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16th Annual Northern Pike Fishing Derby



Aiden Kennedy won \$20 in Chamber Bucks.

SUBMITTED PHOTO



Grand prize winner Cole Lelond won for the 63-75cm category.



Luck of the draw, Justin Gerrard walked away with the Strike Master ice auger.

By Carolyn Phillips
 RIVERS BANNER

On March 8, 2025, fishing enthusiasts gathered for the 16th Annual Northern Pike Classic held at the breathtaking Lake Wahtopanah, organized by the Rivers and Area Game & Fish Association. The event brought together a fabulous mix of seasoned anglers and enthusiastic youth, resulting in a memorable day filled with friendly competition, community spirit, and plenty of fish.

The Derby kicked off under perfect weather conditions, with 154 participants – including 25 youth anglers under the age of 16 – casting their lines on the icy expanse of the lake. The excitement was palpable as competitors settled into their spots, each hoping to make this year’s event one for the books. Over the course of the four-hour fishing derby, an impressive total of 96 northern pike were caught and subsequently released back into the waters, showcasing the event’s commitment to responsible fishing practices.

The highlight of the day was the competitive spirit on display as anglers vied for various cash prizes. Cole Lelond of Rivers took home the grand prize of \$1,000 for the 63-75 cm category. Following closely behind were Riley Boyd, who earned \$500 for a fish in the 51-63 cm range, and Trista Morgan, who secured \$400 for her catch measuring 39-51 cm. Completing the leaderboard was Ron Taylor, who, despite his fish being the only one in the 27-39 cm category, was awarded \$350 for his effort.

The event also placed a strong emphasis on the next generation of anglers. Youth winners received \$50 gift certificates from Stillwater Adventures, along with rod and reel combos, generously donated by Southwest Wildlife Group. The youth winners included Avery Froese taking 1st place, followed by Wynn Feczczyn in 2nd, Julia Raupers in 3rd, and Chloe Kent and Avia Kennedy, who each were awarded rod and reel combos for their commendable efforts.

Adding an extra layer of excitement, Sutton Gerrard won a Trail Ride gift certificate from Lucky Break Ranch & Tack, while the Mystery Time Winners, who earned \$20 in Chamber Bucks from the Rivers and District Chamber of Commerce, included Aiden Kennedy, Trevor Taylor, Angela Roberts, Sean Sherb, and Chris Hillis.

In addition to the day’s fishing, participants had the opportunity to partake in a 50/50 raffle, with the lucky winner, Jason Demarce, walking away with \$417.50. Furthermore, Justin Gerrard was thrilled to win a Strike Master ice auger, purchased from Still Water Adventures, completing the day’s excitement for many.

As the sun began to wane, everyone could feel the camaraderie that had developed throughout the day. With smiles and stories of the day’s adventure shared amongst friends and families, participants left with a sense of accomplishment and a desire to return next year.

The Rivers and Area Game & Fish Association looks forward to welcoming back old friends and new faces alike for the 17th Annual Northern Pike Classic in 2026. This annual fishing derby has become not just a competition, but a cherished celebration of community, sport, and the great outdoors.

Inside...



HAMIOTA JOB FAIR

P7



OAK RIVER BONSPIEL

P2

GETTING SWEEP AWAY BY THE COMPETITION

Oak River Mixed Bonspiel - March 1, 2025



Winner of A Event - Jeff White Rink. Jeff curled with all 3 of his kids. The game was tied in the final end, so had to be decided by a draw to the button.



Runner up A Event - Dick Heapy Rink. They have more than 200 years of combined curling experience.



B Event Winner - Ryan Brown Rink.



C Event Winner - Tom Mellings Rink.

LAZY FRENCH ONION SOUP

Ingredients

- | | |
|--|-----------------------------|
| 3 yellow onions, thinly sliced | 2 tbsps olive oil |
| 3 thyme sprigs, plus leaves for garnish | 1/4 cup dry sherry |
| 6 cups beef broth | 1 tbsp Worcestershire sauce |
| 1/2 tsp ground pepper | 1/2 tsp kosher salt |
| 1 fresh or dried bay leaf | 2 tpsps apple cider vinegar |
| 12 (1/2-inch-thick) slices French bread loaf or other soft baguette, lightly toasted | |
| 8 ounces Gruyère cheese, shredded | |

Directions

1. Gather all ingredients. Preheat the oven to 425 degrees F (220 degrees C) with rack in middle position.
2. Combine onions, oil, and thyme sprigs in a heavy-bottomed pot or large Dutch oven.
3. Bake, covered, in the preheated oven, stirring once halfway through, until onions are wilted and lightly browned, about 40 minutes. Uncover and continue cooking, stirring occasionally, until onions are golden brown and caramelized, about 30 minutes more.
4. Remove from oven and stir in sherry. Cook over medium, stirring constantly, scraping up any browned bits from bottom and sides of pot, until liquid has mostly evaporated, about 3 minutes.
5. Stir in broth, Worcestershire, pepper, salt, and bay leaf; bring to a boil over high. Reduce heat to medium-low, and simmer, undisturbed, allowing flavors to meld together, about 15 minutes. Remove from heat and stir in cider vinegar. Discard thyme sprigs and bay leaf.
6. Increase oven temperature to broil. Ladle soup evenly into 6 broiler-proof bowls or crocks, and place bowls on a large rimmed baking sheet. Top each bowl with 2 bread slices and about 1/3 cup Gruyère.



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

FAITHFULLY YOURS

NEIL STROHSCHNEIN

Walking the road of servanthood



It was something Jesus' disciples never expected to see. Their Lord and Master, their teacher, the one they affectionately called "Rabbi," knelt next to them--a towel wrapped around his waist and a basin of water on the floor close by. He moved from one disciple to another, washing their dirty, smelly, blistered and calloused feet.

Jesus didn't have to wash the disciples' feet. As the host of their Passover meal, he could have asked one of the disciples to perform this task. Instead, he waited to see if one of them would volunteer to do it; but when no one did, Jesus did it himself.

Jesus' actions, while unusual, were consistent with his character. He had not come to this earth to be served by others. He had come to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many. (See Matthew 20:28) To accomplish this goal, Jesus had to be totally surrendered to the will of his Heavenly Father and be prepared to use his power and resources to help those who his Father brought to him.

As one might expect, this did not sit well with some of the people Jesus met during his time on earth. When, for example, he told the residents of Nazareth (the Galilean

town in which he grew up) that they shouldn't expect him to do in their town the miracles he had done in Capernaum, they got angry and tried to throw him off a cliff outside of town.

When he exposed the sins of the Jewish religious leaders (the priests and other officers in the Jerusalem temple), they rejected him and tried to silence him. When they failed to do that, they joined with others in a conspiracy to put Jesus to death. But despite their threats, Jesus kept serving those his Father brought to him (including some of them) until the day he died. He was faithful to his calling, right to the end.

Sometimes, to be the servant God wanted him to be, Jesus had to rebuke the common people for the inconsistencies he saw in them. We recall how, after he had fed roughly 17,000 men, women and children; Jesus showed his disappointment with those who came to see him the following morning. "You aren't here because you saw signs," he told them. "You are here because you ate your fill of loaves (and fish)." (See John 6:26) They wanted a Messiah who would give them whatever they asked of him. They didn't want a Messiah who would ask anything of them.

Jesus wasn't the first one to experience the challenges of being a servant; and he won't be the last. Servants who do what people desire (even when what they desire isn't what is best for them) will always be popular. Those who don't will be mocked, ridiculed and rejected, just as Jesus was. Choosing to be a public servant (whether in government, business, community service or church) is not for the faint of heart.

But that shouldn't frighten any of us. The road of servant-

hood may be challenging; but it can also be very rewarding. It begins with a simple prayer; asking God to help us love, accept and forgive others as he has loved, accepted and forgiven us. Then we go about our work, seeking to use what God has given us to help us help those he will send our way. Such faithful service will always bring great rewards-if not in this life, then certainly in the life to come.

Time is running out on the Veterans Affairs Class Action Suit

The Federal Court Approved Settlement in Class Proceeding (Manuge v His Majesty the King) involving the Calculation of Disability Benefits for Disabled Veterans of the Canadian Armed Forces and Royal Canadian Mounted Police. This underpayment of benefits to affected Veterans relates to recipients of a disability pension or benefit in the 10-year time period 2003 to 2023. Family members can make a claim on behalf of the veteran if deceased. The deadline for application is March 19/25. Links further information on this Class Action Suit, and the process to submit a claim, are as follows. <https://vetwpensionerror.ca/> and <https://veteranspensionreglement.kpmg.ca/>. For further information regarding this opportunity, call Veterans Affairs Canada at 1-866-522-2122 or KPMG at 1-833-839-0648

Message brought to you by the Woodworth Legion Branch #118

From last weeks front page

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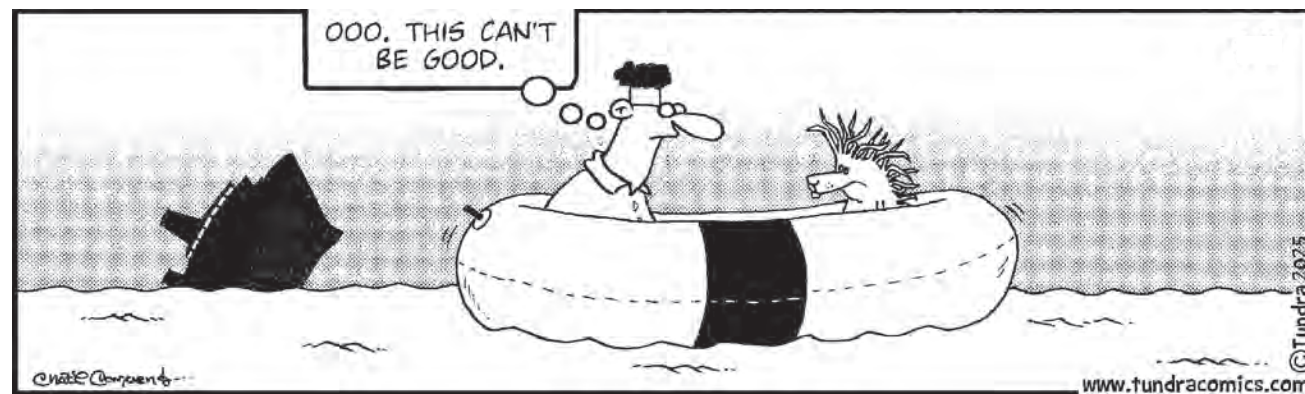
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Tundra

By Chad Carpenter



When I am old...

Strange, isn't it, that when we were young someone who was forty was old. Our grandparents were really old. And they may have been sixty-five! I look through the old photo albums and note pictures of my ancestors- grandparents, parents, aunts and uncles- and they appear more aged when they were in their mid life than when they were ten years older. Part of that will be the change in clothing and hair styles. Part of that will be in the very formal way they presented for family pictures, and part of it will be that life in general had become easier. Career pressures under control, family grown and provided for, and retirement in sight. Much easier to smile.

Reflecting on family genes and attributes, I am thankful for both. Uncle Henry, an uncle by marriage so no genetic line, loved sports- skiing, baseball, golfing- and fully engaged in competitions. There was a Toews family reunion at the Kane schoolyard. The afternoon activities included a baseball game. I so clearly recall Uncle Henry, no longer young, probably the age I now am, leaving third, rushing for home plate, his toupee seriously awry! Safely scoring, he adjusted his hair piece and continued on. I want that! (Well, may not the hair piece! But the attitude!)

One of my aunts, my father's sister, so this is a genetic connection, is 94. Aunt Marilyn continues to be engaged with living, using her musical ability, piano and voice, to encourage others and support her younger than me daughter in her musical endeavours. Up until a few years ago my aunt shared her gifts with 'seniors', some younger than she! Aunt Marilyn pursued her love for music and education as an adult, raising a family of five, the wife of a teacher/preacher and faithful family member to her extended family. Her knowledge of scripture, her depth of faith, her love for God and family inspire me.

Then there was Mr. Bergen: a refugee from Russia, a farmer, a patriarch, an advocate for higher education, and a life long learner. No genetics but what a character. He spoke Low German, I spoke English and he felt if that worked for the world powers of the time, it worked for us. The parents provided the finances for the oldest child to attend university, and then that child helped the next one, and so on down the line. Now, I know that the children were not four years apart in age so there must have been some overlap of support, in the family there were teachers, nurses, and a missionary. The youngest son chose to maintain the farm. I recall watching Mr. Bergen planting an apple tree in a decaying stump in the yard knowing that he would not eat of the fruit, but his children and grandchildren would. Foresight and wisdom.

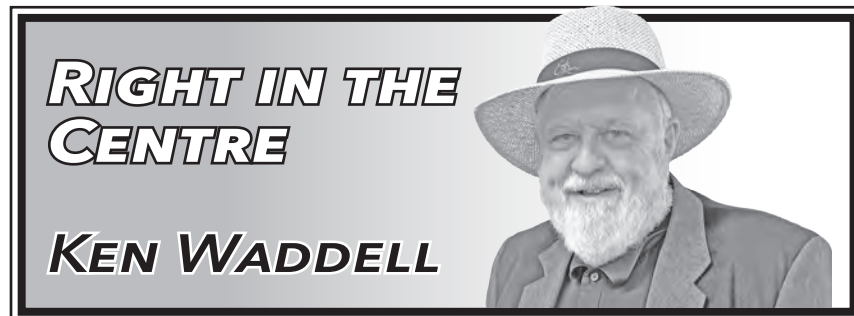
I do wonder what others will remember of me. Keeping in mind that I am not yet old and have years left to make a difference! It is my heart's desire that I will be remembered with affection, and respect. I'm still working on making memories!

Tariffs a bad choice on both sides of the border

The Federal Liberal Party of Canada leadership race ended in the afternoon on Sunday, March 9. By the look of the results, the race actually ended before it started. The predicted winner, Mark Carney, received over 85 per cent of the vote. Over 400,000 people signed up to vote but just over 150,000 people actually voted. It is my understanding that a person doesn't have to pay a membership fee, they only need to register to be a member and to vote in the leadership race.

Mark Carney promised throughout the short campaign and in his speech on Sunday that he would stand up to Trump, repeal the carbon tax and unite the country. It sounds good except for the fact that Carney has been Justin Trudeau's financial advisor for years and until recently has been a big promoter of the carbon tax. Carney's approach has been that the government has to punish purchasers of gas by taxing it heavily in an effort to get car and truck drivers to use less, to save the planet from burning up.

It's very flawed logic because Canada produces a very small percentage of the world's greenhouse gases, especially compared to China for example. In addition China uses every fuel available to them to burn to create energy heat buildings and power plants. We, in Canada, have been taxing our people to solve a problem that may not exist and even if it does, we aren't doing much to make it worse.



The Liberal policies that have limited our economy will continue under Carney who may well be named prime minister by the time you read this column.

One of the absolutely worst Liberal policies has been to commit \$50 billion to three EV car battery plants when we don't even produce an electric car in Canada. Canada has also placed a tariff on Chinese electric vehicles, I believe it's 100 percent and that does two things. It makes them just as expensive as US built EVs and it angered the Chinese government to the point that China will apply a 100 per cent tariff to just over \$1 billion of Canadian canola/rapeseed oil, oil cakes and pea imports, and a 25 per cent duty on \$1.6 billion worth of Canadian aquatic products and pork. The tariffs on canola and pork could have a devastating effect on Manitoba farmers and the economy.

Hopefully, Carney will seek to mend the errors of his and the Liberals ways. Nobody wins in a tariff war. Recently, Dauphin-Swan River-Neepawa Member of Parlia-

ment, Dan Mazier said, "Canada putting tariffs on products coming into Canada is like a person punching themselves in the face." The federal Liberals are just as dumb as Trump because he said US citizens won't bear the expense of the tariffs, the countries will. That's not true, tariffs raises the price of products the consumer.

We also need to get rid of all the trade barriers between provinces. I think there are still restrictions on sending meat from one province to the other if it is processed in a provincially inspected plant. Small scale breweries have an awful time getting their products into liquor stores in another province.

Trump shouldn't put tariffs on goods from other countries and neither should Canada.

Neither should we play silly protectionist games between provinces.

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.

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WESTMAN HIGH SCHOOL PLAYOFFS



Hamiota Huskies playoffs.

SUBMITTED PHOTO

By Gerry Nolan
RIVERS BANNER

The Westman high school playoffs are under way. Thursday evening game 1 of the Boissevain / Hamiota series began in Hamiota. The Hamiota Huskies defeated the Broncos in a one-sided affair by a score of 10-0.

Drayson Sheridan led the Huskies by scoring 4 goals and assisting on another. I do not think I have ever seen a defenseman at this level of hockey score 4 goals. Well done Drayson!

Jack Oakden scored a pair of goals and some assists as well.

Nicolas Mcduff picked up the shutout with a rather easy night in net.

Game 2 goes in Boissevain on Saturday.

In the Westman high school hockey league there are 17 teams that played a home and away against every team for a total of 32 regular season games. The top 16 teams are playing off to declare a winner. That is 4 rounds of playoffs to crown a league champion.

What is really weird is they let the top teams pick who they wanted to play in the first round. By some of the scores I have seen so far it would have been a much better way to let the top 8

teams play off against each other. If you want to have the teams play more games the bottom 8 teams could have played off in a consolation round. I do not think Boissevain had any fun at all last night and by the results of some of the other games I do not think there were some other teams having any fun either. Not a real great way for some of these graduating young men to end their high school hockey career!

Dawson Brooks kept the fans entertained with the music that he was playing. Congrats to the Huskies on this win and good luck in Boissevain on Saturday.

Breathe your way to balance: Easy breathwork practices for a calmer you

**HOLISTIC WELLNESS CERTIFIED
HYPNOTHERAPIST
MARIE EVELYNE GINGRAS**

Take a deep breath in... and let it out. Feels good, right?

Now imagine using that same breath to calm your mind, lower your stress, and even boost your digestion all without stepping foot in a gym or popping a pill. Welcome to the wonderful world of breathwork, where your lungs double as your very own wellness toolkit.

Breathwork is not just some new-age trend with a fancy name. Humans have been using conscious breathing techniques for thousands of years, from ancient yogis perfecting pranayama to monks using breath to sharpen focus during meditation. Fast forward to today, and science is catching up and studies show that changing how we breathe can lower blood pressure, ease anxiety, improve sleep, and even help with pain management.

When you are stressed, your breath gets shallow and fast, like you are running from a bear (even if the bear is just an overflowing inbox or traffic jam). Your body thinks danger is near and fires up the fight-or-flight mode, flooding your system with stress hormones called adrenaline and cortisol.

Breathwork lets you hack that system. By slowing your breathing, you are basically whispering to your nervous system, "hey, we are safe" and your body listens! Heart rate slows, digestion improves, and your brain fog starts to clear.

There are tons of techniques out there and you do not need to be a guru to try them. One of the easiest is box breathing. Breathe in for four counts, hold for four, breathe out for four, hold again for four. It's just like drawing a square with your breath. It is a favorite trick used by athletes, first responders, and CEOs to stay cool under pressure.

If you want something even simpler, try belly breathing. Sit back, put a hand on your belly, and breathe deep enough to make your hand rise and fall. This type of deep diaphragmatic breathing is like a warm hug for your nervous system, perfect for calming jitters or unwinding after a long day.

For the adventurous types, there is holo-tropic breathwork, which involves intense, rhythmic breathing sessions designed to unlock emotions, release tension, and even spark creative breakthroughs. It is a wild ride (best done with a trained guide), but for many, it is like therapy just without "the talking". This is something to look into if you are an adrenaline junky for sure.

The best part about breathwork? You can do it anywhere. Stuck in traffic? Breathe. Nervous before a meeting? Breathe. Need a mini vacation but your budget says no? Breathe.

With just a few minutes a day, you can turn your breath into your secret superpower, balancing your body and mind without any fancy equipment or pricey memberships.

So, take a deep breath and discover just how powerful your lungs really are.

Shedding loneliness through Men's Sheds

Submitted
RIVERS BANNER

Ever heard of a Men's Shed? All over Canada, Men's Sheds have emerged as vital community hubs, offering older men a space to connect, engage in meaningful activities, and enhance their overall well-being. Originating in Australia, the grass roots movement has gained international traction, including here in Manitoba, where 10 independent Men's Sheds are active and operating around the province.

Men's Shed Manitoba supports and promotes the establishment of Men's Sheds across the province. According to Chairman Fred Bobrowski, Men's Sheds plays a crucial role in promoting mental health among older men.

"Many older men face loneliness or social isolation, especially after retirement, but being part of a Shed provides a vital sense of belonging," says Fred. "We often hear from Shed members how their Shed community has helped them feel valued, supported and less lonely."

All Men's Sheds are autonomous and offer a diverse range of activities, tailored to the interests and skills of their members. Activities range from woodworking to metalworking, gardening, card games, crafting -- and there's always an opportunity to talk over coffee. Most often, Sheds partner with local non-profit organizations to take on community projects, such as building furniture for local schools or charities, creating toys for childcare centers, and participating in environmental conservation efforts like tree planting or community gardening.

"The aspect of giving back is key," says Fred. "When we know we're helping our community, we really feel that sense of purpose that can be lost after retirement." adds Fred.

In addition to being a place to work on hands-on projects, the Men's Shed often serves as an informal setting for health education, where members can access information or hear

presentations on various health topics. This "health by stealth" approach effectively reaches men who might be reluctant to engage with traditional health services. Educational workshops are also a staple of many Sheds, offering sessions on technology skills or financial planning.

The positive effects of Men's Sheds have a ripple effect, extending far beyond the individual participants. Families benefit from the enhanced well-being of their loved ones, who often return home happy and fulfilled after a day at the Shed. And by fostering a sense of belonging and active participation, Men's Sheds contribute to building stronger, more cohesive and resilient communities.

At a national level, Men's Sheds Canada (MSC) exists to grow and strengthen the Men's Shed movement and has ambitious plans to increase the number of Sheds in Canada from approximately 150 today to 1,000 by 2032.

Recognizing the role Sheds play in supporting men's mental health, federal governments in both Australia and Ireland now include significant grant funding for Shed development and sustainability in their health and aging policies.

"Ultimately, our objective is to inform Canadian policy-makers about the pressing health issues affecting older men, highlight the positive social impact of Men's Sheds, and influence government policy that supports older men's health," says MSC President Robert Goluch.

Interested in starting a Men's Shed in your community? Resources, support and startup funding is available. For information on how to join an existing Shed, start a new Shed or support Men's Sheds in Manitoba please contact menshedmanitoba@gmail.com. Website: mensshedsmanitoba.ca

For information on Men's Sheds across Canada, contact Men's Sheds Canada at info@mensshedsCanada.org. Website: mensshedsCanada.ca



Building Camaraderie Through Men's Sheds

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Celebrating community spirit

Donna Morken honoured with King Charles III Coronation Medal

By Carolyn Phillips
RIVERS BANNER

On a memorable Wednesday, March 5th, our community gathered to celebrate a remarkable achievement by one of its own. Dan Mazier, our esteemed Member of Parliament, presented the prestigious King Charles III Coronation Medal to Donna Morken, a dedicated community leader whose tireless efforts have profoundly impacted the lives of many in our region. This honor is awarded to individuals in Canada who have made significant contributions and demonstrated outstanding achievements within their communities, and Donna is truly deserving of this accolade.

Donna's contributions to our local community span decades and illustrate her unwavering commitment to enhancing the lives of those around her. Most notably, she transformed the former RBC building into a public library, creating a vibrant space for learning and engagement that would benefit generations to come. Additionally, her role as a town councillor allowed her to advocate for the needs and concerns of residents, ensuring that their voices were heard in local governance.

As the founder and chair of the Rivers and Area Community Foundation, Donna has been instrumental in fostering a spirit of philanthropy within the community. This foundation brings together passionate individuals who are eager to give back, offering diverse funding pathways that support charitable initiatives. Through her leadership, many residents have been empowered to pursue their philanthropic goals, ultimately enriching the community as a whole.

Donna's dedication to community development extends beyond philanthropy. She established the Rivers Train Station Restoration Committee, a project aimed at preserving a vital piece of local history and enhancing the town's cultural heritage. Her commitment to early childhood education is evident in her establishment of a daycare centre, providing families with essential resources for their children.

For over two decades, Donna has also tirelessly

supported healthcare initiatives through her work with the Riverdale District Health Auxiliary Legacy Health Fund, demonstrating her unwavering commitment to the well-being of her fellow citizens. Her service with the Legion Auxiliary has spanned an impressive 45 years, during which she has promoted camaraderie and support for veterans in the area.

Moreover, her involvement in the Riverdale Wetlands community development over the past 18 years reflects her commitment to environmental sustainability and community beautification. Donna's contributions extend to her participation on the police commission and the provincial advisory committee for the community foundation, where she has provided invaluable insights and support.

Despite her extensive accomplishments, Donna remains humble and credits much of her success to her husband, Al, and the collaborative efforts of committee members she has worked tirelessly alongside. In a heartfelt conversation, she emphasized that this honour is shared among all those who have contributed to the causes she cares deeply about.

As she accepted the King Charles III Coronation Medal, it was clear that Donna Morken's commit-

ment to her community has left a lasting impact. Her leadership, compassion, and dedication to improving the lives of others are truly commendable. We extend our gratitude to her for her unwavering service and sacrifice. This recognition is not only well-deserved but serves as an inspiration for us all to continue contributing positively to our community. Congratulations, Donna! Your legacy will undoubtedly inspire future generations to make a difference.



PHOTO BY CAROLYN PHILLIPS

Congratulations Donna Morken, you are an inspiration to your community.

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MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS

DELSIE MARTIN

In my column I speak a lot about emotional connection to family, friends and intimate partners but there is a major emotional connection that I have neglected to speak on, your connection with your pet. Pets are not just animals; they have become family. We connect with them in ways that's beyond human understanding, yet we know that the connection is there. I believe that we can connect with animals on a spiritual level, and we see proof of this in how well animals can help us heal.

Petting/cuddling animals releases oxytocin in our body. Oxytocin is a hormone that reduces stress and helps to promote feelings of comfort. Spending time with animals also lowers cortisol levels (the hormone associated with stress). Playing with an animal causes our body to release endorphins (the bodies natural painkillers). In addition to their effect on hormones, animals such as dogs and horses have been used for decades to help people cope with anxiety, depression and other mental illnesses like PTSD. Emotional support animals not only provide comfort but can provide companionship during a time where someone can feel most alone. Interacting with other pet owners helps with socialization and meeting like-minded individuals. Walking a dog or riding a horse are forms of exercise and can promote overall well being. Caring for a pet provides structure and routine and this sense of responsibility can be beneficial for mental health. This sense of responsibility can be great for children and this bond that animals have with their children can also help those children in expressing their emotions. Highly trained service animals or equine assisted therapy can be essential in the care of folks who are struggling with PTSD. We can see in how integral animals can be to healing how our connections with them run deep.

Our connection with our animals also becomes apparent when they are injured. Humans are wired for empathy, and we naturally share in the distress of our animals. We feel empathy for them on a level as deep as if they were human. It's painful to see our loved ones in distress and not know how to help. We may feel guilty wondering if we do enough for them, but I assure you that this guilt only means that you care and the fact that you care makes you a great pet owner. We have a fantastic vet clinic in Neepawa, if you have any concerns about your pet, don't hesitate to reach out to them, everyone is very welcoming.

Finally, our connection with our animals shows when they pass away. The grief that comes with the loss of a pet is very real and for some, can feel as painful as losing a human family member. To these individuals their deceased loved one was not "just an animal", they were a living, breathing representation of love. There is no prescribed time limit on how long it takes someone to grieve and grieving the loss of a pet is no exception. If you have lost a pet and are struggling, don't be afraid to reach out for help from someone who understands. Honor your pet's life through books, photos or rituals. Honor your pet in death, but most of all, honor them in life with how you treat them each day.

Students see opportunities at career connection event



PHOTO BY ANNE DAVISON

For Shared Health, the EMS dummy patient was a hit. Here a student attempting a procedure on the dummy's airway was told by the EMS representative, "You just saved a life."

By Anne Davison
RIVERS BANNER

Students of Hamiota Collegiate Institute attended a Career Connection Event held March 5 in the Hamiota Hall, where 27 area businesses and organizations had representatives and information available. The event was hosted and manned by the Lifestyle Committee, an arm of the recently formed Hamiota & Area Community Alliance.

With the Hamiota Hall board providing beverages and snacks this was a team effort to showcase what the community and surrounding area has to offer youth who are seeking a summer job, immediate work or perhaps a career path.

It wasn't only for youth; the job fair was open to adults as well and the event was a success with about 70 people attending.

One of the hosts, Gwenda Skayman, said, "We were happy with the turnout and were impressed with the great displays that came and the way all of the kids interacted with the businesses. Definitely something we'd like to see continue."

While they've heard good things, it depends upon willing presenters to make the day worthwhile. Skayman says, "We've had a lot of good feedback so far and we have sent a survey out to the businesses to get

an idea if this is something they would be interested in participating in again."

Among the 27 participants, government agencies included RCMP, Manitoba Conservation, Manitoba Transportation and Infrastructure, Prairie Mountain Health and EMS.

Hamiota's public works operations manager, Hamiota recreation coordinator as well as Hamiota fire chief and deputy represented local services.

The agricultural industry employs a number of people in the area with equipment dealerships, mechanical services, farms and grain/inputs companies.

Financial services, building trades, child care and private health services, all key to the fabric of the community, were well represented.

Yellowhead Broadband technicians displayed gadgets and tools of the trade. Did you know that within the fibre lines installed throughout the community, the fibre optic cable in its core that keeps the wheels of business turning is about the diameter of a human hair?

Yes, there was lots to learn at the career connection event and many of these businesses, organizations and governmental services are looking for recruits or employees.

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Dawson Brooks, Music Guru



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Dawson is rocking the house!

By Gerry Nolan
RIVERS BANNER

Dawson Brooks of Hamiota is the local DJ of this area. Dawson became interested in this in 2012 and decided to pursue his dream career. In the early years he played at the Hamiota Arena for the high school Huskies games, Gerry Campaign helped him to get started on this journey.

When he started at the rink, he just used his phone and took turns with other kids to play music during the game and between periods.

Dawson's mom bought him a DJ board about 7 years ago to help his career get jump started. He says it is a 4 channel DJ board, double the size of what he ever had. He uses it for every gig!

Dawson went to ACC to study media and communication and graduated with a diploma in media and communication.

Dawson has played his music in Hamiota, Rivers, Birtle at the Brandon Wheat King games as well as a host of other places in Westman. He worked for encore as a junior tech in Winnipeg.

Besides hockey, he plays at weddings, anniversaries, Red Sox games and other special events. Dawson is willing to play anywhere at any time.

Someone who was instrumental in his development was SKRILLEX, the king of DubStep.

Goal wise, Dawson says just keep climbing the ladder. Keep practising, build your network and get your name out there.

Once a week he updates his library of music. You have to listen to a lot of songs to see which ones make the grade.

One thing he said, he would like to thank the people of Hamiota who have reached out to him and encouraged him on his journey.

You can book Dawson through Look Music services of Brandon or contact him directly at 204 412 0228 or at brooksd2@assiniboine.net.

He also finds time to play in a local band The Rising Sun.

Dawson plays his music at the Huskies games out of the goodness of his heart. His passion for music drives him onward and upward. Next time you hear music at the rink why not sow some good seed to help him continue on his dream. Lord knows, we could all contribute to this young mans career!

Local official reaching higher levels

By Gerry Nolan
RIVERS BANNER

Brady Waddell, who hails from Hamiota is a hockey official. Recently I caught up to Brady and decided to share his story.

Brady got interested in officiating at around age 12 or 13. It all started out as just a part time job as a student, a way to earn some extra cash. He went on to say it was not until around age 18 or 19 that he really took more of an interest and began to realize there were levels of hockey and opportunities that could come his way. It also meant discovering new friendships.

He says his biggest mentor was Eleanor Muir. Personally, I refereed with Elly years ago. She was a female referee from Russell. She would be a great mentor, that I could see. She loved working with new, young officials.

Eleanor helped Brady out a lot, taking the time often to discuss games, situations etc. She was always available for a phone call and helped Brady out with any questions he had. She also helped him to develop to work higher leagues.

Officiating has given Brady some very fun opportunities. In May of 2024 he was selected to work the Telus Cup Western Regionals in Winnipeg. It was a great experience and he met some new fellow officials and forged more new friendships.

Brady also said that the group of officials he works with is truly one of the best teams he has ever been a part of! Everyone has each others back on and off the ice.

Currently Brady is working U18 AAA provincial hockey in the Tiger Hills Hockey League. The Manitoba Junior Hockey league as well as High School hockey and minor hockey games as well.

As far as Brady would like to climb, he says, "I have always just tried to do my best and take the opportunities that come my way." The veteran guys he skates with tell him,

do not be upset if you do not get an assignment, you can only control what the task at hand is. Do your best, your time will come! If one guy makes it, we all win.

I have seen Brady work a few games. He is a strong skater and the things that stood out to me, he had control of the game. His positioning was spot on and that is a huge component of any official's game. His penalty calls were clear, clean and consistent! Brady looked very professional in any game I have seen him work.

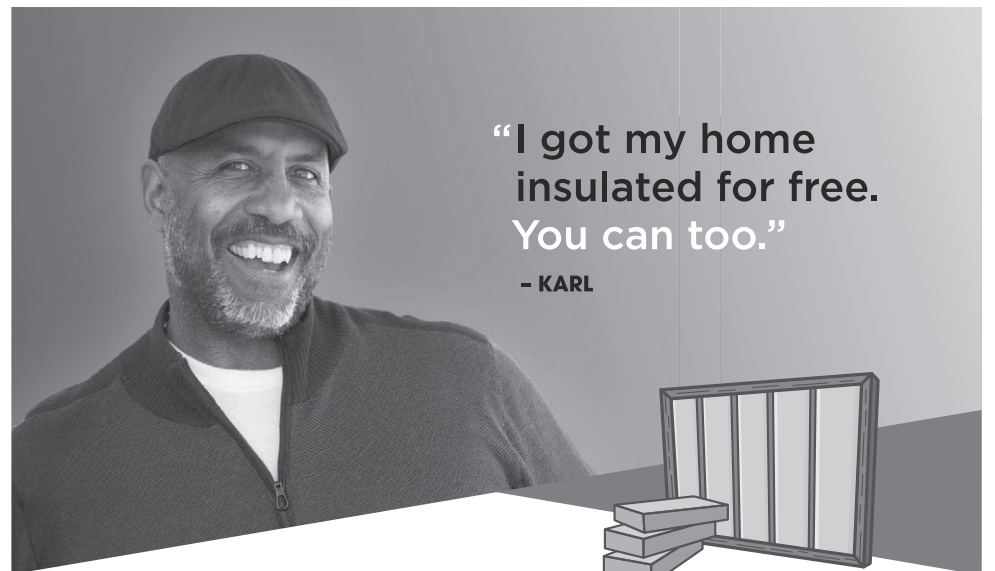
Brady told me he was talking to Morgan Geekie of the Boston Bruins. Morgan told him, most of the NHL officials are players who played in the minor professional leagues but keep on keeping on. Hopefully someday that dream would come to pass, we will all be cheering him on in his quest to advance to higher levels.



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Hamiota's own Brady Waddell.

Brady is a great guy and is a great official. We need more great officials, otherwise the game is not played. Best wishes to you as you continue on your journey!



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The R.M. of Oakview is accepting applications to hire summer students for 2025. Start date may be as early as May, ending in September.

Duties include maintaining grass, weeding, watering flowers, recycling, painting and other duties as required.

Requirements:

Preferences goes to those with a valid Class 5 Drivers Licence.

Ability to work some evenings and weekends if required.

Ability to operate small municipal equipment such as lawn mowers and grass trimmers.

Applicants must be energetic, friendly, be able to take direction well and work independently.

Closing date for resumes is Friday, April 4th, 2025 at 12:00 noon

Please submit a resume with cover letter to the Oak River or Rapid City office
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For more details and application information, please visit our website at www.rrsd.mb.ca select Employment then Summer Student Positions.

Thank you to all applicants for their interest in Rolling River School Division.
Only those candidates selected for interviews will be contacted.



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Thank you to all applicants for their interest in Rolling River School Division.
Only those candidates selected for interviews will be contacted.

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SPORTS

SHAMRAY DELIVERS AS JETS TAKE 2-0 LEAD

By Robin Wark
RIVERS BANNER

Last weekend the Rivers Jets battled to a 2-0 lead in the Tiger Hills Hockey League Eastern Division Finals.

Captain Riley Shamray delivered the game winner in both contests against the Killarney Shamrocks. In the first game of the best-of-five series, the defenceman's overtime goal propelled the Jets to a 4-3 victory. Rivers took the second tilt, 3-2.

"Shams' is a work horse for us," the Jets' Mike McFadden said. "He'll have a massive shift on a penalty kill and then be right back out there for a big shift of the powerplay. For most guys, having back to back game winning goals in the playoffs would be a career highlight. But that's just another weekend for Shams."

The third contest was on March 12 in Killarney after the Banner deadline. If needed, game four would be March 14 in Rivers. A fifth game would be played in Killarney on March 15. The Shamrocks have home ice advantage in the series as they topped the division with a 14-1-1-0 record while the Jets were second at 13-3-0-0.

Game One

Jets 4, Shamrocks 3 OT

The special teams of the Rivers squad made a difference in both of the first two games of the series. In the opening contest of the series on March 7, Shamray's OT marker came with the man advantage.

"We were working it around on the powerplay and it came around to me and I was fortunate enough to beat the goalie with the one timer," Shamray said.

The Jets entered the third period trailing 3-1. At the 6:04 mark, Dylan Thiessen scored with the man advantage. About nine minutes later, Kayden



PHOTO BY JESSICA COULTER

Rivers Jets # 17 Riley Shamray

Sutherland lit the lamp to knot the game at 3-3.

In the first period, Brock Paddock scored the game's first goal. The Shamrocks answered with two straight goals. Ty Enns scored on the powerplay and Rylan Gudnason got one at even strength. That made the score 2-1 after one. Jesse Bernard added one for Killarney in the second period.

Riley Lamb made 43 saves for Rivers. Killarney goalie Brian Archibald stopped 28 shots.

Game Two

Jets 3, Shamrocks 2

On March 8, the Jets outscored the Shamrocks 3-1 over the first two periods. Thiessen got things started in the first period as he scored the game's opening goal on a powerplay. Reid Gow answered

for Killarney. With just over two minutes remaining in the frame, McFadden scored to put the Jets up 2-1. Shamray put the game winner into the back of the net on a second period powerplay.

"We wanted to start this game right where we finished the last game," McFadden said. "We knew both teams would be tired for the second half of back to back nights, but we knew our youth would be an advantage to us so getting the first goal was really important."

Morgan Magwood scored for Killarney in the third, but the team was unable to tie things up. Lamb turned away 38 shots. Archibald made 34 saves.

REF MEMORIES



In 25 plus years of officiating, I never had a player punch me or hit me with a stick intentionally. On faceoffs sometimes I got hit with sticks and along the boards sometimes a puck would hit me. Others were not as fortunate as myself, here are some stories.

I did get spit on by a player. I served him a match penalty which means hockey Manitoba and the league would have to deal with it. He received a one-year suspension for that.

Joe fan seemed to think if you were getting paid you had to take that crap. What a bunch of B.S. that is. You cannot make a living out of officiating in local arenas.

Two officials including our MLA Greg Nesbitt and his fellow official Bob White got punched both in the same game. The game was called off. The suspension was the team was kicked out of the league for failing to control their players. The team returned years later to the league. Both officials quit shortly after that.

Another referee was followed home by a player. The player had been kicked out of the game and obviously was mad about it. In the end the official and family who were upset at that time were fine, still unsettling. The player was banned from ever playing in that league again.

A referee doing a game was cross checked by a player in the face. The official did not get hurt. The player was given a one year suspension. The official hung them up at the end of the season.

A player, the North Central Hockey League had a great offensive season and also was voted as the winner of the Most Gentlemen trophy award. In game 3 in the next season, he punched an official. He was suspended for one year. I knew the player and asked him why he hit an official? His answer, his teammates had pestered him about being soft.

Another referee was threatened to be taken to court because a penalty he called was not a 5-minute penalty as the team thought. There was a 2-minute penalty issued on the play in question. The player did miss one game but was back playing after that.

An official is sitting with his family at a Wheat King game. His cell phone rings. A team executive representative is calling and is drunk. He was using abusive language because of a game the official called the night before. He in fact called him several more times. The result was a 18 game suspension to this man.

An official is working a game where the home team loses 15-2. He comes out after the game to find all 4 tires on his car slashed. That would take a lot of games to pay for that. The result was that the official quit

The Question is why would anyone want to officiate with B.S. like this? You certainly are not getting paid enough or have the security to make sure you are safe. This all happened in Westman rinks in your area. Really makes you want to get out there and referee. If there are no officials there are NO games.

In all these incidents players, fans and team executive members were the culprits. I have heard recently fans that were kicked out of an arena for bad behaviour this winter. Maybe it is just time to stand up for the officials and ban these idiots for a couple of years or maybe they should just be banned forever from going into a local arena! Fans, parents and team representatives if you can not control yourself, do us all a favour and stay away from the arena! Stay home!

HAMIOTA MEN'S AND LADIES' CURLING RESULTS



Ladies 1st Event - Brady Gregory rink.



SUBMITTED PHOTOS

Men's 1st Event - Chris Bridges rink.



Ladies 2nd Event - Shelley Heaman rink.

By Penny Dixon
HAMIOTA LADIES CURLING CLUB

Hamiota Men's and Ladies' Curling Clubs enjoyed a successful bonspiel February 21-23rd, where seven ladies' teams and nine men's teams took to the ice. With the U15 hockey provincials taking place, the rink was a busy spot!

Here are the results

of the bonspiel:

Ladies - 1st event - Brady Gregory, Lily Hammond, Shelby Nowosad, Lauren Soutar
2nd event - Shelley Heaman, Gail Tolton, Clair Tolton, Ashley Black

Men's - 1st event -

Chris Bridges, Justin Gerrard, Ryan Brown, Riley Shamray, Rivers
2nd event - Brian Tolton, Eric Rawlings, Ron Ramsey, Ian Anderson
3rd event - Lawrence Daniels, Dennis Carter, Cam Gregory, Rob Curtis

Thanks to the curlers, volunteers, ice makers, sponsors and spectators for a great weekend!

SUN

MON

TUE

WED

THU

FRI

SAT

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Mar 14

Prairie Crocus Library Storytime in Rivers 10am
Chase the Ace Rivers Legion 7pm
Hamiota Hotel 7pm
Kenton Legion 7pm

Oak River Poker 15

Rivers Legion Trivia Night
TRIVIA NIGHT
Rivers St Paddy's Open Bonspiel

16

Rivers Legion Bingo 11:30am

17

50 + Club Shanghi Rummy 1pm

RIVERDALE Municipality 18 Council Meeting

Kenton Seniors St Paddy's Lunch 12:30pm
50 + Club Pool 1pm
Kenton Seniors Social Club Kenton Hall 2-4pm

19

50 + Club Cribbage 1pm

50 + Club Floor Curling/Carpet Bowling 1pm

Crib Rivers Legion 7pm
Darts Rivers Legion 7pm

21

Prairie Crocus Library Storytime in Rivers 10am
Chase the Ace Rivers Legion 7pm
Hamiota Hotel 7pm
Kenton Legion 7pm

22

23

Rivers Legion Bingo 11:30am

24

50 + Club Tile Rummy 1pm

25

50 + Club Pool 1pm
Kenton Seniors Social Club Kenton Hall 2-4pm

26

50 + Club Cribbage 1pm

50 + Club Floor Curling/Carpet Bowling 1pm

Rivers Figure Skating Ice Show
Crib Rivers Legion 7pm
Darts Rivers Legion 7pm

28

Prairie Crocus Library Storytime in Rivers 10am
Chase the Ace Rivers Legion 7pm
Hamiota Hotel 7pm
Kenton Legion 7pm

29