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Easter COLOURING CONTEST

COMING SOON! THE RIVERS BANNER AND HERITAGE CO-OP WILL BE HOSTING A COLOURING CONTEST FOR ALL THOSE WHO SUBMIT A COLOURED PICTURE IN THE APRIL 2ND PAPER. BE SURE TO GET A COPY OF THE PAPER AND COLOUR!!

RIVERS BANNER

GAZETTE-REPORTER

Local People. Local Stories.

Serving the Rivers, Rapid City, Forrest, Kenton, Oak River, Hamiota and Oak Lake areas for 116 years

Celebrating a successful 17th Annual Northern Pike Derby



Donna Falkevitch presents Dennis Wilcox of Rivers with his first place prize, a brand new Eskimo ice auger, donated by Princess Auto.

By Carolyn Phillips
RIVERS BANNER

The 17th Annual Northern Pike Derby took place Saturday, March 7, bringing together fishing enthusiasts of all ages in a celebration of community spirit and outdoor adventure. This year's event saw a record turnout, with 179 entries, including 34 enthusiastic youth under the age of 16. The excitement in the air was palpable as participants took to the ice, eager to catch some impressive northern pike.

The derby proved fruitful, with a total of 62 northern pike brought in for measuring. These ranged from the

smallest at 39.5 cm to an impressive 72.5 cm. Among the youth participants, seven anglers showcased their skills, and the five largest catches earned each of them a \$50 gift certificate to either Jo-Brook Outdoors in Brandon or StillWater Adventures in Virden. Notably, Rhett Brook from Morden led the youth category with a remarkable 70.5 cm catch, followed closely by Jackson Brown at 68 cm, Hudson Wiebe at 66.5 cm, Quinn Spindler at 62 cm, and Deacon Little at 61 cm. Their accomplishments not only highlight their angling abilities but also reflect the promising future of fishing in our community.

read more about the fishing derby on page 2...

Inside...



RAPID CITY SNOWMOBILE DERBY
P5



LIVING WITH DIABETES
P3

Ice fishing, shivering with excitement

By Carolyn Phillips
RIVERS BANNER

Continued from page 1

In addition to recognizing youth catches, the event presented several other prizes for participants who brought in fish closest to the hidden times. Five lucky anglers walked away with \$20 in Rivers Chamber Bucks, adding a delightful twist to the day's proceedings. The day's longest fish, a magnificent 72.5 cm pike caught by Dennis Wilcox of Rivers, earned him a brand new Eskimo ice auger, generously donated by Princess Auto.

Several categories contributed to the overall excitement, including the 70-75 cm category, where Curtis Wiebe claimed a hefty \$1,000 prize. Chris Homer won \$500 for his catch in the 63-69.9 cm bracket, while Alex Kerr snagged \$400 for his pike in the 54-62.9 cm range. Shawn Gardiner followed suit with a \$350 win in the 42-53.9 cm category. In a rarity, only one pike was measured in the under 41.9 cm category, where Rowan Demchuk was rewarded with a \$250 prize along with a stylish Yeti mug from Johan Construction. Additionally, Kyle Greasley won a Strike Master Maven ice auger from StillWater Adventures in Virden, satisfying both the competitive and practical needs of today's anglers.

The event wasn't just about the fishing—community spirit shone brightly. A heartfelt thank you was extended to the Rivers 4H Beef Club, who provided delicious beef on a bun and homemade fries, ensuring that all participants were well-fed after a day on the water. The atmosphere was filled with camaraderie, laughter, and the joy of the sport.

With spring weather favouring the festivities, the day was truly memorable. Organizers expressed



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Rhett Brook won first in the youth category and was also a hidden time winner.

their gratitude to all sponsors, volunteers, and the loyal participants who made the derby possible, emphasizing that their support is invaluable.

As we reflect on this fantastic year, there's already excitement brewing for the next derby in 2027. Thank you to everyone who made this event a resounding success, and here's to more great fishing days ahead!

BE ON TIME!
Advertising deadline:
12 noon Monday

We love our readers!

Thank you for your continued support.
Rivers Banner

JUMBO BREAKFAST COOKIES

Ingredients

- 2 cups white sugar
- 1 cup butter
- 2 tablespoons vanilla extract or to taste
- 2 1/4 cups all-purpose flour
- 1/2 teaspoon salt or to taste
- 1 1/2 cups raisins or dried fruit of choice
- 1 cup peanut butter
- 1/2 cup water
- 2 large eggs
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1 1/2 cups rolled oats
- 6 cups toasted Cheerios

Directions

1. Gather the ingredients. Preheat the oven to 375 degrees F (190 degrees C).
2. Mix sugar, peanut butter, butter, water, vanilla, and eggs together in a very large bowl until smooth.
3. Combine flour, baking soda, and salt; stir into cookie batter. Mix in oats and raisins, then carefully stir in cereal.
4. Drop 1/2 cupfuls of dough onto ungreased cookie sheets, spacing cookies about 4 inches apart. Flatten cookies to 1 inch thick.
5. Bake in the preheated oven until cookies are lightly browned at the edges, about 10 to 12 minutes. Let stand on the cookie sheets for 5 minutes before removing to wire racks to cool completely. Enjoy!

The Strathclair Drama Club proudly presents its 42nd annual production

big
the musical

April 20 - 25, 2026
Bend Theatre, Strathclair
Monday - Friday 7:30 pm
Saturday Matinee 2:00 pm

Tickets on sale:
Saturday, March 21
10 am - 2 pm
BY PHONE ONLY
204-365-2436

Payment by cheque
("Strathclair Drama Club") or e-transfer:
strathclairedramaclub@gmail.com

Tickets: \$20 main floor, \$15 balcony

After March 21, call the Box Office:
(204) 365-2436 (9 am - 12 pm)

BIG, THE MUSICAL is presented through special arrangement with Music Theatre International (MTI). All authorized performance materials supplied by MTI (www.mtishows.com).

Living with Diabetes



SUBMITTED PHOTO

By Gerry Nolan
RIVERS BANNER

Just recently a friend of mine was diagnosed with type 2 diabetes which is what I have. I was diagnosed about 15 years ago. I remember the struggle I had to change my eating habits and just day to day living. Exercise and watching what you eat along with the prescribed medications are the key to live a happy healthy life. Well at first not necessarily a happy life!

I had to meet with a dietician and take my blood sugar levels 4 times a day. My fingers got sore from pricking them so often, but it had to be done. Thank goodness I do not use an insulin needle, I am not sure I would like that very much.

The biggest changes for me were eating properly. From portion sizes to eating more vegetables and having less sugar. I used to get a 20 pack of mini donuts and eat them all and drink French vanilla coffee. Also liked pizza and processed meat. Well, that was gone on day one. After a

while I tried a mini donut and it was so sour tasting, I actually spit it out. I seldom have sweets. Once a summer on a hot day I will have ice cream, as a treat. I just do not have any desire to have sweets anymore.

Processed meat is difficult as it is quick to make a sandwich with ham, bologna etc.

One of things for me was I had a great doctor. Dr Roux really really helped me out not only with medications but how to look at things. He supported me so much. One of the things he shared was eating in moderation. An example of this was, if you are going out for dinner, decide if I am going to have a baked potato or dessert, not both but one or the other. I found this very helpful and solid advice.

I read how Bobby Clarke, a former National Hockey League Hall of Fame hockey player who had type 1 diabetes from the time he was 17 played for 15 years did not let diabetes stop him from living his dream. Bobby Clarke said all I have to do is follow a few simple rules.

From last weeks front cover

J S U N D A Y V B H D Y T Y A
 O O J B B A X T S D R L R A F
 W L V Y A G M D O P R A Y E R
 O I X E P R N A T I O N A L A
 R D K S X S R W E X I V G L C
 L A T X A P F I L X U S F X L
 D R C H U S R V E Y T K U W Y
 I I R O C P V E F R W J N P F
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 Z Y W J L N Y L I R F P N K R
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 N C G R B W O U M P S L L I A

- | | | |
|---------------|-------------|------------|
| 1. solidarity | 5. cultural | 9. Sunday |
| 2. expression | 6. barriers | 10. prayer |
| 3. powerful | 7. national | 11. world |
| 4. countries | 8. Nigeria | 12. unite |

Diabetes runs in my family, so it is important to remind themselves to watch what they eat and the amount of exercise they get.

My wife Celia really helped me with my diet and live a healthy lifestyle. Thank you, Celia!

The initial shock was I can't eat this and that. It was not a huge problem, it was more just changing what you eat. Potatoes and bread were 2 of the biggest hurdles for me and of course sweets. I do not really drink any pop. I do drink a lot of water as you have to keep the kidneys working. It also made me pay attention to my body and the little warning signs that would suggest to you

that you are eating too much of something that is not good for you. If I do have too much sugar I get a headache and my blood sugar readings will rise. If my blood sugar gets too low, I get what I call, the shakes. A mouthful of pop, orange juice or a piece of chocolate will straighten me out in just a few minutes. It is a reminder that I have to eat.

If being diabetic is new to you, adjust your eating habits and you will carry on successfully. I learned there were things I had never eaten before that were actually not that bad. For the most part I eat whatever I choose, I just had to learn to choose differently!

**YOUR VOICE
 YOUR VOTE
 YOUR
 CO-OP**

NEW THIS YEAR: Voting for the Board of Directors will be hosted virtually from March 16 to 27, 2026.

Members may vote virtually online, or on location using a device provided by Heritage Co-op during the following times:

Monday, March 23, 2026
 9:30AM-12:30PM – Brandon Food Store
 2-4PM – Rivers Food Store

Tuesday, March 24, 2026
 10AM-12PM – Sandy Lake Food Store
 1:30-3:30PM – Erickson Food Store

Wednesday, March 25, 2026
 1:30-3:30PM – Wawanesa Gas Bar

Friday, March 27, 2026
 10AM-12PM – Strathclair Home Centre

March 16-27, 2026 (M-F)
 8AM-5PM – Minnedosa Administration

More Info: www.heritageco-op.crs



AGM

April 29, 2026
 7PM

Live Event: Minnedosa
 Community Conference
 Centre

Satellite Location:
 Brandon Agro

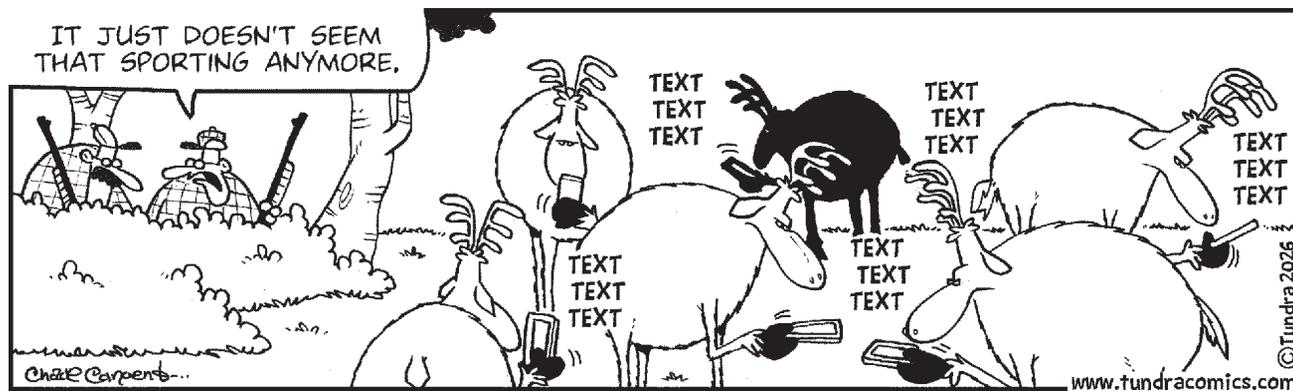


PLEASE NOTE: voting opportunities are only available in advance of the AGM March 16-27

ADVERTISER

Tundra

By Chad Carpenter



Does your dawg bite?

Long ago, 1976, there was a popular movie 'The Pink Panther Strikes Again' starring Peter Sellers as Detective Clouseau. My favourite scene is the detective, spotting a cute little dog, asks the hotel proprietor "Does your dawg bite?" "No", the owner replies. Then, as the detective bends down to greet the nice doggo, the creature snaps and bites. Clouseau turns and reproachfully says: I thought you said your dawg does not bite." The reply has become a byword with our family "That's not my dawg." How lovely to be able to not take accountability for a snapping, snarling creature!

This saying came to mind early this month. Aerie, my almost four year old Yorkie Poodle cross dog (fourteen pounds of attitude!) were returning from our daily walk. As we had set out, there had been a large black dog, untethered and unsupervised at the corner, but a sharp 'no, go home' from me had halted his advance. Coming home this creature was anxious to greet us. I scooped up my dog and stood there, very uncertain of what would happen next, and how I should react. And a knight on a white charger appeared! The driver assessed the situation, leaned on the horn, and proceeded through the intersection, effectively sending the big, black dog back. As I hastened to the left side of the street - I know the right side would have been safer, but 'walk on the left side facing traffic' is a rule!- and the driver kindly stopped and offered me a ride home. Well, me and my dog. I hesitated but a moment, it was less than a block to the safety of my home, but I gladly, and thankfully accepted the ride. Does your dawg bite? Not taking the chance.

Later that evening I was sharing my ordeal with a friend. Her question was, "Do you think it was playful and curious, or threatening?" Really, that was not a question I was about to pause and entertain at that time! I don't believe I had the capacity to stop and think. It was fight or flight for me at that point. Does your dawg bite? I was not about to stop and wonder.

It's a fact that some large breed dogs get a bad rap. It does depend much on the training and environment. Ed always said to watch closely for the little ankle biters- the little lap pets that sneak up behind you and try for a quick snatch and go. I do know that Arie doesn't trust strangers and wishes, desperately, to keep me safe. She also abhors rabbits and squirrels, so maybe it isn't about protecting me....

A cornered dog, a chained dog, a hungry and abused dog...these sights hurt my heart deeply. They have no words that we can easily understand. They have emotions. They don't understand all our words.

Thinking back to that big black dog (and yes, it really was big and black- not imaginary!!)if it could have called out "I just want to play with you", or "I'm lost, help me" my reaction might have been very different!

March a time for optimism

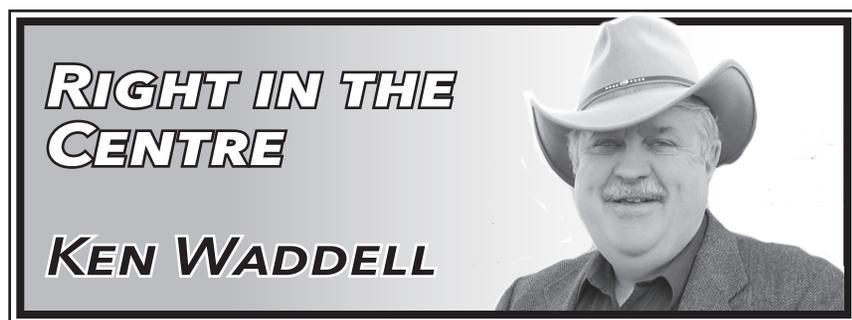
Publisher's note: This an updated re-run of a column I wrote in 2024.

March is a memorable month for me. Seventy-eight years ago, I was born on Mar. 29. I remember many of the intervening months of March. One year, when I was in my very early school days, we had to travel by horse drawn sleigh and van to school because the roads weren't passable for a truck. The snowplows of the day couldn't keep up with accumulated drifts. Yes, students used to be hauled to school in the back of a covered in pick-up truck. But that year, our early 1950s rear wheel drive half ton couldn't make it through the snow clogged roads. It wasn't "over the fields we go" or "dashing through the snow", it was more like slogging all the way.

Another March, actually on my March 29 birthday, I had an agronomist friend out to my own farm at Arden and the snow had receded so much and the sandy soil had warmed up enough that the alfalfa was sprouting nicely. Needless to say that was an exceptionally early spring. One year, on my birthday, we had five calves born in one day. That was memorable.

So this March, while bringing back a flood of memories, also stirs some thoughts about the past but also about the present. Bull sales and cattle sales are booming. And then there's something about March and calving season that brings out the buyers for a new bull to better the genetics of the herd.

Grain growers are putting the finishing touches on seed, fertilizer and machinery purchases. Machinery is being, or has been, made field ready. After some very dry years, and



“ If you are worried about too much CO2 going into the atmosphere, then stop buying stuff from China. ”

surprisingly good crops and prices, growers are figuring it may be a more "average" year this year but hope springs eternal within the human breast and perhaps that's where the spring season gets its name. Even the Neepawa Titans Hockey team gets into the spring season theme as they are in the play-offs and looking forward to the annual Ag Expo auction.

Here's some spring thoughts to chew on for a while.

Farmers feed us all, so everyone please don't speak out against farmers while your mouth is full. Farmers provide a lot of habitat for wildlife, way more in some areas than when they used to when one-third of the crop acres were kept as blackened summer fallow.

Carbon taxes raise food prices and for everything else. Carbon taxes don't lower consumption because most of fuel consumption is essential in rural areas. Rural people don't just fire up the tractors, trucks and combines for the fun of it. Mostly, it's essential.

And so here's a thought, back in

the day, when I was a child, crop yields were far less than now. Today's yields were unheard of in the 1950s and 60s. Why is that? One reason is minimum tillage which retains more moisture than the old tillage methods. Another is that seed varieties are better. Fertilizer use is more targeted and better utilized. And, if Carbon Dioxide (CO2) levels are higher now yields will be higher. Many people don't know that greenhouse operators pump CO2 into greenhouses to get better plant growth. Perhaps a slightly higher CO2 level in the atmosphere is a good thing. I think it is but all the liberals will disagree.

And finally, if you are worried about too much CO2 going into the atmosphere, then stop buying stuff from China. That's where the problem is. Maybe you can convince the volcanoes around the world to stop erupting.

Disclaimer: The views expressed in this column are the writer's personal views and are not to be taken as being the view of the Banner & Press staff.

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Friends that ride together, slide together

Rapid City 22nd Annual Vintage Snowmobile Poker Derby

By Jessica Coulter
RIVERS BANNER

On Saturday, March 7, Rapid City hosted its Annual Vintage Snowmobile Poker Derby. This derby is to continue the legacy of Garth Leys. The weather was calm, perfect and not too cold with temperatures reaching a high of plus 5 in the area.

To start the day, there was a delicious fluffy pancake breakfast to help everyone start up warm and full.

Snowmobile registration started at 10am at the Rapid City Community Complex. Then it was time to grab your sled, collect your cards and enjoy a fun filled ride with family and friends for a chance to win the poker derby. Poker hands were \$20.

With your entry fee you had a chance to win first, second or third place in the derby. The afternoon ride was through the scenic Rapid City Valley. If you were unable to ride you could still take advantage of the derby with a Silent Rider Hand. All poker hands were tallied at 5pm sharp.

The vintage snowmobile derby always includes a draw for a vintage snowmobile. This year the vintage ride was a 1981 Yamaha 340 Deluxe Enticer and tickets to enter were only \$5. There was also a huge silent auction with a ton of donated prizes to win. The draw was at 4pm.

During the day, if you were not snowmobiling or finished snowmobiling, there was free public skating for everyone.



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Braxtyn Usunier is enjoying the Snowmobile Derby, relaxing and waiting for the next ride.

Remarkable centenarian celebrates



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Mr. Tom Sedgewick of Hamiota has celebrated a very special 100th birthday surrounded by his family, (L) Sandra and Barry Todd and (R) Allan and Marlene Smith on Feb. 20th.

By Anne Davison
RIVERS BANNER

Mr. Sedgewick has had many experiences throughout his 100 years of Manitoba living. Most recently, he was the first to receive the Legion Centenary Medal on Jan. 28 from the RCL Woodworth Branch No.118.

In an interview, the very sharp centenarian talked about his life.

He was born in the Minnedosa area. As a very young lad, he lost his mother. It was the dirty thirties.

His dad couldn't raise him on his own and so, young Tom was sent to live with relatives in the Hamiota area. And that's how he came to be a Hamiota area farmer, where he met and married his

wife, Eleanor.

In his retirement years, Tom drove a school bus and the ambulance.

He valued his independence and into his late '90s he could be seen about town, driving his motorized vehicle - with a weather shield, when the climate demanded it.

Tom's time in the military gave him purpose and brought the camaraderie he valued. But he felt robbed of his early years and said, "I asked for 15 extra years." At 100, Mr. Sedgewick said he had received those extra years.

Mr. Tom Sedgewick of Hamiota has celebrated a very special 100th birthday surrounded by his family, (L) Sandra and Barry Todd and (R) Allan and Marlene Smith on Feb. 20th.

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We also worked with Manitoba's hotels, bars and restaurants, First Nations, and private liquor, cannabis and lottery retailers to generate hundreds of millions of dollars in revenue for their businesses. Read more about how we're working with Manitobans to do good together by scanning the QR code below.



Read the report at mbl.ca/ESG



March is Nutrition Month



FILE PHOTO

Submitted

BY PRAIRIE MOUNTAIN HEALTH

Building on last year's successful campaign, the **Nourish to Flourish** nutrition month theme returns in 2026 to highlight the impact of registered dietitians across Canada.

Dietitians play an essential role in supporting the health and well-being of individuals, families, and communities. Dietitians work in various settings. They are located throughout Prairie Mountain Health in community settings, clinics, hospitals, and personal care homes.

Here are a few of the many ways that dietitians help people flourish:

Dietitians provide personal advice that suits your situation and needs.

Eating is a personal experience for each of us. Our nutritional needs and food choices are unique based on many factors such as age, traditions, income, and medical conditions. Food connects us to our communities, our cultures, and ourselves.

Clinical dietitians work at hospitals and personal care homes in the region. They help patients/residents to meet their nutrition goals through various health challenges. They also plan and approve menus that provide nutritious, balanced meals that meet the needs of each person.

Dietitians empower you to make informed, practical choices every day.

Food is more than fuel. Food is connection, comfort, and a pathway to flourishing. Dietitians support people in making informed choices that help them feel their best.

Cancer Care dietitians help patients/residents nutritionally through their cancer journey.

For more information on CancerCare Manitoba dietitians visit <https://www.cancercare.mb.ca/Patient-Family/support-services/nutrition-services>

Dietitians are health promoters.

Health promotion dietitians give you the tools and support you need to take care of your health and wellbeing. It's not just about telling people what to do – it's about creating environments, communities, and policies that make the healthy choice the easy choice.

Dietitians in Health Promotion work with communities, organizations, and groups, rather than individuals. They promote healthy eating with a special focus on nutrition and food skills education such as meal planning and nutritious cooking.

Dietitians provide support through outpatient nutritional counselling and group sessions.

From managing illness and navigating complex health concerns, to preventing disease and helping families build positive relationships with food, dietitians provide trusted, evidence-based guidance at every stage of life.

Dietitians provide **individual nutrition counselling** to help you reach your nutrition goals. They answer general nutrition questions such as for children and during pregnancy. They also provide guidance on specific conditions such as celiac disease and food allergies.

Dietitians also work in clinics throughout Prairie Mountain Health to help people learn about healthy lifestyles and skills to manage health conditions such as diabetes, high cholesterol, heart disease, stroke, and kidney disease.



Submitted
PRAIRIE MOUNTAIN HEALTH

March 15 to 21

National Poison Prevention Week is an annual campaign to raise public awareness of poisoning injuries in Canada, encouraging community involvement as part of the solution.

Each year, more than 5,000 people in Canada lose their lives due to poisoning and annual unintentional poisoning deaths have surpassed transport-related deaths in Canada.

For 2026, the campaign will encourage people in Canada to #RethinkPoisons and use over-the-counter medications and natural health products safely. The goal of the campaign will be to empower people in Canada to talk to their doctor or pharmacist about medications and natural health products, read labels carefully and use products safely.

Medications can help when used safely

It is easy to find over-the-counter medications in stores, online and at home. They are safe for most people if you use them in the right ways but there are dangers if you don't use them safely.

Medications are the leading cause of poisoning in Canada

This includes prescription medications, over-the-counter medications and natural health products. Each year, pain medications are the No. 1 substance people call poison centres about. Poison centres in Canada receive about 100 calls a day about pain medications.

Over-the-counter medication is medication you can

buy without a prescription from a doctor. One example is medication that helps with pain, such as acetaminophen. Another example is cough syrup.

Natural health products are often made from plants but can also be made from minerals or other natural things. Vitamins and traditional medicines are examples. Natural health products can come in many forms such as tablets, capsules, creams, ointments and drops.

Take action to prevent poisoning

Knowing how to use and store prescription medications, over-the-counter medications and natural health products safely can prevent poison-related injuries and harm for you and your family.

Take and give medication, including over-the-counter and natural health products, safely

Always read the label and instructions for use before giving or taking medication. The label tells you how, when and who should take the medication. It also has important warnings and precautions.

Read and follow the dosage. Medications do not work better by taking more than the recommended dose. They work best when you take the correct dose.

Pay attention to all dosage instructions. Read how much medication you can take at once, how often to take it, and how much you can take in 24 hours.

Talk to your doctor or pharmacist if you have any questions about medications or natural health products, such as proper dosages or side effects.

Mixing medications and other substances can be dan-

gerous. Talk to your doctor or pharmacist before you use a new medication or natural health product. This includes vitamins and supplements.

Mixing alcohol and/or cannabis with medications can have dangerous effects. Ask your pharmacist about any effects alcohol and/or cannabis may have on the medications or natural health products you take.

Many over-the-counter products have acetaminophen along with other ingredients. Check labels and do not use more than one product with acetaminophen in it at the same time, unless your doctor or pharmacist has told you to do so.

When picking up or buying medication

Talk to your pharmacist. They can help you use prescriptions, over-the-counter medications and natural health products safely.

Inform your pharmacist about any medication conditions you have or have had as well as all medications (including vitamins and supplements) you are taking and exactly how you take them.

Tell your pharmacist about any changes to your medications, as well as anything that could impact your use of the medication, such as issues distinguishing between medications or taking the correct dosage.

Pay attention to packaging. Choose products with child-resistant packaging and buy smaller packages instead of bigger ones. Having less medication at home can help prevent misuse and abuse.

Store medications safely away after use

Store over-the-counter medications and products safely away, just like prescriptions, after every use.

Storing medications and products safely means locking them away, up high and out of reach. Medication lock bags or boxes can be used to securely store medications.

Return expired and unused prescription and over-the-counter medications and natural health products to your pharmacy or through your local unwanted medications take-back program.

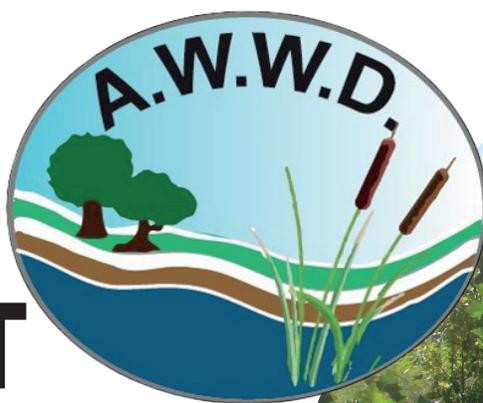
Know what to do in case of a poisoning

Have an action plan in place to help you and your family respond quickly in the event of a poisoning (for example, if someone has taken too much of a prescription medication, over-the-counter medication or natural health product). If you suspect a poisoning, call your local poison centre.

Poison centres are a free phone service you can call. They are available 24/7 and have healthcare providers with special training in the effects of poison. Poison centres give advice to people of all ages who may have been exposed to a poison.

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INFO@MYAWWD.CA

WWW.MYAWWD.CA

Manitoba Government makes menstrual products mandatory in workplaces

First Province requiring employers to provide products at no cost

Submitted
By MB GOVERNMENT

The Manitoba government will make the province the first in Canada requiring employers to provide free menstrual products to employees at no cost, ensuring workers have access to basic necessities while on the job, Labour and Immigration Minister Malaya Marcelino announced today.

“These changes are about dignity and fairness at work,” said Marcelino. “No one should have to worry about access to basic menstrual products while they are doing their job. Periods are a normal part of life and workplaces should reflect that reality by making sure workers have what they need.”

The amendments to the Workplace Safety and Health Regulation require employers to provide menstrual products such as pads and tampons

at no cost to employees in workplace washrooms or another accessible location.

With the change, Manitoba becomes the first provincial jurisdiction to require employers to provide menstrual products. This positions Manitoba as a leader in promoting healthier and more inclusive workplaces, improving gender equity at work, and reducing stigma around periods.

“This is a really important step for gender equity in the workplace, and for health and safety on the job,” said Anna Rothney, executive director, Manitoba Federation of Labour. “Treating menstrual products like the necessities they are will lead to healthier and more inclusive workplaces and reduced stigma around periods. It will help make life more affordable for many workers who are struggling to pay their

bill.”

These amendments respond to the consensus recommendations from the five-year review of the Workplace Safety and Health Act, completed by the Workplace Safety and Health Review Committee in January 2025.

Providing menstrual products in workplaces comes at a modest cost, the minister noted. Federal estimates suggest the annual cost ranges from \$10 to \$25 per employee who menstruate, with initial dispenser and disposal container costs ranging from \$20 to \$300.

The Workplace Safety and Health Branch will enforce compliance through existing workplace inspections. The new requirements will come into effect early August 2026, giving employers time to prepare and purchase any necessary supplies.

Expanding access for every member

Heritage Co-op introduces online voting in 2026 director elections

By Leanne DeVliegere
HERITAGE CO-OP CEO

For Immediate Release – March 9, 2026

Heritage Co-op is taking a major step toward strengthening member engagement and expanding democratic participation. For the first time in its history, Heritage Co-op will offer secure online voting for the 2026 Director Elections, taking place March 16–27, 2026.

This change reflects member feedback received in recent years. In 2024, Heritage updated its bylaws to introduce advance and online voting opportunities, providing members with greater flexibility and accessibility.

Heritage Co-op CEO Leanne DeVliegere welcomed this step forward. “Moving to online Director Elections allows us to better support our members with a modern, convenient way to participate. This step is about meeting our members where they are and making it easier than ever for them to take part in shaping the future of their Co-op.”

Members will be able to vote online using a secure, encrypted digital platform managed by a trusted local service provider. This system ensures voter anonymity while making the election process more accessible for Heritage Co-op’s more than 36,000 members. In addition to voting from any personal device, members can cast ballots in person at designated Heritage Co-op locations using Co-

op-provided devices.

In-person voting opportunities include:

Monday, March 23, 2026
9:30 AM-12:30 PM – Brandon Food Store
2:00 PM-4:00 PM – Rivers Food Store

Tuesday, March 24, 2026
10:00 AM-12:00 PM – Sandy Lake Food Store
1:30 PM-3:30 PM – Erickson Food Store

Wednesday, March 25, 2026
1:30 PM-3:30 PM – Wawanesa Gas Bar

Friday, March 27, 2026
10:00 AM-12:00 PM – Strathclair Home Centre

March 16-27, 2026
(Monday-Friday)
8:00 AM-5:00 PM – Minnedosa Administration Office

Heritage Co-op’s Annual General Meeting (AGM) will be held on April 29, 2026, at the Minnedosa Community Conference Centre, with a satellite location at the Brandon Agro site. Election results will be announced at the AGM alongside the annual financial review and the introduction of the 2026 Community Development Fund recipients. Members are encouraged to RSVP by emailing agm@heritagecoop.ca.

Heritage Co-op members are strongly encouraged to participate in voting from March 16–27, 2026, as this period serves as their sole opportunity to influence the Director Elections. More information can be found online at www.heritageco-op.crs.

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Woodworth Millenium Museum Update - Kenton, MB

Submitted
By ADELINE MERKE GOOD



FILE PHOTO

Woodworth Millenium Museum, Kenton, MB

Good News! At our Annual Meeting on October 27, 2025, we welcomed four new members to our board. They are Torrie Carter, Linda Drake, Carolyn Finnie and Sherry Grandmont. Along with our present members of Bev Bennett, Adeline Merke Good and Mike Ramsden, we now have full membership of 7 members on our board. Meetings are now being held monthly, and our Board would be happy to hear suggestions and ideas from those interested in the future of our museum.

We are fortunate to have several new names added to the list of our volunteers. The enthusiasm and fresh ideas being brought forward are most welcome. Appreciation is given for the work of our faithful volunteers who have donated food, manned the barbecue and served guests. They have developed and cared for the flower beds, done yard work and performed building repairs, sold tickets and so much more. What would we or any other organization do without our

hardworking volunteers?

At present our members are selling tickets for a Spring Draw on a Mini Greenhouse, 2 - \$50 Plant Gift Certificates and a pair of Tall Solar Lights, all these prizes have been locally purchased.

This museum has been named Woodworth and our artifacts represent the history of the former Woodworth Municipality including the villages of Harding, Kenton and Lenore.

It is your museum to enjoy and support. Please do so!

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SPORTS

REF MEMORIES

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GERRY NOLAN



One night in a game, the unexpected took place. Before the game begins, the linesmen would look at the game sheet to get the numbers of the players who were starting a game. If a team started the wrong players a minor penalty was to be assessed to the offending team. The referee was to check the game sheet and count the players on the ice

to ensure all were accounted for. This rule has changed somewhat over the years but back in the day, this was how it looked.

I and the other linesman have got our numbers and the referee has counted the players, so the game begins. Play is going and midway through the second period one of the teams scores a goal, not the

first goal of the game, but a goal.

After the puck is dropped to resume play, the official scorer hits the buzzer signifying the end of the period, but we know it is not the end of the period. The officials all gather together at the penalty box, and the official scorer tells us the player who scored the goal is not listed on the game sheet. The head referee takes the game sheet and sure enough the player that scored is not on the game sheet. What do we do? Well, this is what takes place! The head referee has to deliver the message to the team with the player not listed on the game sheet. We take the goal away and

the player cannot play in the remainder of the game. I was glad I was not the messenger! Of course, the team is not happy to say the least and try blaming the officials. The blame is on the coach who wrote down the players who were playing that night.

You learn from your mistakes! In future games we all checked the game sheets and never started a game without counting heads and making sure that all were accounted for.

Sometimes teams would write down a player's name on the game sheet because to play in the playoffs you had to participate in a certain number of games. Teams

would try and get away with this, but it was cheating! If a player's name was on the game sheet and did not play, we as officials would stroke the name out, and print beside it 'absent'. Then we would call the league president, who would call the team and tell them there is no credit for a player who was not there. The team would be advised, next time it happened, they would have to repost their \$500 performance bond.

Now as I said, the rule changed, if a player was late for the game due to unforeseen circumstances you could write the player's name on the game sheet but not fill in the number of the player. If he showed up to play,

the player would inform the referee, and the referee would instruct the official scorer to put in the number. If the player did not show up for the game, his name was scratched from the game sheet. This rule would not be known to the fans so there were always questions about that rule. This was the only time I was ever a part of this situation thankfully. It did remind me though to always go over the game sheet.

In later years when I evaluated officials, if they did not check the game sheet before the game began they would lose a mark for that and then you had to explain to them why they should be doing that. Live and learn!

NHL TRADE DEADLINE

By Gerry Nolan
RIVERS BANNER

Trade deadline day has come and gone for another season in the National Hockey League. There are of course always winners and losers, but only time will tell. On paper Colorado is the big winner getting Nickolas Roy and Nazem Kadri. They were a great team already and this just made them a whole lot tougher and better.

The question is though, do you just

want to make the playoffs or win the Stanley Cup? The answer should be the Stanley Cup!

If you are looking to improve your team, look at what Colorado did. It does not mean that you will win, but you have really increased your chances.

For me the biggest losers are the Winnipeg Jets. They traded away their size, their grit and toughness. Adam Lowry is the only big guy left that could fight if necessary. In 2018 the

Winnipeg Jets were one of the biggest, toughest teams in their division. Now, all the other teams have adapted to size. The Jets are now the smallest, oldest team in their division.

After last spring's playoff series against the St. Louis Blues and Dallas Stars, one would think that the Jets have to get bigger and tougher. They went the other way, smaller with no grit. The years of such a strong core group are being wasted, by

the time they rebuild their core players will be either retired or have moved on and their play diminished. The current players for the Winnipeg Jets must be disappointed that they did not get the help they needed to compete for the cup. Just making the playoffs is not a win. Winning the Stanley Cup is the ultimate victory.

They need to have a new general manager with a new fresh vision.

WESTMAN HIGH SCHOOL

By Gerry Nolan
RIVERS BANNER

The Hamiota Huskies hosted the Vincent Massey Vikings in game 2 of their best of three series on Thursday evening. The game did not go the way that the Huskies wanted as they lost the game 7-1. Vincent Massey won the series two games to nothing. Mateo Finnie scored the lone Hamiota goal assisted by Reid Hutchings.

This brings an end

to the Huskies season. There were a lot of changes on the team this past season and overall I would think they actually exceeded expectations. The Huskies had a lot of players graduate last year, so they lost a lot of experience. The players should be proud of their season and will look forward to being a stronger squad next season!

Thanks for the entertainment guys, see you next hockey season!

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Going Vertical

Submitted

By PATRICIA HANBIDGE

Spring is on the way! Now is the time to take a moment to say – where is my garden going this season?

Space in the garden is always a challenge so this spring, I encourage you to “reach for the sky and go vertical!” You might be wondering what I mean by vertical gardening which is simply exploiting the vertical space instead of relying on the horizontal which is the more traditional way to garden. Going vertical will give you more space but it is also a way to make your garden more attractive and more accessible. Imagine harvesting strawberries while standing straight up – instead of crawling along the ground.

If you are an avid garden grazer, then vertical gardening has even more advantages. The fruit or vegetables that you harvest will be cleaner as they are not in direct contact with the ground. You will also find that you are losing less fruit/vegetables to moisture and rot again due to less contact directly with the soil. Air circulation is definitely better as well as any breeze will waft through those plants that are vertical. The only drawback to going vertical is you may have to water more often. However, perhaps it is the ideal time to install a simple irrigation system that suits your personal needs!

From the perspective of one who was rural and now is urban – adjusting to a much smaller space and still managing to grow everything desired is challenging. How do you make the best use of the space you have? One solution that is definitely worth trying is to go vertical. Any plant that is a sprawled, a natural climber or needs staking can easily be grown vertically – with the suitable support.

Vertical elements can be utilized as working func-

tions of the garden. They work well to screen unpleasant areas in the landscape; can provide shade or shelter from the wind; can soften stark vertical surfaces; can define use areas in the garden and can provide movement.

Looking outside right now to your garden space might help to encourage you to think about going vertical. If you think of the trees in your landscape, they are an element that is always visible. If you incorporate other vertical elements in your garden, then those too will always be visible in every season - from both inside and out. After all, enjoying the garden in winter, we most often enjoy the view from inside your home where it is warm. Thus, elements need to be more prominent as they are not viewed in close quarters.

Think about incorporating some structure that has beauty itself. Ensure that the structure is suitable for the plant material it supports. Some easy plants to use for your vertical garden include: cucumbers, sweet peas, tomatoes, melons, peas, pole beans, black-eyed Susan vine, morning glory, climbing snapdragons, hyacinth bean, nasturtium, passion flower, grapes, Virginia creeper, hops, and more!!! Just ensure that you supply the suitable structure and remember that some plants need to be tied to the structure while



SUBMITTED PHOTO

others entwine themselves to the support.

So, this season..... look ahead and plan to go vertical!

Hanbidge is the Lead Horticulturist with Orchid Horticulture. Find us at www.orchidhort.com; by email at growyourfuture@gmail.com on facebook @orchidhort and on instagram at #orchidhort.

Tune into GROW Live on our Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/orchidhort> or check out the Youtube channel GROW...

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15	16	17	18	19	20	21
Rivers Legion Bingo 11:30am 	50 + Card Games 1pm 	50 + Club Pool 1pm 	50 + Club Cribbage 1pm  Darts Rivers Legion 7pm 	Rivers Legion Cribbage 7pm  50+ Floor Games 1pm 	Prairie Crocus Library Storytime in Rivers 10am  Chase the Ace Rivers Legion 7pm Kenton Legion 7pm 	RIVERS KIDS CLUB 3RD ANNUAL RETRO TREVEA DRESS 80S/90S RETRO 
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