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Manitoba's premier Wab Kinew pays his respects to Juliette Hastings, at the vigil held outside the home in Carman last Friday where Hastings' daughter Myah-Lee Gratton died. Approximately 100 friends and family gathered and lit candles, brought flowers and stuffed toys to remember the lives of the five family members killed earlier in the week.

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# Community members hold vigil to remember Carman family killed

By Ty Dilello

More than 100 friends and family gathered in Carman, Friday evening to remember and honour the lives of five family members killed over the weekend.

Standing outside of the family's home, community members lit candles in memory of the victims: 30-year-old Amanda Clearwater, six-year-old Bethany, four-year-old Jayven, two-and-a-half-month old Isabella and 17-year-old Myah-Lee Gratton.

Clearwater lived at the home with her three children, Gratton – who,

though not related by blood, called Clearwater her aunt – and Clearwater's common law partner Ryan Manoakesick.

Clearwater and Manoakesick both grew up in foster care in Woodlands in the Interlake and had been together since the age of 14. Clearwater attended and graduated from Warren Collegiate.

Manoakesick has been charged with five counts of first-degree murder in their deaths.

On Feb. 11, the five family members were found by RCMP at three different locations. At approximately 7:30



Flowers and stuffed animals made up a shrine outside the house.



STANDARD PHOTOS BY LANA MEIER

A vigil held outside the home of Amanda Clearwater and her common-law partner, Ryan Manoakesick, Friday evening was an opportunity to grieve the innocent lives that have been lost. Manoakesick is facing five first-degree murder charges for the deaths of the mother of his children, Clearwater, their three children – six-year-old Bethany, four-year-old Jayven, and two-month-old Isabella and Myah-Lee Gratton, 17, a cousin of Clearwater.

a.m., on Feb. 11, Carman RCMP responded to a report of a hit and run on Highway 3, approximately 6.5km south of Carman. When officers arrived, the body of Manoakesick's common-law partner was located just off the highway in a nearby ditch. She was pronounced deceased on scene.

At approximately 10 a.m., Headingley RCMP received a call of a vehicle on fire on Highway 248, north of PTH 424 in the RM of Cartier. The three young children were pulled from the burning vehicle. All three children

were declared deceased on scene.

The RCMP confirmed that Manoakesick removed the bodies of the children from the burning vehicle and was at the scene and taken into custody.

The 17-year-old niece was located deceased at the home she was living in.

All five victims lived together and were residents of Carman.

Autopsies of the bodies were con-

Continued on page 3



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> VIGIL, FROM PG. 2

ducted last week, but causes of death have yet to be released.

"Young, innocent lives were senselessly taken yesterday, and we grieve with all Manitobans," said RCMP Inspector Tim Arseneault. "Our thoughts are also with the community of Carman, who are mourning the loss of an entire family."

Last week, Gratton's mother Juliette Hastings told media that her daughter was placed in the home by Winnipeg Child and Family Services (CFS) in April of 2023 despite repeatedly telling CFS workers that she feared the home was not safe. Her concerns fell on deaf ears.

In speaking with the press, Kinew said he is open to an inquest or inquiry into CFS following the deaths of the five victims.

"There is no context, there is no explanation that can make this OK," said Kinew. "This is pure darkness. But I want to say to the people of Manitoba that we are not helpless in the face of darkness."

Manitoba Advocate for Children and Youth called on the provincial government to better support people facing intimate partner violence as it's been estimated that about 20 per cent of all homicides in Canada are due to intimate partner violence.

According to studies, intimate partner violence claims a woman's life every six days. And 2022 Statistics Canada data shows Manitoba has the second-highest rate of intimate partner violence among Canadian provinces, just behind Saskatchewan. However, the actual rates are likely even higher, as an estimated 80 per cent of domestic violence cases go unreported to law enforcement.

Court records reveal that Manoakesick had a history of addiction and mental health issues, and was previously convicted of smashing an electronic display at a Tim Hortons location in Winnipeg while on methamphetamine.

At a court hearing in 2019, Manoakesick received a conditional discharge after pleading guilty to mischief for destroying the display by throwing glass coffee mugs at it, as employees locked themselves in a back office and called 911.

A judge told him he had to get help before "things spiral completely out of control. If you don't do something, eventually it's going to cost you your family."

Manoakesick has been charged with five counts of first-degree murder in their deaths. The charges have not been tested in court and he is expected to appear before a judge on Feb. 23.



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# getheard

EDITORIAL > VIEWPOINTS > LETTERS

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## RM of Thompson's councillor Donna Cox reinstated to council

By Ty Dilello

A Court of King's Bench judge has reinstated RM of Thompson councillor Donna Cox after the council she sits on tried to remove her for missing three meetings held while she was working at her full-time job with the provincial government.

"This matter is anything but an example of collective responsibility, consensus governing and leadership of elected officials," King's Bench Justice Chris Martin wrote in his ruling. "Council did not extend simple courtesies so that every councillor chosen by voters could rightfully fulfil their mandate. Collectively on this issue, all members of council and committee fell well short of facilitating good governance as common sense and collegiality would demand."

Last year, the RM of Thompson and Local Urban District (LUD) of Miami applied under the Municipal Act to disqualify first-time councillor Donna Cox and declare her position vacant after she missed three consecutive committee meetings.

Due to her work commitments, Cox was unable to attend three back-to-back meetings held at 9:30 a.m. Her employer did not grant her unpaid leave to participate in these meetings.

Cox was first elected Ward 2 councillor in October of 2022 after previously serving as a school trustee. Ward 2 includes the town of Miami, and with her becoming elected, Cox automatically became a member of the LUD of Miami Committee and was appointed to five other committees.

Following Cox being elected, the RM council implemented a bylaw amending the start times of their regular meetings. The changes involved shifting from a rotation of 9:30 a.m. and 5 p.m. start times to solely beginning at 9:30 a.m.

Cox was the only one of six RM councillors to vote against the change and subsequently told the council that if the change went ahead, she would be able to attend only one council meeting a month because her employer would not approve additional time off.

Reeve Brian Callum testified in court that changing the meeting times simply worked best for the majority of council members.

"I find that when making the changes, council and committee knew Ms. Cox would be adversely impacted, if not precluded from fully attending and participating, and made the changes for 'convenience reasons,'" Martin said. "Council members were unwilling to continue with one monthly 5 p.m. meeting, despite council having done so during the prior four-year period."

Cox missed three consecutive committee meetings between Jan. 18 and March 15, 2023, cause for disqualification under the Municipal Act.

Last May, the RM of Thompson became aware that under the Municipal Act, only a Court of King's Bench justice could make a determination that a councillor be disqualified. Upon hearing that, the RM took the matter to court.

Justice Martin rejected the RM's claim that meeting times were changed to accommodate council members. While several council members had full-time jobs, they worked for themselves in businesses they owned.

"The degree of flexibility they have, being their own boss, is in no way equivalent to the lack of flexibility Ms. Cox had," Martin said. "It was disingenuous to offer this excuse."

Voters in the area elected Cox as their representative, and she should have been provided the help she needed to carry out her duties as a councillor.

"Any council or committee has the responsibility to all voters to work with elected representatives to assist them in fulfilling their obligations to the voters and the municipality," Martin said. "A municipality cannot, in a situation such as this, in effect, obstruct a councillor and disenfranchise voters by taking actions it knows, or should reasonably know, will preclude the elected representative from fulfilling their function."

"Generally, communication, col-



PHOTO SUBMITTED

RM of Thompson councillor Donna Cox

laboration and compromise are hallmarks of good governance; here, the municipality failed miserably."

Ultimately, the judge ruled that Cox be reinstated as Ward 2 councillor in the RM of Thompson immediately.

The RM of Thompson is also on the hook for lawyer fees on both sides and will be spending the ratepayers' money on this, which is not a good look on the RM's part.

Cox was pleased with the ruling and looks forward to returning to her seat on the council.

"I have every intention of fulfilling my duties as a councillor," said Donna Cox. "I believe the next meeting is Feb. 29, and I'm looking forward to getting caught up on everything that I've missed."

RM of Thompson Reeve Brian Callum is not as enthusiastic with the court's ruling.

"We have the recent decision from the Court of King's Bench," said RM of Thompson Reeve Brian Callum. "Council for the Municipality acted in accordance with the provisions of The Municipal Act, as well as our duties and obligations to our ratepayers when a councillor has failed to attend meetings and missed three consecutive meetings. We are considering our appeal options."

When pressed further on the topic, Callum failed to comment.

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# Chamber of Commerce holds busy February meeting

By Ty Dilello

The February meeting of the Carman and Community Chamber of Commerce was held on Feb. 13 at the Carman Memorial Hall.

The Chamber discussed several items but the main focus was how best to help the community after the recent tragedy in town and looked at ways to raise money or help out with the cause.

The Chamber was made aware that the family of the victims had ordered flowered crosses to be placed along the highway at the site where the tragedies occurred. The Chamber decided to cover the cost of these markers.

The Chamber of Commerce has also sent a letter of support to the Emergency Medical Services (EMS) and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police

(RCMP) as a gesture of gratitude for their heroic efforts as first responders during this tragic incident.

In other news, Richard Dyck, councillor for the Town of Carman, notes that town council had a meeting recently with Brandon Burley, the former mayor of Morden. Burley resigned from his mayoral duties and promptly became southern Manitoba's new NDP cabinet leader.

Burley reminded town council that southern Manitoba is the strongest economic driver in the province, more than Winnipeg. He also has access to NDP ministers who are very eager to tour the area.

"We were able to share some of our concerns and focused on the health-care staff shortages and some of the challenges that he sees and the NDP

sees," said Dyck. "We talked about road improvements because we had a promise six years ago before the Main Street Project was started that Main Street would be fixed north of the tracks within ten years and the intersection within five years, so we just wanted to remind them. Most importantly, we want more funding from the province, so we're looking for more sustainability from them there."

Jodi Winkler from the Chamber of Commerce notes they are looking for a few more membership renewals. There are still quite a few out there that haven't paid yet, so if you're a business that hasn't paid your membership, please do so soon at your earliest convenience.

The Carman Restorative Justice group is welcoming any new mem-

bers of its committee.

The golf committee is also dwindling, so they are looking for some new directors. The Chamber Golf Tournament is one of the biggest fundraisers of the year and is needed for the Chamber to survive.

The Chamber is also looking forward to its Annual General Meeting (AGM) on April 9, its regular meeting day at the Boyne River Bistro.

Finally, the Carman Robotics Club at Carman Collegiate has been put on hold as the Manitoba Robotics Games aren't being held this year. The Chamber had some success with the Robotics Club last year and is disappointed with the news, but is hopeful that they'll be back making cool robots for next year.

## Manitobans encouraged to provide feedback on functional design study for PTH 3

By Lana Meier

Manitoba Transportation and Infrastructure (MTI) invites Manitobans to provide their thoughts on a functional design study to twin a section of Provincial Trunk Highway (PTH) 3 to address increased traffic volume.

MTI is conducting a functional design study for PTH 3, which spans from Road 7E to the Winnipeg city

limit. This study will explore potential routes for the road, including the current one that leads to McGillivray Boulevard and a new route that connects Bishop Grandin Boulevard (proposed Abinojii Mikanah).

Manitobans are being encouraged to participate in an online survey to provide feedback on the various options

for the PTH 3 functional design study. The survey period will end on Feb. 27, and a report called "What We Heard" will be published on the EngageMB site once the survey concludes.

Other public engagement opportunities are expected to take place in summer 2024 and will include a presentation of the preferred highway

alignment and intersection designs.

The functional design study in its entirety will take approximately 18 months to complete and will be informed by both technical studies and feedback from the public.

For those interested in taking part in the EngageMB survey, simply go to <https://engagemb.ca/pth3>.

## RCMP investigate reports of suspicious vehicle

By Ashleigh Vivieros

Manitoba RCMP are warning people to be careful when pulling over to help someone apparently stuck on the side of the road.

Just after noon on Feb. 13, Pembina Valley RCMP responded to a report of a suspicious vehicle on Hwy. 3 between the communities of Thornhill and Darlingford.

It was reported that two males in a light blue BMW SUV with an Ontario licence plate were stopped on the highway, flashing their vehicle lights and waving their arms in an attempt to get other motorists to stop.

Once stopped, the males approached the motorists and offered to sell them jewelry, such as watches and rings, or asked for

money for gas, stating they were not from the area.

RCMP say they have received several similar reports in this area and elsewhere in southern Manitoba over the last week.

While no threats were made and nobody was injured, many motorists reported they felt intimidated in these interactions.

Manitoba RCMP are warning the public to be safe and aware if pulling over to assist someone roadside.

If you have any information about these incidents, contact Pembina Valley RCMP at 204-745-6760, call Crime Stoppers anonymously at 1-800-222-8477, or send a secure tip online at [www.manitobacrimestoppers.com](http://www.manitobacrimestoppers.com).



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# Roland School celebrates I Love to Read Month

By Lana Meier

While most of us enjoy reading throughout the year, February is a particularly special month at the schools. This year at Roland School, students embraced the theme of "Our voices are all unique" from the Manitoba Reading Association. Using the MRA events calendar, staff created an I Love to Read bingo challenge for all students and staff. Activities included an entire school word splash celebrating their uniqueness, a reading train involving the entire school, and a teacher reader swap. Recurring events like stop, drop and read, as well as frequent visits from guest readers were included in the month long activities. Some guests were announced in advance, while others remained a mystery until daily clues revealed their identity.

The Carman Cougar hockey players Dane Bergen and Brody Benner took turns reading to each class. They were also put to the test with challenging inquiries from the students, discussing topics such as the qualities of a good teammate and the significance of reading in their lives. Of course, one popular question was about their personal choice for the best hockey player.

Roland School welcomed Stan Abrams, Amy Bartley and Janessa Davis from the Roland Fire Department. The RFD not only read to the whole school in the gym, but they did a presentation on fire safety and dem-



onstrations on how their equipment works, students had some great questions including why does each fireman have a different number on their helmet and suit.

Roland School was delighted to host representatives from the Roland Fire Department, including Stan Abrams, Amy Bartley, and Janessa Davis. In addition to leading a captivating reading session in the gym, the RFD also conducted a comprehensive lesson on fire safety and showcased their equipment through interactive demonstrations. The students were actively engaged and even posed some thought-provoking inquiries, such as the

significance of the unique numbers on each fireman's helmet and suit.

**STANDARD PHOTOS SUBMITTED**  
Roland firefighters, Stan Abrams, Amy Barley and Janessa Davis were special guests for I Love to Read Month at Roland School.



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# Carman & District Game & Fish is hosting annual ice fishing derby

By Lana Meier

Calling all ice fishing enthusiasts! The Carman and District Game & Fish Association is hosting their annual ice fishing derby on Saturday, March 9 on Stephenfield Lake.

Registration opens bright and early at 8 a.m. on the north side of the lake, so make sure to arrive in time to secure your spot. The derby will take place from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. and welcomes anglers of all ages. It's not just about reeling in the big ones; it's also an opportunity for families to bond over their shared love for fishing.

The registration fee of \$30, is used for research analysis on Stephenfield Lake along with hosting future events throughout the year.

With over \$3,500 worth of prizes waiting to be won, there is plenty of motivation to reel in that prize-wor-

thy catch. In both the pike and perch categories, first and second place winners will receive hefty payouts – 50 per cent for first place and 25 per cent for second place.

For those feeling extra competitive or just looking for a fun twist, there's even a category dedicated to catching the smallest perch. So if you've got a knack for finding those tiny fishies, this might be your chance to shine!

Kids' prizes are also up for grabs. So parents can bring along their little ones who dream of becoming master anglers themselves someday.

This derby also supports ongoing research analysis on Stephenfield Lake as well as future events throughout the year. By participating in this competition, you're contributing directly to conservation efforts while enjoying a day out on the ice.



STANDARD PHOTO BY JUSTIN MAJOR

The Carman and District Game & Fish Association is gearing up for their annual ice fishing derby, on March 9 at the picturesque Stephenfield Lake.

## Flashback... 1959 firebug sparks flames, fear in Carman and fear



PHOTO SUBMITTED

Mayor Frank Harris posted a \$500 reward leading to an arrest.

By Dennis Young

The summer of 1959 saw arson on the rise in Carman.

Lost to flames were the pool elevator and egg grading station, Park's Hatchery, Kyle's Livery Barn, a Canadian National Railway storage shed and unsuccessful attempts made at local businesses.

It started Saturday, Aug. 15 at 3:45 a.m., when the last remaining elevator in town shot flames and sparks as far north as O'Brien's Grocery on Hwy #13.

Due to a recent delivery quota, there were approximately 40,000 bushels of different grains inside, valued at \$40,000 (\$416,000 today) and insured under the Canadian Wheat Board. The majority would only be useable as poultry feed.

The elevator, built in 1948 after the original Pool elevator burnt a year earlier, was in-

sured for \$64,000 replacement value.

Pool chairman, Alex Wilkie, along with manager, Gord Greenway, announced an immediate rebuild at a member's meeting. At a cost of \$69,000 (\$713,000 today), it would be built with an increased capacity on CN property.

At 7:45 a.m., once the blaze was under control, the local fire department headed home. But it was not a long break because, at 9:45 p.m., a second alarm was sounded at the Manitoba Dairy and Poultry egg pool building on South Railway Street (Centre Avenue West).

Once again, fire crews turned out en masse in a vain attempt to save the grading station (a \$200,000 loss in today's money), but they were able to prevent the flames from spreading to the valuable processing plant.

The stubborn fire and thick smoke hampered Chief Harry Malcolmson and his crew, as it took until 4:45 a.m. to wrangle the blaze.

Then, two small but intentionally set fires were sparked at Beaver Lumber and Carman Hardware. Little damage was done, and a pair of local juveniles were questioned in connection with no news released further.

Just five days later, the Beaver location was "attacked" once again, but with minor results.

The third major fire in two weeks broke out on Friday,

Aug. 21.

Beginning around midnight, it completely leveled Kyle's Livery Barn (now Catholic Church location) along with three harness racing horses, seven hogs and a pet dog.

Willis Kyle estimated the loss to be \$6,000 (\$61,000 today), which also included racing sulkies, harnesses and more.

The building was built in 1898 and was known as the Palace Barn until 1937, when Kyle bought it from Alex Gordon.

The following Sunday, Park's Hatchery brooder house was demolished by arson at 3:35 a.m.

The \$8,000 loss (\$76,000 today) included the 160 x 20-foot structure and 1,000 hay bales.

Opened in 1932 by Mel and Mary Park on North Railway Street (1st Avenue NW), the property eventually became Parkview Manor followed by Legion and Evergreen.

One week later, the arsonist struck at the fairgrounds. A CNR 24 x 40 storage shed was levelled next to the horse barns. All totaled, the five fires accumulated \$150,000 in losses (\$1.5 million today).

The town council announced a \$500 reward for any information leading to arrests and conviction of a suspect.

Citizens were on edge and businesses began adding lights to their back yards to discourage further arson.

No one has ever come forward or been charged.

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Romans 12:9



## The psychology of bullying: CAUSES AND CONSEQUENCES

Bullying is a harmful behaviour that can have profound psychological effects on both the perpetrator and the victim. Understanding the underlying psychology of bullying is crucial in effectively addressing its harmful effects.

### CAUSE

Bullying can have multiple and complicated causes. In many cases, bullying

stems from feelings of insecurity, a desire for social dominance or a need for attention and popularity. In some cases, bullies themselves may have been victims of bullying, thus perpetuating a cycle of abuse. Other factors, such as a lack of parental supervision and tolerance for aggression, can lead to bullying tendencies.

Continued on next page

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## CULTURAL DIFFERENCES and bullying

Bullying is a problem that happens all over the world and isn't limited to one culture. Because different cultures communicate differently, culture can affect how bullying is expressed. Here's an overview of some ways bullying may differ according to culture.

**Tolerance for aggression.** Different cultures have different attitudes toward aggression and ways of resolving conflicts. This can impact the frequency and normalization of bullying in a community.

**Communication styles.** Some cultures might be more direct, with loud speech and expressive emotions. However, others might use more subtle forms of aggression, like gossip or social exclusion.

**Power distance.** In cultures where there's a big difference in power between people, bullying might be more hierarchical. For example, a boss might use their position to bully a staff member.

**Collectivism vs. individualism.** In cultures where it's more important to think about the group, bullying might be more group-oriented. In cultures where individuality is valued, bullying might be more one-on-one.

**Responses to bullying.** How individuals respond to bullying can vary. Some cultures might encourage people to handle bullying on their own, and others might encourage people to seek help from other members of the community.

Understanding these cultural differences is essential to creating anti-bullying initiatives that work for everyone, no matter their cultural background.



Continued from previous page

### CONSEQUENCES

Victims of bullying often experience a range of negative psychological consequences, including anxiety, depression, low self-esteem and a sense of hopelessness resulting from the relentless nature of the bullying. These effects can extend well into adulthood.

Furthermore, bystanders who witness bullying may experience feelings of guilt, fear or powerlessness for not intervening, contributing to a culture of silence that perpetuates the problem.

This Pink Shirt Day, February 28, 2024, stand up against bullying. Look for initiatives and events you can get involved with in your area to make a lasting impact and end this harmful cycle for good.

## How to overcome THE TRAUMA OF PAST BULLYING



others who have faced similar challenges can help reduce feelings of isolation.

- 3. Develop self-compassion.** Be kind and forgiving to yourself to overcome any shame or guilt. Take time for self-care and prioritize your personal growth to foster resilience and strength.
- 4. Celebrate progress.** Recognize and celebrate each milestone achieved in the healing journey. Acknowledging your progress can help motivate you to continue moving forward. Every step forward is a victory to be proud of.
- 5. Seek professional help.** A therapist or counsellor who specializes in bullying trauma can provide a safe space for you to process emotions and develop coping strategies. Professional guidance can be crucial in helping you find peace.

Dealing with the aftermath of bullying can be challenging. However, with persistence and support, it's possible to move forward. Here are some essential steps.

- 1. Acknowledge the trauma.** Recognizing how bullying has affected your life is essential to moving forward. By accepting this reality, you can begin the healing process.
- 2. Build a support system.** Connect with empathetic friends, family members or support groups who can offer validation, comfort and encouragement. Sharing your bullying experience with

Above all, remember that you aren't alone. With determination and support, you can overcome past bullying. Keep pushing forward and never give up on yourself.

**BE KIND ALWAYS!**  
Let's Put a STOP to Bullying!



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**Western School Division**

# Meet Rita Bisht, chair of the board for Golden Prairie Arts Council

By Autumn Fehr

This year, Golden Prairie Arts Council (GPAC) welcomed Rita Bisht as the new board chairperson, replacing Scott Johnston of MMJS Law Offices.

Bisht has been a part of the Carman community for over ten years and has been a longstanding GPAC board member, joining the board in 2018.

"As a board member, I got firsthand experience of the amazing activities and events that GPAC has been organizing over the years. GPAC's mission is to showcase diverse artists from all walks and be inclusive to ethnic minorities. As chair of the organization, I am excited to further promote the values of GPAC and support events that will garner support across a variety of ages and backgrounds," she said.

Many years ago, Bisht heard about the GPAC when she attended a concert in town recommended by a friend, which she thoroughly enjoyed. From that point on, it was clear to her that she wanted to support the organization, she said.

"Throughout most of my adult life, I've enjoyed volunteering in the communities I live in. I joined the board since I was looking to be involved with the Dufferin community, and with my interest in arts and promoting diversity, I felt GPAC was a perfect fit to share these values," Bisht said.

Bisht works in the Carman school system and has occasionally taught Indian cooking classes for the last eight years. Her husband, Vikram, works for the Manitoba Department of Agriculture. Their

daughter and son-in-law live in Brooklyn, New York.

But the most interesting fact about Bisht is her diverse background.

Bisht was born in Jakarta, Indonesia, has lived in seven countries and has travelled to many others. When she lived in Prague as a child, she spoke Czech fluently and learned conversational Mandarin when she lived in China.

Growing up experiencing and engaging with so many different cultures around the world has given her a passion for exploring diversity since she was young.

Bisht said she loves travelling and learning about other cultures — specifically their local cuisine. Cooking is a passion of hers, and she likes to try her hand at making international dishes when she learns about them.

Although she is not an artist herself, she enjoys visiting exhibitions, art galleries and the theatre. One of her favourite authors is American novelist Toni Morrison.

Her cultural background motivates her desire to foster inclusivity and celebrate all cultures in the community, which she hopes to carry into the art scene in her new role as board chair, she said.

"By being involved with GPAC, I feel part of the community I live in and am happy that I can contribute my background and perspectives to the work the council does."



PHOTO SUBMITTED

Rita Bisht is the new chair of the board for Golden Prairie Arts Council.

# Cougars varsity girls enter basketball playoffs on a roll

By Ty Dilello

The Carman Cougars varsity girls' basketball team have wrapped up their Zone 4 regular season with a record of five wins and three losses.

"We are a very young and inexperienced team with only two returning players," said Cougars' coach James Ballantyne. "We're led by our two returning captains - Jayci Best (our top scorer) and Wynelle Dueck (our top rebounder). We started out quite slowly but have shown tremendous

growth over the course of the season."

At the moment, the Cougars are ranked second in Zone 4 and ninth in the province. The team's top result to date was in its home tournament this season, where they finished in second place.

This past weekend in Warren, the Cougars played in a tournament there and lost out in the consolation championship. The Cougars lost to the #1 ranked Warren Wildcats and the #4 ranked Hapnot Kopper Kweens, but defeated the Gimli Lakers.

"The girls competed hard and played solid defence, but we struggled to score against the more experienced teams," said Ballantyne.

This coming week is the Zone 4 playoffs where Carman will host Morris in a semi-final on Feb. 20. If they win that, they would then play in the Zone 4



STANDARD PHOTO BY JAMES BALLANTYNE

The Carman Cougars girls varsity basketball team are hoping to earn a berth into the provincial championships after a strong regular season in Zone 4 play that saw them hold a record of five wins and three losses.

finals on Feb. 21. On Mar. 2, Carman will also compete in the provincial qualifier and hope to earn a berth into provincials.

"We are hoping to pull off an upset to get us into the top eight in the province and qualify for the provincial tournament in the process."

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*The Carman-Dufferin*  
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# sports & recreation

INSIDE > OUTSIDE > UPSIDE DOWN

## James and partner finishes fourth at Skate Canada Challenge

By Ty Dilello

Elm Creek's Wyatt James and his partner Gabriella Lucia have been cutting up the ice since joining together less than six months ago in the Pairs Figure Skating world.

The duo recently finished fourth at the 2023/24 Skate Canada Challenge Pre-Novice/Novice event in Oakville, Ontario, at the Sixteen Mile Sports Complex from Feb. 1-4.

James started playing hockey on the ice before getting into figure skating with his mother's encouragement and a coach. He laced up his first set of skates, hit the ice at age four, and started taking lessons at six.

"I started figure skating with my mother, coach Jody James," said Wyatt James. "I skated in Portage for two years and then switched to Carman Skating Club, where I skated until last year before I moved to Hamilton. When I skated out of Carman Skating Club, my parents made weekly trips to Virден once to twice a week, where I skated three hours in the afternoon and got up early to skate two hours in the morning before heading back to school."

Towards the end of the pandemic, James found a local skating partner with Jorja Best for eight months until he could find a partner that was at a higher level.

After graduating from Elm Creek School in 2023, the 18-year-old James moved to Hamilton, Ontario, to train with his new partner Lucia and coaches Jen Jackson and Bryce Davison at the Hamilton Skating



STANDARD PHOTOS BY SHERRY LUCIA

Elm Creek's Wyatt James and his partner Gabriella Lucia recently finished in fourth place at the Skate Canada Challenge in Oakville, Ontario, from Feb. 1-4.

Club.

James trains a minimum of two and a half to three hours a day on ice and a minimum of two hours off-ice every day since joining the Hamilton Skating Club. In the summer, the training goes up to four hours on-ice and three hours off-ice.

Within a mere three months of training together on the ice, James and Lucia successfully earned a spot in the Skate Canada Challenge.

At the recent Nationals event in Oakville, James and Lucia went into it with high expectations and came out of it with a fourth-place finish in the Pre-Novice Pairs event (long and short program), narrowly missing out on a



bronze medal finish.

"Our recent skate at the Skate Canada Challenge went overall pretty well for us," said James. "Despite only having been skating together for six months, together we accomplished what we wanted to accomplish, which was to go and appear as a team and improve on our overall look as a pair on and off the ice."

"We had been practicing every day, performing clean programs, so we were a little disappointed in our performance as we made a couple element mistakes, but we have only had two competitions prior to this event and we have only been skating together six months. We were also happy with how we skated and performed the programs together regardless of the mistakes."

James and Lucia aim to continue working together and training, with the goal of surpassing their performance at the Skate Canada Challenge next year.

"We plan on training lots of hours this spring and summer so we can come back this next season moving up with some new elements," said James. "The goals I'd have going forward is to keep training consistently and see where we can make it next year. Our team goal out of competition season will be to accomplish tripling our more successful double elements and improving our look as a team on the ice."



# sports & recreation

INSIDE > OUTSIDE > UPSIDE DOWN

## Carman to host U21 Provincials this week

By Ty Dilello

The Carman Golf and Curling Club is proud to be the host of this week's 2024 U21 Provincial Curling Championships, taking place from Feb. 21-25.

There will be a total of 18 teams participating in the provincial championships, which will take place in Carman.

The boys' teams are Nash Sugden (Morden), Tanner Graham (Heather), Ethan Marshall (Brandon), Rylan Campbell (West St. Paul), Colin Desaulniers (Heather), Zachary Norris (Morris), Colton Olafson (Portage), Jace Freeman (Virden), Jordon McDonald (Assiniboine Memorial).

The girls' teams competing are Robyn Buchel (East St. Paul), Bethany Allan (Heather), Zoey Terrick (Heather), Shaela Hayward (Carman), Gina Giasson (Killarney), Dayna Wahl (Altona), Emily Cherwinski (Assiniboine Memorial), Karys Buchalter (West St. Paul), Rylie Buchalter (Heather).

Team Hayward is coming off their gold medal at the U18 National Championships, while Team Jordon McDonald is coming off a third-place finish at last week's Viterra Championships.

The local host committee in Carman has been doing very well in the lead-up to the U21 event, as preparations have been in place over the past year. The Opening Banquet is on Feb. 21, and Opening Ceremonies will take place on Feb. 22 at 6:45 p.m.

"Everything is going well for U21 Provincials that start next week," said organizer Kyle MacNair. "The event starts on Wednesday evening with the opening banquet for the athletes. Draws start on Thursday morning, and the opening ceremonies will take place on Thursday night. We are excited to have arranged a piper to pipe the teams into the ceremony and have arranged four former Provincial Junior Champions from the Carman area to deliver and sweep the ceremonial opening rock."

MacNair and his fellow organizers anticipate that there are going to be a lot of fans for the event, considering that the local team, Shaela Hayward, won the U18 Canadian Curling Championships that took place in Ottawa last week.

"We also have confirmed that the draw set-up will mean we only have to use four of the five sheets at the



STANDARD PHOTO SUBMITTED

Carman's Shaela Hayward and her team will be the hometown favourites at this week's U21 Junior Provincial Curling Championships being held at the Carman Golf and Curling Club. Pictured, left to right, Rylie Cox, India Young, Keira Krahn and Shaela Hayward.

curling club for the event, so we will sheet one so that fans can enjoy an ice-level setting up chairs and tables on sheet one so that fans can enjoy an ice-level viewing experience."

## Manitoba 4-H curlers take part in Elm Creek bonspiel



STANDARD PHOTOS SUBMITTED

The Manitoba 4-H Council hosted a curling event in Elm Creek on Sunday, Feb. 4 with 36 curlers taking part. Teams travelled from all around Manitoba to take part including from Moosehorn, Grunthal, St Claude, Roland, Carberry and Elm Creek. All teams have been invited to attend the Manitoba 4-H Curling Provincials in Portage on Feb. 24.

# sports & recreation

INSIDE > OUTSIDE > UPSIDE DOWN

## Local sledge hockey players win gold in Regina

By Ashleigh Viveiros

The Pembina Valley Blades teamed up with the Manitoba Express junior team to form an unbeatable sledge hockey squad for the Para Hockey tournament in Regina last week.

Wearing Manitoba Express jerseys, they swept the Feb. 9-11 tournament, defeating the Regina/Kindersley Avengers 6-1, the Melville Sledge-dogs 3-0, and the Calgary Venom 5-0 ahead of downing Melville 3-1 in the final to bring home the gold.

The joint team was coached by Winnipeggers T.J. Ehman and Shay Hawthorn and Winkler coaches Silas Penner and Nic Klassen. Klassen says it was an exciting weekend for the six local kids who took part.

"We have players from all across southern Manitoba," he says, noting they range from 12 or so to 16 years old, though there is no age limit to be part of the team.

Sledge hockey is an adaptation of hockey for people who have a physical disability. Players get around the

ice on sleds and use special hockey sticks to navigate and handle the puck. With only a handful of players, the Blades mainly get together locally to train and scrimmage, so getting the chance to partner with the Winnipeg team to compete was a great opportunity.

"This was something new this year for us," Klassen says. "We had been working together this year with them, and this came up."

"We're still growing. We mainly just do practices, scrimmages, but last year we did host a small tournament in Winkler and we're planning to do that again this year," he says, noting the date for that competition is March 2 at the Meridian Exhibition Centre. Further details were not available at press time.

Klassen, a sledge hockey player himself, says he's had a blast coaching the Blades and hopes to see more people come out to try the sport or simply cheer the team on.



STANDARD PHOTO SUBMITTED

Members of the Pembina Valley Blades joined the Manitoba Express junior sledge hockey team from Winnipeg to compete at the Para Hockey tournament in Regina last week. They were undefeated and brought home gold.

"It's open to the public to watch, so we're hoping it will get people watching and garnering interest," he says of the upcoming tournament.

"It's been a really fun season for coaching ... when I started I wasn't sure how this whole thing was going to go, but the more I coach, the more

I enjoy it.

"I'm really enjoying seeing the growth of the new athletes to this sport and just seeing what they can do and seeing them grow."

You can learn more about sledge hockey at [sledgehockeymanitoba.com](http://sledgehockeymanitoba.com).

## Twisters clinch playoff spot after two big wins

By Ty Dilello

The Pembina Valley Twisters earned two wins out of their three games last week to stay a contender in the Manitoba Major Junior Hockey League (MMJHL). With the wins, the Twisters have clinched a playoff berth and are staying firm in second place in the league standings with a record of 25-10-3.

On Feb. 14, the Twisters were 3-1 victors on the road against the Raiders Jr. Hockey Club. Twisters' goals on the evening were scored by Kyle VanDeynze, Max Collet and Cohen Thomas, while goaltender Owen LaRocque made 23 saves for the win.

On Feb. 16, Pembina Valley team secured a thrilling 4-3 victory over the Transcona Railer Express in overtime. VanDeynze was instrumental with two goals, and Heppner and Bergman also contributed

to the score. Enns made 25 impressive saves in goal to secure the win for his team.

On Feb. 18, the Twisters win streak was snapped with a 4-1 loss to the St. Boniface Riels. Riley Goertzen scored the Twisters' lone goal on the day, while LaRocque made 21 saves in the loss.

"I've been very pleased with our game as of late we've been outworking teams and getting lots of pucks to the net without sacrificing on defence," said Twisters' head coach Braeden Beernaerts. "We played a very good game against St. Boniface, but they capitalized on three little mistakes. And we didn't generate enough pucks and traffic to their net. It was a great test and a playoff-type feel game."

Beernaerts is looking forward to the final run of games on the season.

"It feels good to clinch a playoff spot and be in

the situation we are in," said Beernaerts. "However, with the standings so tight, we still need to stay focused and battle to keep the playoff position we are in currently."

Twisters' sniper Derek Wiebe is currently sixth in the MMJHL's scoring race with 61 points in 38 games, Merik Degraeve is in seventh with 58 points in 39 games, and Riley Goertzen is in tenth with 48 points in 38 games. Enns is currently third in the goalie rankings, boasting a 2.91 goals-against average and a .915 save percentage.

The Twisters are on the road this week with their first game on Friday, Feb. 23 when they travel to Stonewall to play the Jets. The puck drops at 8 p.m.

Then on Sunday, Feb. 25, they will take on the first-place St. James Jr. Canucks at the St. James Civic Centre at 2:45 p.m.

## Pembina Valley secures U18 male AAA playoff spot

By Lorne Stelmach

A weekend split of a doubleheader with Yellowhead was good enough for the male U18 Pembina Valley Hawks to officially clinch a playoff position.

The Hawks blanked the Chiefs 4-0 in game one Saturday at Shoal Lake but were then edged 3-2 in game two

Sunday.

It leaves Pembina Valley locked to finish seventh with a record of 18-16-4-4 for 44 points with just two regular season games remaining on the schedule. They are five back of Interlake and six ahead of Norman.

Bryson Yaschyshyn got the 29 save shutout in game one while the Hawks

connected on 35 of their 39 shots on goal. Scoring for Pembina Valley were Jayden Penner, Cohen Pilkington, Liam Goertzen and Kam Thomas.

The Hawks then took a 2-0 lead in game two but gave up three unanswered goals, including two in the third period.

Goertzen and Haiden Friesen scored

for Pembina Valley, and Ryler Gates made 25 saves as the Chiefs held a 28-27 edge in shots on goal.

The Hawks close out the regular season this weekend with a home doubleheader against the last-place Kenora Thistles.

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3. Tender must be accompanied by a certified cheque, payable to PKF Lawyers (in trust), in the amount of \$10,000.00 per parcel. Deposit of tenders not accepted will be returned to the Tenderers.
4. Highest tender or any tender will not necessarily be accepted.
5. Possession and the due date of the balance of tender price shall be April 22, 2024. Please note that possession is subject to a lease on all the lands which will expire December 31, 2024, for lease terms please contact PKF Lawyers.
6. The maker of any tender relies entirely upon his/her personal inspection and knowledge of the land, independent of the representations made by the Vendor or the Solicitor and Agent of the Vendor. The land will be sold "as is" and the Tenderer is solely responsible to determine the value and quality of the land.

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## OBITUARY



### Merle Baker

June 24, 1942 – February 10, 2024

It is with heavy hearts we announce the passing of our beloved mom, sister, aunt, grandmother and great-grandmother.

Mom is survived by her children Keith, Cathy (Darryl) and Pat (Ed). Grandchildren Emily, Krista (Matt), Brittney (Derek), Chris (Katherine) and Dale (Hser). Sisters Pat and Bev (Leonard) and sister-in-law Donna (Corky). Great-grandchildren and nieces and nephews.

She was predeceased by the love of her life Bruce (2022) and her grandson Bruce John (2020).

Mom and Dad were married for 62 years.

In keeping with Mom's wishes, cremation has taken place and no formal service will be held. Interment at Elm Creek Cemetery will be at a later date.

Many thanks to the staff at Concordia and Selkirk hospitals for their care and compassion during Mom's brief stay.

In lieu of flowers memorial donations may be made to a charity of your choice.

Doyle's Funeral Home  
in care of arrangements  
www.doylesfuneralhome.ca

## OBITUARY



### Laura Helen Funk (nee Pauls)

1936 - 2024

Laura passed away at the Boyne Lodge, Carman, on Wednesday, February 14. She is survived by her husband, Neil, two sons and their families, and one sister.

Laura made the decision to become a Christian at the age of nine and used her many gifts to serve the Lord. She married Neil in 1964 and was often involved in the children's ministries and the music in the churches where he was the pastor. She enjoyed her role as a pastor's wife and was a great support to him.

Laura was also a substitute teacher for about 26 years. In retirement she volunteered at the local MCC Shop and also led a singing group which sang in the local hospital and the Lodge.

Funeral service will be held on Friday, February 23, 2024 at 11:00 a.m. at Friends Community Church, Carman.

Doyle's Funeral Home  
in care of arrangements  
www.doylesfuneralhome.ca

## OBITUARY

### Carmen Stevenson Hunter

Carmen passed away peacefully on January 25, 2024, at the age of 84.

He was predeceased by his parents, Jacques and Mabel Hunter; granddaughter Madelene, and brother Ronald.

He is survived by his wife of 59 years, Carol; son Kelly (Maggie); grandson Alex; siblings, Dennis (Sharon), Ellen (Jack- predeceased), Joyce (Colin), Carol (Clayton), sister-in-law Judy, Jackie (Ron), Jennette (Doug) and Kenny (Linda), and daughter Pam (Ken), sisters-in-law, Ida and Louise along with many nieces and nephews.

Carmen was born in Carman, Manitoba in 1939. The eldest of nine children, he spent his childhood skating on and swimming in the Boyne River. He preferred sports over school and played hockey for many years. His hockey included junior in Carman and later beer league in Winnipeg. He also played football, baseball, curling, golf and badminton.

Coming from a large family, Carmen had an outgoing personality and loved to joke, give nicknames and loved to tell stories. He was faced with numerous health issues for the last 23 years.

There will be a Celebration of Life at the Fort Garry Legion on May 26th at 12:30 p.m.

## OBITUARY

### Jacqueline Louise Stevens (nee Wery)

October 13, 1950 – February 13, 2024

Jacqueline Louise Stevens (nee Wery), beloved wife, mother, grandmother, sister, aunty, mother-in-law and friend, passed away on Tuesday, February 13, 2024 in Brandon, Manitoba, surrounded by her loving girls and husband.

Jackie leaves behind a legacy of love that will endure through the generations. She will be deeply missed and fondly remembered by her loving husband, Fred Stevens; daughters Brenda Stevens (Mark), Cori Behrman (Darcy) and Tara Rempel (Kris); grandchildren Brie, Alex, Ryan, Lindsay, Hailey, Holly and Lee; sister Carla Solonyka (Meron); brothers Joseph Wery (Susan), Richard Wery (Laura), and David Wery (Kim); and brother-in-law Fritz Thede.

Jackie was predeceased by her parents Joseph and Jikke (nee Bruinsma) Wery; sister Lorraine Spencer (Wery) and Lou Spencer,

and sister Nettie Thede (Wery)

A graveside service will be held at a later date at Greenwood Cemetery, Carman, Manitoba.

In keeping with Jackie's love for children, donations in her memory may be made to Westman Dreams For Kids, 404 18th Street North, Brandon, Manitoba R7A 7P3.

The family would like to thank the Home Care attendant, Brandon City Police - Cst. Frame and his BPS partner, Paramedics, and Memories Chapel for their care, and compassion they showed our family during this difficult time.

Condolences: www.memorieschapel.com

# take a break

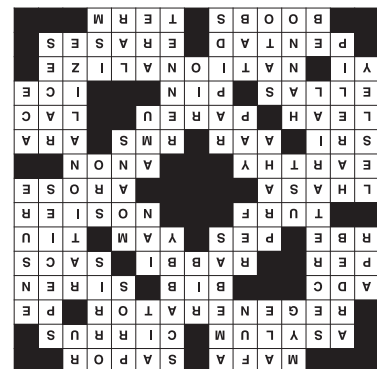
> GAME

### CLUES ACROSS

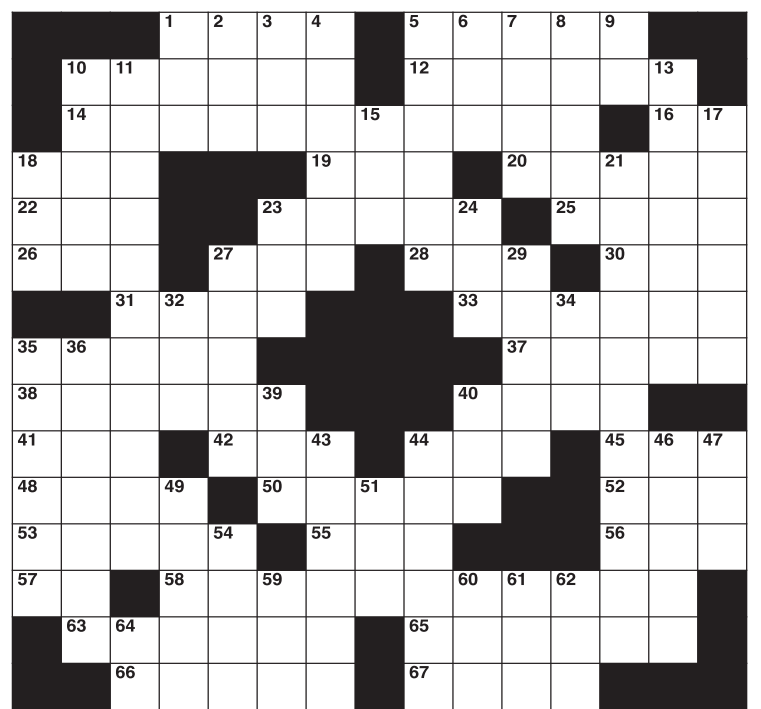
1. Gene type
5. Persian male given name
10. Type of protection
12. Cloud
14. One who returns to life
16. Gym class
18. General's assistant (abbr.)
19. Baby's dining accessory
20. Enchantress
22. Prefix denoting "in a"
23. Spiritual leader

### CLUES DOWN

25. Cavities
26. Relative biological effectiveness (abbr.)
27. Foot (Latin)
28. Sweet potato
30. Pharaoh of Lower Egypt
31. Land
33. More inquisitive
35. Dog breed: \_\_\_ Apso
37. Stood up
38. Direct and uninhibited
40. Authorless
41. Blocking type of drug (abbr.)
42. Retrospective analysis (abbr.)
44. Root mean square (abbr.)
45. Macaws
48. Actress Remini
50. Polynesian wrapped skirt
52. City of Angels hoops team (abbr.)
53. Fitzgerald and Baker are two
55. Bowling alley must-have
56. A way to cool down
57. Ethnic group in Asia
58. A way to alter
63. Set of five
65. Removes from the record
66. Dummies
67. Set period in office
1. DC Comics superhero
2. Brew
3. Play
4. Single-celled animals
5. Rough to the touch
6. Small island (British)
7. Often noted alongside cons
8. Preparation of rootstock
9. Atomic #44
10. Egyptian unit of capacity
11. About secretary
13. Particular groups
15. Poke fun at
17. Make certain that something occurs
18. Financial term
21. Justify
23. Arbiter
24. 007's creato
27. Czech name for Prague
29. Groans
32. American time
34. No seats available
35. \_\_\_ Stahl, journalist
36. Cleft lip
39. Talk incessantly
40. Expresses atomic and molecular weights (abbr.)
43. A part of a river where the current is very fast
44. Curdled milk
46. Running competitions



Crossword Answer



47. A team's best pitcher
49. Carthaginian explorer
51. World-renowned city
54. Most common Japanese surname
59. The bill in a restaurant

60. They \_\_\_
61. City of Angels football team (abbr.)
62. Distinctive practice
64. One quintillion bytes



## Filing taxes last minute: common mistakes to watch out for



Filing taxes last minute can be a stressful task, and the rush to meet the deadline often leads to common mistakes that can cost you time, money and peace of mind. Be aware of these common errors to ensure a smooth last-minute tax filing process:

- **Incomplete information.** Rushing through tax preparation can result in missing crucial information, such as forgotten deductions or credits.
- **Forgetting to sign.** Failing to sign your tax return can result in it being rejected. Ensure you've signed and dated all necessary documents.
- **Filing under the wrong status.** Choosing the wrong filing status can affect your tax liability. Make sure you select the correct one, such as single or married, based on your situation.
- **Ignoring e-file options.** Electronic filing is fast and secure and reduces the risk of errors compared to

paper filing. Opt for e-filing to save time and ensure your return reaches the CRA on time.

- **Missing the deadline.** Filing late can result in penalties and interest. If you can't meet the deadline, file for an extension.
- **Neglecting documentation.** Keep records of all tax-related documents and receipts for deductions. This ensures accuracy and helps in case of an audit.
- **Not seeking professional help.** If your tax situation is complex or you're unsure about deductions, credits or changes in the tax code, consider seeking assistance from a tax professional.

The deadline to file your taxes is April 30. Avoid the stress of filing taxes at the last minute and contact a local professional tax services company to ensure a smooth and accurate process.

Kimberley Jensen is the founder of Victorious Financial Services. Our goal is to give you comfort and confidence when it comes to your financial future. We work with you in the following areas:

- retirement planning,
- farm planning,
- risk management planning,
- succession planning and
- business owner planning.

With over fifteen years of experience, Kimberley is passionate about planning and is a strong advocate that everyone should have a written financial and retirement plan. Kimberley loves to learn and has earned the Certified Health Insurance Specialist, Registered Retirement Consultant, and Certified Financial Planner designations. She is always learning and is currently completing her Chartered Life Underwriter designation. When we work together, we take an interactive approach. Building a strong relationship based on a foundation of trust is important to us. We take the time to learn more about your goals and objectives and really understand what is important to you. From there, we collect relevant data to create your custom plan and set expectations for implementation and reviews. Kimberley's purpose for her business is to develop meaningful and trusted relationships with communities and clients while giving back time, talents, and treasures. We believe we can create excellence together because we care about you and your legacy!



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FINANCIAL SERVICES

## Advice from someone you trust.

While there's no shortage of demands on your money, now's the time to build a strong foundation for the future. It all starts with a conversation.



**Kimberley Jensen\***, B.Comm (Hons), CHS™, RRC, CFP®  
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