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# RIVERS BANNER

GAZETTE-REPORTER

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## The 5th Annual Hootenanny at Rivers Provincial Park



PHOTO BY CAROLYN PHILLIPS

Approximately 90 guests of the Rivers Hootenanny lined up for the Beef on a Bun supper hosted by Friends of the Rivers Lake.

**By Carolyn Phillips**  
RIVERS BANNER

The 5th Annual Hootenanny, hosted by the Friends of Rivers Lake, brought together community members in a celebration of conservation, camaraderie, and local talent on a lively Saturday at CJ's Snack and Mini Golf in Rivers Provincial Park. This much-anticipated fundraiser not only showcased the spirit of cooperation among attendees but also emphasized the group's commitment to ensuring water quality and availability in Lake Wahtopanah, benefiting individuals and families alike.

The Friends of Rivers Lake consist of a dedicated group of volunteers striving to maintain and improve the natural resources of the region. Their efforts focus on securing a

sustainable ecosystem for Lake Wahtopanah, which serves diverse recreational purposes. The mission of the group is clear: advocate for environmental health, preserve water quality, and foster recreational activities that enhance the community's interaction with their lakes and parks. However, these initiatives come at a significant financial cost, necessitating annual fundraising events like the Hootenanny.

This year's event drew many guests with approximately 90 partaking of the Beef on a Bun Supper, a testament to the ongoing commitment and enthusiasm of the community. As participants mingled and enjoyed the spectacular weather, the park came alive with the sounds of music, children's laughter, and the inviting aromas from the food.

*read more about the Hootenanny on page 16...*

*Inside...*



**ALL THE FUN  
OF THE MILK  
RUN**  
*P10 - 11*



**SCHOLARSHIP  
WINNER  
LAYTON VEITCH**  
*P2*



# Layton Veitch of Rivers awarded scholarship

By Ken Waddell  
RIVERS BANNER

**S**hawn Mason, President of the Rivers and District Chamber of Commerce said the Chamber Board is thrilled to congratulate Layton Veitch on being successful in obtaining the 2025 Rivers and District Chamber of Commerce Youth-In-Business scholarship!

“This is an achievement and testament to his hard work and dedication”, said Mason, “and we congratulate Layton on his achievements in the community and for this scholarship.”

The Rivers and District Chamber of Commerce believes the small business sector is the backbone of any community and our goal is to contribute to the future development of that sector here in our community. They offer an \$1,000 annual scholarship to a local youth to support their success in business-related postsecondary studies. Information on this scholarship can be found on the Chamber website... <https://riverschamber.ca/>

Mr. Veitch’s history, in his own words, follows below:

My name is Layton Veitch. I have lived in Riverdale my whole life. My dad, Ryan, grew up in Riverdale and my mom, Christa has been a resident since 2003. I am 20 years old and will be attending Assiniboine College in September 2025 to take the Agribusiness 2-year diploma program. I went to Rivers Elementary School from Kindergarten to grade 6 and to Rivers Collegiate grade 7-12. I graduated in 2022 with silver in both academics and athletics. During my grade 12 year and for two years after I played Junior A hockey for the Virden Oil Capitals. This past year, I stayed home to work on our family farm and took my Class 1 driver’s license training.

My parents have instilled in me the importance of

giving back to my community and getting involved in various organizations and committees. From ages 6-16, I was part of the Rivers 4-H Beef Club where I was taught many life lessons. We learned the value of community volunteering by participating in events like cleaning up the fairgrounds for fair day and highway clean up.

Over the past few years, I have been a volunteer coach for both hockey and baseball. Last year I was the assistant coach of the U18 Male Yellowhead Chiefs hockey program and had the pleasure of coaching some players from my home community of Rivers. I was asked to head coach the Directors Cup program for Yellowhead this past spring and really enjoyed this age group. I recently received the co-head coach position for the U15 Yellowhead Chiefs and again, hope to see some hometown boys playing. I was an assistant coach with the U13 Rivers Baseball team this past season, and they just won the gold medal at U13 provincials, hosted right here in Rivers.

This fall, I am excited to move forward with my goal of having a diploma in the agriculture field. Agriculture has always been my passion and plan for the future. Our family has farmed in Riverdale for generations and my plan is to work in the agricultural industry after my diploma and eventually farm full time. Agriculture plays a significant role in the economic success of Riverdale, and I want to see this community grow and thrive as I raise my own family here someday. I also want to continue to volunteer in the community and give back through coaching sports and other activities and be a mentor for the younger kids in Riverdale. I really appreciate the Rivers Chamber of Commerce for offering the Youth in Business Scholarship and giving Riverdale students assistance with their schooling.



FILE PHOTO

#12 Layton Veitch, scholarship winner, also plays for the Rivers Comets.

## BISQUICK PEACH COBBLER

### Ingredients

- 1 cup Original Bisquick mix
- 1 cup milk
- 1/2 teaspoon ground nutmeg
- 1/2 cup butter, melted
- 1 (29 ounce) can sliced peaches, drained
- 1 cup sugar

### Directions

1. Gather all ingredients. Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F (175 degrees C).
2. Stir together Bisquick mix, milk, and nutmeg in an ungreased 8x8-inch baking dish until batter is smooth.
3. Stir in melted butter until blended.
4. Stir together peaches and sugar in a large bowl until combined; spoon over batter.
5. Bake in the preheated oven until golden, 50 to 60 minutes.

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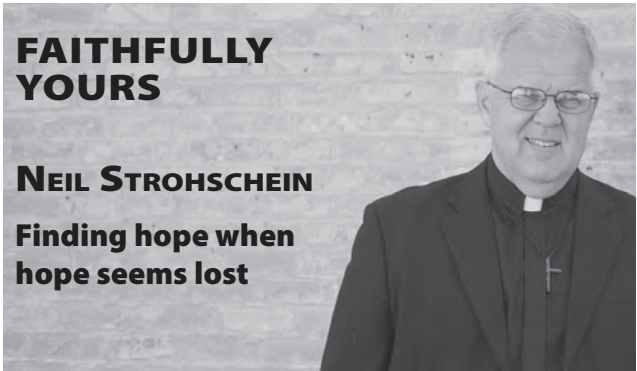
Advocates are familiar with their community and Efficiency Manitoba's offers. And you may have one in your area!

Saving is easier when we work together — and even easier when we bring the savings straight to you.

To see if there's an advocate in your community, visit [efficiencyMB.ca/CEEP](http://efficiencyMB.ca/CEEP).

**EFFICIENCY  
MANITOBA**





The words you are reading are the first words I wrote since my birthday. I began my new “birth year;” with a blank page on my computer screen, a “To-Do” list with three items on it, and a growing concern for the emotional and spiritual health of my fellow Canadians and the people of the United States. The past year has not been easy for many of us.

I spent portions of the last two months following reports from “reliable” news sources and talking with people who are dealing with grief, stress and fighting emotional battles that many of us will never have to face. Some stories broke my heart. Some made me angry. Others made me shake my head, wondering what (or if) government leaders were thinking when they made some of the radical decisions of the past few months.

While each story is unique, they all share a common trait. Two words from St. Paul’s letter to the Ephesians (see Eph.2:12) summarize how these people might describe their current emotional

state. Those words are: “without hope.” Having gone through difficult times myself, I know how easily people’s emotional health can decline to the point where they have lost all hope that conditions in their lives will ever improve. I also know how hard it can be to get that hope back. But it can be done.

One of ancient Israel’s worship leaders must have struggled with similar feelings. But he was not about to let them control how he thought, spoke and lived. Here’s his response to his emotional state: “Why are you cast down, O my soul? Why are you disquieted in me? Hope in God, for I shall again praise him, my help and my God.” (Psalm 42:5-6)

Whenever we start to lose hope, it is a sign that we are putting our trust in people who, sooner or later, will prove to be unworthy of the trust that we have placed in them. They will disappoint us, they will violate our trust and in some cases, their policies will make things worse instead of better. In their zeal to help one group of people, they alienate others. Instead of bringing peace and prosperity, their actions bring poverty and pain, leaving many in their world without hope. Such is the world in which we live.

But here is the good news. As I wrote last week, God has not abandoned us to our own ways and means. God is here. God’s Spirit is among us. God is ready to help all who call on him and who seek his help. He is able to help us find hope when hope seems lost. He asks us to put our trust in him. He will never abandon those who believe in him.

My goal, for the rest of my life, is to share a simple message with the people I meet. There is a

God in heaven who works miracles; and because he lives, there is hope for us, for our families, our communities, our country and world. That will be a recurring theme in the sermons I preach and in the columns I submit for you to read. I hope you will join me in sharing this message.

Our efforts may not ignite waves of hope across our country. But if we can help ease the despair and give some hope to those around us, we will help create an oasis of hope in our community that will draw people to God, who is the source of all hope.

**RAPID CITY COMMUNITY CHURCH**  
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Children's Church during the message  
Bible Study – Thursdays 7:30 p.m.

**JESUS IS LORD**

**Westman Canadian Reformed Church**  
Worship Services  
Sundays at 10:00am

*“Let the rivers clap their hands; let the hills sing for joy together.” Psalm 98:8*

# From last weeks front page

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

Word Bank

1. dock

2. accessible

3. pontoon

4. beach

5. grand

6. safer

7. ramp

8. funding

9. services

10. ribbon

11. porkfest

12. wildlife

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**Does Facebook support local?**

**Has your organization ever called up Facebook and asked them for a donation to your cause? Local business rely on local support to exist.**

**Shop local today.**



# Tundra

By Chad Carpenter



## Helping communities is a purpose and passion

We are well into summer and I better not hear about anyone being bored.

Judging by all the fairs, cattle and horse shows, rodeos and homecomings this summer, you can't possibly be bored. You may gain some weight from all the beef/pork on a bun or pancake breakfasts but no room for boredom for sure.

Our three newspapers (*The Neepawa Banner & Press*, *Rivers Banner* and *Virden Empire Advance*) cover about 50 towns and villages from Ste. Rose to Reston and from Gladstone to Elkhorn. Our problem is getting enough time to attend even a portion of the events. Fortunately, we have great staff and community contributors who send us stories and write-ups from many of the events.

Yet to come this summer are the Virden Indoor Rodeo, the Elkhorn Western Weekend, the Kelwood Fair and the Kelwood Harvest Sun Music Festival. And that's only a partial list.

Community activities are an economic driver in communities. The events create publicity for the respective communities. Events draw a community together, generate funds for local organizations, and show off the communities to the local district, region and beyond. I have often wondered how communities would survive without their local events and the local sports teams? Without these kinds of events and teams, the communities might not survive. All the more reason to build on past successes to create future growth.

That said, it takes a lot of work to put on events, be they one day or multi day projects. Most of the heavy

lifting is done by volunteers putting in long hours and their payment comes in satisfaction.

Another thing that I have observed in my 70 plus years memory of attending events, is the constant battle to keep facilities in good shape. I have seen excellent facilities and some that have failed. I know of at least three rinks that collapsed or were damaged beyond repair. Usually the first failure in a building is the roof but the walls and basement aren't far behind. I visit a lot of communities and you can see the well-kept places and you can see the ones that need upgrading or replacement. It takes a lot of money and labour to keep it all happening.

From our three papers, I send out a message. Please let us help. Communities need to tell their story over a wider area about what they are doing and what they are planning. Newspaper ads and stories are still a big part of that messaging process. We usually offer discounts on advertising to local groups but we need to know weeks ahead, not days, so can plan our work. We need pictures of past events, we need to know your plans for the future. We need the names of the people in charge, especially the

ones who will answer their phones or emails.

I am obviously on a band wagon here, but name me an organization that wouldn't like to have more entries, more attendees, more fans. I bet every event would like to see another 100 or 200 people attend. Newspapers aren't the whole answer but we certainly are part of the answer so please talk to your local newspaper.

**Editors note:** Examples of organizations that work closely with our papers include the Virden Indoor Rodeo, The Neepawa Titans & the Virden Oil Capitals (MJHL), Rivers Jets (THHL) and the Carberry Ag Society to name a few.

Our three newspapers have been around for a long time, we have stood the test of time. Virden-Empire Advance dates back to 1885, the Neepawa Banner & Press to 1896 and Rivers Banner to 1908.

Contact us early about your plans and dreams and we will do our best to help you fulfill them.

**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 newspaper staff.

### Homebodies

RITA FRIESEN



## What are the chances?

It has probably happened to many of us - some random event or person crossing our path that suddenly connects us to someone or somewhere. Years ago, sitting in the Winnipeg airport, I struck up a conversation with a stranger, a woman travelling by herself as was I. Both heading to Calgary to catch connecting flights that would take us to completely different destinations. As we shared our names and a bit about ourselves, I discovered that she was close friends with two of my first cousins. They had grown up in the same area, shared a love of music and stayed friends. So there I sat, chatting with Sylvia, feeling safe and in a familiar space because of our common love and respect for Marilyn and Candace. The positive interaction boded well for the remainder of my holiday. Two strangers with common friends. What are the chances...

In May, while on the tiny and remote island of Iona, my travel companion began a conversation with a gentleman who was camping on the island while seeing much of Scotland and Ireland. Oh, the conversations that Marie has initiated with complete strangers could be a book itself! This time she learned that home for him was a remote outpost on the northern end of Newfoundland, St Anthony. It happens that at one point Marie wished to be a part of the Canadian Coast Guard but found she suffered from seasickness...not a good combination! While the craft she was one was docked at that very same remote outpost, Marie went ashore to speak to the lighthouse keeper there. He was less than sympathetic with her plight for he had a nephew that wanted very much to join the same organization but never qualified. What year had that been, the young man queried. Well, way back in 1977, 48 years ago. It so happens the lighthouse keeper was his grandfather! All these years later, more than forty, there Marie was, speaking to the keeper's grandson. What are the chances...

My aunt and uncle were flying back to Jamaica, and began speaking to another couple waiting for the same flight. It happened that the couple employed one of my aunt's nieces, and there, in the airport called up Heather to talk to her Aunt Mil. Random people starting random conversations, with close ties. What are the chances...

The other day one of my friends was leaving work. She was somewhat puzzled at how dim the headlights were, but it had been raining and muddy. Then she received a text from her son 'mom, turn on your headlights!' Somehow between using the windshield washer buttons, for front and back windows, the light switch had been turned off. She was leaving the city much later than her regular departure time, and she was spotted by a family member that recognized her vehicle and the problem. Not scheduled, not planned, but definitely helpful before heading down dark country roads! What are the chances...

When we stop and think about it, the chances are pretty good! It's a small world and more people know more people.

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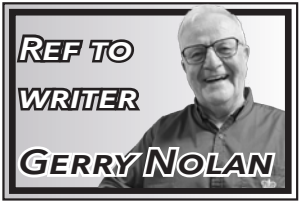


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# Drought 2025



REF TO  
WRITER  
GERRY NOLAN

2025 has been a very dry year in the RiversBanner coverage area.

Thank goodness we had about 4 inches of moisture in the spring. It was already dry before that rain and snow. It seems every day the wind blows, the clouds form but no rain. There have been thunderstorms in some areas and they have received some precipitation but no general rain. Remember the old three-day-rains, we do not see them anymore. Even a two day rain would be nice. As I write this it is raining, yeah! I hope it lasts for a couple of days.

The crops are burning up, the gardens, unless you are watering, are not great. The weeds keep growing and the germination rate this year was not high. Potato bugs have magically appeared, almost in swarms. Your lawn, well I have not had to cut mine many times.

Crops are sort of all over the place with some areas worse off than others. I have seen truck-loads of hay already heading down the highway. The pastures, unless we get a significant amount of rain, are pretty much toast. Producers will be bringing their cows home to feed and that makes for a long year and increases the cost immensely.

This summer, we have seen a number of terrific, vicious thunderstorms, with funnel clouds and just otherwise scary weather. This is becoming more of a trend, not just a one time occurrence. These storms, while not widespread, but rather seem to go in stripes, have already destroyed crops. I saw what happened to crops down by Pipestone where a hail storm went through. The crop was shredded to bits.

I remember as a kid the drought in 1961. The creek ran dry and we pumped water for the cattle all summer. The cows did not milk as well and the crops were awful. The cattle had to be fed earlier than normal so feed had to be stretched out.

This is not the first time we have seen a drought and will not be the last. At least there are no mosquitoes!

In 2011, we were the other way. It rained every week and some crops were flooded out, like the potholes. The crop was great that year. I guess the question is, which one would you choose? Personally, I would take the rain. I get tired of looking at brown grass, like the lawn, the pastures and especially the hills. The farmers need the rain for their crops and their cattle, so before you go to bed tonight, whisper a little prayer for them. Keep them safe when they are out working. We need the farmers because I think we all like to eat!

# Riverdale Council Recap July 15, 2025



By Laura Gill

ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

The Council of Riverdale Municipality held its regular meeting on July 15 at 6:00 p.m. at the municipal office, with Mayor Heather Lamb and all council members present—Councillor Dave Creighton joined remotely until arriving shortly after 7pm.

## Key Highlights Community Updates & Recognitions

- Council reviewed recent correspondence, including a thank-you letter from S. Krahn and an invitation from the Assiniboine West Watershed District.
- Mayor Lamb celebrated the success of Rolling into Rivers and the grand opening of the Friends of Rivers Lake Accessible Dock. She also shared that Dr. Koji from Japan will visit in

September for the unveiling of the Westoba Credit Union mural.

## Finance & Approvals

- Council approved accounts totalling \$446,809.48 and reviewed monthly financial statements, including the June bank reconciliation and Col-labria credit card statements.
- The canteen tender for the Riverdale Community Centre will now be advertised following council approval.

## Upcoming By-Election

Due to a council resignation, a municipal by-election will be held. CAO Marci Quane has been appointed as the Senior Election Official and will oversee the process.

## Important Decisions

- A request to waive utility arrears interest charges for a property on 5th Avenue was denied.
- Council discussed legal matters in a closed session and then resumed the public agenda.
- A new request for donation was received and will be considered at another time as per the grant and donation policy.

Next Council Meeting: August 19 @ 6:00pm

# A Weekend Away: Rediscovering My Sanity on a Self-Care Retreat

PUBLISHED AUTHOR, HOLISTIC  
WELLNESS CERTIFIED HYPNOTIST  
(CH)

MARIE EVELYNE GINGRAS

Last weekend, I had a medical appointment in the city and decided to extend it. I did something revolutionary. I ran away. Not to Bali or a fancy spa with cucumber water on tap, but to a cozy little self-care retreat tucked away. Honestly, it was either that or keep yelling at my houseplants for not thriving under my questionable care.

From the moment I arrived, it felt like my nervous system let out the biggest sigh. The air smelled like calmness and possibility. I could practically hear Mother Nature whispering, "Girl, take your shoes off." So, I did. Grounding, which sounds mystical, is just walking barefoot and pretending you are a wise forest witch. But it works. Standing with my toes in the dirt made me feel less like a frazzled robot in leggings.

Each morning started with hypnosis, meditation and Pilates. At first, my brain screamed, "Excuse me, what are we doing? There is a shopping mall to obsess over!" But eventually, it settled down. Sitting quietly, box breathing

in and out, I felt like I was tuning an old radio full of static giving way to the sweet music of actual peace. One morning, twenty minutes in, I realized I was not thinking about email or what was for dinner. It was just me and the present moment and a mosquito or two that had not signed up for the retreat.

Between meditations, I binge-listened to Jay Shetty tapes. His voice is soothing, like chamomile tea for your brain. He kept dropping truth bombs like, "You can't be everything to everyone and still be true to yourself." That one hit me right in the people-pleaser. I had to pause and mutter, "Okay, Jay, I get it. You can stop dragging me now."

The food was fresh and colourful with fruit and salads that looked too pretty to eat, herbal teas and kombucha that promised to detox my soul, and enough vegetables to make my body forgive me for late-night cookies. Eating slowly, without scrolling my phone, was surprisingly satisfying. Who knew mindful chewing was a thing? Tasting. Every. Bite.

Afternoons were for exploring the property's nature paths and water's edge, where the breeze was like nature's air conditioner. I swear the water ripples were plotting to hypnotize me into staying forever. There is something about the stillness of water that makes you rethink your life choices.

# WELL WATER TESTING

Assiniboine West Watershed District will be coordinating well water testing days. Shipping will be covered by AWWD

Consent forms will need to be signed in order to allow AWWD to receive individual test results for the purpose of enhancing and protecting drinking water

## SAMPLING KIT PICK UP/DROP OFF LOCATIONS

### TEST 1: \$20

- Coliform & E.coli

Use one (1) sterilized 100ml bottle.

### TEST 2: \$62

- Includes test 1, plus Nitrogen-Nitrates & Nitrogen-Nitrites

Use one (1) sterilized 100ml bottle  
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### TEST 3: \$200

- Includes test 1, test 2, plus Calcium, Magnesium, Sodium, Potassium, Manganese, Zinc, Iron, Chloride, Sulphate, pH, Hardness, Conductivity, Arsenic, Barium, Baron, Fluoride & Uranium

Use one (1) sterilized 100ml bottle  
Use one (1) sterilized 500ml bottle

### TEST 4: \$229

- Includes test 1, test 2, test 3 plus Lead & Copper

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Use one (1) sterilized 1L bottle

SAMPLING KITS CAN BE PICKED UP A WEEK BEFORE DROP OFF DATE  
DROP OFF SAMPLES BETWEEN 9:00 - 11:30AM

## TUESDAY, August 5th

ERICKSON - Municipality of Clanwilliam-Erickson office  
RAPID CITY - R.M. of Oakview satellite office  
MINNEDOSA - R.M. of Minto-Odanah office  
OAK RIVER - AWWD office  
ONANOLE - Municipality of Harrison Park office  
RIVERS - Riverdale Municipality office  
SANDY LAKE - Pickup: Heritage Co-op & Drop off: Fire Hall  
STRATHCLAIR - Community Centre  
NEWDAL - Pickup: Post office & Drop off: Drop-in centre

## WEDNESDAY, August 6th

MINIOTA - AWWD Office  
BIRTLE - Prairieview Municipality office  
MCAULEY - R.M. of Ellice-Archie office  
SHOAL LAKE - R.M. of Yellowhead office  
HAMIOTA - Hamiota Municipality office  
KENTON - R.M. of Wallace-Woodworth satellite office  
ELKHORN - Pickup: Municipal office Drop off: Leisure Centre  
VIRDEN - Town of Virden office  
ST. LAZARE - Town Office

## THURSDAY, August 7th

ROSSBURN - Rossburn Municipality office  
ROBLIN - Municipality of Roblin office  
INGLIS - AWWD office  
RUSSELL - Municipality of Russell-Binscarth office

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# Experience the magic of Lucky Break Ranch and Tack

## Rivers Chamber Member of the Month



Escaping the every day for a relaxing ride at Lucky Break Ranch.

SUBMITTED PHOTO

By Carolyn Phillips  
RIVERS BANNER

Nestled amidst rolling hills and lush pastures, Lucky Break Ranch and Tack provides an enchanting escape for horse lovers and those seeking personal growth. With spacious arenas, well-maintained trails, and comfortable barns, the ranch is not only a haven for animals but also for individuals looking to develop life skills and connect with nature. Led by Kim Richardson, a certified equine-assisted living facilitator and riding instructor, Lucky Break offers a variety of programs designed to enrich lives in unique and impactful ways.

For families seeking engaging activities, especially during the summer months, Lucky Break Ranch offers incredible riding lessons and summer camps. The summer camp sessions running from July 28 to August 1 and August 11 to 15 provide an excellent opportunity for kids to learn how to ride, care for horses, and appreciate the beauty of nature. These camps are designed to keep children busy while fostering a sense of responsibility and nurturing a love for animals.

Beyond just riding, Lucky Break Ranch emphasizes personal development through horsemanship. The riding lessons cater to all experience levels, ensuring everyone from beginners to advanced riders can find a program suited to their needs. Kim’s expertise not only helps riders improve their skills but also allows them to learn valuable life lessons about trust, patience, and teamwork through their interactions with horses.

A vital aspect of Lucky Break is its commitment to supporting the community. The ranch offers a variety of programs aimed at individuals grappling with challenges such as PTSD and domestic abuse. These empowerment classes and support groups create a safe space for individuals to heal and grow, utilizing the therapeutic power of horses. The ranch’s serene setting serves as an ideal backdrop for participants to find solace and strength.

Additionally, the Adopt-a-Pony program is a wonderful initiative that promotes responsible animal ownership and gives individuals, especially youth, the chance to bond with ponies. It’s a delightful way for families to engage with their children while teaching them the value of compassion and responsibility.

For those looking for a unique experience, the ranch also offers 2.5-hour trail rides and cowboy suppers during the summer. These rides provide participants with an opportunity to explore the natural beauty surrounding the ranch while enjoying quality time with friends and family. It’s not just an adventure; it’s a way to create unforgettable memories.

To stay updated on events, news, and more, be sure to follow Lucky Break Ranch on Facebook or visit their website at [luckybreaquequine.com](http://luckybreaquequine.com). Whether you’re looking to improve your riding skills, participate in life-changing workshops, or simply enjoy a peaceful day in nature, Lucky Break Ranch and Tack is the place to be. And don’t forget about the annual Haunted Forest Oct 16-19 this year! Always looking for volunteers to help out! Come and experience the magic of horses and the transformative power they hold; it truly is a lucky break!



## Letter to the Editor

### RE: MPI charging motorists for defective license plates

Dear Editor,

I just reread the news release from MPI stating that Manitoba motorists should pay \$15. to replace their defective license plates. I do not recall seeing any vehicles from any province or state in Canada or the USA that have peeling license plates. Therefore, MPI should be going after the plate manufacturer if their manufacturing is substandard to what MPI has requested, and if MPI has requested substandard plates, then MPI should replace them for free and then change their specifications. Just another bureaucratic mess we all have to put up with.

Don Kinley, Gladstone, MB



## Correction

### RE: Oak River Homecoming

Some errors have been brought to our attention in the recent **Oak River Celebrates their** roots article. We apologize for the errors.

Susan (Heapy) Smith had a band of helpers for the supper led by **Ivy Heapy**, Maxine Shamray, Dianne Brown and Penny Froese.

Comrade Diane Kuculym, President of the Oak River Legion Branch #150, introduced the Parade led by piper Dan Jardine, Past President Comrade Carol Black, Vice-president Comrade Gerry **Gourlay**, and secretary treasurer Comrade **Ivy Heapy**. She welcomed the special guests Zone #24 Commander **Fred Pritchard** and Rivers Legion Comrade Dave **Clooney**, Oak River Legion members, **Oak River Ladies Auxiliary** and Legion members.

Homecoming 2025 baseball (T-ball) on Dodgers Field, players were: Ty Paddock, Ben Henry, Ryan Argue, Steve Reid, Lindsay Reid & Chris Thomas, Gerald Kuculym, Allan Reid, Dallas Bridgeman, Brayden & **Darcy Heapy**, the Baily Family of **Don, Walker, Sawyer and Corey** and Les Nicholls, Adam Reid, Eric McLean, Russell Paddock and missing, Rory McCallum due to an injury.

Susan (Heapy) Smith added, “There were many kids on hand enjoying the huge bouncy castle, face-painting, and the Oak River fire truck and fire department displays.”



# Farmers' Advocate



## From sunrise to sunset



PHOTO BY ROB WADDELL

From sunrise to sunset and beyond, farmers across the region laboured long and hard to get their crops seeded. The push was on to get the seed into soil moisture before fields dried out. Many crops sprouted and hung on for the long-awaited summer rains but some did not. A tour of crop conditions shows a lot of variation. Some fields look pretty good but some will not yield well. Hay crops are reported to be lower than normal and many pastures are starting to show drought stress. This particular field photo was taken east of Kelwood.

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# Farmers' Advocate

## More rain needed for healthy harvest season

By Joshua Jackson  
FARMERS' ADVOCATE


With the growing season well underway within the province, many areas are struggling with a lack of rainfall, but Neepawa appears to be an outlier. According to the latest provincial crop report, Neepawa has received 181 mm of accumulated precipitation between May 1 and July 13, which is 94 per cent of the normal 30-year average, making Neepawa the wettest location in the Southwest region for the season

so far, compared to places such as Eden, which has only received 67 mm, 38 per cent of the normal amount of precipitation. Rivers has received 94 mm, which is equal to 48 per cent of normal rainfall, while Virden has received 133 mm, or 66 per cent of the normal rainfall. Much of the central and southwest regions in Manitoba have accumulated less than 70 per cent of the 30-year precipitation average. Only a few locations have accumulated more than 80 per cent of the 30-year average since May 1.

Even with the amount of precipitation received, getting more remains crucial to a healthy crop. According to the crop report, most cereal crops around the province have been sprayed with fungicide, and producers continue to apply fungicide to canola. Winter wheat and fall rye are in the head fill stage, and early crops are starting to turn, likely due to the dry conditions. As for canola, the majority of crops are flowering across the province, while early-seeded crops are in full bloom. The

report noted there are no major insect concerns yet, but producers are monitoring closely. For corn, crops are dark green and have been weathering the drought well, but areas with light sandy soils that haven't gotten rainfall are showing severe signs of stress. As for forage and livestock, producers had a favourable week for harvesting good-quality feed. Yields ranged from average to below average, with older stands and those dominated by grass producing significantly less.

Above-average hay yields were reported in parts of the northwest region where significant moisture occurred during the growing season. The crop report stated some farmers reported that alfalfa weevil feeding has affected hay fields. Producers are also harvesting native hay, while the dry conditions have made it possible to access low-lying areas that are typically too wet for equipment. Those yields remain well below normal.



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# Farmers' Advocate

## Farm Credit Canada and EMILI expand Innovation Farm Network in Manitoba

### Submitted

FARM CREDIT CANADA

Farm Credit Canada (FCC) is expanding its Innovation Farm Network, a key part of its long-term strategy to make Canada a global leader in agricultural innovation and productivity.

The network is adding a 6,000-acre farm, with 2,600-acres dedicated to potatoes, in MacGregor, Manitoba to its series of Innovation Farms, which give farmers access to trusted, practical tools to grow efficiently, build resilience and with less risk. This marks the first time a potato operation has joined the network and reflects FCC's continued commitment to support agtech innovation that meets the needs of a wide range of producers.

The expansion is part of a multi-year partnership between FCC and EMILI, a Winnipeg-based organization focused on accelerating digital agriculture. EMILI will lead testing and validation efforts at the MacGregor site, building on the success of its Innovation Farms, its demonstration site launched in 2022.

"World leading innovation is essential to helping Canadian farmers keep pace in a highly competitive global industry. New methods and technologies in the ag and food industry keeps Canada's economy resilient and strong" said Justine Hendricks, president and CEO of FCC. "FCC's Innovation Farm Network and its partners are critical to delivering this vital innovation to Canadian producers when they need it the most."

In May, FCC announced a \$2-billion commitment through FCC Capital to help Canadian agtech companies bring viable, practical solutions to the market. The Innovation Farm Network is a key part of that investment strategy, offering real-world testbeds for startups while

reducing the risk for farmers who want to adopt new tools.

The EMILI Innovation Farms potato site, located at the JP Wiebe Ltd. operation in MacGregor, produces a variety of Russet potatoes used in food processing. It will test five new technologies for growing potatoes, related crop rotations and irrigated crops. One of those is a sensor-based storage monitoring technology developed by Cellar Insights, an FCC Capital portfolio company. Other tools being trialed include field-scale monitoring systems such as Agi3's CropSentry and Ukko Agro's ForeSite software, which help collect data on growing conditions.

"With the addition of this site, we can evaluate more technologies in more settings and see how they perform in prairie conditions and on different crops," said Jacqueline Keena, managing director of EMILI. "We're grateful to FCC for their ongoing investment. Their multi-year commitment helps us reach more farmers and support more innovators to accelerate the adoption of on-farm technologies, ultimately making them more

efficient."

Potatoes are Canada's most valuable vegetable crop and the fifth-largest primary agriculture crop overall. Canada ranks among the top 10 global exporters of table and seed potatoes. The potato sector is ripe for transformation through technology, particularly in areas like irrigation, water management, nutrient placement and yield optimization.

Expanding to more than 17,000 acres, the FCC Innovation Farm Network supports real-world testing of agtech innovations across Canada. Through a mix of farm types and regions, the network mirrors the diversity of Canadian agriculture, helping build confidence in innovations to lower the risk to producers of adopting new operations and processes.

FCC and EMILI will continue working together to align resources, connect innovators to testing environments and expand the network's reach and impact. Through FCC's investment in Innovation Farms, we're ensuring that Canadian farmers have access to the tools and insights they need to thrive.

## All eyes on moo!



PHOTO BY JOSHUA JACKSON

A group of young calves and their mothers rest in the tall grass alongside the herd in a field east of Kelwood.

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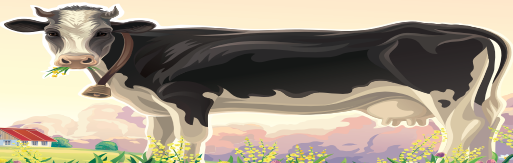
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# Milk Run Fun



## Pancakes, piglets and prairie pride: Oak Lake Fair brings the fun!

By Ev Nolan  
RIVERS BANNER

If you ever doubted that a small town could throw a party for the ages, you clearly were not at the 137th Oak Lake Fair this past weekend! Friday evening started things up with live music filled the hall followed by the fireworks at dusk, bursting above the fairgrounds and reflecting off smiling faces.

From syrupy pancakes at dawn, this small-town fair packed enough charm, chaos, and community spirit to rival any city event, just with more piglets and fewer parking headaches.

Saturday started early with a free pancake breakfast that smelled like heaven and tasted even better. Admission was just six dollars. That got you unlimited flapjacks, hot coffee, and your first glimpse at the heart of the community: the volunteers. They moved like a well-oiled machine; flipping, pouring, and joking like they had been doing it for 137 years.

By mid morning, the main street was a sea of folding chairs, high anticipation, and candy-hungry kids waiting for the parade. As usual, it did not disappoint. Tractors, ponies, 4-H floats, and fire trucks rolled through with waves, horns, and an avalanche of tossed candy. If there was a theme, it was “Everyone Is in It”, from toddlers in wagons to retirees on decorated farm tractors.

Over at the horse ring, things got competitive. Ranch-horse riders showed off their skills, while miniature horses (yes, they are real and adorable) trotted around like they owned the place. Across the fairgrounds, the real crowd-pleaser might have been



Bagpipes on parade on Saturday, July 19 in Oak Lake, MB.

the lawn-mower pull, where decked-out ride-on mowers roared like muscle cars trying to drag weighted sleds across dirt. Loud, dusty, and oddly thrilling, it was pure rural horsepower!

For lunchtime, the line for the roast beef meal stretched past the fence, and for good reason. Piled plates of meat, mashed potatoes, and gravy left people full and happy, with just enough energy to make it to the pig scramble. Imagine: a pen full of greased piglets, dozens of kids trying to catch them, and parents laughing (or panicking) from the sidelines. It was muddy, chaotic, and completely unforgettable.

Inside the exhibit hall, things were calmer but just



PHOTOS BY EV NOLAN

Annual Oak Lake tractor pull was a ton of fun!

as impressive. Prize-winning pies, quilts, vegetables the size of toddlers, and school projects lined the walls. It was a showcase of homegrown talent, and the bragging rights were very real.

As the sun dipped low, the beer garden came alive with live music and laughter. Glow sticks lit up the field, kids chased bubbles, and old friends clinked drinks under the open sky. A perfect finale to a day that felt like both a celebration and a reunion. Because that is what the Oak Lake Fair really is: not just a list of events, but a heartbeat. A place where people reconnect, traditions live on, and the biggest show in town still fits inside a dusty, beautiful patch of prairie.

## 131st Hamiota Fair gets perfect weather

By Anne Davison  
RIVERS BANNER

On day four of the milk run, Hamiota's 131st Agricultural Fair got underway with a customary pancake breakfast. A large parade of floats drew hundreds of spectators throughout town streets.

It was perfect weather for the day. Contestants showed cattle, and light, heavy and miniature horses under cloud cover with a slight breeze.

Miniature horses and draft horse classes showed turn-about.

Manitoba Miniature Horse Club had entries in almost every class for line classes, costume and driving exhibition. The largest class - three horses owned by one family - brought 15 horses into the ring.

There were entries in the home making division and student crafts. A delicious smorgasbord evening meal served about 200 and Manitoba Gymkhana Rodeo Association competition began in the late afternoon and continued into the evening.



PHOTO BY ANNE DAVISON



PHOTO BY DALE DAVISON

Top left: Kinley and Austyn Peters with calves of the calendar year are on deck at Hamiota Fair's cattle showing.

Top right: Hamiota fair day parade makes its way up 4th Street. Young spectators came equipped with large bags to collect the candies flung from the floats.

Left: From Alexander, Manitoba the single competitor in the draft division is Bob Scott of S Bar H Clydesdales showing his heavy draft team. These beauties were also shown in hand and in harness as Unicorn, Best Dressed and Ladies Driving entries.



PHOTO BY ANNE DAVISON



# Milk Run Fun



## Takes a community effort to make the day successful in Harding

By Gerry Nolan  
RIVERS BANNER

Another Harding Fair day is in the books for 2025. The fair is held the third Friday of each July. It's an annual affair and is a part of the "Milk Run" week, held in conjunction with Rivers, Strathclair, Shoal Lake, Hamiota and Oak Lake fair days.

The thing I would like to focus on today is the volunteers and all the planning and hard work it takes to put on such a wonderful day. This year, the weather could not have been more perfect for the day.

The president of the Harding fair committee is Trav Hunter and his executive team makes everything run smoothly. There are numerous meetings held throughout the year when the committee comes together to plan such a big one day event. There are many of the Harding area people who are always somehow joined together to bring the fair to its annual success. It is a community effort to make the day successful.

Some of the things the committee oversees are the fairgrounds and the buildings on the grounds. The upkeep on the buildings takes time and effort. There have been new barns built and this is all done by the Harding Fair Volunteers. The old hall still stands and on fair day you will find the fair office as well as crafts, sewing, kids crafts which are done when the kids are in school. Next to the hall is a smaller building which featured vegetables, grain, baking, flowers and other items that are entered for judging. There was prize money for the winners.

The horse and cattle barns are well kept, as is the ring for stock competitions and the ring where the horses take part in their classes. There is also a beer garden area for a brew for those who need a drink on a hot day. The grass gets cut several times during the season especially around the buildings and the main ring. The ring itself gets cut more often to keep the grass shorter for fair day. The outlying grass is cut and baled about a week before fair day. The committee is also responsible for making sure there is a food truck on the ground. The Harding ladies supply dinner and supper in the church and it is well worth it for a person to go there and try it out. It's delicious!

All this is done before the actual day by volunteers. Volunteers make Harding Fair successful! They invest countless hours to make sure the standard of the fair is met. I must also say there is a pancake breakfast to start the day and it's always a big hit.

I would like to extend a huge thank you to all the volunteers who work so hard, invest their time to make Harding Fair fantastic. I could name them all but I would be afraid of missing someone so I will just say, well done Harding volunteers, well done!



Bareback equitation requires skill, balance, coordination and a well-trained horse. These riders have all these things.



All ages were active at the Harding Fair cattle show on July 18. This young competitor has her eye on the judge to know when he has his eye on her.



PHOTOS BY DALE DAVISON

Rural summer fairs like this one at Harding bring out the best in local gardeners.

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# Crowd swarms Maple Ave. Show 'n Shine

By Anne Davison  
RIVERS BANNER

Hamiota's Show 'n Shine hummed with car collectors, the largest ever showing of polished vehicles as vintage, classic and muscle cars streamed into town on July 16. Visitors from the area and from towns around thronged the street.

Hamiota's Mid West Arts Council director Allison Gardham was an organizer for the Wednesday evening street festival. A cadre of volunteers sold 50/50 tickets, and food tickets, served pork on a bun/hot dogs and assisted with set up and clean up.

Gardham said, "We were thrilled to host the Show n' Shine Car Show this Wednesday night, and what a night it was! With 73 incredible vehicles registered (plus a few unregistered) and a great turnout from the community, it was an evening to remember."

Thirst quenching lemonade was a welcome treat. Gardham reports, "the Mid-West Arts Council's Lemonade Stand for Hope raised \$221 for Cancer Care Manitoba."

At 7pm, a time capsule that was sealed following the 1970 Manitoba Centennial was opened in the Heritage Art Centre. A story in itself, it revealed a glimpse into local life of over 50 years ago. The capsule will be re-sealed and include new material sometime this year.

The evening's entertainment featured local musicians: Edson and Ella Andan, and two bands Cicada and Simple Jack, in downtown Hamiota.



Learning the ropes for fundraising, (L-R back - front) Tyce Carter, Bryden Carter, Reid Gardham and Ace Carter sell tasty lemonade at the Show 'n Shine - part of the province-wide Lemonade Stand for Hope (Cancer Care Foundation).



PHOTOS BY ANNE DAVISON

Mayor Randy Lints, historian Ken Smith and Irene Robinson recording each piece of memorabilia as it's found in the 1970 time capsule.



Bonnie Sangster of Kenton minds the car while Harvey strolls through the show to see the other 72 classics, muscle cars and antique tractors lining Hamiota's Maple Ave. on July 16. In Hamiota's largest show 'n shine (to-date), Sangster's 1956 Olds Holiday model was voted Fan Favorite.

The evening's features were sponsored by 10 businesses with proceeds going toward the Heritage Art Centre roof repair.

Gardham said, "We received wonderful support in fundraising for our roof repairs."

## Saving Seeds

Submitted  
By PATRICIA HANBIDGE

The ancient practice of saving seeds has in recent years become a feasible and in some cases encouraged practice. There is a science to saving seeds; one that requires patience, vigilance and dedication but the rewards and satisfaction outweigh the labour costs.

There is far more to saving seed than going out into the garden and selecting one or two plants from each vegetable variety you grow to serve as seed producers. The ancient people, who began to save seed, observed the plants and paid special attention to how the plants grew, when they flowered and the quality and quantity of fruit produced. Seed was selected from plants that showed natural disease resistance, high yields, good to excellent quality and growth that suited the growing environment. The home gardener can take a similar approach. Plants that show these qualities have the potential to be excellent seed sources.

Although the ancient seed savers had no knowledge of plant biology, the home gardener will benefit from a little of this knowledge. The concept that is most important to know is pollination. Pollination differs with each plant family. Some require wind while others are mainly pollinated by insects and still others utilize a combination of the two. Pollination occurs when the pollen from either male flowers or male flower parts (called stamens) is transferred to female flowers or female flower parts (called pistils). The pollen may be from the flower of related plant or it may be from a flower of a plant in the same family. For example, cucumbers and zucchini are part of the squash family. They have monoecious flowers which means they have both male and female flowers on the same plant. Some plants are dioecious which have male and female flowers on different plants. Some of the most common



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Seeds of all shapes and sizes.

plants that come to mind are poplar and ash trees. Dioecious plants are extremely important as there might be strong preferences to one sex or another due to allergies or other landscape concerns like poplar fuzz! Still other plants contain perfect flowers which contain both the male and female parts in each flower itself. For example, our dwarf sour cherries have perfect flowers so there is no cross-pollination with another cherry to produce fruit which means that gardeners will only require one plant for fruit production.

There is one thing that the ancient seed gatherers did not have to contend with and that modern seed gatherers do: hybridization. Many plant varieties are hybrids meaning the flowers of two related species have been cross-pollinated to produce a new flower or vegetable variety. The seed from hybrid varieties will likely be sterile, however, if it does germinate, it is unlikely that the flowers or vegetables will be like the parent plant. In fact, the plants may be sterile and not produce flowers at all.

We have covered the basics of pollination but there is

still more to know about seed saving. Pollination is the key to either having fruit or not but it is also the key to whether or not the fruit will be like the fruit of the parents. When a seed is described as "coming true", it will grow, flower, and produce fruit that looks exactly like the parent plants. Seed that does not 'come true' will often be seed that has two different parents from the same plant family. For example, green beans will cross-pollinate with yellow beans resulting in beans that can be either green or yellow. When planting a garden to use for seed production, remember that it is important to plant single varieties of those plants you plan to save seed from. Planting only non-hybrid green beans will mean that you will have green bean seeds that will produce true green beans the following year. Keep in mind that if your neighbour is growing vegetables, there can also be cross-pollination between their varieties of vegetables and yours. Maybe you can go together and each grow different types of vegetables but then share the produce. You'll have double the garden space, more vegetables and new friends for life.

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Announcement

Obituary

IN LOVING MEMORY  
MARGARET ANNE BURT (BLACK)  
MAY 27, 1946 ~ JUNE 22, 2025  
AGE 79 YEARS

It is with heavy hearts that we announce the passing of Margaret Anne Burt after a long and courageous battle with cancer. Margaret passed away at the Hamiota and District Health Centre on Sunday, June 22, 2025 with family by her side.

Margaret Anne was born on May 27, 1946, at Forman's Nursing Home in Rivers, Manitoba, to Alexander and Blanche Black. She was the youngest of four children. Her older siblings—Eileen, Frank, and Melvin—were not only her family but her lifelong friends. Margaret shared a special bond with each of them, along with their spouses: Eileen's late husband, Murray Kent; Frank's late wife, Georgina; and Melvin's wife, Carole.

To those who knew and loved her, Margaret was many things. She was Margie, Marg, Aunt Margaret, Auntie Margie. She was a loyal friend, a devoted daughter and sister, a caring sister-in-law, a proud grandmother, a loving mother-in-law, a nurturing mum, and a beloved wife. Each of these roles she filled with warmth, kindness, and grace.

Margaret grew up surrounded by family, faith, and community. She was raised on the family farm just three miles south of Oak River, where life was full of farm life, cousins, school days, and church gatherings. She attended school in Oak River and achieved her Level 7 in piano. She was active in 4-H, taking both sewing and beef, and was also a proud member of the Canadian Girls in Training (CGIT), where she built values that stayed with her for life. She shared a special closeness with her many Paddock cousins. One of her fond memories was placing pennies on the train tracks to watch them flatten and melt as the train rolled by. Margie had a deep love for her own mother's cooking and baking, and as she grew older, baking became her own special role in the household. Every Saturday, she would bake cookies and two cakes for the week.

Margaret was no stranger to hard work both inside and outside the home. Her career began in 1964 at the Royal Bank in Rivers, where she quickly proved herself to be a capable and reliable presence. She transferred to Brandon after a couple of years then back to Rivers. In 1970, she joined the Bank of Montreal in Oak River, until the branch transitioned to Vanguard Credit Union in 2000. Margaret continued her service there until her retirement in 2006. Throughout her career, Margaret balanced the responsibilities of work with deep devotion to her family, taking time off to care for her children during their early years. Her dedication over the decades made her a trusted and familiar face in the community. Margaret was a friend, a mentor, and a steady source of warmth. Customers felt welcomed by her presence, and colleagues admired her commitment and grace. Her legacy lives on in the relationships she nurtured and the impression she left on all who had the pleasure of knowing her.

But Margaret's work didn't stop when she left the office. On the family farm, Margaret wore many hats. She fed and processed chickens, tended the garden, delivered hot meals to the field, fed animals, and hauled grain. Her hands-on work was as much a part of her identity as her career—grounded in commitment, and pride for the love of her family and the farm.

Margaret married Brian Burt on May 16, 1969, at the Oak River United Church. They honeymooned out west, beginning a life together that would be filled with love, laughter, and resilience. In their early years of marriage, they lived in several places in Oak River, Rivers and just outside of Oak River. In 1972, Margaret and Brian moved to the Burt family farm when Brian's parents relocated to town. Marg always remembered how her brothers Frank and Mel were a huge help with all the moving. They first lived in a two-story home on the farm, and in 1980, they purchased the elevator house from Bradwardine and moved it to the farm. This was their loving home up until they moved to town in 2014.

With Brian came another loving family. She became part of a warm and welcoming clan that included Brian's parents, Gladys and Leonard, and his siblings: Marlene and her husband Murray Genung, Mayvis and her husband Jim Sesak, Jack and his wife Wendy, and Linda and her husband Syl MacDougall. Margaret also gained many nieces and nephews.

She and Brian raised three children—Brent, Shelley, and Nancy—with unconditional love. Nurturing, thoughtful, and incredibly patient, she had a heart of gold and a sense of humor that never failed to lift us up. Whether she was cheering from the sidelines or chauffeuring her children to endless activities, she did it all with love in every gesture. Her "special touch" was felt in every corner of family life—the way she remembered every little detail that mattered. Even as her children became adults, birthdays began with that cherished call and her sweet voice singing "Happy Birthday to you..." It was a tradition that warmed hearts and set the tone for the day. And Sunday night chicken suppers? They weren't just meals—they were special moments of togetherness and love that the family holds close in memory. Margaret welcomed Jason and Wendi into the family with open arms with that same gracious heart and joyful spirit that defined her. The family was blessed with countless family gatherings. Some of our best memories were family trips out west—to Calgary, Banff, Ponoka, Sylvan Lake, and Edmonton.

In retirement, Marg and Brian traveled—sometimes just the two of them, with family, and often with dear friends. Their adventures took them to Victoria, Thunder Bay, Jamaica, Cuba, Toronto, New York, Las Vegas, Nashville and Phoenix. Later in life, they made a tradition of ringing in the New Year with friends and family, often heading to Belcourt or Winnipeg to celebrate.

Margaret adored her grandchildren—Jillian, Danika, Carson, and Colby—and they adored her right back. She loved time with them, receiving photos and videos, always eager to stay close to their everyday moments. One especially memorable celebration included a train ride from Rivers to Winnipeg with all four grandchildren, where the rest of the family joined in for festivities. No matter how busy life became, she and Grandpa rarely missed an event. Her grandchildren brought light to her days, and she filled theirs with love and unforgettable memories.

Margaret was blessed with some truly special friends. They stood by her through life's joys and its challenges. Her friends showed up in the most meaningful ways and always seemed to know just when she needed company. We've heard so many beautiful stories from her friends—each one a testament to the joy she brought into their lives. She never took these special friendships for granted.

Margaret gave back to her community in countless ways. Some examples are: volunteering at the Clack Museum for close to 30 years, a member of the Lothair Daly Hospital Guild, served as a 4-H leader teaching cooking to local youth, taught Sunday School, volunteering on fair days for many years and Margaret walked in the Terry Fox Run more than 30 times.

Margaret's life was a beautiful blend of hard work, quiet strength, and selfless service. She never sought recognition—she simply showed up and made everything around her better. She leaves behind a legacy of kindness, grace, and connection.

Margaret is survived by her husband of 56 years Brian; son Brent (Wendi); daughters Shelley, Nancy (Jason) Smith; grandchildren Jillian and Colby Burt and Danika and Carson Smith; sister Eileen Kent; brothers Frank Black, Melvin (Carole) Black; brother-in-law Jack (Wendy) Burt; sister-in-law Mayvis (Jim) Sesak, Linda (Syl) MacDougall and several nieces and nephews; and a large extended family.

Margaret is predeceased by her loving parents Alexander and Blanche Black; parents-in-law Leonard and Gladys Burt; brother-in-law Murray Kent; sister-in-law Georgina Black, Marlene and (Murray) Genung; and nephew Donald Genung.

A celebration of Margaret's life was held on July 7th, 2025 at the Oak River United Church, Interment at Oak River Cemetery and Reception at the Oak River Memorial Rink Hall.

Thank-you

## Thank-you

We would like to extend our heartfelt gratitude to the compassionate staff of the Assiniboine Centre, 2nd Floor, for the care provided to Margaret from June 6th to June 18th.

A special thank you to everyone at the Hamiota and District Health Centre for your steadfast support throughout Margaret's illness. The comfort and dignity you brought to the palliative care room was deeply appreciated and will never be forgotten.

To Abby Clark, Dr. Anderson, Dr. Breneman, and Dr. Segovia-Ramos – your expertise and thoughtful care during Margaret's cancer treatment provided strength and reassurance in difficult moments.

To Charla Murray, Margaret's palliative nurse – your gentle guidance and presence were a true gift. You cared not just for Margaret, but for all of us.

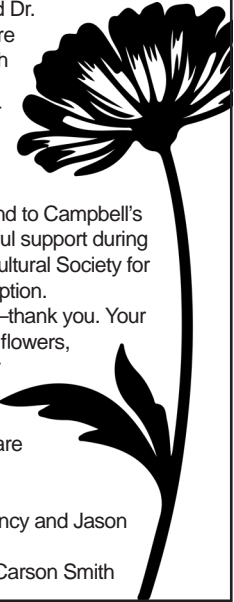
We are sincerely grateful to Linda Clark for the beautiful service, the cherished memories shared, and to Campbell's Funeral Home for your careful planning and thoughtful support during our sorrow. Also, a big thanks to the Oak River Agricultural Society for serving lunch and beverages at the reception.

To all who joined us in celebrating Margaret's life—thank you. Your hugs, stories, visits, phone calls, messages, food, flowers, and thoughtful gestures—both before and after her passing—lifted our hearts and surrounded us with love.

So many incredible people carried us through. We are deeply grateful.

With love and appreciation,  
Brian Burt, Brent and Wendi Burt, Shelley Burt, Nancy and Jason Smith

Grandchildren: Jillian and Colby Burt, Danika and Carson Smith



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# SPORTS

## COMETS, DODGERS BATTLE FOR NORTH DIVISION TITLE

By Robin Wark  
RIVERS BANNER

After two contests, the South West Baseball League North Division finals was knotted up at 1-1.

The Rivers Comets shut out the Oak River Dodgers, 12-0, in the series' opening contest. In game two, the Dodgers triumphed 7-4.

Game three was slated for July 23, after the Banner deadline. The fourth contest will be played July 25 in Rivers. If necessary, game five will be in Oak River on July 27. In the South Finals, the defending champion Boissevain Centennials swept Brandon's RFNOW Cardinals, 3-0.

### North Final

### Game One

### Comets 12, Dodgers 0

To say that Comets hurler Scott Beever was dominant on July 16 is a massive understatement. In his complete game shutout, Beever held the hosts to only four hits. He struck out 13. The Comets' Fred Hrycak said it is "very fun" to watch Beever when he is throwing like that.

"It makes all of our jobs pretty easy in the field when he pitches like that, and he's got a bunch of great pitches that it's awesome to watch him mix and get guys out in all different ways," Hrycak said.

The Rivers offence was also dominant. It collected 14 hits and took advantage of five Dodgers' errors. Hrycak was three-for-four at the plate and drove in three runs. His brother, Luke, pushed

two runs across. Owen Wareham and Beever also had RBIs.

"I think we just some hits together at timely moments," Fred Hrycak said. "We've got some speed on our team and we put the ball in play a lot and it worked pretty well for us all through the game."

### Game Two

### Dodgers 7, Comets 4

The Dodgers scored all seven of their runs in the fifth inning en route to winning game two, 7-4. The host Comets scored two runs in the second and added two more in the third to take a 4-0 lead.

The Dodgers' Mitch Bettersby hit a home run and drove in three runs. Teammate Dylan Schrader had a good night. He drove in two runs. Schrader also earned the win and struck out seven. He allowed four runs on six hits in a complete game effort.

Fred Hrycak had two RBIs for the Comets. He



PHOTO BY DALE DAVISON

# 32 Scott Beever throws another perfect pitch. #25 Zach Veitch covers first.

was tagged with the loss after striking out five and surrendering seven runs, only one earned, on nine hits in six innings. Luke Hrycak threw the final inning.

## UMPIRE MEMORIES

REF TO  
WRITER

GERRY  
NOLAN



I really enjoyed umpiring baseball and often wished I had kept with it but a bad back prevented that from happening. I saw a number of really good ball players from our local towns play the game.

Two men I really enjoyed how they played the game were Jeff Robertson and Kerry Lowe. They played in Hamiota with the Red Sox then with the McCauley Blazers. Jeff also played in Birtle, I believe. They were both good defensively and both men were real tough

guys to get out. They brought passion and intensity to the game, and played the game hard. They were not satisfied just to play the game but to win the game. The reason for a scoreboard, right?

I never had a problem with either athlete on the field of play. They actually caused me to focus. Black everything out around me, especially when I was calling balls and strikes. I appreciated the way they played the game and that they made me a better umpire. I lived for those games! As I learned that I was able to take the focus into more and more games until it became a habit.

Sometimes that intensity would spill over and there would be some heated words with the opposition player and may have led to some physical contact. Riverside comes to mind!

Jeff and Kerry knew the strike zone, what was outside or inside the plate, what was a ball or a strike. One night I was umpiring first base and the home plate umpire called a strike on Kerry, which later

was confirmed a ball. The next pitch Kerry fouled off so it was no balls and 2 strikes. Kerry hit the next pitch and grounded out. The next batter is Jeff and he was not happy about the strike that was called on Kerry. Jeff said to the umpire you put Kerry in a hole with that called strike, which was a ball! The umpire stayed quiet, let it go. Jeff hit the first pitch he saw for a double and the game went on.

After the game Jeff said to the umpire, "You put Kerry in a hole because you were not focused." Well, he said it in a loud voice but to his credit he had his say and left. That little exchange helped me as an umpire to make sure I focused on every pitch.

Hamiota has had some of the greatest teams in Manitoba over the years as the billboard just on the outskirts of the town would attest to. The games I worked with these 2 men made it a lot of fun to be out on the diamond. Thanks Jeff and Kerry for the great memories of being a part of the games you played!

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on Monday



Rivers Banner



# Beef on a Bun Supper and a lineup of local bands

continued from page 1

The Hootenanny featured an impressive lineup of live local entertainment, showcasing the talents of artists such as Jacques Thomson, Shaya, Jeff Worth, Rob Holden, Close But No Guitar, and Murray Kernahan. Each performer contributed to an electric atmosphere, allowing the audience to sing along, and appreciate the rich tapestry of local musical talent.

The culinary highlight of the event was undoubtedly the beef on a bun supper, which was well-received by all. Many attendees indulged in the hearty meal, and the delightful experience didn't end there; numerous guests opted to buy extra portions to take home, ensuring that the enjoyment of the meal extended beyond the event. The delectable food and friendly company created a wonderful atmosphere, amplifying the sense of togetherness that permeated the park that evening.

Among the excitement surrounding the performances and meals was the highly anticipated raffle for a zero-gravity two-seater lawn chair. The winner, Frank Pockett, was thrilled to receive this coveted prize. The raffle not only provided a fun entertainment segment but also contributed to the fundraising efforts, reinforcing the adage that everyone loves a good surprise.

Throughout the day, it was clear that the Hootenanny was more than just a fundraiser; it was a gathering of like-minded individuals united in their love for nature and the preservation of their local environment. Families and friends came together, sharing laughter and stories, while actively highlighting the importance of eco-friendly practices and sustainable living. This collective spirit plays a crucial role in fostering a sense of stewardship among community members, ensuring that future generations may also enjoy and cherish the natural beauty of Rivers and Lake Wahtopanah.



PHOTO BY CAROLYN PHILLIPS

Jacques Thomson entertained the crowd at the Rivers Hootenanny on Saturday, July 19.

In addition to the enjoyable activities and dedicated volunteers, the event also served as a vital reminder of the consistent efforts required to protect and preserve local water resources. The Friends of Rivers Lake represent the engagement of local citizens advocating for the health and sustainability of their community's natural assets. Fundraising events like the Hootenanny underline not only the importance of conservation initiatives but also emphasize the sense of belonging, pride, and responsibility that connects

all who call this region home. As everyone departed, carrying the lingering aromas and smiles from the day's festivities, one sentiment remained clear: the Friends of Rivers Lake would continue their essential work, inspired by the warmth and enthusiasm echoed throughout the park. This vibrant gathering was yet another step in the ongoing journey to ensure the health and safety of Lake Wahtopanah, making it not just a place for recreation but a thriving sanctuary for all.

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
COMMUNITY CALENDAR					July 25	26
27 Rivers Legion Bingo 11:30am	28	29 50 + Club Pool 1pm	30 50 + Club Cribbage 1pm	31 Riverdale Harvest Food Bank 9:30 to 11:30am. Crib Rivers Legion 7pm Darts Rivers Legion 7pm	Aug 1 Chase the Ace Rivers Legion 7pm Hamiota Hotel 7pm	2
3 Rivers Legion Bingo 11:30am	4 50 + Club Rummy 1pm	5 RIVERDALE Council Meeting 50 + Club Pool 1pm	6 50 + Club Cribbage 1pm	7 Crib Rivers Legion 7pm Darts Rivers Legion 7pm	8 Chase the Ace Rivers Legion 7pm Hamiota Hotel 7pm	9