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GAZETTE-REPORTER

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A frosty celebration of sisterhood at the Rivers Curling Club Ladies Bonspiel



Charley Beever presents trophy to Hayley Lamb, Kassidy Heapy, Kendra Walker, and Carrie Shier winners of A Side.

By Carolyn Phillips
RIVERS BANNER

As the frost settled outside, the Rivers Curling Club transformed the Riverdale Community Centre into a warm and vibrant hub of activity for its annual Ladies Bonspiel. Despite the brutally cold temperatures, the energy inside was electrifying. Twelve spirited teams, each composed of four enthusiastic ladies, gathered to engage in spirited competition for the coveted trophy, all while embracing this year's delightful theme: hats!

The creativity on display was simply astounding. Participants showcased an array of fantastical headgear that added a light-hearted flair to the event. From proudly Canadian beanies bedecked with maple leaves to whimsical curling rock toques, and even a few imaginative toilet plungers, the hats became a celebration of camaraderie and fun. The joyous atmosphere was palpable, with laughter ringing out amidst the clinking of curling stones.

As the merriment transitioned to competition, it was clear

that these ladies meant business on the ice. The weekend unfolded with fierce contests as teams battled it out, each striving for victory while displaying remarkable sportsmanship. The atmosphere, while competitive, remained filled with support and encouragement for one another—an embodiment of the spirit of curling and community.

Throughout the matches, Team Walker delivered an impressive performance on the A side, showcasing precision and teamwork that allowed them to seize victory. On the B side, Team Hyndman rose to the occasion, demonstrating their strategic prowess and resilience to clinch the win. The teams celebrated each other's achievements as passionately as they chased the trophy, highlighting the essence of this beloved sport.

The conditions outside may have been frigid, but inside the Riverdale Community Centre, warmth radiated from both the camaraderie and the competitive spirit of the participants.

read more about the ladies bonspiel on page 2...

Inside...



FROST AND FLAIR FASHION SHOW *P6*



KENTON BONSPIEL 2026 *P7*

Ladies fun hats bonspiel



Rivers Curling Club Ladies Bonspiel



B side winners Alanna Brown, Eleanor Hyndman, Ashton Shaw, Loree Wedderburn - spare for Cara Tully.

The Rivers Curling Club Ladies Bonspiel has become a cherished tradition, uniting women from various backgrounds through a common love for curling and fun. Plans for next year are already stirring, with a hopeful eye on even more creative costuming and spirited competition.

In conclusion, the Rivers Curling Club Ladies Bonspiel serves as a reminder that bonds can be formed through both com-

continued from page 1

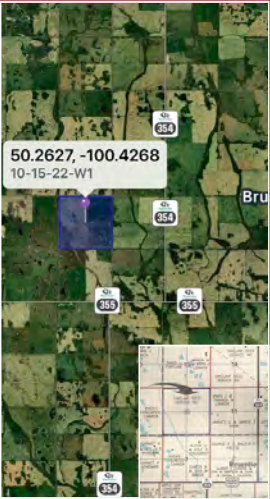
The curling rink became a stage for not only athletic prowess but also for friendships strengthened through shared experiences. As the weekend drew to a close, the smiles on the faces of every participant reflected the true joy of this event. Reflecting on the fantastic atmosphere, one can't help but feel eager for next year's gathering.

petition and celebration. As ladies come together to embrace the sport of curling, they also celebrate their shared joys and triumphs, creating memories that last a lifetime. With the success of this year's event, participants eagerly await the next round of laughter, friendship, and fierce competition on the ice. Until then, stay warm, and keep those brooms ready for next year's adventure!



LAND AUCTION
RM OF OAKVIEW
FEBRUARY 24TH, 2026

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and BID BY PHONE AUCTION



Please accept our invitation to submit your opening bid and become eligible to take part in this upcoming land auction. Visit our website www.fraserauction.com for information and forms to become part of the phone bid auction of 1 parcel of land located in the

R.M. of Oakview (Section 10-15-22W1 Approx. 640 Acres)

I would like to thank you in advance for your interest in this land auction. Should you have any questions regarding this auction and or the process in which it will be conducted please feel free to contact me directly 1-204-724-2131 or e-mail scott@fraserauction.com

IMPORTANT DATED TO REMEMBER:

Monday February 23rd, 2026 (Opening bids close)
Tuesday February 24th, 2026 (Phone auction starting at 1:00pm)
Wednesday April 15th, 2026 (Closing & Possession) Balance due by Certified Cheque or Bank Draft.

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GOLDEN SWEET
CORNBREAD

Ingredients

- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 2/3 cup white sugar
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1/3 cup vegetable oil
- 1 cup yellow cornmeal
- 3 1/2 teaspoons baking powder
- 1 cup milk
- 1 large egg

Directions

1. Gather the ingredients.
2. Preheat the oven to 400 degrees F (200 degrees C). Grease a 9-inch round cake pan.
3. Whisk flour, cornmeal, sugar, baking powder, and salt together in a large bowl.
4. Add milk, vegetable oil, and egg; whisk until well combined.
5. Pour batter into the prepared pan.
6. Bake in the preheated oven until a toothpick inserted into the center of the pan comes out clean, 20 to 25 minutes.
7. Slice and enjoy!



Wordsearch from last week front page

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





Join us Sundays at 10:30 a.m.

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Letter to the Editor

RE: Trump, tariffs and free trade

Tariffs are a hidden tax paid for by consumers. Tariffs increase the cost of goods, slow down the economy, increase the unemployment, slow down innovation and cause tension and hostility between nations.


The best course of action for peace, freedom, justice and harmony between nations is free trade while respecting each nations sovereignty and independence.

The economist Milton Friedman used the example of steel to demonstrate the harmful effects of tariffs. Steel manufacturers and steel workers demand the Government impose tariffs on cheaper imported steel to protect their industry and that does benefit those people to some extent, but the great majority of people are worse off because they have to pay more for vehicles, appliances and anything made with steel, and they have less to spend on other products and the country that had the tariffs imposed on it often retaliate with counter tariffs on goods it imports from that country such as grain or beef, or as in the case of Canada reacting to arbitrary tariffs imposed on its exports by the United States seeks new trade partners such as China, not exactly a free and democratic country.

Free market competition is the way to go and I would advise President Trump to pursue a policy of free trade with your friends and allies and save the tariffs for China and Russia until they stop their aggression and repression.

Damian Dempsey
Arden, MB


Opportunity
Supporting
Emphasizes
Gun
Exhibit
Community
Success
Art
Forward
Starts
Wishes
Journey



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Bible Study - Thursdays 7:30 p.m.

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UNDER THE AUTHORITY OF THE PLANNING ACT NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

On the date and at the time and location shown below, a **PUBLIC HEARING** will be held to receive representations from any persons who wish to make them in respect to the following matter:

RIVERDALE MUNICIPALITY
BY-LAW NO. 2025-04
being a

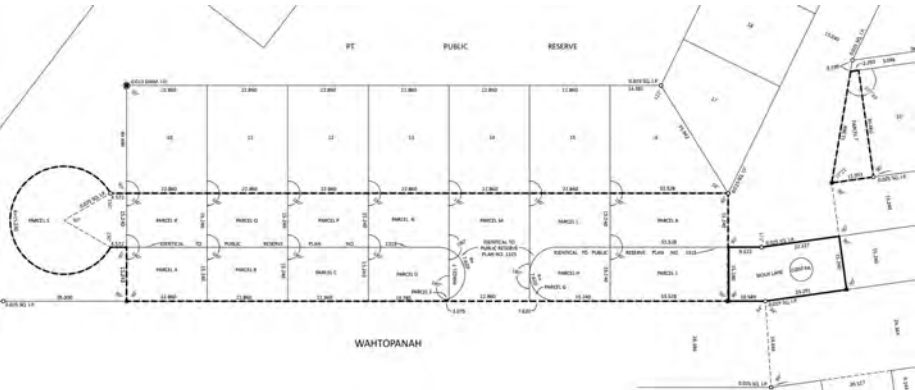
BY-LAW TO CLOSE PORTIONS OF A MUNICIPAL ROAD AND PUBLIC RESERVE AND AUTHROIZE THE SALE OF THE LAND

HEARING LOCATION: Riverdale Municipal Council Chambers
670 – 2nd Avenue
Box 520
Rivers, Manitoba ROX-1X0

DATE & TIME: March 3rd, 2026 at 6:05 p.m.

GENERAL INTENT OF BY-LAW NO. 2025-04: To close a portion of a municipal road located between SW 1/4 20-12-20 WPM Sioux Lane, plan 1315 and sell to adjacent land owners.

AREA AFFECTED BY BY-LAW NO. 2025-04: Lots 10-16 and west of lot 31, Plan 1315 BLTO Sioux Lane, Chimo Resort, Rivers, Manitoba as identified below.

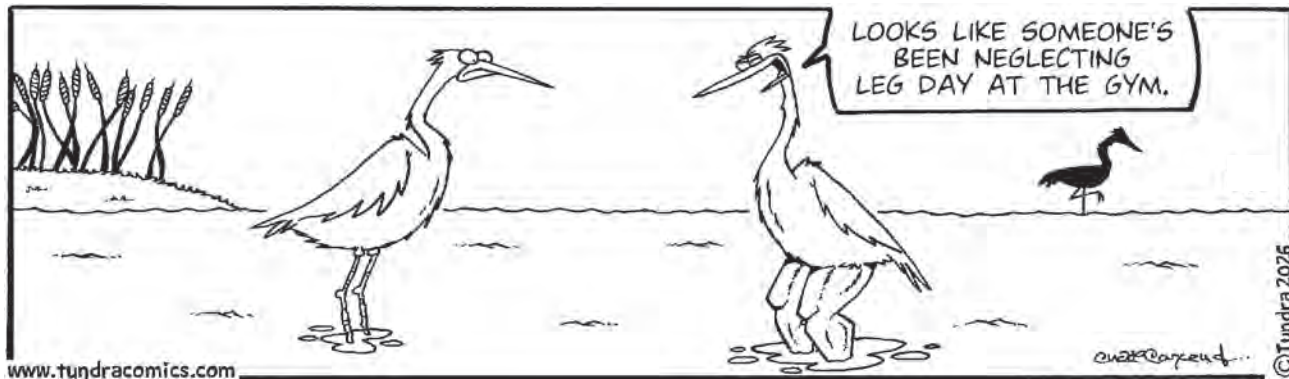


FOR INFORMATION CONTACT: Marci Quane
Chief Administrative Officer
Riverdale Municipality
670 – 2nd Avenue
Box 520
Rivers, Manitoba ROX-1X0
(204) 328-5300

A copy of the above proposal and supporting material may be inspected at the location noted above during normal office hours, Monday to Friday. Copies may be made and extracts taken therefrom, upon request.

Tundra

By Chad Carpenter



Why are we watching this garbage?

It's long overdue but many people in the news industry and millions upon millions of non-media people are slowly coming to the recognition that many, if not all on-line mediums, are not necessarily good for humanity. On-line platforms are almost completely unregulated. Facebook claims that they do fact checking. A few years ago I asked how many FB fact checkers there were and the ratio worked out to be one for every 90,000 users. That automatically tells us that fact checking is, minimal at best, and at worsts, non-existent. In some countries there are no fact checkers as the billionaire owners have come to realize that fact checkers cost money and are basically ineffective.

In the past few years, it has become evident that Artificial Intelligence (AI) can make up many thousands of stories and videos, be they fact-based or fiction. And lately it has become apparent that be it AI or otherwise, sexual abuse, promotion of falsehoods and violent scenes are being spewed out by the thousands on web based venues.

I have heard of a number of people who are abandoning social media. I think what it will boil down to is being very careful as to what sites a person visits. For example, town or community web sites should be reliable and are needed to announce emergencies and promote last minute changes to events. Newspapers, like the one you are holding, can't always get the news out quick enough being weekly papers. That means community web sites are important.

It should be noted that FB sites for newspapers, radio and television stations are banned in Canada by Facebook. The Canadian On-line News Act declared that companies like FB and Google would be required to compensate domestic Canadian media as they use our



“It should be noted that Facebook sites for newspapers, radio and television are banned in Canada by Facebook.”

material with neither recognition nor compensation and have done so for years. Google agreed that they would pay money towards Canadian Media. Facebook refused and, as a reaction, shut down Canadian news media FB sites.

As criticism of unrelenting and uncontrollable on-line material increases, Jen Zoratti of The Winnipeg Free Press said on the weekend about X (formerly Twitter), “Respectfully, a primary communication tool for whom, exactly? Who is still using it, besides bots, ragebaiters and the creators of child sexual abuse images? There's nothing to save, nothing to make better. It's a social media platform run by a billionaire who allows this stuff to happen. The decision to leave should be easy.

How bad does it need to get, exactly, to make people log off forever?”

Good question. Zoratti's column, along with my own observations and reading other peoples' frustration has lead me to resolve to cut way back on the use of social media. I plan to head back to reading a book a month. I prefer Canadian histories

and biographies. The local papers, radio and TV stations should be our go-to sources for the most of our media with the only usage of social media being local sites. Other social media should be used very carefully and sparingly.

Interesting that the Bible verse of the day for Jan. 25, the day I wrote this column speaks about being careful what you read and think about. “Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things.” Philippians 4:8 New International Version.

I feel moved to take that advice but not a lot of what is on the internet falls into the standards of that admonition

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

Homebodies

Rita Friesen



Not trusting my memory...

About this cold snap...it's not the first or the worst in my memory. Way back in 1963 the temperature recorded at Richardson's Airport, and experienced at Graysville, never rose above zero degrees Fahrenheit, day or night, for the month of January. It was a winter that my father was attending the University of Manitoba, leaving me to keep the home fires burning, and the chores completed. I was in grade eleven, turned seventeen that February. It is recorded as one of the coldest winters, colder than 1947, coldest since 1740. January 1966 beat that record.

It was a tough winter, so cold that some mornings the fog was heavy enough to dim the yard light's glow and give the whole world an eerie other world feeling. So cold that even sheltered animals needed more feed, and watering the livestock was challenging. There was one barn with several milk cows, Jersey and Jersey mix- (I still know them by name, Molly, Daisy, Bambi, Penny...coo boss), some chickens and possibly a hog or two. The other barn housed the sheep. The buildings were adjacent and attached, so once inside, all was well. The loft of the main barn was home to the bedding straw and some bales, but most of them were hauled from a stack outside. Some prickly clover, some alfalfa, some straight hay, all off our land, so any farmer knows that back then, those wonderful square bales were handled many times- on the rack, off of the rack and onto the stack, into the barn, and then in a less delightful form, out of the barn! No wonder I have long arms! By this time the water had been piped into the barn, a vast improvement from hauling it, in five gallon pails, from the well. That was not a pleasant winter chore.

What I remember so well was the wonderful sense of accomplishment when the chores were done. Opening the door I would be greeted with a cacophony of sounds, cattle, sheep, chickens all calling for breakfast. And as the food was distributed, silence would reign. Well, silence in comparison, for there was the sound of chewing, hay being pulled toward, and the lambs gambolling and galloping in the open space provided as all the ewes gathered at the feed. The air was heavy, moist, rich, and pungent. The morning routine only called for the supply of feed, the clean up and out came as part of the evening chores. There was satisfaction there as well.

I don't recall many snow days, days that the vans didn't make their rounds. Back then the route was driven by a neighbour, a bus to which we had progressed from using individual's vehicles that could have been a station wagon - no seat belts- or simply a car.

I do recall that winter wear was not what it is today. We relied on bulk to keep warm, layers of sweaters and jackets. Thankfully by then I was past those brown cotton stockings kept in place with a canning jar sealer ring to leotards.

Not the first, not the worst. Not the last!

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Heritage Co-op food store: A community-centered grocery destination

By Carolyn Phillips
RIVERS BANNER

Since its acquisition of Rivers Bigway Foods in April 2019, Heritage Co-op Food Store has become a significant fixture in the local community, offering not just a grocery shopping experience but also a commitment to reinvesting in the towns it serves. With a range of products and thoughtful community engagement, Heritage Co-op stands out as a preferred shopping destination for many residents.

One of the hallmark features of Heritage Co-op is its dedication to local investment. Every dollar spent at the store goes back into the community, supporting local initiatives and fostering growth within the region. This philosophy not only strengthens the local economy but also builds lasting relationships among community members. Shoppers are encouraged to feel a sense of pride, knowing that their purchasing decisions are directly contributing to the advancement of their neighbourhoods.

Heritage Co-op is dedicated to offering a diverse selection of food items that cater to the evolving needs of its customers. From fresh produce to national brands, the store aims to provide high-quality options for every household. Shoppers can find everything from pantry staples to seasonal specialties, ensuring that they can fill their carts with both necessities and treats. By maintaining a well-stocked inventory, Heritage Co-op exceeds customers' expectations and elevates the shopping experience.

Understanding that the modern shopper has a busy schedule, Heritage Co-op provides convenient store hours tailored to meet the needs of their customers. The food store operates Monday through Friday from 8 AM to 7 PM, Saturday from 8 AM to 7 PM, and Sunday from

10 AM to 7 PM. However, it's advisable for customers to check the official Heritage Co-op website or their Facebook page for any updates on holiday hours or special promotions. This flexibility ensures that everyone can access their favourite products at a time that suits their busy lifestyles.

An essential component of the Heritage Co-op experience is its membership program, which offers a lifetime of benefits to its members. When customers choose to become members, they not only gain ownership stakes in the Co-op but also share in its profits. This means that each purchase contributes to building equity in the Co-op, with members receiving cash back annually based on their spending. This unique structure underscores the Co-op's commitment to shared community success and provides tangible rewards to members.

Community engagement is at the heart of Heritage Co-op's mission. Members and customers are encouraged to participate in various community events and initiatives that the Co-op organizes throughout the year. By getting involved, shoppers can play an active role in shaping the

store's offerings and contribute to a community-focused approach to grocery shopping.

Heritage Co-op Food Store is more than just a place to buy groceries; it represents a community-driven commitment to quality, service, and local investment. With flexible hours, a diverse product range, and an empowering membership program, it's easy to see why this store has become a beloved staple in the community. By choosing Heritage Co-op, customers are investing in their community while enjoying a personalized shopping experience.



Heritage Co-op in Rivers Manitoba.

PHOTO BY CAROLYN PHILLIPS

It's bin a success

Your efforts add up.

Thanks to you, Manitoba reached a 75% recovery rate in 2025. You're powering Canada's lowest-cost* beverage container recovery program.

*Per-unit



Frost and Flair Fashion Show brings big energy, bold style, and thrifted glam to Oak Lake



Cara Taylor, modeling a fresh outfit at the fashion show on January 24.



"The princess" Madelynn Rookes in her beautiful red gown.

By Ev Nolan
RIVERS BANNER

Oak Lake Community Hall came alive on January 24, 2026, as Thrift and Thrive transformed the space into a buzzing runway of

creativity, confidence, and community spirit at its first ever Frost and Flair Fashion Show. From the moment the doors opened, it was clear this was going to be something special.

Music filled the room, winter inspired décor shimmered under the bright lights, and stylish guests packed the hall, ready to cheer, shop, and celebrate sustainable fashion. The atmosphere felt electric, equal parts fashion show and community party, with excitement building as everyone waited for the first model to step onto the runway. Cameras were out, smiles were everywhere, and the

energy in the room was impossible to miss. The Flair show kicked things off at 1:45 pm and immediately set the tone. Models from all ages strutted, posed, and owned the runway in expressive outfits that proved second-hand fashion has personality for days. Each look brought surprise and creativity, from playful layers to unexpected pairings, and the crowd responded with loud applause and cheers. It was impossible not to feel inspired watching everyday thrifted pieces turned into statement looks that felt both fresh and fearless. Between shows, the energy did not slow down. Guests mingled, browsed the shopping area for one-of-a-kind finds, and lined up at the RF NOW Sparkle Mocktail Bar, which added a splash of fun and flair to the afternoon. Conversations flowed easily as people shared favourite outfits, thrifting tips, and excitement for what was still to come. Volunteers and organizers could be seen smiling proudly as the room stayed full and lively. At 3:00 pm, the Frost show raised the style stakes even higher. Winter ready looks featuring well known brands like Aritzia, Tripp, Eric Michael, Joseph Ribkoff, Baby Phat, Frank Lyman, Danier Leather, BOS and Co, Chinese Laundry, and Fly London hit the runway with confidence. Seeing recognizable labels styled in fresh, modern ways made one thing clear. Sustainable fashion can be just as polished, trendy, and exciting as anything new! What made Frost and Flair truly shine was its heart. Admission was by donation, and all proceeds went directly back into the community to support local programs and services. Knowing the event was making a real difference added an extra layer of pride and purpose to the day, reminding everyone that fashion can be fun while still giving back. Fusion Credit Union provided cups, napkins, coffee and desserts for the event. Shopping continued until 5:00 pm, and many attendees left with bags in hand, big smiles, and fresh inspiration. The Frost and Flair Fashion Show was bold, joyful, and full of momentum. If this first event was any indication, Thrift and Thrive has officially set the runway for something big. Frost and Flair was not just a fashion show. It was a celebration, and the community showed up in style!

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Visitors Welcome Anytime! Email denbie2005@gmail.com

Beautifully decorated hall for the Frost and Flair Fashion Show in Oak Lake.

SPORTS

KENTON BONSPIEL 2026



The first event winners as shown in the pictures were Jason McTavish, Todd Hunter, Debbie Hunter and Jessica Hunter. Congratulations to the overall winners of the 2026 Kenton Bonspiel.



The third event winners and just maybe the most veteran team to play were Arnold Bailey, Robert Alexander, Greg Alexander and Ken Routledge. I am sure with this team there was a lot of wisdom sharing going on!

WESTMAN HIGH SCHOOL HOCKEY LEAGUE

REF TO
WRITER

GERRY
NOLAN



On January 21 in high school hockey action, the Hamiota Huskies defeated the Boissevain/Deloraine/Waskada/Pierson Broncos 4-3 in overtime. Hamiota overcame a 2-goal difference twice to come back and win the game.

Reid Hutchings scored, assisted by Aaron Roels and Carter Rozdeba, to get the Huskies back in the game. Aaron Roels then scored with assists going to Sam Rivas and Duncan McLean. This brought the Huskies to within a goal going into the third period.

Sam Rivas scored on the powerplay assisted by Carter Rozdeba and Dun-

can McLean to send the game to overtime.

In overtime Aaron Roels scored the winning goal just 20 seconds into the extra period with an assist to Harlen Bridges to secure a much-needed victory.

On January 25 the Huskies hosted the Raiders. The Huskies scored

3 third period goals and downed the Raiders 4-3. This gives the Huskies a two-game win streak.

Duncan McLean scored a goal and assisted on another for the team. Reid Hutchings, Aaron Roels and Sam Rivas also scored goals with assists going to Carter Rozdeba with 3. Sam Rivas, Aaron Roels and Corbin Munz each had single assists.

The Huskies record improves to 7 wins and 10 losses. The next couple of games are on the road and then back in Hamiota on February 5 at 8 p.m. when the Virden Golden Bears will provide the opposition.



PHOTO BY GERRY NOLAN

The second event winners from Oak River were Greg Black, Cam Argue, Ross Argue and Shanie Burt. Congratulations to team Black

By Gerry Nolan
RIVERS BANNER

The Kenton annual Bonspiel was held January 21 -24. In a week where it was brutally cold, the games were

played and fun time had by all. The supper meals were well attended and thanks to all who worked or donated to the event.

All in all, it was a great week. Thanks to Don Carter and Brent

Houston who had the ice ready to go. It takes a lot of volunteers to keep the event going year to year, so congratulations to them as well as working as a team to make the event a huge success!

TIGER HILLS HOCKEY LEAGUE

REF TO
WRITER

GERRY
NOLAN



five years in a row, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004 and 2005. The Gladstone Lakers ended Pilot Mounds streak by winning the championship in 2006 and again in 2007.

Pilot Mound reclaimed the trophy in 2008. In 2009 and 2010 the Swan Lake Cougars were crowned league champs.

The Neepawa Farmers won the crown in 2011, followed by the Killarney Shamrocks in 2012.

In 2013, the Souris Elks won the league trophy and then the Deloraine Royals were league champs in 2014 and 2015. In 2016 and 2017 the Killarney Shamrocks were the champions. In 2018 the Gladstone Lakers won the league and in 2019, the Boissevain Border Kings were the champions. 2020 and 2021 were the covid years when hockey was not played. The leagues had to shut down and I believe in that time frame, a lot of players decided to hang 'em up.

In 2022 the Boissevain Border Kings were league champions, followed by the Miniota-Elkhorn C-Hawks who won back to back championships in 2023 and 2024. Last season, 2025 the Killarney Shamrocks won the league title.

Over the course of the last few seasons in Manitoba Senior Championship play, the 2014 Deloraine Royals, the 2016 and 2017 Killarney Shamrocks and the 2023 Miniota Elkhorn C-Hawks all claimed the Provincial title.

Hopefully the league continues to operate for many years to come, providing a place for players to be able to compete and play senior hockey!

In the past few weeks I have covered Senior Hockey League Champions. This time is for the only Senior Hockey League in our region, the Tiger Hills Hockey League.

The league formed in October of 1983, is still going strong and I would like to share the past championship teams beginning in 1984.

The first championship team was the Baldur Barons in 1984. Pilot Mound Pilots were the league champions in 1985 and again in 1986. The Baldur Barons reclaimed the trophy in 1987, followed by the Pilot Mound Pilots in 1988 and 1989.

The Holland Rockets dominated in the early 90's by winning the championship in 1991, 1992, 1993. The Killarney Shamrocks were crowned champions in 1994. The Cartwright-Baldur Clippers won the league championship in 1995. The Holland Rockets won it in 1996. The Carberry Plainsmen were victorious in 1997, claiming the championship again in 1998. The Glenboro Nordics won the league trophy in 1999. There was no championship in 2000 and I was not able to find out why that happened.

The Pilot Mound Pilots then went on a run winning the league championship

Governments of Canada and Manitoba announce lower Agriinsurance premiums, making life more affordable for producers

Submitted
By MB GOVERNMENT

The governments of Canada and Manitoba have launched a new pilot program that rewards farmers for adopting sustainable management practices with lower premiums as part of the 2026 AgriInsurance program, federal Agriculture and Agri-Food Minister Heath MacDonald and Manitoba Agriculture Minister Ron Kostyshyn announced today.

“AgriInsurance is a vital tool for Manitoba producers, helping them manage risk and stay resilient in the face of unpredictable challenges,” said MacDonald. “By working closely with the Manitobagovernment, we’re ensuring farmers have the support they need to protect their operations as they adapt to changing conditions and can continue growing the high-quality food Canadians rely on.”

The 2026 AgriInsurance

program, administered by Manitoba Agricultural Services Corporation (MASC), features updated crop insurance dollar values and will provide Manitoba farmers with predictable coverage for crop production and quality losses caused by natural perils, helping them manage risk and plan confidently for the upcoming growing season.

Total coverage for 2026 is expected to reach \$4.3 billion, and farmers will benefit from lower premium rates for most insurable crops. For annual crops, the average premium for producers will be \$11.46 per acre in 2026, compared to \$13.01 per acre in 2025.

“Manitoba farmers continue to face challenges from unpredictable weather and global market volatility,” said Kostyshyn. “AgriInsurance helps protect their investments and provides a foundation for long-term success. We’re proud to introduce enhancements that reward

sustainable practices and expand coverage to meet farmers’ evolving needs.”

As part of its ongoing efforts to support sustainability, MASC is piloting the Forage Advantage incentive, offering a 15 per cent discount on Forage Establishment Insurance premiums for perennial forage crops grown on designated land. Additional discounts may apply to Basic or Select Hay Insurance or Forage Seed Insurance once the forage crop enters production the following year. The 2026 program also includes new coverage for meadow fescue grown for seed.

The AgriInsurance program is designed to provide predictable protection for producers against natural perils such as drought, excess moisture or other extreme weather event, as well as diseases and pests. Manitoba maintains a high level of participation, with over 90 per cent of annual crop acres and more than 7,300 farms enrolled in the

program.

Also, for the 2026 crop year, the list of damaging species will be expanding as part of the Wildlife Damage Compensation program. This change will lead to compensation for crop damage caused by

blackbirds and raccoons, and livestock injury or death caused by vultures, eagles, hawks, ravens and other corvidae species.

The governments of Canada and Manitoba support AgriInsurance and Wildlife Damage Compen-

sation under the Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership (Sustainable CAP).

For more information on AgriInsurance, contact a MASC Service Centre or visit www.masc.mb.ca.

Time to do better for our communities

By Courtney Kstesky
GILBERT PLAINS CAO

This is not something that I would typically post about publicly, but it needs to be talked about. This is simply my opinion from being involved in the municipal world as both a member of council and now as a CAO. Take it as you wish.

Across many communities, there’s growing concern about the shortage of Chief Administrative Officers (CAOs). People are asking why – and the answer is uncomfortable, but important.

Many good, experienced CAOs are leaving the profession. Not because they don’t care, but because the job has become increasingly difficult to sustain. Ongoing negativity, public hostility, name-calling, and personal attacks – often played out loudly on social media – take a real toll.

In just the past few weeks alone I have personally experienced all of this. Everything from being called Coco Puff on a Facebook forum to someone commenting on my for sale post on my personal business page “That’s called karma... lmaooooo” to constant public criticism for past employees’ actions and decisions that we as current staff and council are only trying to fix. When professionals are routinely questioned, blamed or attacked personally for complex decisions made within legislation, council direction and limited resources, burnout follows.

We operate in high-pressure environments, balancing governance, legislation, budgets, staff management and community expectations.

Yes, we should be held accountable, but we are also human. Constant criticism without respect or understanding makes it harder to recruit new leaders – and harder to keep the good ones we already have.

Yes, as CAOs we learn to have a thick skin, to let things roll off our backs, but when its day after day of constant negativity, or the public thinking they know every policy, procedure, bylaw and governing act better than anyone else, its draining.

We have all seen in many areas across the province what happens when municipalities are forced to hire someone simply because “they were the best candidate” with absolutely zero or very limited municipal experience. If we want strong, capable leadership in our municipalities, we need to change the conversation. Constructive dialogue, respect and understanding

aren’t just “nice to have” – they are essential to attracting and retaining the professionals our communities depend on.

It’s time to do better. Good leadership doesn’t disappear on its own. Sometimes it’s pushed out, not by councils, but by the very people they are trying to help. So here’s some advice for those that care about the success of your community:

- 1. Criticize ideas – not people**
Disagreeing with decisions is fair. Name-calling, personal attacks or questioning someone’s integrity is not. Focus on the issue, not the individual and learn to respect decisions you may not agree with.
 - 2. Understand roles and limits**
CAOs and municipal staff implement council decisions and follow legislation. Not every outcome is within their control.
 - 3. Pause before posting**
Social media amplifies frustration. Taking a moment before posting – especially when emotions are high – can prevent harmful, permanent damage to real people and reputations.
 - 4. Ask questions before assuming intent**
Many municipal decisions are complex and constrained by budgets, bylaws or provincial legislation. Asking “Can you explain why?” goes much further than “This is incompetence.”
 - 5. Use proper channels**
Concerns raised through official processes (emails, delegations to council, public meetings) are more likely to be heard and addressed than public shaming online.
 - 6. Respect that public servants are human**
Municipal leaders live in the same communities, shop at the same stores and raise families locally. Words carry weight long after a meeting or comment thread ends.
 - 7. Recognize positive work**
Silence often follows good decisions, while criticism is loud. A simple thank you, positive comment or acknowledgement goes a long way toward morale and retention.
 - 8. Model the behavior you expect**
Civility is contagious. When residents engage respectfully, it sets the tone for others – for future leaders considering whether this work is worth it and for those considering moving to the community.
- Healthy communities aren’t built by tearing people down. They’re built through respect, accountability and constructive engagement – even when opinions differ.”

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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 Monday, February 2, 2026

For further information and a detailed job description please phone or text (204) 764-0828 or by 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.

Obituary

IN LOVING MEMORY
SANDRA DARLENE HEDLEY
APRIL 5, 1943 – JANUARY 19, 2026



Sandra (known as Sandy) Hedley was born on Monday, April 5, 1943 and passed away peacefully in the early morning hours of Monday, January 19, 2026 at the Riverdale Personal Care Home in Rivers, Manitoba. Sandy was born in Brandon, Manitoba and lived in a variety of places in her early years. In 1957 she moved to the Manitoba Development Centre in Portage la Prairie where she resided until she returned to the Rivers/Cardale area in the mid 1970's, as a part of the Welcome Home program which was designed to have clients move back into community settings. Sandy had often visited grandparents during the summers who lived in the Cardale area. Sandy became part of the Rolling Dale Enterprises program when it first developed its day program at Cardale. She later became one of the first residents in their residence program in Rivers, Manitoba. Sandy was a regular participant in the day program at Rolling Dale until her retirement, when she moved to the Riverdale Personal Care Home where she resided for nine years. Sandy had polio as a young child which left her with limited mobility in her arm and leg, but she was not one to complain and would try very hard to improve her skills in a variety of areas.

For many years, Sandy was the first person one would meet when entering Rolling Dale as she served as their receptionist, greeting people as they entered, answering the phone, and daily working on the many crocheted afghan squares, which would be sewn into multicoloured afghans by the staff. Sandy enjoyed the many activities and outings, and the annual weekly vacation time at Clear Lake. She participated in the Special Olympic program and had numerous trophies to showcase her accomplishments. Sandy had a vast collection of movies and CDs and spent countless hours watching movies. She enjoyed music and played the harmonica and would readily entertain her friends at Rolling Dale. She faithfully attended the Rivers Community Church and would play her harmonica at their Christmas concerts. Sandy had a quiet personality and was kind in her responses to those around her. Many devoted and loving caregivers have been part of Sandy's life, and she was lovingly cared for at the personal care home.

A memorial service will be held for Sandy at the Rivers Community Church at 447 Edward St. in Rivers, on Thursday, February 5, at 1:30pm, with interment at the Rivers Cemetery at 12:45pm, prior to the service. Refreshments will be served after the memorial service. Memorial donations may be made to the Rolling Dale Enterprises in Rivers, or to the activity department of Riverdale Personal Care Home.

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In Memory



In loving memory of
Jim Irvine
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- January 20, 2016

We cannot believe you left us so suddenly ten years ago, but heartache and pain are still here everyday. Our love for you will go on until we are together. Your loving family Dora, Jamie and Sherri and your beautiful granddaughters Kaelee, Aivree, Emerson, Taylor.

Help Wanted

Rolling River School Division

KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION 2026-2027



Kindergarten Registration for the Rolling River School Division will be held during February 2nd - February 6th, 2026 from 9:00-11:30am and 1:30-3:00pm. Children who will be 5 years of age on or before December 31, 2026 are eligible for Kindergarten.

Please register at the following catchment area schools:

SCHOOL	PHONE NO.
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Forrest Elementary	204-728-7674
Oak River Elementary	204-566-2167
Onanole Elementary	204-848-2402
Rapid City Elementary	204-826-2824
Rivers Elementary	204-328-7416
Tanner's Crossing Elementary	204-867-2591

*Parents are required to present their child's birth certificate and medical number at time of registration.

*Please contact the School Division Office
(204-867-2754 Ext. 0)

if unsure of your catchment area school.

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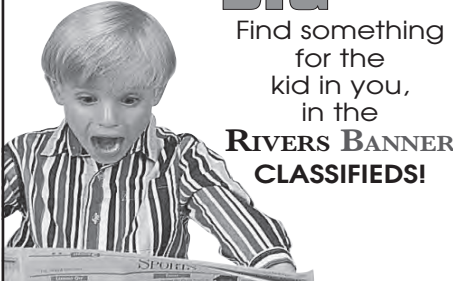


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SPORTS

JETS FLY TO THREE THHL VICTORIES

By Robin Wark
RIVERS BANNER

The Rivers Jets earned three wins last week.

The local senior team beat the Boissevain Border Kings 6-3, Melita Bisons 6-1, and Sandy Bay Flying Feathermen 7-5. As of Jan. 25, the squad had a 14-3-0-0 record and sat second in the Tiger Hills Hockey League standings.

The Jets have two contests remaining on their regular season schedule. They play in MacGregor on Jan. 30. The Jets host the Hartney Blues at home on Feb. 7.

Jets 6, Border Kings 3

On Jan. 20, in their lone midweek contest of the season, the Jets proved they are not just weekend warriors. The Jets led 2-0 at the first intermission in Boissevain and were up 3-0 before the Border Kings got on the scoreboard. The Jets scored three goals in the second period to lead 5-1 at the break. Boissevain was able to get two goals to start the final frame before the Rivers team capped the scoring.

Rivers goaltender Layne Anderson stopped 41 shots. Dylan Thiessen lit the lamp twice for the Jets. Also collecting two points were Jaxon Heeney, Kayden Sutherland, and Luke DeCorby, who each had a goal and an assist. Kaelen Huibers had the Jets' other goal.

Boissevain netminder Jay Pringle faced 47 shots

and stopped 42 of them. Rivers' last goal was into an empty net. Scoring for Boissevain were Ryan Patterson, Jagger Thomas, and Ryan Patterson.

Jets 6, Bisons 1

Hosting the Bisons on Jan. 23, the Jets scored three goals in the first period and three in the third to earn the victory. The Rivers team was two-for-five on the power play and killed off both of Melita's man advantage opportunities.

Anderson made 18 saves. For the Jets, Keaton Moore and Huibers each found the back of the net twice. Posting a goal and an assist each for Rivers were Tanner Nedohin and Drayson Collyer. Owen Wareham, Riley Shamray and Braden Clarke all had two assists each.

Andrew Greig stopped 33 shots for Melita. Mike Tilbury scored for the Bisons.

Jets 7, Flying Feathermen 5

The Jets and Flying Feathermen were all knotted up at 3-3 after two periods on Jan. 25. The visiting Rivers team scored four consecutive goals to start the third on their way to victory. The Feathermen added two goals late in the last five minutes of the contest, but it was not enough.

The game was tied 2-2 after the first period. The Jets were three-for-five on the power play. The Feathermen were zero-for-two.

DeCorby had a game-high seven points. He scored a hat trick and recorded four assists. Nedohin scored twice and had an assist for three



points. Sutherland and Shamray also had goals for the Jets. Shamray finished with two points, as did Heeney and Huibers, who each had three assists. Rivers goalie Logan Bridges stopped 25 shots.

Flying Feathermen netminder Keegan Beaulieu made 30 saves. Scoring for Sandy Bay were Joshua Beaulieu, Sundance Paul, Johnny Beaulieu, Keel-ian Levasseur, and Reed Houle.

REF MEMORIES

REF TO
WRITER

GERRY
NOLAN



We have had a bit of a cold snap lately which reminded me of some cold nights on the road officiating hockey games. I was working a game in Foxwarren one night between the Foxwarren Falcons and the Shoal Lake Eagles. It was -35 and windy as well. This was back in the 1980's. Vehicles were not nearly as good as they are today, but the game must go on.

Foxwarren, Cardale, Miniota, Angusville and the old Souris arena were the coldest as best as I can remember. Anyway, back to Foxwarren. The game itself was fast with only

about 8 minor penalties, but man it was cold. You can only put on so many layers to keep warm and on that evening there were not enough layers. I had a pair of curling gloves on my hands which did nothing, but the game was played.

In this game a puck was split into 2 pieces due to the cold. I never saw that ever again, that is how cold it was.

In Cardale one night it was extremely cold and the Cardale Cougars were hosting the Miniota Night Hawks and it was COLD. With natural ice, it was crack- ing. It was so cold so we

had to put snow over the crack, then pour water on top of the snow so it would freeze. Talk about cold hands! This was another fast game, as both teams just played hockey. Maybe I just did not call many infractions so we could get back to the dressing room. Cardale had a small officials' room but it was one of the warmest in western Manitoba!

Another night in Miniota it was the same thing, the ice was cracked right across the blue line and needed to be repaired as it was not safe to play on. I thought I had Bob McKenzie talked into giving us northern pay due to the weather. Bob, of course, just laughed and stayed in the waiting room.

Angusville was also cold and there were some interesting nights with long drives home when it was so brutally cold.

Lots of cold nights on the road, but the games had to go on. Stay warm folks, until next time!

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Living sustainably in the winter

Submitted
By PATRICIA HANBIDGE

Regardless of where you may live, winter is still winter. Living in the northern hemisphere means that in winter, our days are shorter and the nights seem so dark! Those that suffer from seasonal fatigue really feel the darkness of this time of year. I find that my sleep/wake cycles are definitely different from summer. I welcome these cozier times and am thankful for the added rest. It also helps if you keep yourself busy!

One of the many things that I do to ensure I do not succumb to the winter blues is to spend this time planting, and ensuring I do not feel like I am drying up like the leaves do at this time of year. Time is also spent with ensuring I focus on making sustainability a priority. Making eco-friendly choices helps me to feel more powerful and able to create more mindful habits for myself and my family.

Let's start in the heart of the home – the kitchen. When it is cool outside, I may grill a bit less but still enjoy using the BBQ and smoker as much as possible. Composting never stops – even in the dead of winter. It is simply amazing how much of our waste is actually compostable. Spending a bit of time creating meals out of what you already have in your fridge or pantry is enjoyable and the extra heat generated by cooking long and slow is especially appreciated. Take a moment to look also at your cookware as this is somewhere most of us can improve. Stainless steel, titanium and ceramic coated stainless steel are infinitely better and last longer than your non-stick Teflon or uncoated aluminum pans.

Inevitably we wear more clothes in winter so it is a good time to take stock of your wardrobe. I love to shop at second-hand stores as what I purchase is generally

of more quality and made of more natural substances than purchasing new from retailers. Organic cotton bamboo and hemp are my first choices as polyester is made from fossil fuels and rayon is made from wood pulp contributing to deforestation. Regular cotton requires a significant amount of water to grow and for all the stages of processing required before you purchase that brand new t-shirt. My long-term habit of not following trends has helped me to clothe myself more sustainably and very little of what I wear ends up in the dryer.

Cold weather reduces the humidity in the air. Our skin is dry, our lips are chapped and inevitably we are not drinking enough water. Our plants look sickly, and there are more pest problems too. Do not succumb to overwatering your plants as unless they are under grow lights, they are really not growing and thus need less water. You need to drink more water – your plants do not.

Turn down your thermostat and if you feel chilled put on a sweater. For every degree below 20 C, you can save a small percentage of your heating costs. If you are not home, turn down the thermostat as well. Fans are useful for moving around warm air as well. Your plants will be happier and have less stressors as well.

Recycle everything you can and do it according to your local guidelines. Paper and cardboard from purchases and ordered goods can be easily put in recycling bins. Returnable cans and bottles can be donated to good causes or if you are so inclined, learn how to do that as well.

Thank you for caring!

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



SUBMITTED PHOTO

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COMMUNITY CALENDAR						Jan 30
						31
Feb 1	2	3	4	5	6	7
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8	9	10	11	12	13	14
 Rivers Legion Bingo 11:30am	 50 + Card Games 1pm	 50 + Club Pool 1pm	 50 + Club Cribbage 1pm  Darts Rivers Legion 7pm	 Rivers Food Bank 9:30 - 11:30am  50+ Floor Games 1pm  Rivers Legion Cribbage 7pm	 Prairie Crocus Library Storytime in Rivers 10am  Chase the Ace Rivers Legion 7pm Kenton Legion 7pm	 HAPPY Valentine's DAY