assured that we would be able to meet this obligation

towards our attendees.”

Gagnon says his team received help from the Building Communities through Arts and Heritage program, the Community Festivals and Events program, Manitoba Liquor and Lotteries, as well as the RM of Ritchot.

“It was because of this assistance that we are able to return safely to an in-person format for this year’s edition of the Cheyenne Summer Festival,” says Gagnon.

With music, fireworks, amateur sports tournaments, a parade, a pancake breakfast, and the new Cheyenne Feud game all in the works, there is sure to be something for everyone at this year’s festival.

“For us, this festival is about providing an opportunity for both the people of Ste. Agathe as well as our friends and families from neighbouring communities to come together, enjoy each other’s company, and form new friendships with their fellow neighbours—something that

we’ve largely taken for granted in the past, and something that the pandemic has taught us to appreciate and treasure,” says Gagnon. “After all, at the end of the day it isn’t the fireworks show, the baseball tournament, or any of our other program highlights that make the Cheyenne Summer Fest what it is: it’s the people.”

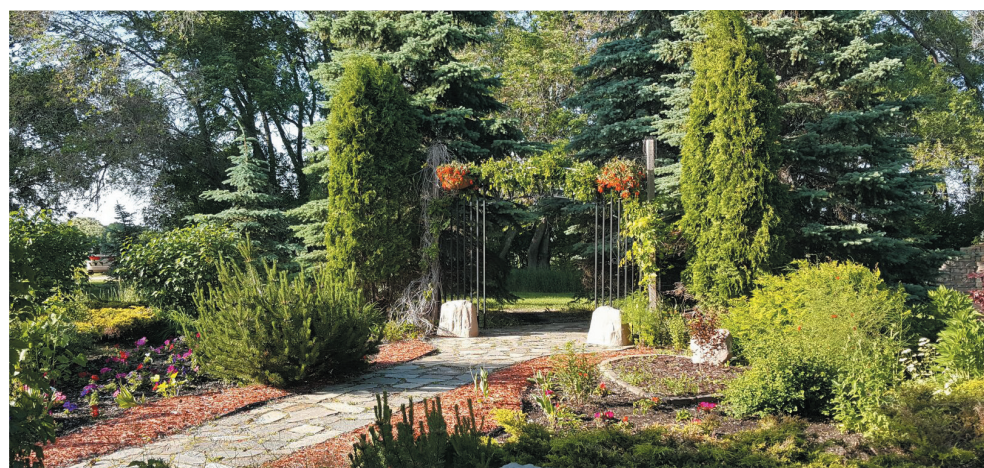
And they just need a few more volunteers to help make the event a success.

“We are currently seeking volunteers to assist with admission at the gate, as well as to assist in supervising the family and children activities,” says Gagnon.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

■ Those interested in volunteering for the Cheyenne Summer Festival may contact Jonelle Donnelly, volunteer coordinator, at 204-612-4111 (text or call) or email at jonelle.donnelly@gmail.com.

■ For the full event line-up and festival information, please visit www.cheyennefest.weebly.com.



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Commentary

A Summer of Body Positivity

By Daniel Dacombe

Most of the world is under the mistaken impression that Manitoba is a year-round land of ice and snow, but we know better. Our summers usually bring perfect beach weather—and with perfect beach weather comes swimwear, and with swimwear comes the annual practice of putting on last year's bathing suit, staring in the mirror, and deciding whether we like what we see.

This is a shared human experience, one of those things we all go through at one time or another, and it taps into something we read about, think about, and only rarely talk about: body image.

Many people use the term “body image” interchangeably with self-esteem. We place the focus on how we feel about our appearance, which for most people is negative.

However, researchers have noticed that body image is a broad, complex issue.

Our body image is made up of three components: our perception of how we look (our size, features, and appearance), our evaluation of our attractiveness (especially in relation to others), and our emotions (related to our body shape, size, and appearance).

These factors all work together to create a mental construct of our bodies and how we feel about them.

We can be said to have a good body image when our perception of how we look is accurate, our evaluation of our attractiveness is positive, and we feel confident in how we appear.

We can be said to have a negative body image when we perceive our size or shape to be poor, we consider ourselves unattractive, and parts of our appearance inspire strong



adverse emotions in us.

What's most interesting about our body image is how little it sometimes has to do with the actual size and shape of our bodies. More important to us is our perception of how we look, and how this perception makes us feel.

More on that later.

Who struggles most with negative body image? If you based your answer on depictions in media or culture, the answer would be teen girls or young adult women.

In reality, though, anybody can struggle with negative body image.

In the early 2000s, a group of psychologists from Harvard conducted a study and learned that males of all ages struggle with negative body image.

The difference between what males struggle with, compared to females, is that males tend to be dissatisfied with their muscle mass and height. That is, males both young and old generally wish to be taller, more muscled, and possess less body fat.

According to the study, this desire persisted despite how tall, muscled,

and lean the males actually were. None of them were tall enough, or big enough, to be completely happy.

Later research showed that this desire could persist well into adulthood.

In fact, all genders and ages appear to struggle equally with negative body image.

What seems to differ between the genders is how they wish they looked. In Western culture at least, males generally wish to be bigger, whereas females generally wish to be smaller.

When we evaluate how attractive we are, research shows that we often do it by comparing ourselves to others. This may be less of an issue in a relatively small community, without a lot of people to compare oneself to.

But social media and the internet have brought to our attention an army of celebrities and models. No longer are we limited to the people immediately around us. Now we compare ourselves to the likes of Channing Tatum and Kim Kardashian.

This can deeply skew our assessment of our own attractiveness, especially considering that so many

of the celebrity images we see aren't even close to realistic. Indeed, they're usually edited so much that they no longer resemble real life at all.

So we aren't even comparing ourselves with the real Kardashians; we're comparing ourselves with computer-generated facsimiles of them.

This is backed by research. Psychologists from the University of Adelaide in Australia found that increased exposure to celebrities and models, especially via social media, is associated with an increase in negative body image.

Sometimes negative body image can be more than just mildly distressing. Remember: our perceptions of our body shape, size, and attractiveness is more important to us than reality.

Body dysmorphia, a serious psychological condition, occurs when our perception of our physical selves becomes severely distorted. People struggling with body dysmorphia may perceive features of their bodies to be larger or more unusual than they actually are. They may feel trapped in their bodies or obsess

about perceived defects. Sometimes this can lead people to resort to cosmetic surgeries in order to correct so-called flaws.

Body dysmorphia can be overcome with psychotherapy, so if you or someone you know is experiencing this condition, please seek help.

Developing a positive body image is important because it can affect our overall mental and physical well-being.

The start of summer is an ideal time to start having conversations about body image—especially the start of this summer, as we move away from our COVID-imposed isolation.

Working on our body image isn't necessarily about trying to get on the treadmill a little more or saying no to that extra piece of cake. Instead, developing positive body image is something we can do together.

Recent research has shown that self-compassion, and encouraging self-compassion in each other, can contribute to positive body image.

Practicing positive self-talk is another evidence-based method of improving our body image, emphasizing our positive qualities over our negative ones.

It's also important to have conversations with our young people about the unrealistic nature of the images they may see online. Spending less time on social media can be a protective factor as well.

Finally, let's spend time doing activities we love to help us feel more comfortable with our bodies. This may include going to the beach in whatever swimwear we feel most at home in.

And if you do hit the beach, be assured that everyone else there is worrying much more about their own bodies than they are about yours.



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Sports & Recreation



The Niverville Force, who have just kicked off their second season in the Manitoba Major Soccer League.

by SUE THOMPSON

Niverville Force Move to Higher Division for Second Season

By Jennifer Lavin

✉ jlavin@nivervillecitizen.com

Soccer season is here again and the Niverville Force are ready to hit the pitch.

The Force, formed just last year, started off by playing their inaugural season in the Manitoba Major Soccer League's third division.

"We had a really good year and won the league by having the most points during the regular season," says coach Andry Giesbrecht. "So that was an achievement to be proud of for a new team with a very young group of guys."

Because of the team's success, they have moved up to the second division this season.

"The competition is tougher, but we wouldn't have

it any other way," Giesbrecht says. "For us to be able to challenge ourselves to be the best we can is all we try to do."

Giesbrecht notes that there have been a few roster changes since last year. The team has added some high quality players.

"The goal this year," he says, "is to be competitive and stay in division two for next year."

The 2022 season, already underway, started off with a bang as the Force defeated the Hanover Sting 3-0 in Steinbach.

Their second game of the season, which was also the home opener, turned out to be just as impressive with a 3-1 win against the Bonivital Flames II.

"We want people to know that we are a competitive

men's team striving to become a top-tier team and compete at the highest level in Manitoba in the next few years," says Giesbrecht. "Our team is very young and any players who think they could play at this level and help us grow should get in touch with us for next season. We are always looking to improve the squad each year."

The Force is made up of mostly local players and Giesbrecht says it is very important to management that the team represents Niverville and the surrounding area.

"We hope that in the future, young players that are currently in youth soccer come through the ranks and become future Niverville Force players."

The Force is co-owned by

Giesbrecht and local soccer enthusiast Sue Thompson, who also serves as team manager.

Thompson adds that the entire team was thrilled with the level of support the Force received from the community in their first season. The team's home games are played at Hespeler Park.

Last season, the team's home games averaged 150 spectators.

Giesbrecht says that anyone who is interested in watching the Force, or joining the team, should follow them on social media for more information.

The remaining home games this season will be held on July 6, July 19, August 2, August 9, September 10, and September 17.

IN BRIEF



The Eastman U15 Wildcats.

by ROXIE REMILLARD

Undefeated Eastman U15 Wildcats Win Big in Regina

By Jennifer Lavin

✉ jlavin@nivervillecitizen.com

In the midst of a perfect season, the U15AAA Eastman Wildcats softball team recently attended the President's Tournament in Saskatoon and came away from the event as champions with four wins and zero losses.

The late-May tournament saw them go head to head with teams from Saskatchewan and Alberta.

At the time of this writing, the Wildcats boasted a record of 16 wins and no losses.

The Wildcats come from all over the Eastman region, but two players come from Niverville: Danyel Heppner and Cheyenne Scott-Cooke. Other local girls on the team hail from La Broquerie, St. Malo, St. Pierre, Mitchell, Oakbank, and Landmark.

This is Dwight Heppner's third year as head coach for the U15 team, and his fifth with the Eastman Wildcats organization.

"This group of girls is extremely competitive and fun to coach," says Heppner. "We are built on a very strong defensive game, a diverse hard-working pitching staff, and a balanced offense."

The U15 isn't the only team to see recent success.

The U13AAA girls also performed very well at the President's Tournament in Regina and made it to the semifinals. The U13 team also features a Niverville player: Cameron Heppner.

Rheanna Falk of Niverville plays for the U17 team.

All Wildcats home games are played at the Friedensfeld Community Centre and there is still some time left in the season to get out and enjoy some Wildcats softball.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

■ You can follow the Wildcats at www.eastmanwildcats.org or on Instagram: @eastmanwildcats.

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Don Dulder Named to Volleyball Manitoba Hall of Fame

By Sara Beth Dacombe

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On June 12, Volleyball Manitoba recognized the lifetime achievements of Don Dulder, head coach of the Canadian Mennonite University (CMU) Blazers volleyball team and former Phys Ed teacher and volleyball coach at Niverville Collegiate Institute.

Volleyball Manitoba inducted Dulder into the Volleyball Manitoba Hall of Fame at their annual awards banquet at the Canad Inns Destination Centre Polo Park. The celebration also recognized other outstanding athletes, coaches, volunteers, and officials.

Dulder worked in Niverville for 37 years and, over the scope of his career, made many advancements for the sport of volleyball in Manitoba while making a significant impact on the lives of many he taught and coached along the way.

A CAREER OF UNRIVALLED SUCCESS

Dulder grew up in Morris, playing basketball while pursuing track and field and other sports. As a young teacher in the 1970s at Niverville Collegiate, he began coaching many sports, including basketball, track and field, badminton, golf, and eventually concentrating on boys volleyball.

In order to develop his high school teams, he also coached club volleyball out of Niverville for close to two decades, winning many medals along the way at the provincial and even national championship levels.

After retirement, Dulder continued to coach at the highest club level in Manitoba, with his WinMan 18U team winning provincial gold medals in 2013 and 2014, a national Tier 1 silver medal in 2011, a national Tier 1 bronze medal in 2014, and a national Tier 1 championship in 2013.

Regardless of the success his teams experienced, Dulder sought to improve himself as a coach by constantly seeking out opinions from other coaches and attending countless professional development courses in coaching.

To this day, he has never stopped being an enthusiastic learner of the sport.

"Don's humble nature and humility, all while being a model of sportsmanship and

fair play, have made him a very popular member of Manitoba's coaching family," reads a statement from Volleyball Manitoba.

In 37 years of teaching in Niverville, he coached his team to the Zone championship 22 times, and to Provincials 10 times. In his last eight years at the school, the Varsity team competed at the AAAA level, advancing to the final-eight five times, and to the final-four twice.

The coaching recognitions he received over the years include the Volleyball Manitoba Mary Jean England Coach of the Year in 2013, being given MVA Honour Society recognition in 2006, being named the MCAC Coach of the Year in 2017, and being honoured at the MHSAA Recognition Awards in 1994 and 2001.

In 2014, Dulder was hired by CMU to lead their men's team in the Manitoba College Athletic Association (MCAC). During this period, his teams have won the MCAC championship four times (2017, 2018, 2020, and 2022). In 2022, CMU qualified and competed at the CCAA National Championships.

Despite his familiarity with success, when Dulder received the news that Volleyball Manitoba wanted to honour him in this way, his first reaction was complete surprise.

"I was very surprised, honoured, humbled," says Dulder. "The Hall of Fame was never something I would even have thought of. You don't coach to be put in a Hall of Fame. It totally caught me by surprise. I coach because I enjoy it. It's not about winning; it's about the relationships with the players, and it's a great deal of fun."

MEMORIES OF NIVERVILLE

Teaching and coaching has come a long way from the 1970s when Dulder began teaching in Niverville.

"A lot of people [in the 70s] had the misconception that you have to be athletic," says Dulder. "Nowadays it's about activity and participation. What excited me the most was seeing students really enjoy activity and enjoy Phys Ed. I remember a time when they didn't have Grade 11 and 12 Phys Ed. I had several students come back and told me they missed it, just the opportunity



Don Dulder.

✉ RUSTY BARTON PHOTOGRAPHY, C/O VOLLEYBALL MANITOBA

to be active in their day."

Over the course of his career, Dulder taught thousands of students in Niverville.

"I've had former students stop me and say hi and they remember me, and I have to admit, my biggest problem is remembering them," he says. "This is not because of anything negative, it's just the way it is. In fact, in some ways, as a teacher if you remember a student it's often because they were challenging. You don't remember the ones who are in the middle of the pack and don't cause problems, even though those were probably the good ones that I should remember."

There are many aspects of his time in Niverville that Dulder finds rewarding, and he remembers his time serving the community fondly.

When asked if there's a career highlight that really stands out from Niverville Collegiate Institute, he says there are frankly too many to choose from.

"It's very difficult to choose just one," he says. "On a personal note, which is kind of a selfish thing, it was 2009, when I received the NHSA Coach of the Year award. And, well, I just think about some of the teams we had in the last eight years I was there. I was so proud of the fact that the players were jumped to the AAAA level. We

were a AA school, but I challenged the players and parents to play against the best and see what we were really made of. And we were the only AA school that for eight years we went AAAA. That was really remarkable."

Dulder recalls with pleasure how surprised he was that the players and parents were able to rise to that challenge.

"The one team I remember, there was that one Mike Hamm was on and the team made the final four in those years. It was pretty impressive, actually."

NIVERVILLE THE UNDERDOG

What Dulder finds impressive, other coaches did also. Under Dulder's leadership, many larger communities soon learned that when Niverville came to play, the small-town team often came away with a win.

Dulder generously suggests there could be a variety of reasons Niverville's volleyball teams were so successful during that time.

"Niverville was a great community," he says. "It was an advantage to be close to the city, so it allowed it because of the geography to play the AAAA schools and get to that level. We did have players that even played with WinMan, and some of the top clubs."

One time, Dulder says he had the opportunity to take

the 17U boys team to club nationals in Abbotsford where they were able to go up against some really difficult competition from larger towns and cities.

"It was the first time I'd ever been to nationals, and here's these guys from Niverville," Dulder remembers. "We walk out to the court and there was a team called the Pacman. They're wearing T-shirts that said 15U national champions. I thought, 'Are you kidding me? Our first game and we have to play the national champions?'"

Dulder says that despite the team's discouragement, they rallied and made it to the third game in the set.

Niverville didn't win that game, but the team scored well.

"The coach came up after the set and asked, 'Where is this place called Niverville? What was the size of the player pool you draw from?' And I asked them the same. They were drawing from a surrounding population of one million students while we only had from around 150 eligible players to draw our team from. And we only lost 15-12 in the third game. Other coaches were saying that was unheard of. I was so proud of my guys. They were an awesome group that year. We went on to be at that level for many years. But I remember that distinctly."

ON COACHING NOW AND INTO THE FUTURE

With every win on and off the court, Dulder recognizes there is a community of people around him as well, and he always shares the credit with that community. From students to other coaches, to staff and volunteers, to parents supporting their athletic children, Dulder would like to see every positive contributing relationship acknowledged.

"It's always been about relationships," says Dulder. "And as we get older, it's especially about relationships. Now I'm at CMU. I know I'm there to coach, but it's the relationships I have with the CMU community and the players. They are older, so they're more mature, ages 17 to 25, and they really put their heart, and put in the effort. It's an outstanding community."

When you've coached as long as he has, you see a lot of changes come to the

sport—and Dulder says that not all of the changes have been positive.

"When I started teaching in the 70s, 90 percent of the coaches were staff members. There was an unwritten rule that it was part of the job, though it really wasn't," he says. "By the time I retired in 2009, it was the reverse. I see the potential for sport in high schools to fall by the wayside, and it may become all club. But that's kind of unfortunate. Keeping sport in school, having gym, it's often a highlight for kids and it keeps them in school. I ask my grandkid, 'What did you do in school today?' and it's the active play that keeps them going throughout their day. It's so important."

A lot of schools struggle to find support staff or volunteers to give of their time to extracurricular sports. Dulder would like to encourage anyone considering giving back to their community to consider coaching.

"It's a hard sell. We're all busy. Everyone's busy. And if you're not already involved in coaching, it's hard to convey how gratifying the process is," says Dulder. "Yeah, we love to win, but it's not about that. It's about the relationships you establish."

He has one more story to tell, one that really gets to the heart of why he loves what he does.

"I was in Smitty's a few weeks ago, and I saw two brothers I used to coach at WinMan and they start yelling, 'Hey, Donny, how's it going?' I see them and we're hugging each other and reminiscing for the next 15 minutes. What can I say? That's what it's all about."

Even on the heels of another recent win, the coach continues to focus on how personally rewarding it is to see players improve and work hard as the measure of true success. In March, Dulder's CMU team won a conference tournament and went to nationals in Quebec City.

"It was so rewarding to see our guys win. Sure, it's gratifying to see them win, but it's not about that. It's not," Dulder says firmly. "I use the phrase, priceless. You just can't put it into words. It's the relationships we make and we have in all of this. It's such a gratifying experience. Priceless."

Kids Programming to Run Nonstop in Niverville this Summer

By Brenda Sawatzky

LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER
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The summer break is here and kids are excited for the two-month recess. For parents, though, it may be a different story. They may dread hearing the phrase “I’m bored,” a familiar refrain when a family doesn’t necessarily have plans for how to fill those long summer days.

The Town of Niverville’s recreation department is going into the summer with more programming for kids than ever before.

“We are running 23 [kids] camps this summer, up from last year’s 17 camps,” says Chantelle Falk, Niverville’s summer camp program coordinator.

Falk says that the camps offer something for any kid

between the ages of three and 13. Each of the day camps will run for one week, and they will fill the schedule throughout July and August.

For preschoolers, half-day camps will explore a variety of themes to help their imaginations soar. The themes include Animal Adventures, Around the World, Wild Water, Dance and Music, and Camping and Nature. Each camp will be packed with hours of games, crafts, sports, and musical adventures.

But with registration having been open since May, many of the newest camps have already sold out. For parents with little people who love superheroes, for example, they’ll have to wait until next summer to get in on the action planned for the Princesses and Heroes week.

New for kids ages six to

12 this year is the Space and Science camp. Expecting the theme to be popular, the town’s coordinators have planned one camp for each month throughout the summer. Registration for the July camps are already at capacity, and as of this writing August was filling up quickly.

Back by popular demand are the Amazing Race, Nature Explorers, and Imaginarium camps where kids explore creative arts such as theatre and the thrill of invention.

For sports enthusiasts, volleyball and basketball camps are ready to go. As well, a generalized sports camp dabbles in a wide variety of sports to help kids familiarize themselves with different ways of getting their game on.

For one week only this summer, young explorers might enjoy the Adventure

camp, where they can build confidence in a safe environment and make new friends as they explore Hespeler Park. Activities will include a fun foam party and mini field trip. Two camps will run simultaneously, one for those who identify as male and another for those who identify as female.

Based on previous popularity, not one but two culinary camps were included in this year’s roster. As anticipated, both camps are already filled to capacity.

“The culinary camps... are specialized camps and are different from your typical day camp,” Falk says. “We have received amazing feedback from our Kids in the Kitchen program that runs throughout the year and Culinary camp has a similar set up. So that is likely another reason why it

has been so popular.”

Apart from summer day camps, Falk and her colleague Chantel Todd have found creative ways for kids to enjoy the new CRRC all summer long.

Every Monday through Wednesday evening in July, kids ages five to 11 can unleash their inner artist in one of three programs designed for creative minds. For the little science nerd in the family, Up & Atom is a four-week program brimming with fun science experiments.

Parents of infants and preschoolers will find more than enough to keep their littles entertained with programs like Neighbourhood Storytime, Toddler Shenanigans, Shake, Rattle & Roll, and Mindful Munchkins.

On Wednesdays and Fridays throughout July and August, kids from birth to

seven years can participate in some court time through Sports Club and Young Children Open Gym.

Because it takes a small army of people to manage all this programming, Falk is hoping for some young recruits to help out.

“We have eight fantastic summer staffers who will work the camps, as well as our campus staff who will help fill in the gaps,” Falk says. “New this year, we are offering volunteer opportunities to youth aged 13 and up... These volunteers will assist our staff in ensuring our camps run smoothly. We are always looking for more help.”

FOR MORE INFORMATION

■ To volunteer with the summer camp program, email recreation@whereyoubelong.ca

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IDC Sisters Pursuing Lacrosse Dream for Team Manitoba

By Sara Beth Dacombe

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In August, two sisters from Île-des-Chênes will represent Manitoba at the Canada Summer Games, competing for the province's female box lacrosse team. It will be the sport's first-ever competition at the Summer Games.

Sidney and Emma Green, 15 and 17, will travel to Toronto from August 6–21 for the Games.

This is their first year playing the sport, and Emma has been appointed assistant captain of the provincial team.

The two sisters live with their family in Île-des-Chênes, attend high school in Lorette, and practice lacrosse in various recreation spaces from Garson to Winnipeg, including the Notre Dame Arena twice a week. They keep an ambitious schedule with the support of their parents.

"We're always busy," says Emma. "We have a big family and they all do sports as well. We're always doing something."

With seven children in the family, their mom says handling everyone's schedules can be "a little nutty some days." But they make it work.

"Over the years, most of our days have been spent driving our children, and sometimes their teammates, to sports after school, evenings, and weekends to cheer them on in arenas, basketball courts, and soccer fields," says Kristy Green. "It has been such a fun experience for all of us so far. A lot of coffee has also helped and we always pack snacks for everyone."

The girls are strong overall athletes and have been playing team sports all their lives. Together, they've competed in basketball, soccer, gymnastics, hockey, and ringette. Both say they can't get enough of sports and have always felt driven to pursue new sports when one no longer holds their interest.

"We only played ringette for a little while before switching to hockey, because ringette was not enough," says Sidney, who says she loves lacrosse more than Emma, though they argue about it. "We both love sports and have always needed something more and more challenging."

The sisters have played together most of their lives, but while advancing through various age categories



Sidney and Emma Green.

✉ SARA BETH DACOMBE

they have found themselves occasionally playing on different teams—or even competing against each other.

Besides transportation logistics just being easier to arrange, the girls prefer to play together because of their dynamic.

"It's just a lot more fun to play with players who always have your back and you never have to wonder," says Emma. "And it's even better that that player is my sister."

The sisters say they've experienced a sibling connection when they play, so they sometimes are able to anticipate each other's moves.

"I know when she's going to score," says Sidney.

"And I know when she's going to get that penalty," says Emma.

The interpersonal dynamic is something both sisters say attracted them to lacrosse. Sidney calls it the "fastest sport on two feet," not just because of the athleticism, but because of the teamwork required and mental agility in decision-making.

Sidney says that lacrosse is more like basketball than field hockey, but you play with more equipment than basketball. You have a long stick with a pocket on one end of it and players typically wear kidney guards, chest protector, bicep guards, arm guards, helmet, mouthguards, and proper shoes.

Sidney describes the plays as being very close to basketball in the positions and plays like setups and picks, but Emma says there are similarities to hockey because you carry and use a stick to put the ball in a net.

"So I guess it feels like a mixture of a lot of sports, which is maybe why we love it so much," says Emma.

"There are five players out at a time, like basketball, and you can set picks, like basketball," says Sidney. "But you can also hit, like in hockey. You can bodycheck."

Lacrosse is often considered a contact sport and both girls enjoy the physicality of play.

But it's Sidney who comes across as the more aggressive player.

"Oh, I love it," she says. "In hockey, there is physicality and I enjoyed that part. I do. So it's kind of the same in lacrosse. You cannot slash, but you can hit the stick and gloves. Unless you're crosschecking them, almost everything else is allowed."

Her sister agrees. "It's a lot rougher than hockey, actually, because you hit a person even more," says Emma. "In hockey you go for the puck, but in lacrosse you can go for the person's arm or their stick, to get that ball. You're allowed."

Both girls say that they thrive on the level of physical intensity in lacrosse, which some would compare to rugby.

Coaches spend time teaching intentionally about physical play and how to use one's body to contact another player appropriately.

"One rule is, you cannot hit from behind. That's absolutely major," says Emma. "Our coaches teach us how to safely hit. You can hit the gloves, you can hit the stick, you can hit the arm. They show us and demonstrate and really stress how to keep our movements controlled."

The play is encouraged to be competitive, but not malicious.

"It's hard sometimes, of course," Emma adds. "We have some players who are more aggressive than others and it's hard to maintain that aggression within competition, but we are taught. It's in our training to keep it competitive and we're here to win, not to hurt people. We don't want to hurt people."

The energy of play and ability to be aggressive is also mentally stimulating, they both agree.

"I love the gameplay," says Sidney. "I loved basketball first, and then I found lacrosse and I realized that I like the strategies and how they crossed over. Working as a team and setting the pick, it just excites you. It makes your brain work. You never stop moving. You never stop thinking... I have ADHD, so it's a good sport for me... It helps me because it calms me down and all my restless energy is gone by the end of the night."

Talking about the benefits of sport brings out another passionate side for the girls, who are strong advocates for girls athletics in general, and specifically box lacrosse, because it's a relatively new sport in Manitoba.

With the help of their coach, they have been volunteering their time at community fairs and other events.

"We went to Lorette Family Fun Days and a Girl Guide Jamboree where we set up a table and a lacrosse station and talk to people about lacrosse, maybe showing them a few drills," says Sidney. "We love telling people about the sport. Our mom comes with us and talks to the parents

about the commitment."

"Especially for girls, they don't know about it," Emma adds. "Lacrosse is more popular with guys than it is for girls. Like, going to camps and clinics is more accessible to guys... We are helping to set it up at more facilities and show that girls can join in the sport."

Both sisters acknowledge the gender disparity when it comes to opportunities in sport, as well as support for staying in sport in the long-term.

"I think girls lose a lot of interest a lot more quickly after high school," says Emma. "I know many, many girls in high school that played a lot of sports and then they get older and they don't play anymore, but guys do. They say they just don't have the motivation, but I think that comes from the people around you encouraging you to stay active and staying active with you. We have our parents, and if we didn't have our parents motivating us, it would be harder to have that motivation and reward in our lives."

Part of what could keep girls in sports longer is having more opportunities in leagues that already operate. But it has to start somewhere.

"There's a responsibility we already have to the younger girls," Emma continues. "We as older girls are stressing to the younger girls how important it is to play sports and how fun it is. We just want to help them to keep their interest in it, because it's there."

Neither of the girls seems to struggle with focus.

In fact, Emma sees herself making Team Canada and going to the Olympics for lacrosse. Sidney will have one more opportunity to play in the 2025 Canada Games.

Both girls say they would like to travel, but it's the sport they are pursuing—not necessarily opportunities to leave rural Manitoba.

Mom Kristy has no reservations about continuing to offer as much support as is needed to help her daughters achieve their dreams.

"We hope it takes them as far as they want to go with the sport," says Kristy. "They have both set their goals very high and we will always be supportive of them. We are our kids' number one fans and always will be. They make us proud every day."



This spring, players came from around the continent to try out for the Nighthawks.

SCOTT STROH

Nighthawks Add Ten Players at 2022 MJHL Draft

By Ty Dilello

In early June, the expansion Niverville Nighthawks added ten new players to their organization at the 2022 MJHL Draft.

Holding the fourth overall pick, Niverville selected defenceman Avery Laliberte (Lorette) of the Eastman Selects.

"It's a bonus that he's local and from the area, but it wasn't the primary reason we drafted him," explains Kelvin Cech, the team's head coach and general manager. "He's a good player, a big modern defenceman. He's just so shifty and can escape with the puck like you wouldn't believe. And he's so fun to watch. So we're excited to get him and can't wait to see him at camp."

Other draft picks on the day included Nathan Brown (Winnipeg), Raiden LeGall (Morden), Regan Anderson (Souris), Kelby Diehl (Glenboro), Liam Goertzen (Homewood), Tyson Sperber (Winnipeg), Hayden Moore (Winnipeg), Calem Normandeau (La Broquerie), and Rowin Bachalo-Richmond (Forrest).

The Nighthawks chose forward Nathan Brown of the Winnipeg Bruins with their second round pick (nineteenth overall).

"For Nathan Brown and Laliberte, we really wanted to come out of those top two rounds with a skilled forward and skilled defenceman, and

we believe we did that with both," Cech says. "They were both at our camp in May, so we've seen them a bit. Like Laliberte, Brown is an exciting player who is big, fast, and can shoot the puck. And we see him making an impact if not this season, then next season."

Niverville made a couple of trades shortly after drafting Brown to get a couple of extra third-round picks.

"We wanted to come away from that with a goalie, and we got our guy," adds Cech. "Raden LeGall was the first goalie on our list, and we were pumped to get him where we did. We've seen him for a few years now as my former goalie coach and new goalie coach are getting to know him. So he's a big part of the future too."

All in all, Cech says that the draft was a successful day for him and his staff.

They drafted eight forwards, one defenceman, and one goalie when it was all said and done.

Cech gives a big thumbs up to assistant general manager Mike McAulay and his scouts, as they really did their due diligence in making calls to players and coaches prior to the draft.

"We didn't intend to draft eight forwards, but it just worked out that way. Every time the draft came to our spot, we looked at our list, and a forward we had ranked high was available, so we were happy to jump on it. All of these players we picked ticked

off all of our boxes, and they've got character and compete."

Each of the players drafted last weekend will get a chance to come to Niverville's main camp at the end of summer and try to earn a spot on the team.

Since the draft, the Nighthawks have also signed a trio of players this week. Ethan Kelley (Dodsland, Saskatchewan), Jack Lynes (Edmonton, Alberta), and Ben Whitford (Calgary, Alberta) have joined the fold as player commitments. Niverville also acquired defenceman Sam Skillestad (Missoula, Montana) from the SJHL's Weyburn Red.

"Three of those guys were at our ID camp in April and looked fantastic and earned that commitment," says Cech. "It's a good mix of players that should strengthen our team this season. Jack Lynes is a good two-way centreman, while Ben Whitford is a big solid right winger, and Ethan Kelley is a solid defenseman and a tough Saskatchewan kid. Skillestad has also already played at the Junior A level, so that is a big boost on the blue-line as well."

Cech and his staff have continued putting together pieces of the team puzzle while ensuring it's a good fit for the team and the player.

"I've had success in the past by focusing on the culture and bringing in guys who have compete and character. It's just so valuable."

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Niverville Fair Attendance “Nothing Short of Amazing”

By Jennifer Lavin

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This year’s edition of the Niverville Olde Tyme Country Fair was, by all accounts, a booming success. Dustin Krahn, general manager of the fair committee, says that the 2022 attendance numbers were nothing short of amazing.

“Actual attendance numbers are pretty tough to nail down accurately,” says Krahn. “We do know, however, that this was easily the biggest fair we have had, attendance wise. Prior to this would have been in 2012 when we had Dean Brody. Including the midway and show-and-shine areas, our best estimate is around 15,000 to 20,000 people, but that isn’t exclusive to the fairgrounds.”

Krahn and his team were thrilled to see so many people in attendance and having good, safe fun.

“With such big crowds, I was a bit nervous there could be some incidents,” he says. “But we had a really good crowd that was well behaved.”

Attendance on Friday was so busy that the organizers decided to call in some extra security. This turned out to be wise, because Saturday turned out to be even busier.

“We watched attendance closely all day, and ultimately made the

decision to leave the gates open until the concert started at 9:30, assuming most people who really wanted to be there would have arrived by the start time,” Krahn explains. “In any event, when the concert started we closed the gate to new sales and only permitted entry to those who already had wristbands, or those who had pre-purchased tickets.”

The fair had excellent weather throughout, which also helped attendance. Krahn points out that not only was the temperature good, but the wind was mild. High winds can create significant challenges for certain acts, particularly for the motocross event, so this was a boon.

Only on Sunday, which is a designated clean-up day for the fair crew, did a huge storm finally arrive. Afterward, the weather calmed down enough for a successful clean-up.

“Cleaning up the fair on Sunday in the rain is never fun,” Krahn says. “But we would rather have rain while cleaning up as opposed to having rain during the fair.”

SPONSORSHIP AND SUPPORT

Krahn adds that when the committee began planning for the 2022 year’s fair, they were a little nervous about sponsorships and community support, as some businesses

and residents have really struggled through the pandemic. They were also concerned that people might prioritize giving their time and money to other worthwhile activities in Niverville, such as the new MJHL team, the Nighthawks.

He need not have worried.

“Sponsors and community support was remarkable,” says Krahn. “It always is, but this year was amazing and very humbling for us.”

He hopes that fairgoers take a moment to realize just how important sponsorships and volunteers are to the fair.

“From a personal standpoint, I just have to say it amazes me seeing the community and businesses rally behind these things the way they do here in Niverville. I really hope people take the time to appreciate how important that is, and why it is important to also support these businesses and community supporters. Groups like the fair committee do everything we can to thank them, but we can never thank them enough. They are very often the backbone of many community initiatives, but often go unnoticed.”

THE ENTERTAINMENT

Krahn also feels that this year’s entertainment lineup was one of the best

that the Olde Tyme Country Fair has ever assembled—and the sheer volume of attendees seems to indicate that the fairgoers agreed.

“The crowds were unlike anything we’ve seen before, which seems to be a common trend with the few festivals that have happened so far this year,” he says. “The Reklaws put on a really good show and were an absolute pleasure to work with! In fact, all the entertainers were fabulous this year, both in terms of their talent, but also just being really easygoing and great to work with behind the scenes.”

MINOR HICCUPS

That being the case, there were a few challenges—many of them due to the sheer number of people who showed up, even though the large attendance is also considered a boon.

For example, along with high turnout comes long lines. In order to hopefully shorten wait times next year, Krahn hopes to be able to provide more food vendors, washrooms, bar staff, face-painters, etc.

Another perennial challenge relates to a shortage of volunteers. A lot of people power is needed in order for the fair to run smoothly, and ultimately the fair could have used a few more bodies.

In the end, though, Krahn is grateful for those who showed up and made things work.

“We really need to say a big thank you to some of those people who did two, three, four extra shifts,” he says. “We even had a few committee members pulling shifts when they had time. It always amazes me seeing people step up when needed like that.”

The committee is coming out of this year’s event with fresh determination to smooth out these rough spots in 2023.

“From a committee or planning perspective, we want to make a big effort to spread out and get more people involved this [next] year,” Krahn adds. “Not to the point of having crazy time commitments, but the opposite. Essentially spreading out the roles a bit wider and having smaller, more specific tasks and roles that are easier for people to take on and commit to. We want to make it easy and fun for people to help.”

Currently the committee is comprised of just 12 people. Krahn believes they can do better if they get a few more people on board.

Another change on Krahn’s mind is rethinking the parade route, so that next year’s parade and the detours won’t overlap—or at least only

overlap in a minimal way.

"There were also some sound check scheduling/timing issues that unfortunately threw a few kinks into our plans," Krahn says, "such as the choir group on Friday evening not being able to use the stage, which we felt terrible about. Saturday also saw a few stage acts overlapping for the same reason, which was a bit awkward unfortunately. But, as usual, people understand the challenges and most just keep smiling and keep enjoying their time at the fair. Considering we haven't done this since 2019, I was pleasantly surprised at how smooth things went overall."

The organizers had hoped to sell most tickets through non-cash options this year, but ultimately just under 50 percent of the ticket sales were processed via debit card. Lines were longer at the cash gates, and Krahn speculates that this may be because people weren't aware of the debit option.

"The system we had unfortunately didn't have tap and didn't take credit cards, so that is something that we will certainly address next year," he says. "Without a tap option, cash is still quicker, and if you're like me you will almost always opt for the quicker method. So I think we just have to make it quicker and easier regardless of which method you use."

Also, the debit machines worked

via cellular network, and Krahn acknowledges that the network wasn't working well over the fair weekend.

"Even on my cell phone, I would drop almost every call throughout the weekend, so having some contingency there would be helpful. A system like this is completely useless if it cannot connect to a network reliably."

A WORD ON PRICING

Before, during, and after each fair weekend, there is always chatter online about the price of admission. Krahn is more than happy to explain how the fair committee arrives at these price points. In essence, he makes four distinct points.

First, he certainly understands that the cost of the fair can be prohibitive for some families. Unfortunately, this is simply a fact of life. Prices cannot be lowered into the basement if the fair is to maintain the high standards it has developed for itself.

"Looking at age 12+ pricing, does \$15 add up quickly for a larger family?" Krahn says. "Absolutely it does, and we completely understand that. However, it also has to be understood that costs adding up is not a unique occurrence that only

takes place at our fair. Doing anything with a large family gets expensive quickly, whether it's the movies, Fun Mountain, go-carting, or simply ordering takeout. \$15 really doesn't get you very far doing anything these days, and from that perspective, we are actually very proud of what we are able to offer for that cost."

The second point Krahn makes is that they do offer free admission for volunteers. Since volunteerism is integral to the event's success, stepping up to lend a hand will get you in the door for free.

"\$15 really doesn't get you very far doing anything these days, and from that perspective, we are actually very proud of what we are able to offer for that cost."

Dustin Krahn | Niverville Fair Committee

Krahn's third point is that fair-goers can save money on tickets via family pack deals and early-bird pricing.

"People may not realize those pre-sales are the best way to get prices lower," he says. "By purchasing admission ahead of time, you are essentially sharing a small piece of

the risk, and relieving some of the financial burden and risk that the committee and sponsors are taking on. When you do that, we don't have to watch our back end so much, and can respond with better deals."

There is a clear bottom line: the more people who participate in pre-sales, the better the prices will be.

"Alternatively, if people prefer to wait to see how the weather is before they decide to support us, then we really aren't able to offer anything better, since all the risk remains on the committee and our sponsors."

As a final point, Krahn wants to remind the community that the organizers have already lowered the event's prices.

The fair has been running on a leaner financial model since 2018, which is starting to put them in a sustainable place.

Since 2018, the fair committee has been able to reduce the price from \$15 to \$5 for those under 12 years of age. They also made admission free for those under five, whereas it used to only be free for those under three.

"As we continue to move forward," Krahn says, "we can hopefully continue that trend and keep passing benefits along to the community. But it is a longer-term strategy, and

it takes time and patience. You can take note, though: the first place those benefits will appear would be the previously mentioned pre-sale tickets like the family pack and the early-bird. So we encourage people to take part in those sales. The more they do, the easier it becomes for us to pass along savings."

REWARDING EXPERIENCE

"Overall, the fair was amazing, and it was really great to get back at it," Krahn concludes. "We all missed it and had a lot of fun putting it together again. There is something really rewarding about it that is hard to explain. No doubt, it can be stressful and chaotic at times, but we all seem to get a kick out of the fast-paced nature of it. It is a really fun group that works well together! We were definitely a bit rusty and forgot some things, but that is just how it goes sometimes. We will learn and always try to improve and be better at the next one!"

By the end of June, the committee had already held their wrap-up meeting for the year. The committee will now take the summer off.

But by early fall, they'll be back to the drawing board, planning busily for 2023.

Krahn welcomes any and all to join the committee. "We promise it is a lot of fun!"



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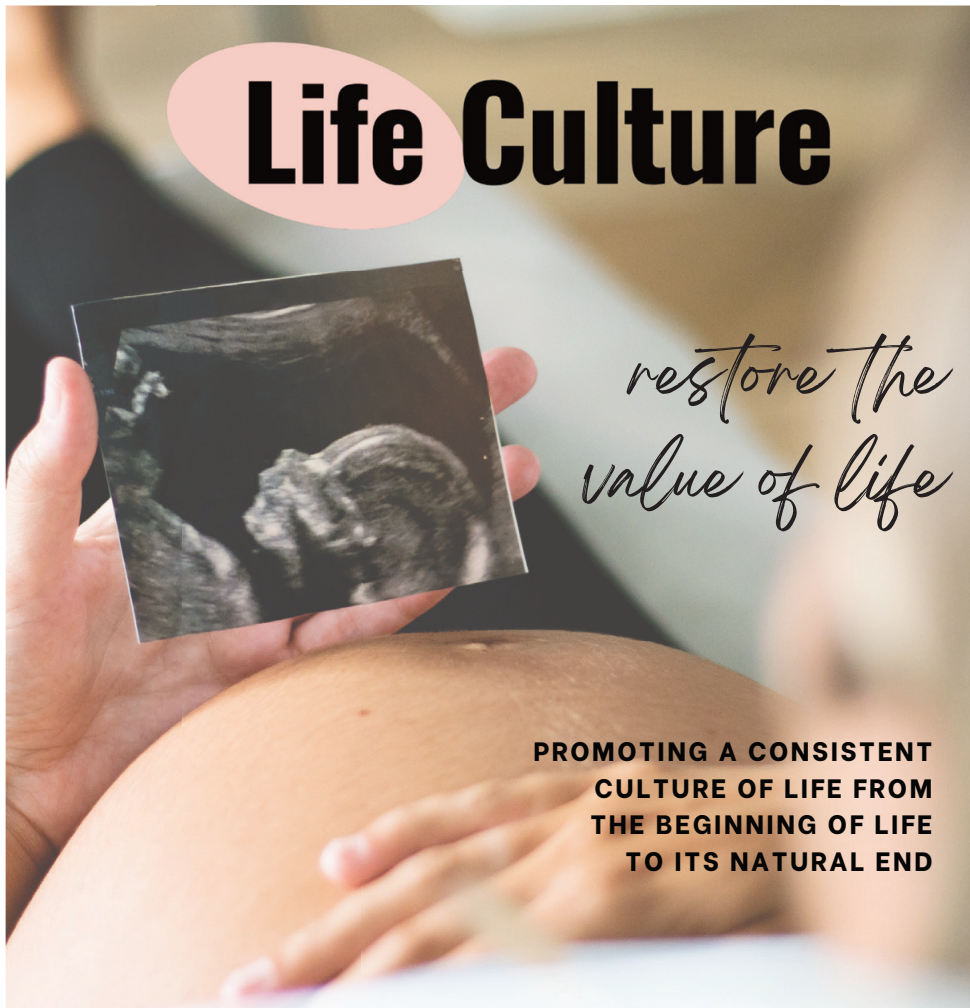
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Eastman Youth Choir at rehearsal camp in spring of 2022.

EMYC

Eastman Youth Choir Seeks Young Singers

By Sara Beth Dacombe

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The Eastman Youth Choir (EMYC) is looking to recruit more singers for their fall season, which consists of two camp weekends (September 16–18 and September 30–October 2) and a concert tour with ten performances which will be held between October 13–16.

“Members have the opportunity to develop their skills

and talents in an intensive choral setting,” says Shannon Sawatzky, an EMYC board member and past president of the group.

The EMYC is one of five regional youth choirs in Manitoba. Originally founded in 1989, the EMYC seeks to provide a high-quality choral singing experience for high school students in southeastern Manitoba.

The EMYC is also excited to announce the selection of

a new musical director, Vic Pankratz.

“Each year the choir brings in a different conductor,” Sawatzky says. “This year, we are thrilled to welcome Vic Pankratz of Winnipeg as our musical director!”

The COVID-19 pandemic presented a number of challenges to in-person singing groups, and the EMYC experienced a downturn in enrolment.

For this upcoming year,

they are changing their intake criteria to invite as many singers as possible. Whereas applicants were previously asked to audition, now any and all interested singers who will be in Grades Nine to Twelve this fall are welcome.

Choral singing groups help foster many skills for young people besides singing, says Sawatzky. Parents and youth alike observe that the students grow in many ways as they are given opportunities

for leadership and socializing, not to mention to build teamwork skills and strong friendships.

“My daughter has made lifelong friends at EMYC and cherishes her memories from the camps and touring,” says J. Preteau, the parent of an EMYC singer. “The organizing committee treated her like family and the music is all just a wonderful bonus!”

Another parent, V. Ayala, says that her daughter has

gained so much confidence. “What our daughter loves about the youth choir is meeting other people who love music as much as she does. As a parent, I just love to see the joy that she has singing together with other kids her age.”

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Interested singers can check out the EMYC website to learn more: www.emyc.weebly.com

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