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Carman connection to Olympic history

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Kailey Allan (right) and her partner Beattie Podulsky compete at the 2025 International Luge Federation (FIL) World Championships in Whistler, B.C., where the Canadian duo won bronze. The pair will represent Canada in the inaugural women's doubles luge event at the 2026 Olympic Winter Games in Italy.

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Another successful night for Carman Dufferin firefighters

By E. Antonio

The third annual Carman Dufferin Fire Department (CDFD) Ball lit up Feb. 7 with another highly successful evening, bringing together community members for a night of celebration, recognition, and support.

Fire Chief Chris Lemky said that despite lower-than-average attendance, he was pleased with the turnout and grateful for the community's continued backing.

One of the evening's highlights was the recognition of retired CDFD Public Education Officer Martin Dewit, who was honoured for his 35 years of dedicated service and presented with the 30 Year Governor General Exemplary Service Award.

Guests enjoyed a catered meal prepared by Tracy Bernard, which Lemky described as excellent, ensuring attendees were well fed throughout the night.

Adding to the lively atmosphere, entertainment was provided by the band Up In Flames, which is partly made up of firefighters from the Selkirk and Clandeboye fire departments.

Lemky also expressed his appreciation to the many businesses and in-



Retired Carman Dufferin Fire Department public education officer Martin Dewit is recognized during the third annual CDFD Ball on Feb. 7, where he was honoured for 35 years of dedicated service and presented with the 30 Year Governor General Exemplary Service Award.

dividuals whose generosity helped make the event possible.



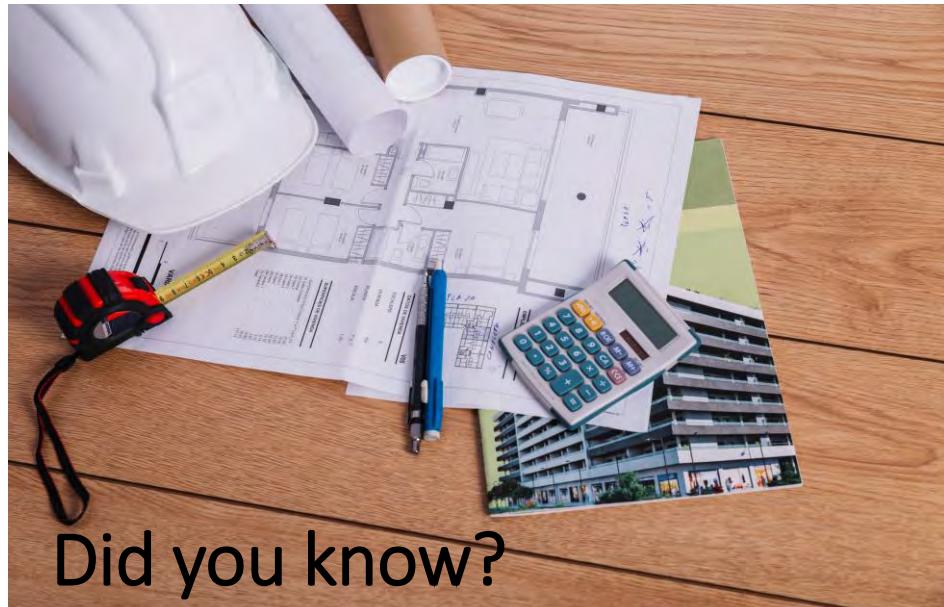
STANDARD PHOTOS SUBMITTED

Members of the Carman Dufferin Fire Department and guests gather for a group photo during the third annual CDFD Ball on Feb. 7, an evening celebrating service, community support and local firefighting dedication.



"We would like to express our sincere gratitude once again to all of the businesses and individuals who donated and attended to make this event successful," he added.

He also thanked the Snoflies Snowmobile Club for their continued support through ticket sales and bartending.



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Carman entrepreneur receives WEYA Lifetime Achievement Award

By Lana Meier

Carman entrepreneur Julie Myers, owner of The Floral Fixx, has been named the recipient of the Lifetime Achievement Award at the 2025 Manitoba Woman Entrepreneur of the Year Awards (WEYA), recognizing more than 25 years of leadership in Manitoba's business community.

Presented annually, the award honours a woman with at least 15 years in business whose leadership and commitment continue to inspire the next generation of entrepreneurs. Myers was recognized among finalists from across the province during the WEYA gala held Jan. 29 at the Winnipeg Art Gallery.

"Receiving this award is incredibly meaningful to me," Myers said. "When I first started The Floral Fixx, I never imagined being recognized in this way. I was simply focused on building something I was proud of, supporting my family, and serving my community."

She said the recognition prompted reflection on the sacrifices and risks involved in building a business over decades.

"To have that journey acknowledged after more than 25 years is very humbling," she said. "It reminds me that all the long days, late nights, risks, and sacrifices were worth it. It also reflects the amazing team, family, and customers who have supported me along the way — I truly couldn't have done this alone."

Myers' journey began in Carman, where she grew up on her family's farm surrounded by gardens, fields and flowers. She said those early years shaped both her work ethic and her deep respect for the natural world.

"Growing up on our family farm gave me a deep appreciation for nature, hard work, and caring for things from the ground up," she said. "Being surrounded by flowers every day is where my love for florals really began."

That interest became a career path through work at a local florist, where Myers said she was fortunate to learn from mentors who left a lasting impression on her approach to business and design.

"Mildred Salter, a true floral master, taught me the importance of craftsmanship and pride in your work," she said. "Della Heaman inspired my creativity and love for flowers, and she would even pick me up every Saturday so I could go to work — something I will always be grateful for. Cheryl Bartley believed in me from the very beginning and encouraged me to follow this path."

Those influences, Myers said, instilled discipline, creativity and confidence.

"They showed me the value of doing things properly, treating customers with care, and always striv-

Continued on page 6

**"THEY SHOWED
ME THE VALUE
OF DOING THINGS
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STANDARD PHOTOS SUBMITTED

Julie Myers, right, owner of The Floral Fixx and a Carman native, is pictured with her daughter Madison after being named the recipient of the Lifetime Achievement Award at the 2025 Manitoba Woman Entrepreneur of the Year Awards, held Jan. 29 at the Winnipeg Art Gallery.

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get heard

EDITORIAL > VIEWPOINTS > LETTERS

Manitoba gov't announces public schools funding increase

By Lorne Stelmach

On Monday, the province announced its financial support for education in Manitoba for the school year ahead, touting that it is increasing school funding overall by \$79.8 million to nearly \$2 billion.

While the funding overall represents a 3.5 per cent increase, it is somewhat limited for the school divisions in this region. Garden Valley School Division is receiving a 2.2 per cent or \$800,000 increase to about \$36.4 million, Western School Division is getting about two per cent or \$400,000 more to \$19.2M, Border Land School Division will see a 1.8 per cent increase of \$400,000 to \$21.1M, Red River Valley School Division increases \$300,000 or 2.1 per cent to \$16.3M, and both Prairie Rose and Prairie Spirit are receiving about \$300,000 or 1.9 per cent more to \$17.8 and \$17.1 million, respectively.

Education and Early Childhood Minister Tracy Schmidt suggested the previous government didn't adequately

fund education and also restricted local authorities from raising property taxes.

"We're taking a different approach ... we know that schools and kids deserve to be invested in," she said, adding that they are suggesting to local divisions that it "allows them to go to their ratepayer in an equally stable and predictable way."

"We believe that providing stable and predictable funding is very important for school divisions ... that's what school divisions have been asking for, and that's what we have been delivering ... and we expect them to increase their budgets in a stable and predictable way that meets the needs of Manitobans when it comes to affordability."

"It means smaller class sizes and more individual attention for students ... and it's important to know that these things are only possible when schools have the proper funding that they need."

School divisions have often suggest-

ed they are receiving increases that are not enough to keep up with the level of growth and rising costs of education.

"We know that enrolment certainly is one factor that drives how much money a school division gets each year, but there's other factors that we consider," noted Schmidt.

The province attests that the overall 3.5 per cent funding increase for public schools in the 2026-27 school year will help manage enrolment changes and ensure students have the supports they need to succeed. The formula guarantee will continue for 2026-27, ensuring every school division receives an increase to the previous year's funding amount.

The Manitoba government's 2026-27 school funding now totals \$1.995 billion and includes:

- \$51 million increase to help public schools with operating costs, which includes the investment in salary harmonization and technical vocational

Continued on page 5

The way it was this week in: February 12

By Dennis Young

100 years ago, 1926 — After attacking the Robt. Takvam family, farmhand Bill McRae was sent to the Brandon asylum; the RM passed a bylaw to provide street lighting in Homewood; The Carmania sold candy mixtures for 10 cents per lb. on weekends only; P.C. Mallory was Carman's Chevrolet dealer; DAS Fair booked acts including Kanazawa Japs, the Flying Moores and Conklin Midway; the Percheron Breeders Club was formed; three bars of Palmolive soap sold for 25 cents at A.F. Higgins Co.; local doctors asked the RM for reimbursement for unpaid rural calls.

75 years ago, 1951 — Joe Pethybridge received council approval for pumps at his south-end store; the Collegiate Quintet won an A.C.T. radio contest, with Darlene Cates placing second and Shirley Nesbitt third; Robinson Stores promoted it-

self as the place for Valentine's gifts; Alf Strachan was named president of the Manitoba Swine Breeders Association; members of the Homewood Seed Club received two bushels of Redman wheat seed for plots; Clarence Bedford gave weekly legal talks at the collegiate; a Legion dance featuring the Mit Woods orchestra, with square and spot dances, cost 50 cents; listen to Billy Graham Sundays on KFGO Fargo.

50 years ago, 1976 — Midland High School recorded the lowest pupil-teacher ratio among rural schools at 17 to 1; Elton Sharpe dispersed his pure-bred herd established in 1933; Carman Radio and TV, Parkway Motors and Laycock Motors all announced new facilities; Safeway advertised chuck roasts for 85 cents per lb.; the Senior Citizens Club and Drop-In Centre amalgamated to form the Friendship

Centre; the RM received a \$10,000 lottery grant for arena and CN station use; RCMP captured cultivator shank thieves; the chamber suggested businesses keep the same hours and days.

25 years ago, 2001 — Major upcoming Main Street changes were announced; Debra Kattler was chamber president; Johnston Farm Supplies launched its annual oil sale; the Have a Heart concert featured George Watson on trumpet, Bruce Wood on bagpipes and the TeBokkel musical family; Carol Wadge opened a satellite office for a Winkler accounting firm; the SEMHL celebrated its 50th anniversary with an old-timers tournament; TG Promotions came to Carman; Bill and Shannon Girling thanked Carman for support at Countrywide Furnishings; the Riverwalk Café featured chicken cordon bleu as a Valentine's Day special.

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Filing taxes key to accessing benefits and services

By Jennifer McFee

With tax season fast approaching, it's important to know that tackling this annual task can help you access benefits and credits that could enhance your financial situation.

Taxes are due to be filed and paid on or before April 30. However, you can file your taxes at any time, which ensures your ability to access some housing and health-care services.

It's important to file an income tax return each year, even if you have no income, low income or are on social assistance. In contrast, if you don't file your taxes, you might miss out on tax breaks, income supplements or government subsidies. If you know someone in this situation, you may want to encourage them to file their taxes as well.

"Even if you don't work or owe any tax, filing a tax return can help you and your family access benefits and feel more financially secure," said Wendy Fontaine, director of health services, public health and wellness with the Interlake-Eastern Regional Health Authority.

"As part of a caring community, we can also encourage others to file their taxes so they receive the benefits they deserve. Filing income tax returns can support people who are struggling, so it is important for people of all ages to file their taxes."

Those who don't file their taxes may miss out on the Canada Child Benefit, GST credit, Canada Carbon Rebate or Disability Tax Credit. Some of these benefits may not be retroactive.

In an example on the provincial government's website (<https://www.gov.mb.ca/housing/tenants/tax.html>), a single parent with two children under the age of four earning \$15,000 annually could potentially access about

\$16,000 in benefits by filing taxes. In this example, the benefits include a GST refundable credit of \$842 (\$210.50 paid quarterly), Canada Child Benefits of \$12,800 (\$1,066.66 paid monthly), Working Income Tax Benefit of \$1,844 (with the income tax refund or part paid quarterly), Manitoba Child Benefit of \$840 (\$35 paid monthly) and Manitoba Personal Tax Credit of \$266 (refunded upon tax filing). After filing taxes and accessing benefits, this single parent's total annual income would increase to \$31,592.

According to Jennifer Dann, manager of health services for social work and patient relations with the Interlake-Eastern Regional Health Authority, many people don't realize that filing taxes also provides important documentation needed when accessing services such as personal care homes or subsidized housing.

"If you or a family member may require a more supportive living environment, it is important to know that personal care home rates are set by Manitoba Health and are calculated based on your Canada Revenue Agency notice of assessment," Dann said.

"You are required to submit your notice of assessment to the personal care home on an annual basis, and your rates are recalculated accordingly."

If you are experiencing housing instability, many housing organizations and other support services also require current financial information before considering your application.

"It's unfortunate when situations like this arise, because working through financial needs becomes even more difficult when there is the added pressure of illness and hospital stays," Dann said.

"Depending on your legal circum-

stances, your family may or may not be able to help you file your taxes. Ensuring your taxes are completed annually can ease their burden and make access to programs that enhance well-being or improve social circumstances a smoother process."

Income tax resources:

- For low-income Manitobans, information about the Community Volunteer Income Tax Program is available at www.gov.mb.ca under the residents' portal.

- A 24-page plain-language booklet, Get Your Benefits (<https://cfcstaxes.com/get-your-benefits/#get-copy>), lists many benefits and programs Manitobans may be eligible for.

- More income tax information is available on the Government of Canada website at www.canada.ca. Information about free tax clinics can be found at www.canada.ca/taxes-help.

- In the Interlake-Eastern region, most communities host a Community Volunteer Income Tax Program, where people with simple tax situations and modest incomes can have their taxes completed for free. To find a program in your area, visit <https://www.ierha.ca/programs-services/life-style/get-your-benefits/>. Many Seniors Resource Councils participate by acting as drop-off depots for volunteer tax filers.

- For those without a local Community Volunteer Income Tax Program, Community Financial Counselling Services (CFCS) offers tax services both virtually and by phone. CFCS also provides free and confidential financial counselling and coaching, assistance accessing benefits, and counselling for individuals and families impacted by gambling. Visit www.cfcs.mb.ca/ or call toll-free 1-888-573-2383 to learn more.

> FUNDING, FROM PG. 4

education;

- \$30 million for a universal school nutrition program and Nello's Law, which protects the program for years to come, plus an additional \$3 million from the sale of U.S. alcohol products for the Children's Nutrition Council;
- \$15.2 million increase in capital support, which includes principal and interest costs related to building schools;
- \$16.6 million increase to independent schools under the funding agreement.

"When we came into government, schools across Manitoba were struggling after seven years of cuts," said Finance Minister Adrien Sala.

He touted a number of statistics including that the province had hired

over 1,600 new staff since 2024 including over 800 new teachers and built 11 new schools, largely in Winnipeg and Brandon.

"Our government is committed to making sure every Manitoba family can count on strong, stable public schools, year after year. We are meeting the needs of students and communities by building new schools and feeding kids with our universal school food program," said Schmidt.

She noted the Manitoba government is allocating \$11.4 million in public school funding to support divisions most affected by teacher salary harmonization. Salary harmonization will be implemented in the 2026-27 school year to standardize teacher pay scales across school divisions to help minimize disparities.

"We've heard from many school

boards that salary harmonization costs were creating significant pressures for this upcoming year," she acknowledged.

"By working together, we are creating a more equitable system that benefits teachers and supports stability for school divisions at a time when the demands on public schools are more complex than ever before," said Alan Campbell, president of the Manitoba School Boards Association.

"School boards recognize that the funding contribution for harmonization announced today is a step in the right direction and we look forward to continuing our work with government to ensure funding fully meets the needs of students, staff and communities across Manitoba."

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Lessons from Milan

As I write this the Olympic Opening Ceremonies have just finished. The coming together of athletes from around the world demonstrates some important lessons for Christians. Listening to the Olympian Pledge, the focus on unity and peace, brings to mind things that we all can learn from.

Unity What is it that brings us together? What is it that we all have in common? Whether you are Catholic, United, Baptist, Mennonite, or one of the many other church backgrounds, we are all united under Jesus Christ and the creed of Ephesians 4:1-6.

Peace As was said in one of the opening speeches, peace is not the absence of conflict, but as the Bible says, the calmness of spirit. As Christians we recognize that this comes when we recognize the presence and power of God despite the evil in this world.

Focus What are we here for? The athletes of the Olympics pledge to play fair and not put down any other athlete. Similarly, Christians are here to play by God's rules, allowing Him to be the judge while we exercise His love toward all other people without discrimination.

Pride Are you ashamed of your country or whom you represent? The athletes proudly wear their country's flag and stand with shoulders back for their anthem. Christians must not be ashamed of the gospel, as it says in Romans 1, but rather walk with a pride that makes people notice ... not you, but your 'country' which is the Kingdom of God.

Reward The reward of each athlete is to get a medal, but the greater reward is the pride of their country for their performance. Similarly, Christians look forward to God saying to them at the end of the race, 'Well done, my good and faithful servant! Enter into your reward!'

Blessings
Pastor Richard Heppner
Friends Community Church

Farmers invited to nominate local groups for BASF community funding

Nominations open from Feb. 3 to Feb. 28

By Lana Meier

Local farmers are being encouraged to give back to their communities by nominating organizations for a major national funding program through BASF Agricultural Solutions Canada.

BASF has opened 2026 nominations for its Growing Home with BASF program, which will award a total of \$160,000 to community organizations across Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba and Ontario.

From Feb. 3 to Feb. 28, BASF customers in the four provinces can nominate a local organization they believe is making a meaningful difference in their community. Nominations must be submitted by BASF customers, typically farmers or growers, though the nominated organizations themselves can include a wide range of community groups.

Eligible groups include child-care centres, schools, agricultural societies, hospital foundations and other community-based non-profits.

The program, now in its fourth year, is designed

to recognize and support the organizations that help rural communities thrive.

"The momentum behind the program over the past four years demonstrates just how important these organizations are to the communities they call home," said Andrea McConnell, senior manager of customer solutions with BASF Agricultural Solutions Canada. "This community-inspired initiative has allowed BASF to support people and the places that are near and dear to them."

HOW TO NOMINATE A COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION

Step 1: Submit a nomination

BASF customers are invited to nominate a local organization that makes a difference in their community. As part of the nomination form, participants are asked to submit a short write-up explaining why the organization deserves to win and how it positively impacts the community. Nominations must be submitted by Feb. 28, 2026.

Step 2: Boost your chances

Nominees can increase their organization's chances of success by earning up to 25 additional entries, with details provided during the nomination pro-

cess.

Step 3: Get ready for voting

A panel will select three finalist organizations per province, which will be announced March 31, 2026. Public voting will then be open to all Canadians from March 31 to April 17, with winners announced April 28.

Twelve organizations will share the \$160,000 prize fund, with awards broken down by province: four first-place prizes of \$25,000, four second-place prizes of \$10,000 and four third-place prizes of \$5,000.

Since launching in 2023, the Growing Home with BASF program has distributed \$335,000 to 19 organizations across the four provinces. Last year's Manitoba first-place funding supported the Bois-Sevain School Parent Advisory Council Playground Committee, helping advance plans for an inclusive and accessible school playground.

BASF officials say the program's success is driven by farmers who take the time to nominate local groups and encourage community participation during the voting phase.

More information, including the nomination form and full program criteria, is available at agsolutions.ca/growinghome

> FLORAL FIXX, FROM PG. 3

ing for excellence," she said. "That foundation still guides how we operate at The Floral Fixx today."

That foundation eventually led to the launch of The Floral Fixx Design Studio, now a Winnipeg-based boutique specializing in weddings, events, workshops and everyday floral design. Known for luxury arrangements and distinctive style, the studio blends bold creativity with carefully sourced blooms and locally made products.

Over time, the business also became a family venture. Myers now works alongside her daughter, Madison, as a mother-daughter design team.

"Working with Madison has been one of the greatest joys of my career," Myers said. "We love bouncing ideas off each other, traveling to trade shows and flower farms, and learning side by side. I laugh when I think something is really cool and she totally doesn't — it keeps me current."

She said Madison's talent and growth have been especially meaningful to witness.

"She's already designing at a level I wasn't at at her age, and I truly believe she'll be an even better designer than me," Myers said. "Most of all, I'm grateful for the time we get to spend together every day. Not many people get to build a business with

their child."

Building a business while raising a family came with challenges, particularly in the early years.

"One of the biggest challenges was being taken seriously as a young woman in business," Myers said. "At the same time, balancing family life, finances and the constant demands of running a business was extremely challenging."

She said her children grew up in the shop, becoming part of the business itself.

"All three of them helped in their own ways," she said. "Madison spent much of her childhood there. As a baby, she played with flowers beside my workbench, and as she got older she was always running around, learning and helping. Customers loved seeing her — it became part of our story."

Peak seasons often meant missing family moments, Myers said, but support from her family made the difference.

"Christmas, Mother's Day and Valentine's Day are exactly when families want to be together," she said. "That was never easy. But having my family alongside me, supporting me and growing with the business, meant everything."

When asked what advice she would offer aspiring entrepreneurs, Myers emphasized belief, structure

and staying true to one's values.

"Believe in yourself and your vision, even when others don't fully understand it yet," she said. "Surround yourself with supportive people and mentors, and don't be afraid of making mistakes — they are part of the journey."

She said strong systems and processes were a turning point for her business.

"They've been a game changer," she said. "Having clear structure allows you to grow sustainably and protect your time and energy."

Looking ahead, Myers said education and continued learning are central to the future of The Floral Fixx.

"One of my biggest passions is expanding our Floral Design School," she said. "Education has always been close to my heart, and I love being able to pass on what we've learned."

She also plans to continue traveling to visit flower farms, including recent trips to Colombia, to deepen sourcing relationships and bring new ideas back to her team and customers.

"With Madison's leadership and our amazing team, we'll keep pushing creative boundaries," Myers said. "Most importantly, we'll continue to do it with heart, passion and a personal touch."

The annual awards are coordinated by the Winnipeg Women's Community and drew finalists from across the province, selected from more than 200 nominations. Now in its 34th year, the program aims to spotlight women strengthening Manitoba's economy and communities.

"Being selected from more than 150 nominated women across Manitoba is no small feat," awards chair Christine Thiessen said in a statement. "Every finalist represents excellence in entrepreneurship, leadership and community impact."

Organizers said the event serves not only to honour individual achievements, but also to connect and inspire women business owners across Manitoba.

Nominations for the 2026 WEYA awards are expected to open in March.



Winners and finalists gather during the 2025 Manitoba Woman Entrepreneur of the Year Awards gala, held Jan. 29 at the Winnipeg Art Gallery. The annual event recognizes women entrepreneurs from across Manitoba.

Fundraising underway for new Carman outdoor basketball court



STANDARD PHOTO SUBMITTED

Eric Smith, a longtime Carman basketball coach and volunteer, is leading a fundraising campaign to build a dedicated outdoor basketball court in Kings Park. Pictured with Smith are members of the junior varsity team. Front row (left to right): Sebastian Panganiban, Arkadii Anishchuk and Travis Knight. Back row (left to right): Bravin Tshondo and Sean Doell, with Jeff Knight, court committee member and junior varsity team assistant coach.

By Annaliese Meier

A growing passion for basketball in Carman is driving a new push to build a dedicated outdoor court in Kings Park, with organizers now turning to the community to help make the project a reality.

Longtime local coach and volunteer Eric Smith is leading fundraising efforts for the proposed professional-grade outdoor basketball court, which would provide a safe, centralized space for players of all ages to train, play and connect.

"I've been involved with basketball in Carman for most of my life, and over the last few years it's become clear there's a serious need for a proper outdoor court," Smith said. "Right now, players are relying on a patchwork of small, inadequate courts that

don't meet regulation standards and don't allow the game to grow the way it should."

At present, local players use a mix of courts at churches and the youth centre, many of which feature inconsistent hoop heights, limited space and worn or incomplete court markings. Smith said those limitations make it difficult to run organized practices or competitive play, particularly as interest in the sport continues to grow among youth.

The proposed court would be centrally located in Kings Park, helping further develop the area as a community recreation hub. Plans call for two full-size main hoops and two adjustable side hoops ranging from six to 10 feet, allowing the space to accommodate everyone from young beginners

to experienced players.

The court design will mirror Manitoba High Schools Athletic Association three-point dimensions, giving youth athletes the opportunity to practise at competitive standards. The layout is also optimized for three-on-three play, a popular and accessible format for outdoor basketball.

By building in Kings Park, the project will also take advantage of existing infrastructure, including lighting for evening use, nearby parking, washrooms and natural shade from surrounding trees.

The total projected cost of the project is \$150,000, which also represents the overall fundraising goal. Smith said fundraising efforts are already underway, with Corduroy Plains Ltd. and Kelvin Smith each committing \$15,000 to kick off the campaign, for a combined \$30,000 raised to date.

If fundraising targets are met, construction is expected to begin this spring.

The project has received approval from the Town of Carman and the RM of Dufferin. Once completed, the court will be owned and maintained by the Town of Carman, with oversight through the town's recreation

department.

The court will be open to the public for casual use and will also be designed to host organized youth and adult programming, as well as competitive play.

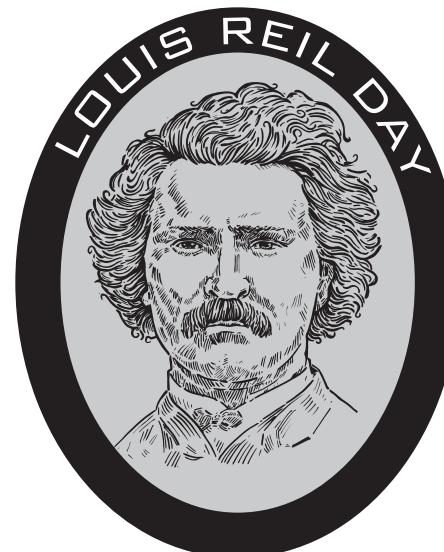
Smith said he has now moved fully into the fundraising phase of the project.

The campaign invites individuals and businesses to "own a piece of the court," with sponsorship levels tied to square-footage contributions toward the project's 5,000-square-foot goal. Sponsorship tiers range from \$300 to \$9,000, with all donors recognized on a courtside sign and through social media.

Cheques can be made payable to the Town of Carman, and Smith said donation pickup can be arranged.

"Our basketball community here is strong, and this court would give it a permanent home," he said. "With community support, this is something that can benefit Carman for years to come."

For more information or to contribute, Smith can be reached at 204-751-0238 or by email at carmanbasketball@gmail.com.



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Carman family watches Olympic history unfold

By Jessica Eblie

When the women's doubles luge competition launches at the 2026 Olympic Winter Games in Italy, former long-time Carman residents, Wayne and Carol Allan, will be watching with pride. Their granddaughter, 22-year-old Kailey Allan, will be representing Team Canada in the inaugural women's doubles luge event.

Kailey will compete on Feb. 11 in Cortina d'Ampezzo as part of Canada's women's doubles luge team, with her partner Beattie Podulsky. While doubles luge has been an Olympic event for decades, Milano Cortina 2026 will mark the sport's debut for women. The discipline features two athletes racing together on a single sled, requiring precise timing, communication and trust while reaching speeds of more than 130 kilometres per hour.

For Wayne and Carol, who lived in Carman for nearly 40 years before moving to rural British Columbia in 2015, the moment is historic, celebratory and deeply personal. "We were in Carman for about 40 years," Carol said. Carol added that she still hears from friends in Carman who are following Kailey's Olympic run via Facebook.

According to Kailey's parents, Stacey and Don, she has always been a superb athlete. "She did every sport she could growing up," Carol said. "She did ski racing, competitive softball, and track, (but) as you go along and get older, you have to start weeding out some of these sports."

Kailey first stepped onto a luge sled at age 10, after spotting a sign in Calgary inviting youngsters to try the sport. What began as a summer camp soon became a high-performance pursuit, carrying her from training sessions to international competition venues around the world.

For the first 11 years of her luge career, Kailey competed as a singles slider. She represented Canada at the Youth Olympic Games in 2020 in St. Moritz, Switzerland, gaining experience on the international stage and earning a seventh-place finish overall.

Kailey came up short in qualifying

for the women's singles luge event at the Beijing 2022 Winter Olympics, but nevertheless persisted in her efforts to qualify for the 2026 Games. That determination ultimately led to a new goal — women's doubles luge.

About 18 months ago, Kailey and fellow Calgary-based athlete Beattie Podulsky decided to partner up, forming one of Canada's most competitive women's doubles luge teams. "They were both single sliders previously and thought, well, Canada needed a doubles women's team," Stacey said.

Despite their recent partnership, the duo has already found success. Last season, they earned a bronze medal at the Under-23 World Championships and another bronze as part of Canada's mixed team relay at the International Luge Federation (FIL) World Championships in Whistler, BC. In the lead-up to the Olympics, the duo ranks just outside the top 10 internationally in women's doubles and has placed well in qualifying competitions leading up to Milano Cortina.

"Their goal is to do well (at the Olympics), probably place in the top eight, maybe top six," stated Stacey.

According to the Allan family, luge is "the fastest sport on ice." Singles sliders can reach speeds exceeding 143 kilometres per hour, while doubles athletes face added challenges of weight, balance, unison and trust.

For the duo of Kailey Allan and Podulsky, Kailey rides on the bottom of the sled, with her partner lying on top of her. The athletes are secured together, navigating narrow ice corridors at extreme speeds, all while trying to be the fastest team in order to win the event.

"It's kind of like driving a double-decker bus down an F-1 track," Stacey said.

Despite the intensity, Kailey's family describes her as someone who balances competitiveness with joy. "She's determined and driven, but she's having fun," Stacey added. "There's always a smile on her face."

As the Allan family prepares to travel to Italy to support Kailey in person, they say the experience has already



STANDARD PHOTO BY TODD KOROL

Team Canada women's doubles luge team Kailey Allan and Beattie Podulsky training in Whistler, B.C. on Oct. 20, 2025.



Kailey Allan (back) and Beattie Podulsky (front) preparing for a luge run in competition.

been incredible. Beyond medals and rankings, they hope Kailey's journey sends a message to young athletes.

"Anything's possible," Carol said. "The places she's been, the people she's met. Sport builds character and life experience."

In a text communication, Kailey stated that she is looking forward to competing and has done everything pos-

sible to prepare for these Games. "I'm super excited to compete in my first Olympic Games and represent Canada in the first ever women's doubles event," she added.

Although Carman was never Allan's hometown, her family's decades-long presence in the community means her Olympic debut is being followed with interest by residents who knew her grandparents and have watched her career unfold from afar.

As the Olympics approach, Allan's participation offers local readers a chance to witness both an Olympic first and the success of an athlete connected to the community through family roots rather than residence. Kailey's Olympic moment is a reminder that no matter where you grew up in Canada or who you are, Olympic dreams can take shape and slide all the way to the global stage.

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Hometown hockey hero surprises Elm Creek students

By E. Antonio

Students at Elm Creek School had a special visit from professional hockey player, Corinne Schroeder on Feb. 2 to kick off I Love to Read Month.

Schroeder, who grew up in Elm Creek and attended Elm Creek School, was invited by the Grade 6 class to talk about her hockey career as part of a writing assignment for, "What do I want to be when I grow up?" Students explored a variety of careers, with several community and family members invited to share their experiences. One student wrote they hoped to become a professional hockey player.

Now playing for the Seattle Torrents in the Professional Women's Hockey League, Schroeder was invited to chat virtually with the class, but they were all in for a surprise.

"Amazingly she had a few days off and was coming home," said Grade 6 teacher, Nicky Spencer. "The look on [my students faces] faces was priceless—Corinne is an absolute celebrity here."

Schroeder spent time answering students' many questions about her journey from a small-town rink to the professional stage.

She also read to the whole school the book, *I Am Big*, by Itah Sadu, which tells the story of a young Black hockey player discovering confidence and joy in the sport.

Spencer added the visit made a lasting impression.

"Corinne is not only a hometown hero," she said. "She is an example of how a strong work ethic, dedication and a great attitude pave the way to success."



Professional hockey player and former Elm Creek resident, Corinne Schroeder, visits with Elm Creek School students on Feb. 2 for I Love to Read Month.



STANDARD PHOTOS SUBMITTED

Corinne Schroeder with Elm Creek School Grade 7 and 8 hockey players.

Miami 4-H Club receives FCC grant to support youth leadership, club identity

By Annaliese Meier

The Miami 4-H Activity Club is using new grant funding to strengthen both its sense of identity and leadership development among members.

The local club received \$500 through the FCC 4-H Club Fund, a national program delivered by 4-H Canada in partnership with Farm Credit Canada that supports hands-on learning opportunities for youth across the country.

The Miami club has 14 members this year, ranging in age from six to 15, according to co-leader Nicole Burnett. Members take part in project-based learning while also running their own meetings, with youth holding officer positions and learning how to conduct meetings properly.

"Our members select a project to work on throughout the year, as well as attend whole club meetings where the kids hold the officer positions and learn how to run a proper meeting," Burnett said.

This year, members are divided into six project groups, including Cloverbud 2.0, Explore Machines, Explore Foods, Science in the Kitchen and First Aid, offering a wide range of learning opportunities for both younger and older participants.

Burnett said the FCC funding will be used to purchase new club T-shirts for members, replacing an aging and mismatched supply that has been reused year to year. If funds allow, the

Continued on page 11

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FARMING WINS.

Emerson cat in the running for America's Fav. Pet

By Lorne Stelmach

An Emerson resident has been earning attention online recently for his feline companion.

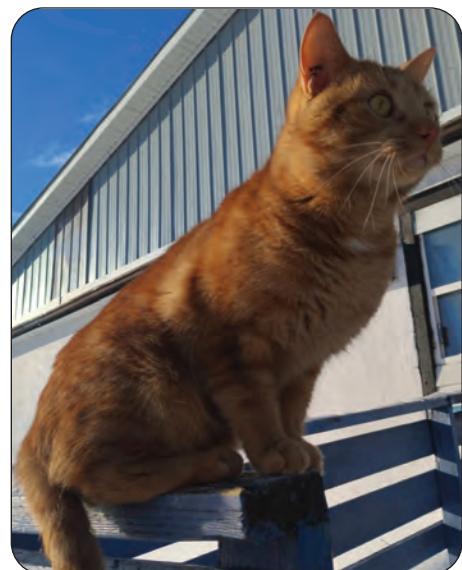
Bradley Le Sage happened to come across a post on Facebook about the America's Favorite Pet contest, and he entered his cat Bert.

Le Sage was somewhat surprised when Bert got selected

to advance in the competition, where the ultimate winner will be featured in *Modern Cat* magazine and win \$10,000.

"I'm surprised it actually went somewhere," said Le Sage. "It's actually given me the opportunity to kind of try to put my own thing together."

Le Sage said Bert is a symbol of resilience as a Christmas Eve rescue who survived a snowstorm.



SUPPLIED PHOTO

You can vote online for Bert the cat to make it to the next round of America's Favorite Pet through Feb. 12.

On the contest's voting page, Bert is described as a total foodie who never misses a meal.

"After months of wondering where the food was going, his healthy weight is finally showing," it reads. "His favourite treat is sitting regally in his own chair at the coffee table like the king he is. He's gone from skinned to sturdy."

When asked what is Bert's most unique quality, it's noted he "possesses a rare 'aura adoration' that draws other cats and people to him for comfort. He's not just a pet. He's a silent guardian who always knows when you need a paw to lean on."

Le Sage added further thoughts about Bert.

"He's really gentle," he said, noting how he was really timid at first but has since become a little more open and will play much more now. "He was scared of everything before I got him."

Le Sage is now inspired to do something to help other cats like Bert.

"It gives me a good chance to start up something local for animals here who are kind of neglected and have special needs," he said.

He sees a need for something to serve the area in and around Emerson.

"There are quite a few strays around here ... there's isn't much in this area for animals."

Bert has made it pretty far in the competition—he's currently up against four other cats in his voting group. You can vote until Feb. 12 online at americasfavpet.com/2026/bert-be4b/.

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Minnewasta Golf clubhouse on track for summer opening

By Lorne Stelmach

Work on the new clubhouse and restaurant at the Minnewasta Golf and Country Club has been progressing well, and officials are optimistic the project is on schedule.

General manager and golf pro Greg Hesom said a key aspect of the construction was being in a position to move on more to interior work before the onset of winter.

"The building was closed in before the cold weather arrived, so the guys are able to work inside with heating," he said. "The interior walls are framed ... the plumbing is going in, the electrical is going in and then drywall following shortly after that."

"Our goal was for sometime in June, and it looks like we are still on track for that," Hesom said of the projected finish date.

The fire that destroyed most of the clubhouse and restaurant came early in 2025 after a gala had just recently celebrated the official opening of the new facility built after

another blaze three years prior destroyed the original building.

While the clubhouse completion date is a bit of a moving target, Hesom said they will start the season with a snack shack and tent, so Santa Lucia will be open for business.

He is somewhat cautious and restrained in his enthusiasm for the rebuilt facility—his second new clubhouse since coming on staff at the golf course.

"I'll be excited when it's been standing for a couple of years, to be quite honest," he said jokingly. "Surreal would be the word that I use. It's a little bit like [the movie] Groundhog Day actually. It's been a straight five years of either planning or building."

"It's a good thing for the golf course and a good thing for the community, and we will carry on as best we can," he said, adding it will be nice to eventually turn the focus back to running a golf club again.

In the meantime, it will also be a bit of a process to also get the sit-



STANDARD PHOTO BY ASHLEIGH VIVEIROS

Work is moving along nicely on the Minnewasta Golf and Country Club clubhouse, which was destroyed by fire early last year. A June opening is in the works.

down restaurant up and running again considering they will need to build a new team.

"It will be a soft start," Hesom said.

"It's going to take time to build it up again and to do it properly."

> 4-H, FROM PG. 13

club also hopes to purchase a pop-up sign to help identify the group at community events.

"We encourage our members to wear their club T-shirts to each meeting and for any events we plan or participate in," she said. "Our stock has mismatched logos, is aging and is not the appropriate size for our current group."

Beyond the tangible items, Burnett said the funding will also support hands-on leadership development by involving members in decisions about the shirts and signage.

"The members will be involved in decisions about the type, colour and logo placement," she said. "Through these discussions, the kids will not only be learning what a grant is, but also the process involved in using those funds and working together as a group to come to a consensus."

Without the grant, Burnett said the club would not have been able to purchase new shirts at this time and would have had to wait until a fundraiser could be planned. Keeping costs down for families remains a priority.

"It's important to us to keep members' costs down, so we have not entertained the idea of asking members to purchase their own T-shirts," she said.

Burnett added that support from community partners like FCC helps volunteers stretch fundraising dollars

further, allowing funds raised locally to be directed toward programming and community contributions.

"When we can access grants like this, it keeps the cost to families down, which is so important in today's economy," she said.

Looking ahead, Burnett said the club is preparing for its Achievement event in April, where members will showcase the projects they've worked on throughout the year.

"We have many members in their first couple of years of 4-H," she said. "It's exciting to see them — and our older members — showing off what they've been working on, and the pride and confidence they have because of it."



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Calvert claims first Manitoba men's title at Bunge Championship

By Haley Cvar

Manitoba has a new men's curling champion.

Braden Calvert and his Heather Curling Club rink captured the Bunge Championship title Sunday afternoon in Selkirk, defeating Jordon McDonald of the Assiniboine Memorial Curling Club in an extra end to earn their first Manitoba men's crown.

Calvert, joined by third Corey Chambers, second Kyle Kurz, lead Brendan Bilawka and alternate Rob Gordon, prevailed in a dramatic rematch of Saturday night's Page 1-2 playoff game, also won by the Heather rink.

The championship final was tied 7-7 after 10 ends when Calvert slid a foot deep on his last-stone draw, conceding a single point to force an extra end. In the 11th, Calvert set up the winning chance with a perfect first-stone hit, leaving McDonald facing a difficult draw around two centre-line stones. McDonald made the shot but left Calvert a short runback, which he converted to seal the win to represent Manitoba at the national championship.

For Calvert and his teammates, the victory marked a breakthrough after falling short in the past two provincial finals — losing to Reid Carruthers

in 2025 and Brad Jacobs in 2024.

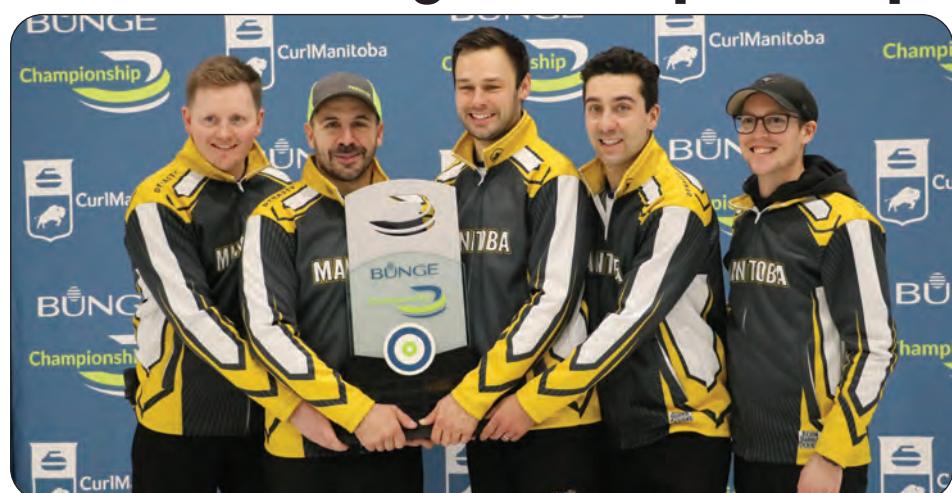
McDonald's rink, which includes Jacques Gauthier, Elias Huminicki and Cam Olafson, had reached the final earlier Sunday with a six-end semifinal win over Brett Walter's Assiniboine Memorial team.

The result capped a week that guaranteed a new provincial champion. Defending champion and top seed Reid Carruthers and his Granite Curling Club rink were eliminated Saturday afternoon by Kelly Marnoch's Carberry foursome, opening the door for a first-time men's champion.

None of the three teams remaining heading into the final day — Calvert, McDonald and Walter — had previously represented Manitoba at the Canadian men's championship, though several players had won provincial titles at the junior, U18 or mixed levels.

Calvert earned his spot in Sunday's final by edging McDonald 8-7 in the Page 1-2 playoff Saturday evening. McDonald led 5-3 at the mid-game break but surrendered five points over the next four ends. Facing a McDonald stone on the button in the 10th, Calvert executed a near-perfect freeze, limiting McDonald to a single point.

Earlier in the playoffs, Walter de-



STANDARD PHOTO BY BRETT MITCHELL

feated Marnoch 8-6 in the Page 3-4 game, running the Carberry rink out of stones in the 10th end. Marnoch had advanced with his upset of Carruthers, while Walter reached the playoff round with wins over Steve Irwin of Brandon and Tanner Lott of Fort Rouge.

The championship field featured a new triple knockout format, with Carruthers, McDonald, Calvert and Walter all advancing through the opening round unbeaten. Preliminary

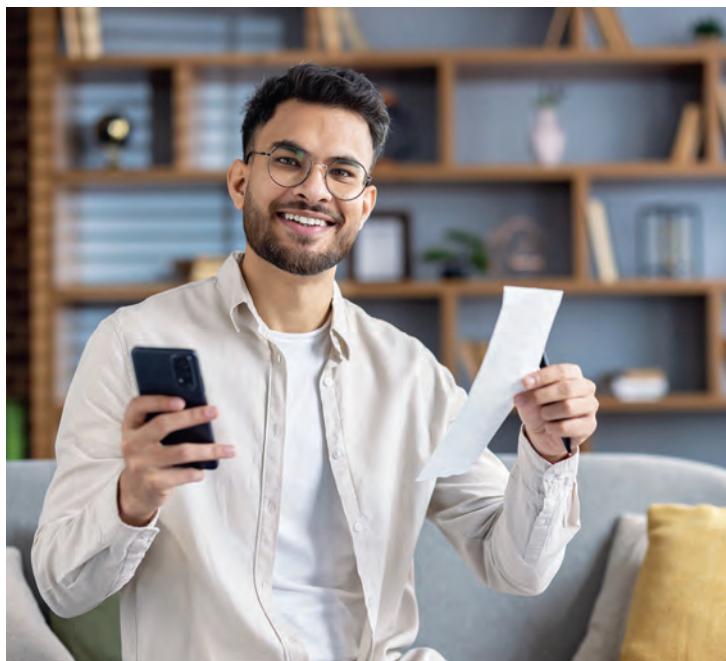
round wins for Calvert came over Stefan Gudmundson of Steinbach and Irwin, while McDonald defeated Derrick Anderson of Gimli and Marnoch. Walter's early victories were against Marcus Titchkosky of Morden and Lott.

With the win, Calvert will represent Manitoba at the Montana's Brier in St. John's, N.L., from Feb. 28 to March 7. Manitoba will be represented by two teams at the national championship, as Matt Dunstone's rink has pre-qualified for the event.

Focus on FINANCE

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Who doesn't love receiving a tax refund they're entitled to? It's even more satisfying when it's the result of smart planning. Do you know how to make the most of yours? Here



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Savings accounts, such as TFSAs and RRSPs, allow you to invest money while lowering your taxable income. This is a great way to boost your tax refund. However, to avoid potential tax penalties, be careful not to contribute or withdraw too much.

2. CLAIM ELIGIBLE DEDUCTIONS

Find out which deductions are available to you. Depending on your situation, you may be able to claim childcare costs, moving expenses or other eligible de-

ductions to reduce your taxable income. Talk to a finance expert to identify the best opportunities.

3. USE AVAILABLE TAX CREDITS

Tuition fees, medication expenses and charitable donations may qualify for tax credits. In some cases, buying a home or claiming work-from-home expenses can also offer valuable savings.

Once you've applied these strategies, you can use your refund to pay off your debts faster, replenish your savings or finally start that kitchen renovation project you've been dreaming about. The possibilities are endless!

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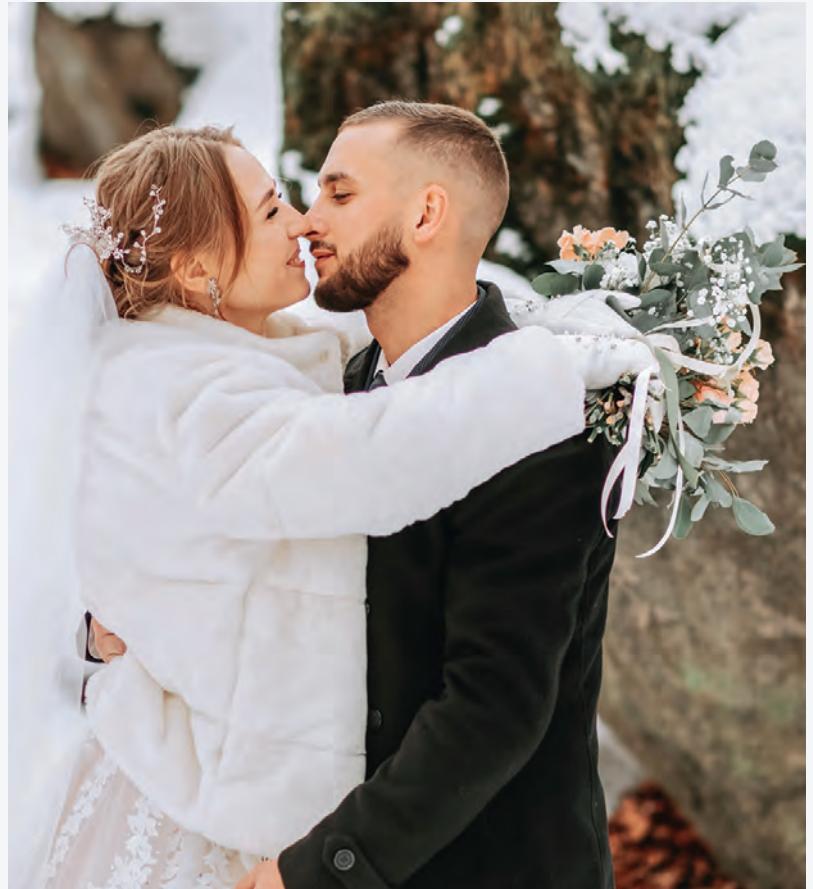
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WEDDING SPECIAL

Getting married in winter: a bold and rewarding choice

Although many associate weddings with the summer season, winter weddings offer plenty of advantages. Venues and hotels are less busy in the off-season. Caterers, photographers and entertainers tend to have more availability. Also, prices are often lower. Here's how to make your winter celebration a success.

- **Location.** Choose a setting that feels warm and inviting, such as a lakeside cottage, a picturesque inn, a cozy hotel or even a modern sugar shack. Just make sure the location is accessible. Avoid remote spots with poorly maintained roads that could become dangerous in snowy conditions.
- **Decorations.** A winter-themed wedding naturally has a magical feel. Opt for seasonal colours like white, pine green and icy blue. Decorate with natural elements, such as fir branches and pinecones. Add soft lighting with candles—LED candles that mimic flames are a safe choice.



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• **Outfits.** If you'll be spending part of the day outdoors, especially for that quintessential winter photo shoot, make sure you stay warm by choosing elegant and warm clothing. Think long-sleeved dresses, faux-fur capes, quilted coats, wool suits, luxurious scarves and elegant lined boots. A winter wedding creates a romantic atmosphere and endless creative possibilities. Work with local businesses and professionals to plan your snowy wedding.

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MITT closing up shop; future of Morden program uncertain

By Lorne Stelmach

The shutdown of a Winnipeg-based educational institution has had a bit of a ripple effect with a new educational initiative based in Morden facing an uncertain future as a result.

The Manitoba Institute of Trades and Technology (MITT) announced last month that it would be winding down operations, with select programs transferring to Red River College Polytech (RRC Polytech).

In a statement, MITT cited how over the past two years the federal government has made rapid, ongoing changes to the international student program.

"These changes have created uncertainty for students and post-second-

ary institutions across Canada and sent a message abroad that international students aren't valued here.

"As a result, institutions have faced financial and operational shocks that they could not reasonably anticipate or absorb," the statement continued. "The Manitoba Institute of Trades and Technology has seen international enrolment drop by more than 55 per cent, making its current financial model unsustainable."

Last fall, MITT in partnership with the City of Morden launched a network and systems administrator diploma program out of renovated space in Boundary Trails Place.

The diploma program's aim was to provide hands-on learning in infor-

mation and communication technology and practicum experiences with local employers.

A representative for the City of Morden declined to comment at this time given they had little more information about MITT's decision to shut down or about the possible future of the local program.

The statement from MITT sought "to reassure students and parents that all students will be able to complete their studies. The transition will occur over the next year, with some programs and functions extending beyond this timeline under RRC Polytech's leadership. Students will continue to access their programs as they currently do."

"We will work closely with the province and RRC Polytech to ensure students are supported and have a clear, well-defined plan for completing their program—whether they're in our post-secondary, high school, adult learning, or English language programming. Any industry training that is underway will also continue to completion."

"As an initial step, a comprehensive review of MITT programs will be conducted. We will engage with students, partner institutions, school divisions, industry partners, and other key stakeholders to ensure all programming and partnerships are addressed thoughtfully and responsibly."

Flashback... TV Turnoff in 2000 still relevant today

By Dennis Young

A campaign launched 25 years ago warned about excessive TV watching, an issue that has only intensified as content options have expanded. In 2000, Francine Lee led the Carman Committee on Media Awareness, encouraging residents to take a two-week break from screens and prioritize family and community activities.

"This is not about being anti-TV or bashing TV," Lee said at the time. "TV Turnoff focuses not on the quality of programming, but on the excessive quantity of television people watch and the lost opportunities to read, talk, participate, think, create and do."

Backed by local councils, the committee aimed to help people reconnect with their lives and friends by avoiding TV, computer games, movies and the internet. The campaign, al-

ready proven successful elsewhere, involved schools, libraries, churches and community groups. It was well received locally, featured on national media — including television — and inspired similar events in other communities.

"We are satisfied that we were able to have people evaluate their viewing habits," Lee commented following the campaign's end. "They had a chance to ponder and think about it, and in that we attained our goal." Strong attendance at the awards night helped validate that success.

Held at the Carman Collegiate, the celebration featured guests Fred Penner, Loreena McKennitt and Justice Minister Gord MacIntosh, with more than 100 donated prizes handed out to participants. Lee wrapped up the speeches with a message that resonated. "Through heightened

awareness, we have created a part of living history that will benefit our community for years to come. Not only have people fine-tuned their daily routines, but they have also found ways to enrich their own lives and the lives of those around them. It was a fun project."

Today, Lee welcomes the idea of a return to the campaign in her community. "My idea was a one-time event, as the time commitment was significant. However, I think another TV Turnoff would be a positive, family-focused and informative experience that offers many health benefits." Anyone interested?

Studies have shown that watching TV for five or more hours a day increases the risk of brain-related diseases such as dementia, stroke and Parkinson's. Screen time, some experts say, is like eating sugar—but for your brain.



STANDARD PHOTO SUBMITTED
Francine Lee and Mayor Murray Rinn sign a proclamation declaring Jan. 7-21, 2000, as TV Turnoff Campaign dates.



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sports & recreation

INSIDE > OUTSIDE > UPSIDE DOWN

Sanford Sabres build momentum with four tournament titles

By Lana Meier

The Sanford Collegiate Sabres varsity girls basketball team is making a strong case as one of the top programs in Zone 4 AAA this season, rolling through January and early February with a string of tournament championships and decisive league wins.

Most recently, the Sabres captured the College Sturgeon Heights HIT Tournament title this past weekend, defeating the host Sturgeon Heights Huskies 58-45 in the championship game. Sanford advanced to the final after convincing wins over the Miles Macdonell Buckeyes (56-26) and the Kelvin Clippers (73-26).

That victory marked the fourth tournament title in less than a month for the Sabres, a run head coach Kelli said has been driven by the group's work ethic and adaptability.

"Work ethic, attitude and athleticism have helped our team have success," she said. "All of the athletes have done a good job adjusting to strategies thrown at them throughout games and working hard in practice."

On Jan. 29-30, Sanford claimed its own invitational tournament championship, defeating the Dauphin Clippers 58-30 in the final. Earlier in the month, the Sabres won the Linden Christian School Tournament, closing out the event with a dominant 73-18 win over the Linden Christian Wings. From Jan. 8-10, Sanford also took top spot at the Piper Classic, defeating the St. Mary's Flames 68-42 in the championship game.

Kelli said the team has continued to

evolve throughout the season, blending experience with younger talent.

"We have two Grade 12s, five Grade 11s and six Grade 10s," she said. "Many of them are multi-sport athletes, and they've been committed to learning and growing together."

Defence has been a constant strength, with Sanford routinely limiting opponents' scoring chances while maintaining a fast pace of play.

"Our defence has been very consistent in every game, holding teams to low offensive production," Kelli said. "Our pace of play has also been strong throughout the season."

Leadership and depth have also played a key role in the Sabres' success. Team captains Halle Penner and Ryan McKinlay bring high-level experience, including competing for Team Manitoba at the Canada Games this summer. Along with Grade 12s Penner and Jacintha Muir and Grade 11s McKinlay and Mackenzie Jeffery, the leadership group has been part of the varsity program since Grade 9.

"They've gained a lot of experience being part of two provincial finalist teams the past two seasons," Kelli said. "Those experiences have helped guide our younger athletes."

League play has mirrored Sanford's tournament success, with lopsided wins over the WC Miller Aces (70-29), Morden Thunder (68-25) and Garden Valley Zodiacs (75-44). The Sabres did suffer a setback on Feb. 3, dropping a 71-42 decision to WC Miller, but the loss has done little to slow



STANDARD PHOTO SUBMITTED

The Sanford Sabres varsity girls basketball team won the College Sturgeon Heights HIT Tournament last weekend. Pictured left to right, back row: Kelli Sinnok, Sadie Spicer, Liza Bestland, Halle Penner, Nel Vanderveen, Jessica Lawton, Ryan McKinlay, Neil McKinlay; Front row: Mackenzie Jeffery, Jacintha Muir, Ashley Saley, Maycen Regnier and Bryn Nichol. Not pictured: Payton Manness and Claire Boyd.

their momentum.

Kelli said tournament play remains a key part of the team's development.

"Tournaments are always an important part of the season," she said. "We've been very lucky to be invited to 4A tournaments that have helped us develop our depth."

As the postseason approaches, Sanford's goals are clear. The Sabres are aiming to win both the Zone 4 AAA championship and provincials, which they will host March 19-21 in Sanford.

Beyond results, Kelli said the team's culture has set it apart.

"All of the girls work extremely hard in practice and competition," she said. "They're not afraid to make mistakes to grow, and they support each other through it. They're an extremely special group of athletes, and I'm very proud of all of them."

Sanford returns to home court on Feb. 17, hosting the Garden Valley Zodiacs at 6 p.m. as they continue their push through the Zone 4 AAA season.

Beavers drop high-scoring affair to Winkler, prepare for playoffs

By Lana Meier

The Carman Beavers closed out their SEMHL regular season schedule Friday night with an 11-8 loss to the league-leading Winkler Royals in a fast-paced, high-scoring contest.

Carman kept pace for much of the night, trading goals throughout the opening two periods and showing offensive depth against the Royals, who entered the game atop the league standings.

Winkler struck early, scoring twice in the opening 90 seconds, but the Beavers responded midway through

the first period on a goal from Kale Ilchena, assisted by Dean Gorchynski and captain Tyler Park. Park added a power-play marker late in the frame to pull Carman within one heading into the intermission.

The teams continued to exchange goals in the second period, with Carman tallies from Gorchynski, Jackson Reimer, Riley Goertzen and Everett Bestland keeping the Beavers within striking distance. Despite the push-back, Winkler carried a 7-6 lead into the third.

Scott Atkins scored twice in the

third period to draw Carman even at 8-8, but the Royals regained the lead on James Penner's goal at 2:56 and pulled away late with a power-play marker and a shorthanded empty-net goal to secure the win.

Luke Zacharias and Dan Wenham split duties in goal for Carman, combining for 60 minutes as Winkler generated heavy pressure throughout the game. Carman went 1-for-3 on the power play, matching Winkler's efficiency with the man advantage.

The loss leaves the Beavers ninth in the SEMHL standings at 3-14-1 with

seven points, rounding out the regular-season table as all nine teams advance to the playoffs.

With the regular season concluding Feb. 10, Carman will turn its focus to postseason play, which begins with a Survivor Series between the eighth- and ninth-place teams. The winner of that series advances to face the first-place club, followed by best-of-five series in the first two rounds and a best-of-seven league final to determine the SEMHL champion.

sports & recreation

INSIDE > OUTSIDE > UPSIDE DOWN

Hawks drop pair of road games, set for regular-season finale

By Lana Meier

The Notre Dame Hawks fell in back-to-back road contests last week, dropping a 6-3 decision to the Portage Islanders on Wednesday before closing out their home schedule with a 9-4 loss to the Morden Bombers on Saturday.

Despite the setbacks, the Hawks enter the final game of the regular season firmly in the playoff picture, sitting eighth in the SEMHL standings with one game remaining.

In Portage on Feb. 4, Notre Dame trailed early and was unable to fully recover after the Islanders built a 4-0 lead midway through the second period. Nicolas Vigier got the Hawks on the board with a power-play goal at 13:02 of the second, assisted by Jake and Eli Carels.

Captain Jeff Michiels led the push back in the third period, scoring twice to cut the deficit to 4-3. Christian Prejet and Vigier each picked up assists on the goals, but Portage sealed the game with an empty-net marker in the final minute before adding a late insurance goal. Goaltender Christopher Lesage turned aside 39 shots in

the loss.

Notre Dame returned home Saturday but ran into a disciplined Morden squad that capitalized on special teams. Eli Carels opened the scoring early in the first period, but the Bombers responded with five unanswered goals spanning the first and second periods.

The Hawks showed resilience late, with Christian Prejet scoring late in the second before power-play goals from Eli Carels and Michiels early in the third brought Notre Dame within striking distance. Morden answered again, however, pulling away with three goals over the final 10 minutes to secure the win. Lesage made 39 saves as Notre Dame went 2-for-6 on the power play.

With the losses, Notre Dame sits eighth in the SEMHL standings at 6-8-3 with 15 points, one point back of Portage and ahead of Carman. The Hawks have been strong at home this season, posting a 5-1-3 record, while struggling on the road.

The Hawks will close out the regular season Tuesday night in Ste. Anne



STANDARD PHOTOS BY RICK HIEBERT

Notre Dame's Jake Carel and Morden's Tyler Campbell race for the puck....

against Ile des Chênes, a game that will finalize playoff positioning. All nine SEMHL teams qualify for the postseason, which begins with a Survivor Series between the eighth- and

ninth-place teams. The winner advances to face the first-place team, followed by best-of-five series in the first two rounds and a best-of-seven league final.

Ringette returns to roots with Elm Creek exhibition game

By Lana Meier

Elm Creek will be the site of a special ringette homecoming later this month as the South Winnipeg U14B Fury bring an exhibition game to town to celebrate local athletes, community support and the sport's rural roots.

The Fury will face the U12A Macdonald Wildfire on Friday, Feb. 20 at 7 p.m. at the Elm Creek rink, marking the first ringette exhibition game played on the community's new artificial ice surface.

For Fury head coach Melissa Funke, the event carries personal significance.

A former Carman resident and long-time ringette player, Funke grew up in the Pembina Valley, where her father, Michael Funke, was among the co-founders of Carman's ringette program and coached his daughters throughout their minor sports careers.

"Ringette was always my favourite sport," Funke said. "With two older sisters who played and parents involved in coaching, our household revolved around it in the winter. Being able to play again and to coach

— especially with my own daughter on the team — is a real joy. It feels very special to continue that legacy of sport back in my home community."

The Fury roster includes Elm Creek's Josie Lacoste, who travels to Winnipeg several times a week to compete at the U14B level, as well as Madelyn McKay of Sanford, adding a strong Pembina Valley presence to the team.

Funke said the exhibition game is meant to recognize the commitment those families make, while also introducing ringette to new audiences.

"We would love to see lots of family and friends in the stands, but more importantly, lots of girls who might not have seen a ringette game before," she said. "We hope to showcase the speed, strategy and teamwork of ringette — but most of all, the way this sport makes girls feel powerful on and off the ice."

She said the new artificial ice surface in Elm Creek plays a key role in making that possible.

"Artificial ice extends the season and gives kids more opportunity to get on the ice," Funke said. "Skat-

ing is so fundamental to ringette and hockey that more ice time equals better players. In the city, we have access to ice year-round, so it's great to see a community like Elm Creek ensuring young athletes can get that same opportunity at home."

Ringette previously had a presence in the community, with former player and organizer Erin Pethybridge having helped run a local program in past years. Funke hopes the exhibition can help spark renewed interest.

"It's a great sport for finesse, strategy and teamwork," she said. "We call it the fastest sport on ice because of the playmaking it requires, and it was designed to be inclusive. Players of all abilities and experience levels are welcome."

Admission to the exhibition is free, and spectators unfamiliar with the sport will have access to a basic rules flyer to help them follow the action. Young players and prospective athletes are also invited to meet the teams and coaches following the game.

The event brings together the Macdonald Ringette Association Wildfire



STANDARD PHOTO BY MELISSA FUNKE

Madelyn McKay of Sanford (left) and Josie Lacoste of Elm Creek are shown at the Elm Creek rink ahead of a special ringette exhibition game later this month.

and the Southwest Winnipeg Ringette Fury, two associations that often share players depending on registration numbers.

"We hope this helps spark something — even informally," Funke said. "Seeing kids at the rink with sticks and rings would be a win for us."

sports & recreation

INSIDE > OUTSIDE > UPSIDE DOWN

Sabres collect two home wins in West Division

By **Annaliese Meier**

The Sanford Sabres continued their strong run in the West Division, earning two home wins last week to remain third with a 14-6 record in Manitoba Women's High School Hockey League play.

Sanford opened the week with a 3-2 win over Oak Park on Feb. 2. Halle Penner scored twice, including the game-winner in the third period, while Mackenzie Jeffery also found the back of the net as the Sabres held off a late push from the Raiders.

The Sabres followed up with a 4-3 overtime victory against Churchill

on Feb. 3. Sanford built leads in each period before Mikalah Grant scored the overtime winner at 3:19. Jeffery finished with a goal and two assists, while Taylr Chornomydz and Kail Ward also chipped in offensively.

Sanford returns to action on the road against GCC on Feb. 9 at 5 p.m., before hosting Sturgeon Heights on Feb. 12 for a 4 p.m. puck drop.

SANFORD SPLITS RESULTS IN WFP DIVISION PLAY

Sanford sits sixth in the Winnipeg

Free Press Division with a 10-11 record in Winnipeg High School Hockey League action following a busy three-game stretch last week.

Sanford opened the week with a 4-3 road loss to J.H. Bruns on Feb. 2. After falling behind by three, Sanford mounted a third-period push with goals from Austin Iliffe and Jake Johnston, the latter on the power play, but the comeback fell short.

The team rebounded Feb. 4 with a 5-3 win over Gab Roy, erupting for three goals in a 29-second span late in the second period. Colton Boulanger scored twice during the surge, while

Brayden Strydhorst and Johnston also found the scoresheet. Nate Young sealed the win with a late third-period goal.

Sanford closed the week with a 3-2 overtime home loss to CSLR on Feb. 6. Power-play goals from Cooper Rodewald and Dyson Dilk gave Sanford early leads, but CSLR tied the game in the third before scoring the winner in overtime.

Sanford returns to the ice Feb. 11 with a road game against CLR at 4 p.m., before hosting Stonewall on Feb. 13 for a 4:15 p.m. puck drop.

Swarm cap week with two wins, finish first overall

By **Lana Meier**

The Macdonald Swarm closed the week with two wins in three outings, punctuating their first-place finish in the Hanover Tache Junior Hockey League standings.

Macdonald opened the stretch Tuesday with a 5-4 loss to the East St. Paul Gators at Gateway Rec Centre. The Swarm answered back throughout the night — getting goals from Tyler Van de Velde, Colton Plaitin, Car-

son Park and Cade McCallum — but couldn't erase a third-period push by East St. Paul. Goaltender Ethan Wiebe was busy in the loss, turning aside 49 shots.

The Swarm rebounded in a big way Friday, rolling past the Warren 67's 10-2 at Sanford Recreation Centre. Macdonald scored five times in the first period and never looked back, with Plaitin scoring twice and Cade McCallum collecting a goal and mul-

iple assists as the offence spread throughout the lineup. Slade Sotheran scored the game-winning goal on the power play late in the opening frame, while Macdonald received goaltending from Liam Jones and Jack Martin, who combined to allow two goals.

Macdonald wrapped up the week Saturday with a 5-2 win over the Landmark Blues at Landmark Arena. After a scoreless first period, Kayden Robertson opened the scoring and

struck again early in the third, while Plaitin added the game-winner 62 seconds into the final frame. The Swarm's special teams made the difference, going 2-for-6 on the power play, including goals by Carson Park and Cooper Rodewald, and Wiebe stopped 21 shots for the win.

With the weekend results, Macdonald finished the regular season at 29-1 atop the HTJHL standings.

Twins pull away in second period to defeat Twisters

By **Lana Meier**

A four-goal second period proved decisive as the Ft. Garry/Ft. Rouge Twins defeated the Pembina Valley Twisters 6-3 in Manitoba Major Junior Hockey League action Friday night at the Morris MultiPlex.

Pembina Valley opened the scoring midway through the first period when Ayden Lazarenko found the net at 7:37, giving the Twisters an early 1-0 lead. Ft. Garry responded early in the second period, however, and quickly took control of the game.

Lucas Spencer tied the contest at 2:42 of the second period, before Ketema Wall restored the Twisters' lead with a shorthanded goal at 6:33. The lead was short-lived, as the Twins scored three unanswered goals later in the period — including a power-play marker by Drew Russell at 19:15 — to take a 4-2 advantage into the intermission.

Ft. Garry added two more goals in the third period, with Spencer completing a hat trick and Russell scoring his second power-play goal of the night. Carter Unger scored Pembina Valley's final goal at

4:26 of the third period, converting on the power play.

The Twins outshot the Twisters 53-38. Rowan Cherkas made 47 saves in goal for Pembina Valley, while Alex Pauls stopped 35 shots to earn the win for Ft. Garry.

With the loss, Pembina Valley fell to 5-27-1 on the season and remains 10th in the MMJHL standings. Ft. Garry improved to 17-14-3 and sits seventh overall.

The teams will meet again later this season as Pembina Valley continues its final stretch of the regular season.

Several local players were recognized with selection to the 2026 MMJHL All-Star Game, which was played Saturday, Feb. 7, at Eric Coy Arena in Winnipeg. Representing the Pembina Valley Twisters were forwards Owen Vanrobaeys, Ethan Wilde, and Matt Lizotte. The All-Star selections highlight strong individual seasons and gave local fans a chance to see familiar faces compete alongside the league's top talent.

UPCOMING GAMES

Feb. 10 — Pembina Valley at River East Royal Knights, 7:30 p.m.

Feb. 13 — Raiders Jr. Hockey Club at Pembina Valley, 8 p.m.

Feb. 15 — Pembina Valley at Transcona Railer Express, 2 p.m.

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OBITUARY



Annie Metcalfe

Annie Metcalfe passed away peacefully on Wednesday, February 4, 2026 at the Boyne Lodge at the age of 97 years.

Thank you to the Boyne Lodge staff for their compassion and care of our mom. Also, thank you to the Foyer in Notre Dame de Lourdes for all your care and kindness.

Funeral service will be held on Saturday, February 14, 2026 at 2:00 p.m. at Doyle's Funeral Home. Private interment will take place in the Graysville Cemetery.

Memorial donations may be made to the Carman Palliative Care or to a charity of one's choice.

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

Your memory will live forever Engraved within our hearts

OBITUARY



John (Jack) Neil Keating

1931 - 2026

Jack Keating passed away peacefully on February 2, 2026 at Riverview Health Centre at the age of 94.

Born May 3, 1931 in Russell, MB to Earle and Bessie Keating, he was raised on the family farm in Silverton, graduated from Russell High School in 1948 and U of M (B of Agriculture) in 1952. He worked for Manitoba Pool Elevators before joining Canada Packers Feed, then Poultry Division. Jack supervised

the company hatchery in Manitou along with company farms at Portage, Ste. Agathe and Morris. He was instrumental in the formation of the Manitoba Chicken Marketing Board. His employment with Canada Packers lasted over 35 years and he retired in 1988. During this time, he served as President of the Manitoba Hatchery Association, and Sect. Treasurer of the Canadian Hatchery Federation. Following retirement, he served for eight years on the Manitoba Hatching Egg Commission.

In 1953, Jack married Sheila Dickey of Crandall, raised two children and resided in Windsor Park. In 1981, Jack and Sheila separated. In 1988 he married Joyce Maxwell of Manitou, gaining three adult children. Jack and Joyce retired in 1988 and headed south to Texas and Arizona and enjoyed 17 winters of very active retirement life. In 1991, they settled in Carman, MB. where they made many good friends. In 2023, Jack moved to The Courtyards at Linden Pointe assisted living complex in Winnipeg.

In his younger years, Jack enjoyed playing baseball and hockey in Russell and later enjoyed curling at the Fort Garry and Heather Curling Clubs in Winnipeg. Upon moving to Carman, he tried to wear out the beautiful Carman Golf Course, was an active member of the Legion and spent many hours in his vegetable and flower gardens. More recently he has filled his time cheering on the Bombers, the Jets, as well as watching many golf tournaments and curling events.

Jack was predeceased by his wife Joyce, as well as his first wife Sheila, his brothers Charles and Donald, and his stepson Ross.

He is mourned by his daughter Teri (Mike Gartner), grandson Joel (Mariah); son Dean (Debbie), grandsons Chad (Stacey), Drew (Zita) and granddaughter Emma; step daughter Terry (Dawn, Sheri-Lyn, Jacquie, Ryan); stepson Jeff and daughter-in-law Allyson (Kristin, Trinda); step daughter-in-law Lori Maxwell (Angela, Megan, Gerrit); sister Marion McNabb, sister-in-law Patt Keating, many cherished great and great-great grandchildren, nieces and nephews.

Following cremation, a memorial celebration will be held at Carman United Church at 2:00 p.m., Friday, March 6; interment of ashes in the Greenwood Cemetery in Carman.

Special thanks to the staff at The Courtyards for their friendly care; and to the staff of 3E Riverview for their support and care in his final days.

Memorial donations can be made to The Kidney Foundation of Canada - Manitoba Branch, 209-2211 McPhillips St, Winnipeg, MB R2V 3M5.

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take a break > GAMES

SUDOKU

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CLUES ACROSS

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2. Fashionable	28. Woman (French)
3. Borough in Helsinki	29. Short route aircraft
4. Inability to hear	34. Pitching statistic
5. More quickly	35. Pointed end of a pen
6. An idea accepted as a demonstrable truth	36. Popular sports league
7. Shrewdly	37. Body part
8. Rooney and Kate are two	39. Inoffensive
9. Mediterranean port	40. Yellowish cotton cloth
10. Benedictine monk	41. Feline
12. Midway between south and southeast	42. Does not tell the truth
14. Town in Galilee	44. Seduced
19. Satisfy	45. Spiritual leader
23. Mice genus	46. Abba __, Israeli politician
24. Brass instrument	47. Repair
25. Chest muscle (slang)	48. Olive genus
26. Transmits genetic information from DNA	51. Swiss river
27. Records electric currents generated by the brain	52. Prejudice
1. Sign language	53. C. European river
	54. Keep under control
	58. Father

CLUES DOWN

FEBRUARY

Heart Month

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Congenital heart disease: what exactly is it?

February is Heart Month. It's a great opportunity to learn about heart health and refresh your knowledge about how to keep your heart strong. That said, some heart problems start at birth. This is called congenital heart disease. Here's what you need to know.

Also known as a heart defect, congenital heart disease happens when parts of the heart, such as the walls, chambers, large vessels or valves, develop abnormally.

These abnormalities disrupt normal blood flow. As a result, the blood may slow down, take the wrong path or stop moving altogether. The severity of the condition can vary widely. Some cases are minor; others require medical intervention.

Congenital heart disease has several types, which can be divided into two main categories:

1. Septal defect, commonly called a "hole in the heart"
2. Blood flow obstruction, such as stenosis or atresia

Being born with one of these abnormalities doesn't mean your life will be cut short. Thanks to modern medicine and surgery, nine out of 10 children with congenital heart disease live into adulthood.

Visit heartandstroke.ca to learn more about congenital heart disease and many other heart conditions.



POSSIBLE CAUSES

It's often impossible to determine the exact cause of congenital heart disease. However, known causes include maternal use of drugs, alcohol or tobacco during pregnancy, as well as certain prescribed medications like thalidomide. Genetic and chromosomal abnormalities can also contribute, along with environmental factors like air pollution and exposure to pesticides.

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