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Rivers Tractor Trek: A journey of hope and community support



PHOTO BY CAROLYN PHILLIPS

The Tractor Trek exemplified the spirit of Rivers – a community that stands together, supports one another, and knows the importance of accessible healthcare.

By Carolyn Phillips
RIVERS BANNER

On a beautiful sunny day, July 5, 2025, the small town of Rivers witnessed an incredible spectacle — the annual Rivers Tractor Trek. This year, 24 tractors rolled out from Redfern's in Rivers, embarking on a meaningful journey to the Clack Museum. The event was not just a parade of tractors but a heartfelt initiative aimed at raising funds for the Hamiota Cancer Care Unit, which plays a crucial role in providing essential treatment for patients in the community.

As the tractors meandered through the streets, they passed by the care home and residential neighbourhoods, bringing smiles and waving hands from onlookers. The atmosphere was filled with a sense of camaraderie and good spirits. The journey even took a scenic turn with a stop at the Rivers Provincial Park, where participants made a loop around the top of the campground. Lorne Green, a devoted supporter of the cause, passed a bucket around at the campground, collecting donations from happy campers and trekkers alike. The generous contributions accumulated close to \$4,000 this year, underscoring the community's commitment to supporting local healthcare services.

For many in the region, the Hamiota Cancer Care Unit is a hidden gem. While larger hospitals provide important medical services, they often come with challenges — long walks from parking areas and bustling waiting rooms. Hamiota offers a more intimate and personal setting. Patients can be dropped off right at the door, eliminating many logistical headaches associated with treatment at larger centres. This aspect is fundamental for those battling cancer, as it alleviates some of the

stress associated with treatment.

An enlightening moment occurred during the visit to the Clack Museum when a patient shared their experience with the Hamiota Cancer Care Unit. This heartfelt testimony highlighted the importance of having accessible treatment options in a community setting. Many attendees were unaware of the existence of this unit and the invaluable support it offers. By participating in the Tractor Trek, they not only contributed financially but also gained insight into the local healthcare options available to them or their loved ones.

The Rivers Tractor Trek is about more than just raising money; it's about building awareness. It serves as a reminder of the strength of community when it comes together for a cause. The trek connects people, stories, and memories, uniting them in a shared vision of hope and healing. Each honk of a tractor horn was a celebration of solidarity, and every smile exchanged was a commitment to supporting one another during difficult times.

As the tractors finally arrived at the Clack Museum, the event wrapped up with a sense of accomplishment and gratitude. The Tractor Trek exemplified the spirit of Rivers — a community that stands together, supports one another, and knows the importance of accessible healthcare.

As we look forward to next year's trek, there's an opportunity for even more participants to join this noble cause. Whether you are a local, a tractor enthusiast, or simply someone who knows the importance of community solidarity, mark your calendars for next July! Together, let's keep the wheels turning for those in need!

Inside...



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The Clack Brothers

Submitted
By BRAYDON PADDOCK

Tucked away just northwest of Rivers, Manitoba, the Clack Brothers Museum is more than a collection of antiques - it's a tribute to the vision, skill, and dedication of the Clack brothers. Among its many remarkable displays is a workshop scene featuring two of the brothers at work, carefully creating the miniature farm toys and models that have become one of the museums most admired attractions.

The Clack brothers – Doug, Tim, and Fred Clack – spent much of their lives farming in the Oakview area while developing a passion for preserving prairie history. Beginning in the 1940s, they collected everything from pioneer tools and horse drawn equipment to automobiles, household furnishings, and rare artifacts that reflected the lives of early settlers. Their dream became a reality in 1983 when they opened the Clack Family Heritage Museum to the public. What started as a single building has since grown into a museum complex with around twenty buildings filled with thousands of artifacts.

The most fascinating contribution made by the brothers was their handcrafted miniature farm equipment. Doug Clack began building detailed scale models of old agricultural machinery, starting with simple implements before tackling increasingly complex pieces. When Doug's eyesight began to fail, his brother Tim continued the work with remarkable pa-

tience and precision. Some of the larger models required years to complete, including a miniature grain binder and an operating threshing outfit that faithfully reproduced the machinery used on Manitoba farms generations ago.

A display at the museum captures the spirit of that craftsmanship. The life-sized figures recreate Doug and Tim Clack as they would have appeared in their workshop, dressed in striped overalls and carefully painting and assembling miniature horses, wagons, and farm implements. Every tiny detail reflects the pride the brothers took in preserving the agricultural heritage they knew so well.

Their work was never simply about making toys. Each miniature was built as an educational piece, showing how early farming equipment operated and honouring the ingenuity of prairie pioneers. Visitors young and old continue to marvel at the precision of the models and the patience needed to create them by hand.



PHOTO BY GORDON GOLDSBOROUGH

Clack Family Heritage Museum (July 2012)

Today, although the Clack brothers are gone, their legacy lives on through the Clack Family Heritage Museum. Maintained by dedicated volunteers, the museum preserves not only thousands of historical artifacts but also the remarkable story of three brothers whose passion for history ensured that the future generations could experience Manitoba's pioneer past firsthand. The miniature workshop is still one of the museums most memorable exhibits, a fitting tribute to two master craftsmen whose hands recreated history one tiny piece at a time.

RASPBERRY BARBECUE SAUCE

Fire up your grill and keep barbecue season going strong with this deliciously unique recipe for Raspberry Barbecue Sauce! Try it on all types of recipes! It's especially tasty on chicken, turkey and pork!

Ingredients

- 1/2 cup ketchup
- 2 tablespoons brown sugar
- 2 tablespoons white vinegar
- 1/2 teaspoon onion powder
- 1/4 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1 cup fresh raspberries

Directions

1. Add the ketchup, brown sugar, white vinegar, onion powder, and garlic powder to a small bowl and whisk until well combined.
2. Puree the raspberries in a blender.
3. To remove the seeds, strain the raspberries through a fine mesh strainer over the small bowl of sauce until only seeds remain in the strainer.
4. Whisk the raspberries puree into the barbecue sauce until fully blended.
5. Refrigerate until needed.

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BULL RIDING SCORING

REF TO
WRITER
**GERRY
NOLAN**



Have you ever wondered how a bull rider gets his score for the bull he just rode? Well, here is how it is done.

Bull riding is scored out of a maximum of 100 points, split evenly with 50 points for the rider and 50 points for the bull. A rider must stay on the bull for a full 8 seconds to qualify for a score. Touching the bull or themselves with their free hand results in immediate disqualification and no score.

The 8 second rule. The clock starts when the bull's shoulder or hip crosses the plane of the chute. The

clock stops at the 8 second buzzer or when the rider gets bucked off, or if his free hand touches the bull or his body or the ground.

No score is if the rider falls off before the 8 seconds.

Judging the rider. Two to four judges watch from the arena, giving the rider up to 50 points each in control and balance. The judge looks for how well the rider stays centred, balanced and in rhythm with the bull's movements. Additional points can be earned if the rider actively and smoothly matches the movement of the bull or pulls their toes and legs away to show

extreme control.
Judging the bull. The bull is scored out of 50 points by the judges regardless of how long a rider stays on the bull.

Difficulty. Judges reward the bulls that display high power, speed, agility and aggressive bucking. Factors include how high the bull bucked and kicking his hind legs, drops its front end and spins or switches direction abruptly.

Understanding the scores. Most average scores are 80-85 points. Exceptional scores would be 90 percent, which is rare. The maximum score is 100 percent of course. This has only been accomplished once in official bull riding history.

Wade Leslierode the bull Wolfman, for the perfect score on October 26, 1991.

Hopefully this helps you understand the concept of bull riding scores.

OLD SAYINGS

REF TO
WRITER
**GERRY
NOLAN**



As I continue this little series on old sayings for this week there are some old sayings and then some from the 70s when I was in my early twenties. Man that makes me feel old! Here we go.

"Too big for his britches" really means someone who is acting conceited or arrogant. You see a lot of this from some professional athletes.

"Not the sharpest tool in the shed", refers to lacking common sense. The world is full of these types of people; in fact

you are not even allowed to say this anymore. Well, I will say it again, there is much LACK of common sense!

"Knee high to a grasshopper", refers to someone who is short and young.

"Barking up the wrong tree", simply means someone pursuing the wrong course of action.

Now from the seventies some things you do not hear of a lot

anymore. "Can you dig it?" Do you understand something or are you cool about it?

"Far out", means something that is awesome and incredible.

"Catch you on the flip side". Burt Reynolds used this line in Smokey and the Bandit, really just means see you later.

"Out of sight", means amazing or unbelievable. "A pad" is where someone lives.

"Groovy" means being cool in a hip sort of way. The last one for this week is Shaggin' Wagon. This is a 70s van with a bed in the back, I see one of those on the highway every now and then, yep that's a Shaggin' Wagon!

Wordsearch from last weeks cover

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

1. Enjoyed

2. Fantastic

3. Branch

4. Hungry

5. Barbecued

6. Meats

7. Team

8. Smoky

9. Tickets

10. Homemade

11. Cookies

12. Ingredients

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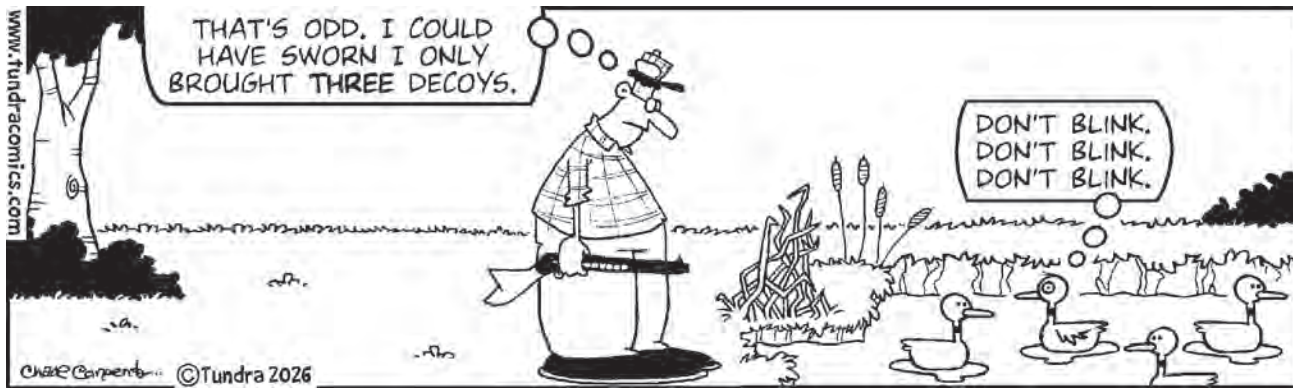
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Tundra

By Chad Carpenter



Bad behaviour has no excuses

An interesting story appeared in the Winnipeg Free Press over the weekend that outlined some of the kinds of problems that we have in our very liberal society today. The little story below is illustrative of problems that face schools and daycares across Manitoba. It's not just daycares and schools that have this kind of problem, its hospitals, workplaces and retail stores. It seems that every bad behaviour by children or adults has some kind of excuse behind it.

Please read the quote below.

"A Windsor Park child-care facility is weighing a five-year-old's right to care versus the safety of other children who have been choked. Little People's Place expelled a pre-schooler in the spring in response to his aggressive behaviour toward other children and staff. The child's family has appealed to the province for him to be reinstated. The case is raising concerns about inclusion support resources and measures to protect everyone at the Cottonwood Road daycare."

In days gone by, a child who acted up like that would've been taken over somebody's knee and given a paddling on the bum. Apparently you can't do that anymore although if I had been in the presence of this incident, there would have been an overwhelming urge to apply some sort of discipline and maybe there was. But I doubt it because you're not supposed to ever, ever speak sharply to a child or God forbid smack them on the bottom.

I am actually surprised that another child didn't walk over and punch the offending kid in the nose. I actually have heard of and seen that happening. I have not witnessed this type of response lately. I know this will offend all the liberals greatly but a punch in the nose by a peer, that is someone close in size and age, is a

time honoured tradition to bring about discipline within a group.

In the above quote, the word inclusion jumps off the page at me. It seems that everything today is framed around inclusion. I am a big supporter of inclusion. I don't like discrimination against people for faults or shortcomings or race or creed or age or sex, but I do draw the line at bad behaviour. There is no excuse for bad behaviour, I know that some people have had very traumatic experiences. I know that with some people including children, maybe especially children, how bad things can happen to them that have caused them a lot of grief. Sometimes, it's a learning disability, sometimes, it's bad parenting sometimes, the problem is unknown but for the life of me I can't see how the teachers, daycare workers or the daycare owners are responsible to include a child that is behaving in the way that the story describes. Trust me, I don't think my children would've gotten away with that kind of behaviour if it had been brought to our attention or to the teacher's attention. It seems that in today's world everything that turns out bad has an excuse.

Not every behaviour has an excuse or reason behind to make it OK. It's true, there are causes, but bad behaviour harmful, destructive, dangerous behaviour has no place anywhere in our society. In the adult world we often hear about people who rob, as-

sault or even murder and the excuse is that they had a tough childhood or they are of a certain ethnic or cultural background. I say nonsense! There is no excuse for bad behaviour and certainly no excuse for bad behaviour on a repetitive basis.

If the quoted account is accurate, then this child should not have been surprised, nor should the parents have been surprised if another child had punched the kid in the nose. According to the report, that didn't happen but the daycare, the staff and I'm sure that provincial lawmakers will be wading in on this issue to try and figure out what to do.

Without a demonstrated change in behaviour, that kid should not be in a day care. It will be interesting to see how all this turns out as the child's parents are asking for him to be reinstated. That would be great but only if the boy learns how to behave. Until he learns good behaviour, he belongs in his own home or in a facility that can deal with his issues, and the parents can deal with that however they need to do. It should not be the responsibility of the day care, the province or the taxpayers to solve the problem.

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.

Homebodies

RITA FRIESEN



Vintage? Antique?

This being over eighty is cause for even more introspection and reflection. So many items that are now museum worthy were staples in my early years. Cream separators, butter churns, galvanized wash tubs, wooden egg crates—fifteen and thirty dozen sizes... that's just the daily or weekly tasks that had already been made easier with advanced technology.

Take the cream separator. No longer was the milk poured into pans and the cream skimmed off the top. This gift to the farm wife was a relatively large item - the milk poured into a large bowl, flowed down through a series of discs, and with the correct speed of a turning crank, the cream ran out one spout and the skim milk down the other. That disc system! There were fifteen to twenty of these depending on the model, and they needed to be washed and sterilised after each use. We actually had a wire hanger for them to dry properly. I acknowledge that this method of gleaning the cream was more time effective than waiting for the milk to cool and the cream to rise. It was a step up for any one milking several cows.

The early butter churn was often a half gallon glass jar. And you shook it, and shook it, and watched and waited for the curds to form and then the butter. Our farm progressed to a squat wooden churn, once again a device with a handle. This time the handle spun a paddle system that agitated the cream. You turned and turned until the sound changed, no longer a splash but an irregular thumping sound. Again, one could process so much more in a given time and the quality was better. This could create a batch large enough to use the wooden butter press whereas the jar usually created a hand formed mound of butter.

That galvanized wash tub, circular or square, was so multi purpose. It could be the laundry tub or the bath tub. In our home the bath sequence was youngest to oldest, the tub often centered on the kitchen floor, the water heated on the range. For me it was already an electric stove not a wood burner.

For many years the farm income relied on, and then was supplemented by, eggs. Many chickens, many eggs. They were collected in wire baskets which were then submerged in a bucket that was set atop a spinning device—a gently spinning device—and the swishing movement removed the major dirt from the eggs before they were dried and placed on layers that filled a shipping crate.

Got to wondering: are me and my memory makers vintage or antiques? By definition, vintage generally refers to something from the past that is of high quality, lasting value, and representative of a specific era. It primarily denotes an item's period of origin and often implies nostalgic, classic, or enduring appeal.

According to the Merriam-Webster Dictionary, an antique is defined as a relic, object, or work of art from an earlier period. Specifically, it highlights that manufactured items or decorative pieces must typically be at least 100 years old to qualify. One of each, me being the vintage?

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Farmers' Advocate



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By Angela Lovell
MANITOBA FARMERS' VOICE

Editor's note: This article was originally published in the June edition of Manitoba Farmers' Voice and is reprinted here with permission.

On the face of it, a seed farm looks much like any other grain farm: they plant the seed, harvest it and store it in bins. But there is a lot more going on behind the scenes to ensure that producers get the best-quality seed varieties for their farms.

"The main difference is our focus on maintaining the seed purity and quality," said second-generation seed grower Tracy Court of Court Seeds near Plumas, Man. "That involves carefully planning our crop rotations, keeping track of what was planted on each field and making sure there are no crop contamination risks."

The Canadian seed industry contributes around six billion dollars to the economy annually, and in 2022/2023, it employed 63,622 people. Local Manitoba seed growers contribute to the rural economy, employ local people, support communities and have a vital role in delivering new seed genetics and technologies to producers.

The value of local knowledge

The process of bringing a new variety to market begins with variety registra-



IMAGE COURTESY OF METRO CREATIVE CONNECTION

tion. Once registered, the variety distributor makes breeder seed available to select seed growers (seed growers with the appropriate designation from the Canadian Seed Growers Association to produce high-generation seed lots) to multiply it in small plots on their farms. From there,

it moves to a network of seed growers who multiply it in larger field plots while maintaining purity and quality, testing its performance under actual local field conditions and helping develop agronomic recommendations on things like seeding rates.

Most of Court Seeds'

customers are within a 100-mile radius of their farm, so local knowledge of growing conditions, soil types, average moisture during the season and heat units is an important part of the selection process for which new seed varieties to grow, as is balancing the needs of producers in

the area.

"Varieties might perform well in the Red River Valley but do terribly here, or something that grows well in the Parkland region just doesn't work here at all, so we are testing all the new varieties that are coming out to try and find which ones fit for this grow-

ing region," said Court. "Our customers value the information that we can give them because we've tried it on our field on a large scale before we pass it on to them, so we can give them a lot of valuable knowledge."

Continued on next page

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Seed growers help build stronger crops from the ground up

Continued from previous page

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“Varieties might perform well in the Red River Valley but do terribly here, or something that grows well in the Parkland region just doesn’t work here at all, so we are testing all the new varieties that are coming out to try and find which ones fit for this growing region,” said Court. “Our customers value the information that we can give them because we’ve tried it on our field on a large scale before we pass it on to them, so we can give them a lot of valuable knowledge.”

A lot of extra work

New varieties are subject to scrutiny throughout their lifetime and for generations after the initial breeder seed release, including several in-field and post-harvest inspections by third-party agencies such as the Canadian Food Inspection Agency, Seeds Canada and the Canadian Seed Growers’ Association (CSGA).

Seed growers take multiple samples throughout the season to ensure that at every stage the seed remains pure, clean and of good quality. Every piece of equipment that goes into the field or handles grain

is thoroughly cleaned and sanitized before moving on to the next crop to prevent cross-contamination.

“It’s all very time-consuming,” Court said. “Sometimes we have to shut the combines down in the middle of the day because we’re switching varieties, so we have to stop and clean everything out, and we can waste three hours of a good combine day, so things like that all have a cost.”

Then there is the endless record-keeping.

“We have to be able to trace where every seed ... comes from right from beginning to end, every bin, every auger, and everything that it touches in the yard,” Court said. “We try to keep track of any potential areas of contamination, so if something ever does go wrong, we can trace it back.”

In the winter, the seed plant runs full-time, processing that season’s seed to stock the retail side of the business for the following spring.

The value of certified seed

According to CSGA, its members grew around 1.26 million acres of certified seed across Canada in 2025, with Manitoba members accounting for just over 315,000 of those acres.

Court Seeds grows and supplies a wide range of certified seed varieties, including cereals, oilseeds and pulses. Certified seed is an important Business Risk Management tool for Manitoba producers. The royalties embedded in the price of certified seed help

fund research to develop new and innovative genetics for their farms and help them stay ahead of potential new threats, whether from weather, pests, diseases or changing market requirements.

“When you buy certified seed, you’re guaranteeing that you’re getting a pure, uniform product, and that product has been tested to make sure it meets certain standards with respect to disease and germination,” Court said. “What you want to see in the field is for every plant to be uniform, because that’s going to maximize yield, and to mature evenly, because if everything is flowering at the same time, you can get your fungicide sprays on at the right time, and that’s definitely going to reduce your disease risk.”

The value of public and private research

Both public and private research are essential to Manitoba’s farms. Public research has public good as a core mandate, focus-

ing on crops such as forages, cereals and pulses. Private research focuses on higher-value crops, which are equally important to Manitoba producers.

“It’s important for the long-term viability of Manitoba’s farmers that we have robust public and private research capacities,” said Jennifer Seward, executive director of the Manitoba Seed Growers Association. “If both models are healthy, they compete with one another, making Manitoba’s farmers and the agriculture community the ultimate winners.”

The biggest trend in developing today’s new crop varieties is a focus on varieties that can withstand weather extremes and stay ahead of evolving disease and insect pressures as the climate changes.

Research funding cuts could have long-term impact

Recent cuts to public research funding have drawn criticism from the seed industry, which fears that reducing research and

development capacity may have long-term impacts on Canada’s competitiveness in global markets.

“Western Canadian grain has enjoyed a global reputation for quality, but other countries are catching up to us,” Seward said. “With rising food prices, if Manitoba’s farmers can’t hold that competitive edge globally, we could be relegated to the last choice by our trade partners.”

The effects of funding cuts to public research may not be felt immediately but will accumulate over time, posing risks to future generations.

“We rely on those plant breeders to develop hardy varieties that are suitable for our climate, and if we’re losing those plant breeders, then we’re going to be relying on varieties that weren’t developed here under our specific conditions with our specific diseases,” Court said. “We need to build a resilient agriculture system in Canada.”

Continued on next page

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Higher seed costs on the horizon

Continued from previous page

With recent cuts in public research funding, more seed growers may have to assume responsibility for increasingly rigorous testing of new varieties to ensure they will perform well in their local customers' fields, which could ultimately result in higher seed costs for producers. These added costs would offset federal funding cuts to Agriculture & Agri-Food Canada for variety development, which could impose an administrative burden on seed growers.

"I potentially see more variety use agreement [VUA] or trailing royalty models similar to those in some of our competitor countries like Australia and the European Union," Seward said. "It is definitely where the industry and the government are looking, so farmers could end up paying for a variety three times through the royalty, their checkoff and through a VUA or a



Jennifer Seward of the Manitoba Seed Growers Association and Tracy Court of Court Seeds Ltd, of Plumas, MB.

trailing royalty."

Seed growers are the final step in the chain of bringing a variety to market, and their experience and careful evaluation of new varieties make it easier for producers to choose which ones will be the best fit for their operation and

keep them profitable in the long term.

Despite challenges ahead, Court believes there is plenty of opportunity for growth in the seed industry, particularly for certified seed, which currently makes up only 25 to 30 per cent of seed



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New AgExpert feature turns years of data into next season's advantage

Submitted
FARM CREDIT CANADA

Farm Credit Canada (FCC) has launched CropPlan+, a new feature within AgExpert Field Premium, that helps producers compare crop plans and test different revenue scenarios using their own historical farm data.

Between unstable global markets, rising input costs and unpredictable weather, farm operators are navigating an increasingly complex environment. CropPlan+ gives producers a practical way to compare different crop plans before the season begins, helping them understand how changes in yields, prices and input costs could affect their operation.

"Canadian producers are among the best in the world at what they do and their tools should match that," said

Mohamad Yaghi, FCC Vice-President for Innovation Hub and AgExpert. "CropPlan+ puts world class planning in every operation's hands, turning a farm's own data into sharper, faster, more confident decisions. When producers plan with precision, they compete harder at home and abroad. That is how every producer's data, kept firmly in their own hands, build an advantage the whole sector shares."

Developed in close collaboration with producers, this feature is designed to ease planning while giving farmers greater confidence in the decisions that shape their operations.

To see the CropPlan+ feature in action, watch the product demonstration on YouTube at the FCC AgExpert TV channel. Look for 'How to use CropPlan+'

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Government programs available to help with water damage

By Greg Nesbitt
MLA FOR RIDING MOUNTAIN

Excessive rainfall and overland flooding caused extensive damage to many areas of Manitoba last month.

To speed up payments for individuals with basement flooding between June 6 and July 1, the Manitoba government is using a Rapid Residential Assessment Model (RRAM).

The model calculates an initial assistance payment based on factors such as water depth, basement size, room type, level of finishing and restoration needs. It also includes emergency work costs such as water extraction, removal of damaged materials and disposal.

The RRAM covers building restoration costs only. Damaged household contents are assessed separately. Assistance for household contents reflects the average replacement cost of basic and essential items rather than the original purchase price or the cost of premium replacements. Appliances are reimbursed based on invoices up to program maximums.

Assistance may also be available for eligible building components such as furnaces, hot water tanks and water treatment systems, as well as structural and site repairs caused by flooding.

For eligible individual claims, assistance is capped at \$3 million, less a deductible, up to the cost of repairs or the assessed value of the property, whichever is lower.

Most eligible Manitobans have already received the initial \$500 payment. Applicants are encouraged to submit photos, receipts, invoices and estimates as soon as possible. For more information go to www.gov.mb.ca/mfrp.

Manitoba Agriculture has eliminated 2025 late-filing penalties for impacted agricultural producers in municipalities and First Nation communities that declared a state of emergency due to flooding. Producers outside these areas who missed the June 30 filing deadline due to flooding may appeal for a waiver of late-filing penalties.

The maximum interim payment available to producers enrolled in the 2026 AgriStability program year is being increased to 75 per cent from 50 per cent of the estimated final payment. This change will improve cash flow for producers by allowing them to receive a larger interim payment within weeks of submitting a completed application. Producers who have already received an interim payment will automatically receive a top-up to the 75 per cent level.

Manitoba Agriculture has also implemented late participation for the 2026 AgriStability program year, allowing producers who did not enrol by the April 30 deadline to still participate in the program, albeit with a reduced benefit. Producers who wish to participate through late participation must pay the required fee before submitting their 2026 AgriStability enrolment.

There is special recognition available for Manitoba farms that have been in families for 100, 125 and 150 years.

The Century Farm Program was introduced in 1981 to recognize families who have maintained continuous family ownership for 100 years or more. To date, 1919 farms have been recognized in our province.

Many fascinating stories have been written by century farm families in recounting the early days and years of the pioneers establishing farms in Manitoba. Families who arrived in Manitoba, without any of the conveniences we take for granted today, often walked many miles to stake claims and build temporary housing in order to survive their first winter. It is because of the foresight and determination of these early pioneers that we have fully developed agricultural communities today.

One of the farms recognized this year was the Les and Donna Odell family farm near Hargrave. I had the honour of being on hand on Saturday, July 11 to present a gate sign and a certificate on behalf of the Minister of Agriculture to the family and the many friends gathered on their farm. Their farm is actually 124 years old so they will be eligible to apply for another honour in 2027.

The Heritage Farm Program was introduced in 2010 to recognize families who have maintained continuous family ownership for 125 years or more. To date, 161 farms have been recognized in our province.

The Legacy Farm Program was introduced in 2020 to recognize families who have maintained continuous family ownership for 150 years or more. To date, eight farms have been recognized in our province.

To apply for Century, Heritage or Legacy Farm recognition apply online at <https://forms.gov.mb.ca/family-farm-recognition-program/> for submission, or you can print the form and mail to Manitoba Agriculture, Box 160, Carberry, MB, R0K 0H0.

If your farm qualifies, you will receive a gate sign to proudly proclaim your pioneering roots.

Just a reminder that if you or anyone you know is celebrating a birthday or anniversary and is eligible for special greetings from elected officials, please contact our



MLA for Riding Mountain, Greg Nesbitt FILE PHOTO

office or go to the website: www.gov.mb.ca/legislature/greeting/index.html

Birthdays from age 65 and up in five-year increments are recognized, as are anniversaries from 25 years and up in five-year increments.

For special greetings from the Governor General of Canada and the King, please visit: www.gg.ca/en/contact-us/birthday-anniversary-greetings. Their criteria for greetings, however, is more restricted than those being requested from the provincial Greetings Branch.

I was honoured to attend the 105th birthday celebration for Edith Edmundson at the Prairie Mountain Regional Museum near Shoal Lake on Saturday, June 13. This remarkable woman, who lived near or in Shoal Lake her entire life, is now residing with her daughter in Langley, BC.

Summer is slipping by and soon harvest will be underway.

By the end of the summer, I will have attended dozens of events throughout the constituency, including a number of community parades. It is wonderful to reconnect with the citizens of these communities as they celebrate at their community events. Thank you for the hospitality!

Greg Nesbitt is the Member of Legislative Assembly for the Riding Mountain constituency. He can be reached at 204-759-3313, toll-free 1-844-877-7767 or by email at gregnesbittmla@mymts.net. When emailing or leaving a message at our office, please include your name, address and a daytime phone number.

Updates from Assiniboine West Watershed District

Submitted
By ASSINIBOINE WEST WATERSHED DISTRICT

Assiniboine West Watershed District (AWWD) is set to receive record funding again in 2026. The recent announcement of 1.8 million dollars provided to AWWD by the Growing Outcomes in Watersheds (GROW) trust fund combined with other funding from other government and private-sector sources will total approximately 3.8 million dollars in funding from sources outside the watershed.

These resources fund many different programs, all aimed at building a more resilient watershed, protecting critical habitat and assisting landowners in their stewardship of the local environment. As it stands, for every \$1 provided by the Watershed District's member municipalities between \$7 and \$8 will be returned in the form of projects. These numbers don't account for the economic value attached to environmental benefits our projects achieve such as improved crop and livestock performance or harder-to-measure benefits, such as improved water quality. These investments allow AWWD to continue delivering practical, on-the-ground projects that benefit producers and the environment.

AWWD has worked with the Rural Municipality of

Minto-Odanah for well over a decade now, building small on-farm water retention projects designed in part to slow overland flows and protect infrastructure. These impacts became obvious as of late, when intense rains and flooding experienced at the end of June could have been much worse if not slowed by a series of small holding pond structures built across the Municipality.

“The small dams and water retention structures that Minto-Odanah have built over the years, many with help from the Watershed District, have reduced the recent flood impacts and protected infrastructure considerably”

- Doug Dowsett, Reeve of Minto-Odanah, noted.

This is but one example of how long-term watershed projects can provide measurable benefits when extreme weather occurs.

Our programs continue to receive increased uptake by landowners, which has presented some new challenges. We are increasingly seeing more project interest and applications than the current funding can support, a challenge we haven't had for 5 years or more.

As a result, AWWD's project approvals committee recently discussed making changes to some of our funding levels and criteria in an effort to spread funding further, support more projects, and increase our impact across more acres. Funding details and any program changes will be finalized later this month and shared through our website and other communications channels.



An Ode to Broccoli



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Broccoli is a great source of vitamin C.

Submitted

BY PRAIRIE MOUNTAIN HEALTH

If there's a green vegetable worthy of a love letter, it's broccoli. With the appearance of little green trees, broccoli belongs to the brassica family, alongside cabbage and cauliflower. In Manitoba, broccoli is often planted in the early spring and is ready for harvesting from early to mid-July. Harvesting is done by cutting the flowerhead from the central stalk. It is best to harvest broccoli before the yellow buds' bloom,

which can indicate that the vegetable has turned bitter (But still edible!).

In addition to the fun appearance, broccoli is chock full of nutrients! It is a great source of vitamin C and contains other nutrients such as iron, potassium and vitamin K. In general, our bodies need vitamins and minerals (like the ones in broccoli) to maintain good health. Broccoli is also full of fibre, making it a satiating addition to meals and snacks.

Fresh or frozen, broccoli is a nourishing addition to meals. Fresh broccoli is best stored in the fridge for up to 5 days. As it spoils, broccoli can become discoloured with brown or yellow spots. It can also appear wilted or less firm. The presence of mold or slimy spots are definite signs of spoiling. Frozen broccoli has similar nutrients to fresh crowns and is often a more affordable option. Excess fresh broccoli can also be frozen for future use. For the best quality, blanch your broccoli prior to freezing.

Using a new vegetable can be intimidating! It is a good thing that broccoli is a versatile vegetable that can be enjoyed in many different dishes. Raw broccoli is a crunchy addition to salads (make sure to chop finely) and pairs well with many dips. When cooked, the possibilities are endless! Broccoli is a yummy addition to soups, stir fries, or, in mac n' cheese. Alternatively, try to add broccoli to already known and loved recipes!

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

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- Use one (1) sterilized 100ml bottle
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TEST 4: \$229

- Includes test 1, test 2, test 3 plus Lead
- Use one (1) sterilized 100ml bottle
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Miniota office: 204-567-3554
Oak River office: 204-566-2270



info@myawwd.ca
www.myawwd.ca

SAMPLING KITS CAN BE PICKED UP A WEEK BEFORE DROP OFF DATE
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WEDNESDAY, 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
NEWDALE - Pickup: Post office & Drop off: Drop-in centre

MONDAY, August 10th

MINIOTA - AWWD Office
BIRTLE - Prairieview Municipality office
MCAULEY - R.M. of Ellice-Archib 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
VIRIDEN - Town of Viridien office
ST. LAZARE - Town Office

TUESDAY, August 11th

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

Help Wanted



FACILITY FOREMAN

This is a permanent full-time position with attractive benefits in Hamiota, Manitoba.

The Hamiota & District Sports Complex along with the Hamiota Municipal Parks Board are searching for an individual to assume the position of Facility Foreman.

Hamiota and surrounding area has a community of 1300 people located one-hour northwest of Brandon on Highway 21. It is in the middle of everything good in Westman.

The Facility Foreman reports directly to the Chief Administrative Officer of Hamiota Municipality. The position is responsible for the management and operation of the Hamiota and District Sports Complex, which is a wintertime hockey and curling arena, as well as the Hamiota Municipal Park, which has the main ball diamonds, agricultural grounds, miniature golf and the Hamiota Aquatic Centre, the community's outdoor swimming pool. Staffing and day-to-day operations of the Aquatic Centre is the responsibility of the Recreation Director.

The successful candidate will be a self-motivated manager with the ability to work unsupervised and allocate and direct staff. The position requires the Facility Foreman to work evening and weekend shifts year-round. Ice making and grounds maintenance experience is considered an asset, however, training is available for suitable candidates.

To apply, submit your salary expectations along with a resume and cover letter clearly marked "Facility Foreman" to;

Facility Foreman Hiring Committee
Box 100, 75 Maple Avenue
Hamiota Manitoba R0M 0T0
E-mail: info@hamiota.com

A review of applications will begin **August 6, 2026**

For further information and a detailed job description please phone (204) 764-3050 or email info@hamiota.com.

Thank you to all applicants for their interest in this position, however, only those selected for further consideration will be contacted.

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Rivers Elementary, Rivers, MB	6.0 hrs per day
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Westview Colony School, Oak River, MB	2.5 hrs per day OR 5.0 hrs every other day

For more details and application information, please visit our website at www.rrsd.mb.ca
Select Employment link then Support Staff Positions link.

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SPORTS

BEEVER, MACKEDENSKI WIN SWBL AWARDS

By Robin Wark
RIVERS BANNER

A pair of Rivers Comets were taken aback when they were honoured with South West Baseball League awards.

For the third straight season, Scott Beever was named the senior loop's Most Valuable Player. In what the league called "one of the closest votes in recent years," Beever was selected as the MVP by a single vote over the Oak River Dodgers' Ty Paddock and John Patmore of the Reston Rockets.

Comets teammate Hayden Mackedenski made a big impact in his first full SWBL campaign. He was named the league's Rookie of the Year and Top Pitcher while winning the Earned Run Average title.

"Scott and Hayden are a ton of fun to watch," Comets player Owen Wareham said. "As a catcher, those guys make my job pretty easy. We are very lucky to have those

guys on our team."

Scott Beever

Despite winning the MVP award for the third straight season, Beever said, "For me winning the MVP was a bit of a surprise. There were a lot of deserving players nominated this year."

For yet another summer, Beever was dominant on the mound. He paced the SWBL with 51 strikeouts during the regular season. He had three wins and a save. In 35 1/3 innings, Beever posted a 2.38 earned-run average. He struck out 11 in a 14-0 July 2 win over the Oak River Dodgers and 10 in a June 3 8-0 shutout of the Brandon Young Guns. Beever had two other outings where he struck out nine.

At the plate, during the regular season, Beever drove in eight runs and batted .243. On July 2 against the Dodgers, he hit a home run and drove in five runs.

Although the MVP award is based on regular-season performance, Beever continued his

strong play in the SWBL postseason. He had a 2-1 record with 35 strikeouts and a 1.91 earned-run average in 22 innings during the playoffs. Beever also batted .429 in the postseason and drove in six runs.

Hayden Mackedenski

When Mackedenski learned of the awards he won, his reaction was similar to Beever's.

"I was super honoured when I found out, but honestly pretty surprised, too," he said. "There are other guys in this league who are also deserving. Even on our own team, Beev is such a fantastic pitcher and so to get recognized like this alongside guys like that is pretty awesome."

The Lethbridge (Alta.) Polytechnic student impressed this summer with a 3-0 record in the regular season and league-best 0.29 earned-run average. Mackedenski fanned 34 batters and walked only two over 24 innings.

Mackedenski twice struck out nine batters



PHOTO BY DALE DAVISON

Rivers Comets # 32 Scott Beever is the South West Baseball League's Most Valuable Player.

during regular season games. He allowed only one earned run all season. What allowed him to be successful?

"I mean, everyone loves getting strikeouts, but you can't rely on that every inning," Mackedenski said. "I think a big part of my success was just trusting the guys behind me. When I couldn't get the strikeout, I knew my defense could get us out of innings. Having

that kind of trust in my team let me just step up and throw with confidence."

Other Awards

The Reston Rockets' Jamie Williamson batted .579 to win the SWBL batting championship.

Brock Fisher of the Wawanesa Brewers received the Mark Minor Award. The prestigious honour is "awarded to a player or team official that shows dedication to the

team and community, and is named to honour the memory of former Lyleton Leaf Mark Minor."

For 22 years, Fisher has been valuable and versatile for the Brewers. This year he spearheaded the purchase of a team bus that not only benefited the Wawanesa baseball team but also minor ball squads and will be used by the Jets, the community's senior hockey team, in the winter.

SWBL: DODGERS IN FINALS, COMETS SEASON COMES TO AN END

By Robin Wark
RIVERS BANNER

The Oak River Dodgers are battling for a South West Baseball League championship, while the Rivers Comets' successful season has come to a close.

The Dodgers fell 5-0 to the Boissevain Centennials in Game 1 of the best-of-five SWBL championship series on July 27. Games 2 and 3 were played July 29 and 30, respectively, after the Banner's deadline.

The series is set to continue with Game 4 on Aug. 4 in Oak River at 6:30 p.m. if necessary. If a fifth game is required, it will be played Aug. 12 in Boissevain, with first pitch also scheduled for 6:30 p.m.

The Comets fell 3-1 to the Dodgers in the SWBL North Division finals.

Dodgers vs Centennials

It is the second straight summer that the Dodgers and Centennials have met in the SWBL finals. Oak River is competing for its first league title since 2020, while Boissevain is looking to win its fifth consecutive championship.

In Game 1 on July 27, the host Centennials led 1-0 after one inning and 4-0 after two. Zane Sawyer went the distance for Boissevain. He struck out six and allowed five hits.

Kaden Rozdeba took the loss for Oak River. He allowed four runs on five hits and five walks in 2 2/3 innings. Dylan Schroder threw 3 1/3 innings in relief. He surrendered one run on three hits and two walks.

The Dodgers were 11-4 in the regular season and made it to the finals with a 5-1 postseason record. In the playoffs, entering the finals, Ty Paddock and Rozdeba had been key cogs in the Oak River offence.

Rozdeba had driven in seven runs. Paddock had hit three home runs. He and Brayden Heapy each had five runs batted in. On the mound, Anthony Friesen had posted a 1.12 earned-run average while throwing 25 of the team's 41 innings in the playoffs.

Boissevain was a perfect 14-0 in the regular season. They dropped one game on their way to the SWBL championship series. Jay Pringle and Drew Hilhorst had led the team with six RBIs each through the first two rounds. Connor Martin and Zane Sawyer had each earned two playoff wins.

Rivers Comets

The Comets posted a 10-5 regular-season record to finish second to the Dodgers in the SWBL North Division. In the playoffs, they beat the Reston Rockets 2-1 before falling to Oak River 3-1. River player-organizer Scott Beever said it is tough to end the season with a loss.

"I'm proud of our group and how we battled through some adversity and always came to the field to try and win," Beever said. "We have a good core and I think we will take the experiences from this year and build on it for next year."

Beever was named the SWBL MVP for the third straight year. Hayden Mackedenski was tabbed as the Rookie of the Year and the Top Pitcher. The young Comets team proved it could compete with the league's best.

"I enjoyed seeing our young team come together and have a good year," Comets player Owen Wareham said. "Everyone on the team played a role. Our offence came from the entire lineup and made games very exciting."

In the playoffs, Layton Veitch led the team with a

.545 batting average. Beever hit .429 while driving in a team-high six runs. As a pitcher, he won two playoff games and posted a 1.91 earned run average.

The ball season is not over for all of the Comets. Beever, Mackedenski and Owen Wareham will play for Team Manitoba at the 2026 Baseball Canada Men's National Championship, Aug. 20-23 in Miramichi, N.B.

SWBL North Division Finals

Dodgers 3, Comets 1

Game Three

Dodgers 16, Comets 1

On July 21, Oak River took a 4-0 lead in the first inning on the way to a 16-1 win. The Dodgers collected 17 hits. Riley Shamray and Rozdeba each drove in four runs. Rozdeba hit a home run. Friesen earned the win as he did not allow a run on three hits over four innings. Paddock pitched two innings and Mitch Battersby threw one.

Mackedenski took the loss. He struck out five while allowing eight runs on eight hits over 2 2/3 innings. McFadden, who struck out four, and Nolan Wright also pitched for the Comets. Veitch drove in Rivers' run.

Game Four

Dodgers 2, Comets 1

In a pitching duel between Friesen and Beever, the game remained scoreless until Oak River broke through with a run in the fourth inning. The Comets came back with a run in the fifth. Oak River added a run in the sixth and held on for the win.

Friesen struck out five and allowed one run on six hits. Beever sent 11 Dodgers back to the dugout. He surrendered two runs on three hits. Paddock and Cody Weilgosh each had an RBI for Oak River, while Veitch had one for Rivers.

Sweetgrass

Submitted
BY PATRICIA HANBIDGE

Sweetgrass (*Anthoxanthum nitens*) was previously known as *Hierochloa odorata* and holds a profound significance in many Indigenous cultures. It is commonly used in ceremony or representation and is often part of the four sacred medicines along with tobacco, cedar and sage. It belongs to the genus *Anthoxanthum* which contains around fifty species that grow in temperate and arctic regions around the world. As it has global distribution, has been used by both interacting and non-interacting cultures it is considered a cultural keystone species. Many cultural practices, traditions and teachings have depended and do depend on this species around the world.

This hardy cool-season grass thrives in diverse habitats and is circumpolar in distribution. It thrives in many diverse habitats but is native to northern Eurasia, Greenland, Iceland, Canada and the United States (except in the south central and southeastern regions). This plant needs full sun, moist soil and is hardy to zone 3.

This perennial grass contains coumarin, which is emitted when the plants are disturbed, such as by drying or burning. It is used by Indigenous peoples across North America with each community having slightly different beliefs about this sweet-smelling plant. Sweetgrass is one of the four plants considered sacred to Indigenous, Inuit and Métis Peoples. It is known for its sweet scent which intensifies when it rains or when burned. It is usually associated with the Prairies but is found in many different growing conditions from low meadows and clearings in forests, along waterways but also in subalpine and alpine zones.

Use of sweetgrass is primarily utilized by the indigenous nations of the Interior Plains. The Anishinaabe Nation believe that sweet grass is the sacred hair of O’gushnan, Mother Earth. When harvested it is often braided, with the three sections representing mind, body and soul.

Some other communities believe that the three sections of the braid represent love, kindness and honesty. The Mi’kmaq who are indigenous to Atlantic Canada, traditionally use sweetgrass for ceremonial smudges, braiding and embellishments on basketry. It is commonly believed that the smoke of sweetgrass will purify thoughts and clear away negative energy. On Vancouver Island, ancestral practices are deeply rooted in cedar and local forest medicines.

This grass has flat, bright green leaves and will grow up to half a metre in height and sometimes even taller with good water and warm temperatures. It has an indescribable fragrance that is somehow a blend of vanilla and freshly cut grass.

The scent is unique and unforgettable. When I water the sweetgrass that I grow it emits this fragrance that spurs many memories. Sweetgrass is a perennial and does produce seeds, but is better propagated by division as it spreads and reproduces through long, underground roots.

It is generally harvested in late June or early July by cutting it close to the ground. It is not acceptable to harvest more than is needed, nor damaging the clump while harvesting. Traditionally it is laid out in the sun for about six hours and once it is thoroughly dried it can be braided, used to make baskets or for use in other ceremonial rituals.

After harvesting sweetgrass and letting it dry, I have been taught by a good friend who was a Cree Elder that



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Sweetgrass is one of the four plants considered sacred to Indigenous, Inuit and Métis Peoples.

sweetgrass helps us to heal and reconnect with our ancestors. The traditional twenty-one strands in the braid have significant meaning. The first seven strands that form the first section of the braid represent the seven generations behind us. The second section of seven strands represents the seven sacred teachings—love, respect, honesty, courage, wisdom, truth and humility. The third section represents the seven generations still to come. All together the braid reminds us that we are all connected – to everyone and everything in the past, the present and the future. To understand that all things in life are interwoven, and that change can only happen right here in the present and that in the present time is the only time we can heal and make a good path to the future.

SUNMONTUEWEDTHUFRI

SAT

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Jul 31

Aug 1

2

CIVIC HOLIDAY

AUGUST 3, 2026

Celebrate the summer long weekend

3

50 + Club Pool 1pm

50 + Club Cribbage 1pm

Darts Rivers Legion 7pm

4

50 + Club Cribbage 1pm

Darts Rivers Legion 7pm

50+ Floor Games 1pm

Rivers Legion Cribbage 7pm

5

Chase the Ace Rivers Legion 7pm

6

Chase the Ace Rivers Legion 7pm

7

Chase the Ace Rivers Legion 7pm

8

9

Rivers Legion Bingo 11:30am

10

50 + Card Games 1pm

11

50 + Club Pool 1pm

50 + Club Cribbage 1pm

Darts Rivers Legion 7pm

12

50 + Club Cribbage 1pm

Darts Rivers Legion 7pm

50+ Floor Games 1pm

Rivers Legion Cribbage 7pm

13

Rivers Food Bank 9:30 - 11:30am

50+ Floor Games 1pm

Rivers Legion Cribbage 7pm

14

Chase the Ace Rivers Legion 7pm

15