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Bowling stays rolling

STANDARD PHOTO BY DENNIS YOUNG

Jeff Lubkiwski is the new owner of Carman 5 Pin Bowl, stepping into the role after managing the bowling centre for the past year. Lubkiwski says his focus is on keeping bowling alive in the community while maintaining a safe, inclusive and welcoming space for all.

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Carman man keeps chasing Disney magic at 84 years old

By E. Antonio

Charlie Froebe doesn't need convincing that Disney Parks are the most magical — and happiest — places on earth.

The 84-year-old Carman resident has taken 22 Disney trips in his lifetime, stepping foot in parks across California, Florida, Hong Kong, Tokyo and Paris. Soon, he'll embark on his 23rd adventure, this time returning to Walt Disney World.

"Some people think Disney is just for kids," Froebe said. "Me? I'm just a big kid who never grew up."

From his first visit to Disneyland in California in 1971 to his most recent adventures at Walt Disney World in Florida, no trip has ever felt too big — or too small — for Froebe. He even remembers sitting in his grandmother's house when Walt Disney officially announced the construction of Walt Disney World. Almost instantly, chaos followed as property values around Disney's pre-purchased land skyrocketed.

When asked what keeps drawing him back time and time again, Froebe's answer was simple: pure enjoyment.

"I just love it there," he said. "The



Bonnie and Charlie with Piglet in 2009.

rides, the people, the atmosphere — there's so much to enjoy when you truly immerse yourself in the magic of Disney."

Funded by his earnings as a retired farmer and founder of the Canola Cash Advance, Froebe's trips bring home far more than souvenirs. They're filled with decades of shared memories with his family. He frequently visited the parks with his children, grandchildren and his late wife, Bonnie, cherishing every moment spent together.



STANDARD PHOTOS SUBMITTED

Bonnie with her daughters, Nikki and Karla with Pluto and Goofy in Disneyland 1971 on their first trip as a family.

While no single memory stands out as his favourite, Froebe especially values the chance to meet and talk with Cast Members — Disney's term for employees — and fellow parkgoers from around the world.

"I'd start by asking where they're from and go from there," he said. "You learn so much about people and their cultures just by waiting in line. The rides are lovely, but that's not why I go. I go for the whole Disney experience."

Froebe has visited every Disney park in the world except Shanghai, which opened in 2016. While he'd love to see it one day, the long travel time has led him to focus his trips closer to home.

Of the five destinations he's explored, his favourite was an easy decision.

"Disney World takes the cake," he said.

He loves the feeling of entering a fully immersive world. At Walt Disney World, Magic Kingdom stands out most because it was the original park and always brings back cherished memories. Animal Kingdom, however, holds a special place in his heart as a park unlike any other.

Froebe always stays on Disney property to take advantage of early park entry and complimentary transportation.

Before Bonnie passed away, the couple checked off a major bucket-list item: staying at Disney's Animal Kingdom Lodge with a savanna-view room. Each morning, they'd wake to giraffes outside their balcony and watch animals roam the savanna at sunset. That hotel remains Froebe's favourite, carrying deep sentimental meaning.

Their Disney must-dos included rid-

ing Pirates of the Caribbean, getting completely soaked on Kali River Rapids and meeting Mickey Mouse. One attraction Froebe will always skip, however, is Space Mountain.

"I rode it once, and that was enough for me," he said. "It was absolutely terrifying. Being in the dark and not knowing what was coming next, I knew I didn't need to try that again."

Over the years, Froebe has seen many changes to the Disney Parks. The biggest — and most disappointing, he says — has been the shift in Cast Member dedication.

"It used to be an honour to work for the parks," he said. "Now it feels like just another everyday job. The magic isn't quite the same as it was in the early days."

One thing that hasn't changed is his pre-trip planning routine. Before packing his suitcase and heading out, Froebe always orders the latest edition of Steve Birnbaum's Disney guides.

"Steve's been doing this a long time," Froebe said. "He always has the tips and tricks down."

Beyond reading Birnbaum's book and planning flights and accommodations, Froebe prefers not to follow a rigid itinerary. Instead, he enjoys wandering the parks, striking up conversations and letting experiences unfold naturally.

With no plans to slow down anytime soon, Froebe encourages hesitant travellers to take the leap.

"If you have an adventurous soul — just do it," he said. "There's nothing else like it on this earth. You can't describe Disney magic — you have to experience it. It's the place to go when you need to forget your worries. It truly is the happiest place on earth."

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New owner aims to keep Carman 5 Pin Bowling alive

By E. Antonio

To Jeff Lubkiwski, providing a safe, inclusive and enriching environment for all is a top priority. As the new owner of Carman 5 Pin Bowl, his values and ambitions remain unchanged as he enters the next stage of his career.

Lubkiwski has worked at the bowling alley for the past three years and has managed the business for the last 12 months. Recently, the previous owner — who lives abroad while travelling the world — approached Lubkiwski with the idea of leasing the bowling alley and allowing him to run the establishment independently.

"I want to see bowling continue to happen in town, and this seemed like a good opportunity to step up and run a business," Lubkiwski said.

To him, the offer was a clear sign of trust from the previous owner.

"If he had faith in me, I should be able to handle it, so why not go for it?" he said.

Acknowledging the long history of the bowling alley, Lubkiwski described stepping into the owner's shoes as "worrisome," noting he wants to ensure the facility remains the best possible space for everyone.

"Nobody wants to see the bowling

alley disappear, so now it's my job to keep this place alive," he said.

While daily operations are expected to continue as normal, Lubkiwski is looking forward to introducing a few new additions. One change he is especially excited about is the launch of a Board Game Club, held every Saturday at 2 p.m.

"I want to make this a place for more than just bowling," he said.

Plans are also underway for a highly anticipated bowl-a-thon in support of a local charity or organization. This year's event will take place during spring break at the end of March.

The bowling centre will continue to offer public bowling by the game or by the hour, shoe rentals, a snack bar featuring quick bites and hot food, and a fully licensed lounge once its liquor licence is renewed. All of these offerings support Lubkiwski's goal of keeping bowling alive in the community.

Always open to new ideas, Lubkiwski encourages community members to share their suggestions by emailing carman5pinbowl@gmail.com, calling 204-399-9866, or stopping by the centre during operating hours.

"We are open for all, creating a safe space for everyone," Lubkiwski said.



STANDARD PHOTO BY DENNIS YOUNG

Jeff Lubkiwski, the new owner of Carman 5 Pin Bowl, has taken over operations of the bowling centre after working there for three years, including the past year as manager.

"We are here for the community and joy a game of bowling or two." hope everyone will come by and en-

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École Carman Elementary outlines priorities in 2025–26 improvement plan

By Lana Meier

École Carman Elementary School has set new targets in literacy, numeracy, student well-being and reconciliation as part of its 2025–26 Framework for Continuous Improvement.

The updated plan, released Oct. 31, outlines how the Prairie Rose School Division school will measure growth and strengthen supports for its 291 Kindergarten to Grade 5 students.

Principal Bob Beaudry said the school's literacy strategy centres on deeper implementation of science-based reading instruction. Teachers

will expand their use of tools such as Really Great Reading (RGR), the Province of Manitoba's Collection of Assessment Results (CAR) strategies, and Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS), while daily instruction continues to follow the University of Florida Literacy Institute (UFLI) model.

"Data is tracked consistently using these various tools," Beaudry said.

"We are able to see if and where student learning is not improving, and can move resources around to target needs."

Beaudry noted that the shift toward phonics-focused instruction is supported through ongoing professional development. Because DIBELS, RGR and new CAR tracking methods were introduced this fall, he said the school is in its first year of data collection.

"We are establishing a baseline," he said. "Comparing CAR data with the new data from DIBELS and RGR is like comparing apples to oranges, although our provincial CAR data this fall improved from last year."

Cross-grade buddy reading will continue in both French and English, and targeted UFLI recovery groups will support skill development, including for English as an Additional Language learners.

The school's numeracy plan focuses on more consistent use of assessment tools and clearer tracking of student understanding. Teachers will use Numeracy Achievement Program (NAP) supports, classroom assessments and student work samples to guide lessons, with baseline data gathered in the fall and targeted instruction planned from January through June.

Beaudry said the most significant numeracy challenges in schools often relate to inconsistent instructional approaches.

"Our strongest area this year was representing numbers in multiple ways," he said, crediting collaborative programming between Grade 2 and 3 teachers and the daily Number of the Day routine in early grades.

He added that NAP and CAR data "point teachers in the right direction, show what needs more focus, and with which students."

The school aims to increase the number of students meeting provincial expectations on literacy and numeracy CAR assessments by 10–20 per cent by 2026.

Student well-being continues to be a central focus as ÉCES builds on improvements from recent nutrition program and sidewalk access upgrades.

"Kids reported that they have friends and feel safe at a higher level than the average," Beaudry said. "We're celebrating that and building on it to make it stronger."

Classroom programming delivered by the guidance team will include Kids in the Know, Sources of Strength and Mind-Up. Teachers will reinforce lessons using social stories, conflict-resolution instruction and co-regulation strategies.

Beaudry said relationships play a key role in the school's culture.

"I like to greet them all with a high-

**"THE STAFF
HERE HAVE
BUILT STRONG
RELATIONSHIPS—
KIDS COUNT ON
THEM."**



STANDARD PHOTO BY LISA GOERTZEN

Principal Bob Beaudry, right, and Vice Principal Shane Muck.

five when they arrive and say goodbye when they leave," he said. "Students reported that 100 per cent of them have an adult they can turn to. The staff here have built strong relationships—kids count on them."

Families will continue to be informed of incidents and school updates through administration, with input from the parent council, ACSL.

More than 10 per cent of ÉCES students self-identify as Indigenous, and the school's plan includes strengthened monitoring of their academic progress. Staff will meet regularly to review data and ensure timely supports in both literacy and numeracy.

"Our Indigenous students' academic success is a priority," said Beaudry. "We are very fortunate that our divisional Indigenous lead has her office here. She makes sure students and staff understand cultural barriers and

history."

ÉCES will continue to work with Elders, Knowledge Keepers and the division's Indigenous consultant on activities including smudging, Orange Shirt Day and community events. Increased visibility of Indigenous culture through displays, books and classroom resources will be used as indicators of growth.

For incoming kindergarten students, the school will once again host its early childhood transition event in the spring to help families become familiar with the building and reduce first-day anxieties. Feedback and participation tracking will help measure the program's success.

Families will receive regular updates through report cards and parent-teacher conferences.

The full improvement plan is available on the ÉCES website.

Access Credit Union commits \$250,000 to Manitoba schools

By Lana Meier

Access Credit Union is investing \$250,000 in Manitoba schools through its 2026 Focused Funding Grant, an initiative aimed this year at strengthening recreation and wellness programs for students.

Now in its second year, the Focused Funding Grant will provide \$25,000 each to 10 K-12 public schools across

the province. The funding is intended to enhance programs, activities and spaces that contribute to student well-being, with an emphasis on creating safe, supportive environments where students and communities can connect and thrive.

Access Credit Union said recreation and wellness were selected as the 2026 focus after seeing a strong and

growing number of grant applications in these areas in recent years, particularly those centred on student wellness spaces and recreation needs.

The credit union noted that many schools continue to rely on aging or limited equipment and facilities, while others face space constraints — especially in Manitoba, where weather can limit outdoor activity and gath-

ering areas. Targeted funding, they said, can help introduce new recreation options, increase participation, enhance movement during school breaks and improve accessibility.

Rural and lower-income schools may face additional challenges due to fewer available recreation resources, making school-based investment es-

Continued on page 5

School tax pressure grows as PRSD grapples with rising property assessments

By E. Antonio

Property owners across the Prairie Rose School Division (PRSD) will see higher school taxes on their 2026 bills, but trustees say the increases stem more from provincial policy decisions and assessment shifts than from local spending.

The division, which covers communities stretching from Carman through St. Claude, Elm Creek, Miami and surrounding rural areas, is preparing for another difficult budget cycle as Manitoba continues phasing out the education property tax rebate. At the same time, farmland and residential assessments have climbed at rates many municipalities describe as disproportionate.

While Municipalities in the region have no control over rates for 2026, they are expecting to see another increase in assessed values following the province's reassessment cycle. Although the school division does not control assessment, rising property values automatically shift more tax burden onto local ratepayers unless the provincial formula adjusts accordingly.

PRSD superintendent, Kevin Clace said trustees are hearing the concerns from tax payers.

"With increasing costs and inflation, it is always a challenge to ensure the division is providing quality programming and services to students. The PRSD Board of Trustees are committed to working towards creative solutions to ensure students receive quality education while supporting delivery of essential services," he said.

Inflation, contractual wage obligations, fuel, transportation, and student-needs supports have collectively outpaced provincial funding increases for several consecutive years. This has left rural divisions like Prairie Rose relying more heavily on the local tax base to balance budgets.

The province's education funding guarantee — intended to limit annual tax increases — is increasingly difficult to meet, trustees say, because mandatory costs cannot be cut without affect-

ing classrooms.

Clace noted creating the 2025-2026 budget was a complex process as the division attempted to understand how the adjustments to the Homeowners Affordability Tax Credit (HATC) and School Tax Rebate would impact local rate payers. This year, PRSD had to levy a two per cent increase in order to maintain current operations.

The tax impact varies widely depending on location and property type. Farmland has seen some of the largest assessment increases in Manitoba, meaning producers are absorbing a higher share of the school levy even when mill rates stay stable or decline.

While tax relief options like the HATC and Farmland School Tax Rebate (FSTR) exist, municipal leaders still say they are not enough.

They also say that the responsibility that provincial funding models place on property owners is too extreme.

"It [places too much responsibility] but until a better way is implemented and school divisions need funding, the taxpayer will share some of that burden," said Brian Callum, Reeve for the RM of Thompson.

RM of St. Laurent, Billie Jean Oliver had similar opinions, expressing the 2025 funding model majorly impacted cottage owners of those who own more than one property, especially since the HATC could only be applied to permanent dwellings.

"Many of the ratepayers asked why they have to even pay the school taxes when they do not have children in school or their children go to school in a different region," she added, noting farmers with in the municipality didn't have a significant impact as the FSTR did not change.

Sharla Murray, CAO of the Town of Carman also said that the current model is too heavy on property tax payers. "When provincial funding doesn't keep pace, the shortfall shows up on municipal tax bills that we must collect but don't control," she said. "This impacts homeowners already dealing with affordability issues, and

it hits farmers particularly hard because school taxes are based on land value, not income.

Within the Town of Carman, she explained farmers are hit the hardest because the FSTR is seeing a decline. "With the rebate shrinking over time and requiring annual MASC (Manitoba Agricultural Services Corporation) applications, the financial impact on farmland continues to grow," she added.

RM of Roland reeve Jodi Gaultier shared every reassessment imposes a level of burden on taxpayers, especially farmland owners.

"While assessments have increased for all types of properties, with the change in education property tax credits this year most residents in the RM of Roland saw their education taxes actually decrease but the farmland went up almost 19 per cent in some cases," she explained.

The RM of Grey was unavailable to comment on the topic at this time.

Callum, Oliver and Murray all say the deal with the consequence of taxpayer's complaints over high school taxes, but all want payers to know they are not involved with determining the rates.

PRSD continues to face demands for more student supports, technology upgrades, and facilities maintenance — particularly aging rural schools requiring mechanical and accessibility improvements.

While it's still too early to determine the 2026-2027 school year budget, Clace calls for changes to provincial funding.

"PRSD Board of Trustees strongly supports the Manitoba School Boards Association, in advocating for a significant shift in the education funding model," he added. "Which calls on the Provincial Government to contribute 80% of operating costs, to ensure greater equity and stability for school divisions across Manitoba."

The provincial government has signalled interest in overhauling Manitoba's education funding model, but no timeline has been provided. Division

officials say real reform must ensure predictable funding that aligns with inflation and program requirements.

Municipal leaders in the PRSD area have also urged the province to reconsider its school tax strategy, warning that continued reliance on property owners — particularly farmers — is unsustainable.

"A more predictable and provincially supported funding model would help reduce the volatility tied to property assessments," said Murray. "Increasing the province's share of school operating costs and reviewing how agricultural land is taxed would create more fairness for rural areas. Stabilizing or improving the FSTR program would also help producers who have been absorbing more of the education tax load as the rebate has declined." She thinks the education funding framework needs to be fair, stable and doesn't place a disproportionate amount of responsibility on taxpayers.

"These tax pressures are happening at a time when overall living and operating costs are rising. Federal and provincial policies—whether through taxation, regulation, or economic decisions—directly influence inflation and affordability," she added.

Callum wants to see complete elimination.

"I would think the only way to make things fair for tax payers is to remove school tax completely from property tax," he said.

Gaultier had similar remarks.

"I would like to see Education funding move away from a property tax model. In particular, it would be nice if collecting the education tax did not fall on the shoulders of the municipalities as it can create animosity and confusion for ratepayers who don't understand that the municipality has no control over education property tax—we merely collect it and then transfer it to the school divisions."

PRSD will release its preliminary 2026-27 draft budget in February, following the provincial funding announcement to be made at the end of January.

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pecially important. Access said the grant is intended to help strengthen spaces that serve not only students, but also the wider community.

"Investments in school recreation and wellness extend well beyond the school walls," the credit union said, noting that gyms, playgrounds and outdoor spaces are often shared with families and community groups. Enhancing these areas helps build stron-

ger connections between schools, families and local organizations while promoting inclusive access.

"We saw tremendous interest from across Manitoba last year and we're proud to once again offer a program that speaks to the specific needs in our communities," said Curt Letkeman, board chair of Access Credit Union. "By focusing on recreation and wellness, we can truly make an impactful difference, remove barriers, and create lasting opportunities for children

to grow and develop."

The grant is open to all K-12 public schools in Manitoba. Applications may be submitted by parent advisory committees, school administrators, teachers or school divisions. Projects must be pre-approved by the applicable school division and supported by a letter from the school principal or vice-principal.

Grant applications open Feb. 16 and close March 31. Successful schools will be notified in the fall, followed

by a public announcement.

Access Credit Union said the Focused Funding Grant will rotate its area of focus from year to year, guided by ongoing conversations with community organizations and local leaders. Those insights help ensure the program remains relevant, responsive and impactful while allowing support to be shared across as many Manitoba communities as possible.

STANDARD



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EDITORIAL > VIEWPOINTS > LETTERS

What 2026 holds for Canadian agriculture

By Cam Dahl, Manitoba Pork

How did Canadian agriculture fare in 2025? What trends will continue from 2025 into 2026, and what does that mean for export-dependent farmers?

A year ago, I predicted that 2025 would be filled with global uncertainty that disrupted markets. I was hoping that this forecast would be proven wrong, but unfortunately it was not. Our neighbour to the south is focused on "America First," and U.S. policies are moving away from supporting free and open trade. Canadian agriculture faced a short period of tariffs but ultimately was protected by the Canada-U.S.-Mexico Agreement (CUSMA). However, we don't know if this will continue until the end of 2026, as CUSMA is up for review.

This is the most important policy file for the 90 per cent of farmers in Canada who depend on international markets. The agreement will either be extended to 2032, put into a cycle of annual reviews, or terminated. The outcome of the review will determine the fiscal sustainability of many farms across Canada, including in Manitoba.

Tariffs are a threat, but they are not the only protectionist measures faced by farmers and food processors. The revival of country-of-origin labelling in the U.S. and individual state legislation that fragments the North American market — such as Proposition 12 in California — are two other examples of policies threatening Canadian agriculture and food exports. And the U.S. is not alone. China has targeted agricultural commodities in retaliation for Canadian tariffs on electric vehicles. The European Union continues to block Canadian agricultural and food exports using non-tariff trade barriers.



**Cam Dahl, General Manager
Manitoba Pork**

Uncertainty in world trade is costly for Manitoba farmers and processors. Unfortunately, this uncertainty will remain throughout 2026 and will likely intensify during the review of CUSMA. Securing the North American market, offsetting the cost of trade uncertainty, and trade diversification need to be at the top of the policy list for all governments in 2026.

Food and agriculture need to be top of mind at every Canadian negotiating table in 2026. Canadian governments and negotiators need to be reminded that food and beverage processing is the largest manufacturing sector in Canada, with sales worth about \$175 billion, accounting for more than 20 per cent of total manufacturing sales. Meat products comprise the largest proportion of the food manufacturing sector in both

Manitoba and Canada. If agriculture and food are left behind in trade discussions, livelihoods in every region of Manitoba will be significantly impacted.

Manitoba hog farmers continue to be world leaders in disease prevention and management. The entire sector has recognized the need to work together to protect animal health. Sometimes this means that parts of the value chain take actions that are not in their short-term fiscal interest but deliver long-term benefits to the entire sector. This level of collaboration is not often found in other countries or regions. Manitoba's pork sector should be congratulated for this accomplishment.

Working with the entire value chain to prevent and mitigate disease impacts is a key priority for Manitoba hog farmers in 2026. This includes preventing diseases such as Porcine Reproductive and Respiratory Syndrome and Porcine Epidemic Diar-

rhea virus where possible, and limiting their spread when it is not. Hog farmers are also working with processors, veterinarians, transport companies, and Manitoba's Office of the Chief Veterinarian to keep foreign animal diseases such as foot-and-mouth disease and African swine fever out of Manitoba.

On the economic front, 2025 was a profitable year across the hog sector. Profitability was driven by strong pork demand around the world, relatively affordable pork prices for consumers, disease pressures in other pork-producing regions, and reasonable feed costs. I expect profitable conditions to continue into 2026, at least for the first half of the year. Profitability in the second half of 2026 will depend largely on the world trade situation.

Given current profitability, 2026 should be a year of renewal and growth for Manitoba's hog sector. However, investing in the future is difficult when markets and trade patterns remain uncertain. Financing barns with a 25-year lifespan becomes more costly and challenging amid growing uncertainty. Manitoba's Economic Development Plan recognizes the impact of international uncertainty on the province's investment climate and the need to reduce reliance on trade with the U.S. A priority for 2026 will be developing ways to partner with government and industry to offset some of these financial risks and costs in order to facilitate industry renewal.

In some ways, 2026 will likely look a lot like 2025. We will continue to see significant trade and market uncertainty, with the potential for that uncertainty to increase as the CUSMA review approaches. Positive profitability should continue, based on strong demand, disease pressure in other jurisdictions, and manageable feed costs. The question at the end of 2026 will be whether the potential negatives from the political environment outweighed the natural positives of the market.

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The way it was this week in: January 29

By Dennis Young

100 years ago – 1926... More than 200 people attended the first Robbie Burns Dinner, featuring haggis. A Dr. Scholl's foot appliance demonstration was held at A.F. Higgins Co. Roland travelled to Swan Lake for a hockey game, followed by a dance, with the team seen off by train the next morning. Stan and son Reid performed a cornet duet at a Father and Son banquet. Carman was asked to contribute photographs for a History of Agriculture in Manitoba. The Carman Great War Veterans Association held a dance, with admission set at \$1 for men and 50 cents for ladies. D.S. Woods of Miami served as district school inspector.

75 years ago – 1951... Archie Hardy was re-elected to the hospital board. Song Jack sold his ownership in the York, Rex and B.C. Cafes, the former Carmania building, and the house occupied by the RCMP and constable, to

a Winnipeg businessman for \$50,000. The ball club was in arrears \$6,200 to the Manitoba Power Commission. Elm Creek formed a chamber of commerce. A subscription to The Leader cost \$3 per year. The Recreation Association announced its annual Carnival Queen Contest.

50 years ago – 1976... Carman Hospital posted a \$21,500 deficit due to lower patient numbers. The Kinsmen agreed to pay a \$150 annual fee for use of the Kin Room at the arena. Carman now had four banks following the opening of TD. Esso dealer Peter Sanderson hosted a Farm Forum and Exhibition at the arena. Safeway Lucerne ice cream sold for 85 cents per litre. Council agreed in principle to 24–36 senior housing units in partnership with the province. Lisgar MP Jack Murta travelled to the United States for trade talks involving eggs, beef and grain. Keith Kyle served as farm management specialist. Mid-

land School Division received \$45,000 of the \$69,000 requested in the provincial budget.

25 years ago – 2001... The RM of Grey faced opposition to a rezoning proposal. The Trudel family celebrated three years at the Carman Motor Inn. The Journey for Sight Snowmobile Ride arrived in Carman. The Birch Mountain Sports Group was formed to help keep Birch Ski Area open. Dean North headed to California for a full season on the Canadian Golf Tour. High-speed internet was scheduled to arrive in Carman later in the year. The former Miami Elementary School was being used by various community groups. Members of the Graysville 4-H Variety Club advanced to district speaking competition. Town council issued a call for volunteers for the Recreation Commission and the Dufferin Historical Society.

Carman Zone 4 champs shine at provincials

By Dennis Young

Carman Collegiate's girls curling team lost just one game on the way to capturing the 2000 Zone 4 title.

The team first defeated Miami to advance to the A side, but the Marlins battled back through the B side for a rematch. After an extra-end win for Miami, a second game was required—as tournament rules dictate a team must be beaten twice. In the rematch, Carman came out on top to clinch the championship.

The original lineup featured Danine McCutcheon, Sam Owen, Trisha Russell and Katie Armstrong. However, Katie was sidelined with a knee injury for the finals, and Karen Hodgson stepped in. By the time Katie recovered, Sam had joined a Winnipeg-based team, leading to a new provincial lineup of Danine, Karen, Trisha and Katie for the junior women's provincials.

Despite being ranked 10th at the event in Portage la Prairie, Team McCutcheon finished first in their pool with a 6–1 record. Their provincial run ended with an 8–6 playoff loss to Selkirk.

Danine McCutcheon recalled: "I remember winning, and I loved playing with the girls. Coming in first in our pool was surprising but rewarding. We had no pressure on us. It's funny—I never curled after high school, but I couldn't imagine playing without my best friends."

Karen Hodgson said: "We really surprised ourselves! We just went out



STANDARD PHOTO SUBMITTED

Carman Collegiate's girls curling team, from left, Trisha Russell, Karen Hodgson, Danine McCutcheon and Sam Owen, captured the 2000 Zone 4 title and went on to finish first in their pool at the junior women's provincials. Missing is coach Dale Owen.

there, curled our best and had fun. No one expected anything of us."

Katie Armstrong added: "We knew a lot of the teams were from the city, but we found we could play with them. It was amazing! After winning our first game, we were really pumped and decided, let's go for it."

Trisha Russell recalled: "Our provincial run was such an amazing experience. We went in as underdogs and really made a great push. What made it even better was that we were all such good friends off the ice, which gave us great chemistry on the ice. We just had fun!"

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Joyful Praise

Have you spent much time reading the Psalms? The people of Israel use this as their song book of praise and their example of prayer. It is a reminder that our emotions can be used for good.

In a world where religion seems to be a solemn event and worship is something we do on Sunday mornings to seriously focus on God, Psalm 150 is a great reminder of a better recommendation utilizing all our emotions. The last Psalm is an example of excited praise. It is not quiet, nor is it solemn.

"Praise the Lord!" The Psalm starts of excited ... notice the exclamation mark, yet solely vocal for now. To praise is to acknowledge that which is good. God is not only our Creator, but also has made a way for us to have a personal relationship with Him through Jesus Christ.

"Praise God in His sanctuary; Praise Him in His mighty Heavens." We now build up the enthusiasm pointing to the joy received when gathered with other believers in what we call Church. We also recognize God's presence which starts in the throne room of Heaven and extends to all of creation.

"Praise Him for His mighty acts; Praise Him for His excellent greatness." Praise is expressed for not only who God is, but also for what He has done and what we know He will do.

"Praise Him with the sound of the trumpet; Praise Him with the lute and harp; Praise Him with the timbrel and dance; ..." Notice the loud instruments come now, building the enthusiasm and noise. As the band joins in, the volume continues to build ... such that the voices are starting to get hard to hear.

"Let everything that has breath praise the Lord!" The final enthusiastic response involves everything of our being. It is like the leader is shouting out this phrase ... like he is saying, 'Let 'er rip!'

Let us join in with enthusiasm in praising the Lord!

Pastor Richard Heppner
Friends Community Church

A question that changed everything to Gretna man

By E. Antonio

To Gretna's Tim Sawatzky, helping others in a time of need is simply part of who he is.

"We need to live beyond ourselves," he said. "It's about creating the bigger picture with others."

Shortly before Christmas, Sawatzky put that belief into action when community newspaper owner Brett Mitchell found himself stranded on the side of the road in Gretna. Sawatzky offered Mitchell the use of his phone, a warm seat, and friendly company at the Gretna Post Office while he waited for CAA.

Helping out, Sawatzky said, was an easy decision.

"I asked myself, 'What would I appreciate if I were in his shoes? How would I want to be treated in this situation?'" he recalled. "I'm a Christian, and one thing we see throughout scripture is that it's not always about us — it's about others."

As the two passed the time waiting for the tow truck, conversation turned to Sawatzky's faith and the pivotal moment that shaped his life decades earlier.

During the summer before he began Grade 10, Sawatzky and a friend were

driving through Gretna when they noticed a large number of vehicles parked outside the former Sunflower Gardens Hockey Arena. Curious, they went inside and unknowingly walked into a crusade led by a Lundstrom evangelist.

"I remember walking through the doors onto the ice surface and grabbing onto the plexiglass," Sawatzky said. "The lights were dim, but the stage was brightly lit. I remember the sight, the smell — the whole environment of that day."

While there, the evangelist posed a question to the audience that would change Sawatzky's life: Do you know where you'll go when you die?

While his friend left immediately, Sawatzky stood frozen.

"I couldn't answer the question, and that freaked me out, so I just stood there," he said. "That question haunted me. That's when I decided to give my life to the Lord — and my life hasn't been the same since."

Though he had attended church regularly with his family before that night, Sawatzky said it was the first time he had been confronted so directly with the question of eternity.



STANDARD PHOTO SUBMITTED

Tim Sawatzky and his wife, Pamela.

"It's been such an amazing journey and adventure ever since," he said. "I know what's to come, and nothing will ever change that."

He doesn't know how long it took him to reach that decision — whether seconds or minutes — but said it felt as though time itself had stopped.

"It felt like an eternity in that moment," he said. "It was just me and the question, wrestling in my heart."

The transformation, he said, was immediate and noticeable.

When school resumed in September, several teachers asked what had happened to him.

"It was such a good confirmation of having a transformed life," he said. "I wasn't trying to be different — I just was. People could see it."

Years later, in 2003, the Sunflower Gardens Hockey Arena was sold, and the new developer offered to lease the building to Sawatzky's local church group at a low cost. Church members quickly embraced the opportunity,

renovating the arena into a new church home after previously meeting at the Community Club Seniors Centre.

Eventually, Sawatzky became pastor of Victory Family Church, in the very building where his faith journey began. Becoming a pastor had never been part of his plan, he said, but when the opportunity arose, it felt like a calling.

To Sawatzky, being a pastor meant serving as a role model both inside and outside the church, especially for younger generations. While he holds many fond memories from that chapter of his life, seeing positive change in others stands out most.

"When you really see change in people, that's the most rewarding part of it all," he said.

After retiring from ministry, Sawatzky found himself on a new path during the COVID-19 pandemic, turning to refurbishing and selling pontoon boats.

Hoping to buy a boat for himself but deterred by high Canadian prices, Sawatzky began travelling to the United States on his commercial licence, purchasing affordable pontoons and refurbishing them back in Canada. Since cross-border travel was limited at the time, others began relying on his licence as well, and soon he was selling refurbished pontoons to customers, marking his entry into the business world.

The best part of this stage of life, he said, is the excitement it brings to his family.

"We love adventure," he said. "We want to live where the adventure is and that's what I'm holding onto."

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Santa Paws drive brings in over 1,000 items for PVHS

By Lorne Stelmach

Supporters came through once again in support of the Pembina Valley Humane Society during the holiday season.

The organization held its Santa Paws campaign for a fifth straight year with the goal of helping meet its needs for dog and cat food and cat litter for 2026.

"We started it during COVID, and it blew us away the first year, and it continues to do that," said donor engagement chair Tanya Rempel. "We have so many people, even from local businesses, who offered to collect for us."

"It shows we have people in all different areas of the Pembina Valley and all different ages who are willing to do whatever they can to help the shelter," she said. "We have a lot of people who are willing to help us out."

The goal this year was to collect 300 cans each of wet cat food and wet dog food as well as 100 cans each of wet puppy and kitten food and 50 bags of cat litter.

Rempel shared last week that they collected over a thousand donated items overall.

"We met all of our donation goals aside from cat litter, but a lot of them,

we exceeded. We were very happy with it.

"We kind of streamlined it to less items this year, and it seemed to go over really well," Rempel noted. "We got over 250 cans of kitten food, which is great because we run out of that usually in a couple of months."

How much they go through and how quickly can vary from one year to the next.

"It's hard to say. It's dependent on the kitten season," Rempel explained. "Last year, I think, we probably put a call out multiple times during the year, and we asked for a hundred at Christmas, and we burned through that by the spring."

"This won't get us through the year, but it will likely get us through that first kitten season in the spring."

Rempel felt it was worthwhile to focus on the most important basic needs.

"We focused on the things that we go through the most ... and it's kind of a cost effective things people can buy," she said. "People can buy a can of food for a dollar or so, and it's a nice way to feel like you are donating something worthwhile."

"We often have had to buy the wet kitten and the wet puppy food, especially if we have malnourished ani-



STANDARD PHOTO SUBMITTED

The region really came through for the Pembina Valley Humane Society during its Santa Paws donation drive last month.

mals, so if we don't have to buy that it gives us a little more money to pay for vet care or things like heating costs and other things that are going up.

"We're very, very grateful to everyone who donated and all of the businesses that helped out," stressed Rempel.

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BRANDON UNIVERSITY

January 2026

Brandon University helps students get a great start

BRANDON, Man. – Beginning your post-secondary education is a big step, and that's why Brandon University is committed to helping you get off to a great start.

Brandon University has a 125-year history of high-quality academic programs, combined with a constantly growing support system that helps today's students put their best foot forward as soon as they step on campus. A friendly and welcoming group of student leaders greet new students when they arrive for orientation, and the helpful faculty and staff are with them every step of the way, including academic assistance, career counselling, Student Accessibility Services, personal counselling, and cultural resources such as the Indigenous Peoples' Centre. A recent addition to BU's supports is the Al and Bee Wagner Indigenous Student Transition Program, which helps students adjust to university life through mentor-

ship, academic check-ins, and guidance from Knowledge Keepers.

"Brandon University is a small university with a big sense of community," said Michelle Lemoine, Director of Recruitment and Retention at BU. "Students benefit from smaller class sizes, meaningful connections with professors, and a campus where they feel known and supported. Living in Brandon is also ideal for students who enjoy the amenities of a city paired with a small-town feel — short commutes, affordable living, and a strong sense of belonging. Many students choose to stay with BU through the completion of their undergraduate degree, and some continue on into our graduate programs."

Located on a compact but full-service campus at the heart of Manitoba's second-largest city, BU offers its 3,500 students a wide range of options to prepare for their future careers. Students can choose from 19 undergraduate

programs, six graduate programs, and four certificate programs in the Faculties of Arts, Education, Health Studies, Science, and the School of Music. Additionally, many established professionals further their careers by studying offerings such as the Master of Education and Master of Psychiatric Nursing programs, which they can pursue part-time while they work. For those looking for something else, there are 19 available pre-professional programs, where students can start at BU before moving seamlessly into their specialized program at another university.

Aiding in career preparation are built-in practicums in Education and Health Studies, as well as the Co-op program, which allows students to earn while they learn by mixing in paid work experience between academic terms.

Enoch Ouskun, who was a Co-op Business student and participant in the Indigenous Student Transition Program,

began an articling position with an accounting firm following his graduation last year, and he credited the people of BU with helping him reach his goals.

"The professors and staff were all wonderful people, and whenever I need help with anything, be it understanding a concept, getting office time to go over questions, or anything to do with deadlines," he said. "They were always helpful and understanding."

Brandon University also has robust research programs, allowing students to gain real-world experience working on meaningful projects, even at the undergraduate level. Right now, undergraduate BU students are working on projects such as cancer detection and treatment, environmental stewardship, quantum computing, and green energy production.

To learn more about BU, take a virtual tour, or set up an in-person visit at BrandonU.ca/Future-Students.

BRANDON UNIVERSITY

let's start!

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2026 Education

Spring/Summer

Why visiting MITT's Open House might be your best winter road trip

You may have noticed MITT's name popping up around the Pembina Valley this past year. That's thanks to the college's Network and Systems Administrator program offered right in the heart of Morden. The program will be back for 2026-2027, so if tinkering with servers and fixing everyone's Wi-Fi makes your heart flutter, make sure to apply soon to snag your spot. Check out MITT.ca/events to learn how you can get a sneak peek of the program on February 25.

Not a tech person? No worries. MITT offers plenty of other in-demand programs. With their Open House coming up on February 19 at Henlow Campus in Winnipeg, it's the perfect chance to explore your opportunities. Yes, you'll have to drive to Winnipeg. But if you're willing to head to Carman just for Syl's ice cream, then a slightly longer drive to invest in your future is hardly a stretch, right? MITT's Open House is your chance to see for yourself what they offer. Here's what you can expect:

Explore campus life

Just like the Pembina Valley, MITT is a place where you can feel at home quickly. Campuses are small and easy to navigate. They're also filled with inviting social spaces and student life events that make it easy to connect with classmates.

Meet expert instructors

Meet MITT's instructors who know their in-

dustries inside and out. They're pros who've spent years working in the careers you'll be training for and are the exact people you want in your corner when you're starting your career.

See live demonstrations of hands-on learning

You'll see MITT programs in action with real tools, real labs, and real activities, not just pamphlets on tables. You can poke, press, tap, and test...just like you sample your way through treats at the Corn and Apple Festival.

Chat with support staff

At Open House, talk directly with the people behind MITT's student supports. You'll have access to information like academic assistance, financial guidance, accessibility services, mental health resources, and more. Plus, you can meet with the recruitment team about applications and deadlines to set you on the path to starting your studies. Together, they'll make your experience smoother than a fresh stretch of Highway 3 after spring repairs.

You might just discover the place that helps you launch your career. That sounds like a trip worth taking.

Ready to start your journey? Visit MITT.ca/openhouse to register and learn more.

Task force urges residents to stand up against racism

By Ashleigh Viveiros

A task force begun in the wake of a racially-motivated attack last summer is putting a call out to the community.

The Pembina Valley Antiracism Action Team has released a public letter with several actions people can take to foster an environment of inclusion and respect.

The team is a coalition of 30 community leaders across eight municipalities who have been meeting the last several months to come up with a concerted plan to battle racism in the Pembina Valley.

"There was quite a bit of shock when we all heard, rather unexpectedly, about the assault that happened in Winkler," shared Elaine Burton Saindon, who heads up the Pembina Valley Local Immigration Partnership (PVLIP) and is one of the founders of the action team.

The June incident saw a man physically assaulted in a residential area of Winkler. His turban was torn off his head and his attackers reportedly hurled racial slurs at him during the assault. Three men were charged.

The incident left community leaders wondering what could be done to battle the anti-immigrant viewpoints that fueled it—sentiments that have been on the rise of late, Burton Saindon said.

"So we reached out to other colleagues and stakeholders to ask if there was interest in having a conversation about how do we respond to something like this. Twenty-five people showed up."

"We all came to the conclusion that saying nothing is still saying something," Burton Saindon said, noting that while a public statement condemning the attack was issued last summer, the group felt more is needed long-term to really get to the root of this issue.

They've been working on that plan ever since, and are now asking the community to help them with the first steps of rolling it out.

"It's a call to action," Burton Saindon explained of the "Speak Up Pembina Valley" campaign, which urges residents, businesses, and other organizations to reach out and connect to newcomers to ensure they feel welcome here, to speak up publicly to condemn discriminatory actions you see or hear of occurring, to establish safe reporting mechanisms for staff and volunteers for when incidents

occur, and to remember our shared roots as a community made up of people from many different backgrounds and cultures.

"Silence can be mistaken for acceptance," the action team collectively stresses. "We need everyone to speak up and act, so our towns remain welcoming and safe for all."

Burton Saindon shared that the action team has applied for federal grant funding they hope will allow them to further refine anti-racism efforts in the Pembina Valley. They should receive word about whether they'll get it or not this spring.

In the meantime, they intend to do what they can with limited resources, including this awareness campaign and potentially hosting public forums to dialogue with newcomers and longtime Canadians alike.

PVLIP also has resources on its website (pvlip.ca) designed to help community members support diversity, inclusion, and a sense of belonging for everyone.

Steve Reynolds is the executive director of Regional Connections Immigrant Services and one of the founders of the action team alongside Burton Saindon and Tash Olfert from Pembina Valley Victim Services. He says racism in our community comes in many forms, some of them overt and some much more subtle.

"It's a mix of both ... some incidents have been very direct, like derogatory name calling and stuff that's being said to people and how people are being treated that's very clearly directed to their culture, their ethnicity or where they're from, or just that they're an immigrant."

"It happens in the workplace and in community spaces. It's been at coffeshops and parks and in schools between kids, at youth events. Definitely everywhere and the whole range."

"I would say people are getting more brazen about it," observed Burton Saindon, noting that's certainly not unique to our area. "It's everywhere in Canada, not just us. But what we've seen locally is that we've never had this kind of escalation at this level, people being more vocal ... they're expressing thought processes that they typically in the past maybe would have just kept internally or around their kitchen table. That's what we're starting to see."

"At the end of the day, it's bullying. We need to pull together against it."

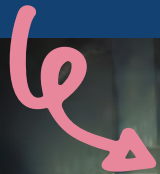
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Local author brings Manitoba sasquatch story to young readers

By E. Antonio

Sasquatches, giant beavers and mysterious northern sightings aren't just campfire stories for Interlake author John Warms — they're the foundation of his newest children's book, inspired by a real encounter in northern Manitoba.

Interlake-based author John Warms recently published his first children's book, *The Girl Who Met Sasquatch*, earlier this summer.

Warms, who grew up west of Carman, said his inspiration for becoming an author comes from the people he has met throughout his life. Now the author of three books, he continues to collect and share stories of strange encounters experienced by both himself and others he has crossed paths with.

"All of my books are people-driven," Warms said. "You have to enjoy what you write about, and these unusual encounters have certainly piqued my interest."

A retired teacher who spent years working in Indigenous communities in the northwest region of the Interlake, Warms said he occasionally heard stories about large, frightening and unknown creatures. Over time, he noticed these sightings were common in remote northern communities, while many people in southern Manitoba were largely unaware of them.

"My delight is to share what is somewhat secret and let it be known in other parts of Manitoba and other parts of the world," he said.

Warms gathered stories from eye-witnesses describing extraordinarily large birds, bats, beavers, snakes, sasquatches and more. Before teaching in the north, he said he had not heard of many of these creatures, later describing the experience as "an absolute gold mine of little-known creatures," and the sightings themselves as "phenomenal."

Through word of mouth and storytelling, Warms collected account after account of these eerie encounters and compiled them into his second book, *Stranger Creatures Seldom Seen*. His newest children's book expands on one of those accounts, telling the story of a young girl who encountered a sasquatch while camped beside a lake where her grandfather did commercial fishing.

The story follows five- or six-year-old Marlene, who, after flying to a remote location with her family, was tasked with periodically checking on her baby sister while her grandmother cleaned fish by the lake. On one particular trip to the hammock, Marlene noticed a terrible smell, looked up and found herself face to face with

a sasquatch.

Although the encounter took place more than four decades ago, Warms said he has remained in contact with Marlene over the years not only to confirm details, but "also to enjoy the story again and again together."

The 40-page picture book — illustrated by Warms' granddaughter — invites readers into the day Marlene saw the sasquatch with her own eyes.

Warms said writing a children's book proved more challenging than his previous work, as it required transforming a real-life account into a child-friendly story young readers could understand and enjoy. Still, he welcomed the challenge.

"I enjoy thinking and getting inside the person who is having the experience," he said. "I like dramatizing the story from the clues that have been given to me, and then try to make it exciting for the reader."

For *Stranger Creatures Seldom Seen*, Warms said he enjoyed putting on a "reporter's hat," gathering clues from across the province to determine what might be real and what might not.

"I got so many witnesses from the north, south and everywhere in between that it made sense to me their

Continued on page 14



STANDARD PHOTO SUBMITTED

John Warms is the author of *Stranger Creatures Seldom Seen* and *The Girl Who Met Sasquatch*, books that explore stories of Indigenous Peoples' encounters with strange and unusual creatures.

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Registration now open for high school ice fishing championship on March 10

By E. Antonio

The Manitoba High School Ice Fishing Championship continues to grow, returning to Balsam Bay for its third year on March 10. Balsam Bay is located on the southwest shore of Lake Winnipeg, just south of Gimli and north of Winnipeg Beach. Tournament organizer Dustin Bruce expects approximately 1,500 students from more than 70 schools to attend, with space still available for high schools looking to participate.

Bruce and co-convenor J.J. Ross first began hosting ice fishing derbies more than five years ago for St. James-Assiniboine School Division high schools. After receiving repeated requests from schools outside the division, the pair coordinated the inaugural provincial championship in 2024.

Since its inception, the event has expanded rapidly, and registration numbers for this year already point to a record-breaking turnout. For Bruce, the championship is about far more than competition — it's a hands-on way to teach fishing skills, responsibility and conservation.

"It's opened up a lot of different ways to teach about fishing and fisheries," Bruce said. "It teaches students how to prepare, and for us, it wraps up our fishing unit in a fun way. It also enables us to have important conversations about conservation. It's rewarding knowing we're leaving our resources in capable hands. That's the legacy behind it — teach them young and teach them the right way."

In the classroom, Bruce prepares his students by teaching them how to tie knots, prepare tackle, review the angling guide, identify fish and understand the full fishing process.

"I want to make myself as useless as possible come championship day," he said. "I love seeing students able to do everything on their own."

The championship is a full-day event that blends education, community and friendly competition. Students have opportunities to engage with

fishing and conservation professionals while competing for hundreds of prizes. Awards include trophies, banners and bragging rights for schools that reel in the biggest catches.

Schools from across Manitoba — including several from the north — have attended in past years. Bruce credits the strength of the fishing community for the championship's continued success.

"What's cool is that all the organizations involved share similar goals of protecting our resources so we can all enjoy them," he said.

While teaching conservation to such a large number of students presents challenges, Bruce called the record-setting attendance an "awesome problem to have."

There is no cap on registration numbers, but teachers or group leaders must register their teams by 3:30 p.m. on Feb. 27. Individual students without adult supervision, and teams without wristbands received through pre-registration, will not be permitted to participate.

New for 2026, the championship will introduce three divisions based on school size:

- A: fewer than 14 anglers;
- AA: 14-29 anglers;
- AAA/AAAA: more than 30 anglers.

Registration closes two weeks before the event to allow organizers and volunteers time to prepare prizes and pre-drill holes — an intensive, full-day task.

"It takes a lot of volunteers and manpower," Bruce said. "We drill 25 per cent more holes than kids. We head out Monday, camp on the ice, and drill more holes at 4 a.m. It's exhausting, but another awesome problem to have."

Registration costs \$20 per student and includes a fishing licence for the duration of the derby, a pre-drilled hole, and coverage for supplies and services. All remaining funds go toward prizes, as the event is non-profit. Each registered school also receives

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STANDARD PHOTOS SUBMITTED

Registration is now open for the Manitoba High School Ice Fishing Championship, set for March 10 on Balsam Bay.

a welcome package designed to help build or sustain a fishing program.

"Our goal is to make it as easy as possible to just show up and start fishing," Bruce said.

Students are only required to bring a rod, bait, a chair and warm clothing. Food vendors will be on site, with lunch available for purchase.

Bruce emphasized the event is designed to be enjoyable regardless of fishing success. Based on feedback from previous years, schools understand the experience goes beyond catching fish.

"Just being in the atmosphere with so many schools together makes it a once-in-a-kind event," he said. "Just being here is a reward in itself."

In addition to prizes for the longest and smallest fish, teams can win awards for catching no fish, as well as individual student prizes. Other activities include a fan-favourite push-up contest, ice plank challenge, casting contest, trivia and more.

"There are lots of ways to have fun," Bruce said. "We're more than just about fishing."

New this year is a photo contest en-

couraging schools to go ice fishing before the championship. Bruce said it promotes practice, helps students prepare and increases the likelihood of catching fish in a quieter environment.

Bruce's favourite moment of the day comes at the very beginning.

"Seeing all the students dash for a hole when the starting horn goes off — it's just the coolest thing," he said. "I still get goosebumps every year."

He extended thanks to the many sponsors and volunteers who make the event possible, with a special shout-out to the Fishin' Hole in Winnipeg for donating prizes and offering school-wide discounts to educators.

"I encourage any teacher looking to buy supplies to go through the Fishin' Hole," Bruce said.

A full list of sponsors will be displayed at the championship. Anyone interested in volunteering — either by pre-drilling holes or helping measure and identify fish — is asked to email Bruce at dustin.bruce@sjasd.ca or scan the QR code on the event poster. Registration for the derby is also completed online through the QR code.

> AUTHOR, FROM PG. 13

stories matched," he said. "I report what I heard and give my conclusions and insights on these findings, like a comprehensive report."

Warms said he appreciates the opportunity to showcase the wonders — and mysteries — of Manitoba, something he finds both challenging and intriguing. For him, the excitement lies in realizing what creatures may roam close to home and uncovering secrets that remain unexplained.

He has personally witnessed three unusual creatures mentioned in his

books: a giant beaver, a giant snake and a platypus-like creature. His favourite sighting was a black bear-sized beaver he saw west of Brandon in the Assiniboine River.

Based on evidence shared by Elders, Warms believes these beavers lived in large burrows. He noted that one southern Manitoba farmer discovered a massive burrow without knowing what could have lived in it.

"That's when things just clicked," Warms said. "As soon as I learned they lived in burrows — which farmers, road construction workers and grave diggers have exposed — I re-

alized which animal was capable of making such tunnels."

His goal is to one day locate a burrow and place a camera inside to capture evidence. He also hopes to re-establish the giant beaver as the world's largest living rodent — a title lost when the species was labelled extinct.

Of the creatures he has yet to encounter, Warms said he hopes to one day see a giant bat, a species believed to live in large caves. Firefighters who have been near these sites have reported large collections of bones, according to Warms. If he cannot see the bat itself, he hopes to locate one of the

caves they once inhabited and search for signs of life.

"The residue may be of interest to biologists," he added.

Warms is already planning his second children's book, which will focus on another young girl who reportedly saw a sasquatch in the woods near Fairford.

All of Warms' books are available on Amazon, with his two creature books also carried by Chapters and several small shops and art galleries throughout Manitoba, including Toews Printing in Carman.

Greenvalley Equipment, Enns Bros. to merge

By Lorne Stelmach

Greenvalley Equipment and Enns Brothers recently announced plans to combine forces.

The two John Deere dealerships will merge to create what they say will be an even stronger John Deere dealership network to serve the province.

Company representatives touted this merger as bringing together two trusted organizations with deep agricultural roots, shared values, and a long history of supporting farmers across Manitoba. They suggest the new partnership will create a stronger, more resilient company, focused on enhancing customer service, strengthening employee opportunities and investing in the future of agriculture.

"This represents an exciting step forward for both our customers and

our employees," said Curwin Friesen, president of Greenvalley Equipment. "By combining resources, expertise and technology, we'll be able to serve farmers with an even broader range of solutions and faster access to the parts and service they depend on."

"Our companies share the same commitment to customers, employees, and communities," added Ray Bouchard, CEO of Enns Brothers. "Together, we'll have the scale and financial strength to continue investing in innovation and meeting the evolving needs of our industry for years to come."

GVE began in 1989 when Ernie and Glen Kehler bought the John Deere dealership in Morden. Today the company operates locations in Alto-

na, Killarney, Morden, and Treherne.

Enns Brothers, meanwhile, had its start when Jake and Harry Enns entered the farm equipment business in 1953 as an Allis-Chalmers and New Holland dealer in Sanford. Three years later, they became a John Deere dealer, eventually moving the business to the corner of Hwy. 3 and the Perimeter at Oak Bluff. Enns Brothers currently operates nine locations across Manitoba.

"There's always been synergies between Greenvalley and Enns. We're neighbours in the province ... we've had a strong relationship," said Friesen. "It made sense for us to talk about joining forces to better serve the province."

Friesen stressed that "we're balanc-

ing this idea of getting bigger with also not losing local connections.

"In the John Deere world, size and scale matter," he said. "The challenge in the agriculture world for dealers like us is having the right piece of equipment on the yard ... the greater we can work together with Enns, we can fit more of those needs."

"Scale allows us to meet the needs of growers for what their equipment needs are ... and we also have that same challenge on the parts side," he added. "Now we will be tapping into 13 branches that all have inventory."

"That scale allows us to provide more offerings faster to customers; that's even true with service techs."

The merger is expected to be completed by April.

Manitoba Disaster Management Conference returns Jan. 28-30

By E. Antonio

When disaster strikes, being prepared can help communities minimize its impact. Since 1992, the Manitoba Disaster Management Conference has provided valuable information sessions, keynote speakers and hands-on workshops. This year's event will take place Jan. 28-30 at the Canad Inns Destination Centre Polo Park in Winnipeg.

"There is such a need for disaster management education," said conference chair Shelley Napier. "Manitoba has strict guidelines in place to keep residents safe, and there is so much to learn through shared practices."

More than 20 speakers from across Canada will be featured, including RM of Lac du Bonnet Reeve Loren Schinkel, who will discuss lessons learned from the 2025 wildfires; Brock Happychuk, who will provide an overview of the national public alerting system in Manitoba; and Tyler Smith, a Humboldt Broncos bus tragedy survivor and mental health advocate.

Manitoba is home to the longest-running and largest disaster management conference in the country — a title Napier carries with pride.

"It's Manitoba — we are an amazing province with a lot of knowledge to share," she said.

The conference is expected to draw more than 400 delegates from across the emergency management sector, including coordinators, government officials, business owners and first responders.

"This conference is perfect for anyone whose life has been touched by



Shelley Napier, Manitoba Disaster Management Conference chair.

emergency disasters," Napier said.

She added she is especially excited to announce that the first group of students from the Manitoba Association of Municipal Emergency Coordinators will graduate as certified emergency coordinators during Wednesday's dinner celebration.

Napier said the conference board continually seeks impactful speakers whose insights reflect the past, present and future of emergency management.

"We look at what has happened in the world, what we can learn, and how to ensure every session delivers key takeaways," she said. "There's a topic for everyone, carefully selected based on current events."

The conference opens with Schinkel presenting leadership lessons from the recent wildfires. He will share his experience navigating the crisis and offer tips on preparing for similar events.



PHOTO SUBMITTED

The Manitoba Disaster Management Conference returns Jan. 28-30 at Canad Inns Destination Centre Polo Park in Winnipeg, bringing together emergency management professionals for education, networking and hands-on training.

"Manitoba wildfires touched every corner of our province," Napier said. "Whether it was an actual fire in your community or helping evacuees, there are lessons for everyone involved."

In addition to keynote presentations and breakout sessions, participants can choose from four half-day, hands-on workshops designed to actively engage attendees with industry experts.

Napier said the sessions offer more than classroom-style learning, providing direct, practical experience to help participants respond effectively if disaster strikes.

Feedback from previous conferences has been "overwhelmingly positive," she said, noting many attendees return year after year.

The all-inclusive \$550 registration fee covers access to all sessions and workshops, meals and coffee breaks, and one ticket each to Wednesday's

casual dinner and Thursday's gala and awards banquet. The event also offers networking opportunities with representatives from school divisions, universities, municipalities, hospitals, non-profit organizations and businesses.

"There's such high energy in the room," Napier said. "You can form partnerships, exchange ideas and expand your outreach. Just attending the conference enhances your ability to connect with others."

She encourages anyone considering registration to attend.

"We host a fun, energetic and rewarding experience for everyone," she said.

For more information or to register, visit www.manitobadmc.com. Registration remains open until the day of the conference, and walk-up registrations will be accepted with payment.

Cutting the ribbon on Pembina Valley Hospice

By Ashleigh Viveiros

A new facility in the region aims to provide a peaceful and supportive environment for those entering the final days of their lives or who are awaiting placement in a personal care home.

The Pembina Valley Hospice House cut the ribbon at 533 Tower Dr. in Winkler last week. Their staff are currently completing final training with the regional health authority ahead of welcoming the home's first guests sometime next month.

"Today is not just the opening of a building, but the beginning of a promise—the promise of compassion, dignity, and care for those who need it most during some of the most vulnerable moments of their lives," said Celma Pinto, who heads up both the hospice and the Heavenly Care Agency, which has provided private home care services across southern Manitoba for the past several years.

"Hospice care is about more than medical treatment. It's about comfort, respect, and support, not only for patients but also for their families and loved ones," Pinto said.

Access to hospice care in rural areas especially has long been an identified challenge in Manitoba.

People at the end of their lives or waiting for a bed in local care homes don't want lengthy stays in the hospital or to be sent to care homes outside the area while awaiting a long-term placement, Pinto said.

"This facility changes that. It brings essential service close to home, close to families, and closer to people who need it."

The facility is located in a former house that has been renovated for its new purpose while still maintaining a home-like environment.

It offers six beds and shared kitchen, dining, living, and washroom areas, all created to be accessible. It will be staffed 24/7 and provide residents with meals, grooming and personal care, medication assistance and administration, and bathing and hygiene support. Both short- and long-term stays are available, including palliative, end-of-life, and transitional care for people waiting for a bed elsewhere.

It's the culmination of a longtime dream for Pinto. As a youth in Mozambique, she dreamed of a career in health care, but it was a scholarship in business stud-



STANDARD PHOTOS BY ASHLEIGH VIVEIROS

Pembina Valley Hospice House cut the ribbon on its facility in Winkler last week. Right: CEO Celma Pinto shares it will provide a peaceful and supportive place for people in need of care.

ies that brought her to Canada on her own in 1997.

She finished her studies with no real vision of becoming the entrepreneur she is today, she recalled.

"My goal was to become a medical professional, and I didn't give up," Pinto said. She secured a job as a health care aide and later pursued a nursing degree. "My heart is all in health care, and here we are today."

She started up her home care business to meet the growing need for private services in rural Manitoba, and then took the next step to open this hospice for the same reason.

"I live here, I live in Southern Health, I live in the Pembina Valley," Pinto said. "The community has helped me for the past 10 years, and I felt once again that they need more."

They're starting small, but dream of eventually opening up other similar facilities to offer more beds across the region.

"As small as it is, this will give people opportunity to see that anything is possible," Pinto said. "This serves as an example for other entrepreneurs to say that it doesn't need to be a big facility—a small gesture will open the eyes of young people [with] ambitions like I [had] 10 years ago, to create something bigger."



You can learn more about Pembina Valley Hospice House online at pembinavalleyhospicehouse.ca.

sports & recreation

INSIDE > OUTSIDE > UPSIDE DOWN

Beavers fall 7-1 to Winterhawks in Springfield

By Annaliese Meier

The Carman Beavers ran into a strong Springfield Winterhawks squad and dropped a 7-1 decision on Saturday night in South Eastern Manitoba Hockey League action.

Springfield opened the scoring early in the first period and added a power-play goal later in the frame to take a

2-0 lead after 20 minutes. The Winterhawks continued to build momentum in the second period, scoring three times in a span of less than five minutes to extend their lead.

Carman broke through midway through the third period when AJ Nychuk scored the Beavers' lone goal, with Scott Atkins and Dan Nychuk

picking up the assists.

Springfield answered later in the period to round out the scoring.

Luke Zacharias faced heavy pressure in the Carman net, turning aside 39 shots despite the loss. Steve Christie earned the win for Springfield, stopping 18 shots.

The Beavers were held scoreless on

two power-play opportunities, while Springfield converted on its lone chance with the man advantage.

Carman returns home Monday, Jan. 26, to host Portage at 8 p.m., before travelling to Red River on Saturday, Jan. 31, for a 7 p.m. start.

sports & recreation

INSIDE > OUTSIDE > UPSIDE DOWN

Local wrestlers prepare for Carman tournament

By Annaliese Meier

When Brady Hasell steps onto the mat at a wrestling tournament, his mother Marla feels the same surge of adrenaline echoing through the stands.

"It's exciting, lots of adrenaline flowing in the stands too," Hasell said. "It's just the best when your child finds something they enjoy doing."

Brady, 13, will be among the local wrestlers competing when an open wrestling tournament returns to Carman on Saturday, Feb. 7, at Carman Collegiate. The event is expected to draw between 120 and 140 athletes from across Manitoba, competing in divisions ranging from elementary through under-23.

Now in its third year, the tournament is an open event rather than a provincial qualifier, welcoming wrestlers of varying ages and experience levels. Local competitors will be joined by athletes from communities including Morden and Winkler, making the one-day event a showcase of the region's growing wrestling scene.

Since Brady began wrestling, Hasell said she has seen noticeable changes in her son, both on and off the mat.

"He's definitely gotten stronger," she said. "He's becoming more independent, disciplined and resilient."

Wrestling has become a regular part of the Hasell family's routine, with Brady practising two evenings a week at the community hall. Hasell said the training is demanding but positive, helping young athletes build healthy habits early.

"It's an unreal workout and they have lots of fun," she said. "A great



Brady Hasell competes during a previous wrestling tournament in Carman. The 13-year-old is among local athletes set to take part in an open wrestling tournament returning to Carman Collegiate on Feb. 7, drawing competitors from across Manitoba.

habit to get into early."

While competition is optional, Brady typically chooses to compete in several tournaments each season, travelling between November and March to events as far as Kelowna and Weyburn. Hasell said the focus remains on participation and community rather than results.

"He just picks which ones he wants to do, as the community of the club and the bi-weekly commitment to being active is his highlight," she said.

Hasell believes youth wrestling is sometimes misunderstood as overly



STANDARD PHOTOS SUBMITTED

Members of the Pembina Valley Wrestling Club are pictured ahead of the upcoming open wrestling tournament in Carman. From left are Rose Langill, Asher Becker, Kyle Ballantyne, Isaac Sailer, Tenleigh Nordstrom and Samuel Langill.

aggressive, when in reality it offers a supportive and structured environment.

"It's a tough sport, being on the mat one-on-one, but it's a really supportive and encouraging environment," she said. "The coaches are fantastic, and they train for all the possible scenarios and outcomes, and how to best protect themselves physically and mentally through wins and losses."

For Brady, the upcoming tourna-

ment is another opportunity to challenge himself while competing in front of familiar faces.

"It feels good," he said. "This is the third year that we've hosted a tournament here. It's lots of fun."

Brady said wrestling has taught him lessons that extend beyond competition.

"Never give up," he said. "Wrestling doesn't teach you how to win, but how to lose and come back again."

Sabers skid continues on road, women's squad holds playoff spot

By Annaliese Meier

The Sanford Sabers faced a challenging week on the road in Winnipeg High School Hockey League Winnipeg Free Press Division action, dropping both games to remain eighth in the standings with a 7-10 record.

Sanford opened the week Tuesday, Jan. 20, with a 4-2 loss to the St. James Regional Varsity. SJR struck early, but the Sabers answered late in the first period when Cale Wood scored off a

feed from Tanner Saley. Sanford took a brief lead in the second period on a goal from Austin Iliffe, assisted by Jake Johnston and Nate Young, before St. James responded.

The Varsity side rallied with three unanswered goals in the third period to secure the win and pull away from the Sabers.

Sanford was back on the road the following night and was shut out 5-0, unable to generate offence against

a strong defensive effort from their hosts.

The Sabers will look to rebound Wednesday, Jan. 28, when they visit the Kelvin Clippers for a 4:15 p.m. start, before returning home Friday, Jan. 30, to host the CPET at 4:15 p.m.

In Manitoba Women's High School Hockey League West Division play, the Sanford Sabres were idle this past week but remain firmly in the playoff picture.

Sanford sits fourth in the West Division standings with a 12-6 record as the regular season continues to tighten.

The Sabres return to action Wednesday, Jan. 28, on the road against the John Taylor Pipers at 3:30 p.m., before coming back home Thursday, Jan. 29, to host the St. Mary's Academy Flames at 4 p.m.

sports & recreation

INSIDE > OUTSIDE > UPSIDE DOWN

Hawks come up short in 7-5 road loss to Mercs

By Annaliese Meier

The Notre Dame Hawks battled back twice but ultimately fell 7-5 to the Warren Mercs on Friday night in South Eastern Manitoba Hockey League action.

Notre Dame erased an early deficit in the first period, responding to Warren's opening goal with three straight markers. Sean Christensen scored twice to put the Hawks ahead, before captain Jeff Michiels added a power-play goal midway through the period to give Notre Dame a 3-1 lead. Warren closed the gap late in the frame, sending the teams to the intermission tied 3-3.

The Hawks matched Warren stride for stride in the second period. After the Mercs scored twice early, Notre Dame answered with goals from Eli Carels and Zander Carels to pull even again at 5-5 heading into the third.

Warren struck quickly in the final

frame, scoring twice in the opening two minutes to take the lead for good. Notre Dame pressed late, but a power-play goal by the Mercs in the final minute sealed the result.

Christensen led the Hawks with two goals and an assist, while Eli Carels finished with a goal and two assists. Zander Carels added a goal and an assist.

Christopher Lesage faced heavy pressure in the Notre Dame net, making 48 saves in the loss. Travis Bosch earned the win for Warren with 41 saves.

Notre Dame went 1-for-3 on the power play, while Warren converted once on five opportunities.

The Hawks return home Thursday, Jan. 29, to host Ile des Chênes at 8 p.m., followed by a matchup against Winkler on Saturday, Jan. 31, also at 8 p.m.



STANDARD PHOTO BY JO-ANNE PROCTER

Notre Dame Hawks goaltender Christopher Lesage made 48 saves in a 7-5 loss to the Warren Mercs on Friday in South Eastern Manitoba Hockey League action in Warren.



TRIBUNE PHOTO SUBMITTED

Rene Hamonic wasn't sure who he would be cheering for when his two sons laced up their skates to battle it out on opposing teams for the first time in a South Eastern Manitoba Hockey League game in Warren on Jan. 23. Connor Hamonic, a 29-year-old defenceman has been playing for the Notre Dame Hawks since 2021 and before that played for the University of Wisconsin and the Winkler Flyers in the Manitoba Junior Hockey League. His brother Justin Hamonic, 31, also a defenceman recently joined the Warren Mercs after playing across Europe for the past eight years and various North American leagues prior to that. Justin's team emerged victorious with a score of 7-5. He picked up an assist at the end of the third period as teammate Drake Lindsay scored an empty net goal. Pictured left to right: Connor Hamonic, Rene Hamonic and Justin Hamonic.

Swarm overwhelm Mudbugs

By Annaliese Meier

The Macdonald Swarm erupted for five first-period goals and never looked back in a 13-1 rout of the Red River Mudbugs on Friday night at Sanford Recreation Centre in Hanover Tache Junior Hockey League action.

Macdonald scored twice in a 13-second span early to seize control, with Carson Schnell netting the game-winner at 7:07 after Cole Kendall opened the scoring at 6:54. The Swarm carried a 5-0 lead into the first intermission and continued to pile on in the second, striking six more times to put the game out of reach.

Kayden Robertson led the offensive outburst with a hat trick and an assist, scoring twice in the opening period and adding another early in the second. Tyler Van de Velde finished with two goals and an assist, including a shorthanded marker late in the second period. Baylen Dilk added a pair of goals in the third, one coming on the power play.

Macdonald went 3-for-5 on the power play, while Red River was held scoreless on four man-advantage opportunities. The Swarm also added a shorthanded goal and outshot the Mudbugs consistently throughout the contest.

Ethan Wiebe earned the win in goal for Macdonald, stopping 23 of 24 shots. Red River starter Tyler Blanchette allowed eight goals on 36 shots over 40 minutes, while Connor Parago surrendered five goals on 21 shots in relief and took the loss. Gavin Wiens scored the lone goal for Red River midway through the third period.

The win keeps Macdonald perfect atop the HTJHL standings at 24-0, giving the Swarm 48 points and a league-best goal differential through 24 games.

Macdonald continues its homestand Tuesday, Jan. 27, visiting Ste. Anne at Maurice Chaput Arena before returning to Sanford Recreation Centre to host Warren on Friday, Jan. 30, and East St. Paul on Sunday, Feb. 1.

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QUALIFICATIONS:

- Post-secondary education or equivalent experience in administration, office management, or a related field
- Strong administrative background with experience handling documentation, contracts, and payments
- Comfortable communicating with landowners and members of the public, both in person and electronically
- Proficient with computer applications including Microsoft Office and Google Workspace
- Willingness and ability to learn internal databases and funding processes
- Strong organizational skills and ability to manage multiple files and deadlines
- Ability to work independently while collaborating with a small team
- Must hold a valid Class 5 driver's license
- Experience in environmental, agricultural, or watershed-related work is considered an asset, but is not required.

DUTIES:

Reporting directly to the Project Manager, the successful candidate will be responsible for:

- Communicating with landowners regarding available funding programs and application requirements
- Assisting landowners through the funding process, including answering questions and providing guidance
- Preparing and managing administrative documentation related to funding programs, including contracts, funding proposals, and correspondence
- Coordinating funding requirements for each landowner, including receiving and tracking invoices, quotes, and required documentation
- Assisting with the coordination of payments in collaboration with the Project Manager and Administrator
- Maintaining and updating the GROW Program database and related records
- Assisting with the organization and delivery of funding workshops, information sessions, and outreach events
- Providing regular updates and status reports to the Project Manager
- Performing general office duties and other related tasks as required

Wage range is \$23.00 - \$26.00 per hour based on experience and qualifications.

This 1-year term position, 40-hour work week and health benefits may be available.

Anticipated start date: March 2, 2026.

If you are interested in applying for the position, please submit your resume before 4:00 pm, Friday, February 6th, 2026 to info@redboine.com

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OBITUARY



George Edward Allen

George Edward Allen was born August 19, 1929 and passed away January 19, 2026. He was the eldest in a family of six born in Carman to Edward and Leah Allen (nee Funke).

George leaves behind his wife Evelyn of 70 years; sister Ellen and brother Maurice (Dawn) plus sisters-in-law Grace and Joan; along with five children Jim, Dave (Sheena), Sharon, Ken (Kim), and Scott; 12 grandchildren; seven great-grandchildren and many, many cousins, nieces, nephews and great neighbours and friends.

Gone before George were his brothers Don, Lawrence and sister Theresa, along with in-laws Francis and George.

Service is being held January 27, 2026 at 2:00 at Our Lady of Mount Carmel Catholic Church, 35 - 1st Ave N. W. Carman with luncheon to follow at Carman Legion. Burial to take place at a later date in the summer.

Many thanks to the Medical Teams for all the excellent care while at Carman Memorial Hospital, Boundary Trails Health Centre and Boyne Lodge Personal Care Home.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to CancerCare Manitoba.

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OBITUARY



Edwin Lyle

It is with profound sadness that we announce the passing of Edwin "Ed" Lyle on January 14, 2026, at the age of 65.

Ed was predeceased by his beloved wife of 28 years, Mary Anne (Bouwman); his parents, Bruce and Mae; and his parents in law, Jules Bouwman and Monique (Hutsebaut).

Ed will be dearly missed by his brothers Dale (Rhonda) and Kevin (Tayne); his sisters in law Karen (Conrad), Colleen, and Kim (Warner Main); and his brother in law William. He leaves behind many nieces, nephews, aunts, uncles, cousins, and friends who loved him deeply.

We are devastated to share the loss of our brother Ed. It is difficult to imagine a world without him—a world without his bright smile, his enthusiastic greetings, and his unwavering kindness. Ed had a remarkable ability to make everyone feel welcome. He was always excited to see someone he knew, always ready with a cheerful hello, and never one to complain.

Life was rarely easy for Ed. At the age of four, he was struck by a car, an accident that changed the course of his life forever. He faced both physical and cognitive challenges as a result, yet his spirit remained untouched. His sunny disposition, resilience, and determination became the defining features of his life. Anyone who knew Ed knew how strong he was.

Despite doctors' grim predictions, Ed exceeded every expectation. He not only learned to walk again—he ran, often for hours. He learned to read and proudly graduated from high school. He practiced tirelessly for his driver's license, failing many times but refusing to give up until he succeeded. His perseverance was unmatched.

Even as the world around us changed, one thing remained constant: Ed's joy in seeing the people he loved. When family arrived to visit, Ed would announce with pure excitement to anyone nearby, "This is my brother." His happiness was genuine, infectious, and unforgettable.

Ed always dreamed of meeting someone he could marry and share his life with. He never gave up that hope. He did just that when, through a matchmaker, he met Mary Anne, the love of his life. They shared a life together for 28 blissful years.

Ed will forever be remembered for his radiant smile, his boundless positivity, and the courage with which he faced every challenge. His legacy is one of resilience, love, and an unshakeable belief in the goodness of life.

He will be missed more than words can express.

Doyle's Funeral Home
in care of arrangements
www.doylesfuneralhome.ca

Your memory will live forever Engraved within our hearts

GLBC MISSIONS CONFERENCE

February 5-8, 2026

Thursday & Friday — 7PM

Sunday — 10:30AM with potluck to follow

Sunday — 7PM to wrap up the conference



Host Pastor – Mike Giesbrecht
Gospel Light Baptist Church



Guest Speaker – Benjamin Reimer
Serving in Liberia, Africa since 2016



Jake Friesen
CanAmra Baptist Missions

163 2nd Street SE, Carman, MB 204-745-2078



26-27 Kindergarten Registration

Registration for the 2026-2027 school year is now open! If your child was born in 2021, they are eligible to attend kindergarten beginning in September 2026. Parents/guardians may use

PRSD's electronic registration form or contact schools directly using the information below:

www.g.prstdmb.ca/studentsparents/student-registration

École Carman Elementary School

(204) 745-2623
vgiesbrecht@g.prstdmb.ca

École St. Eustache

(204) 353-2869
steuoff@g.prstdmb.ca

Elm Creek School

(204) 436-2354
ecadmin@g.prstdmb.ca

Miami School

(204) 435-2441
miamischool@g.prstdmb.ca

Roland School

(204) 343-2023
mbenner@g.prstdmb.ca
mrempel@g.prstdmb.ca

St. François Xavier School

(204) 864-2868
sfx@g.prstdmb.ca

St. Laurent School

(204) 646-2209
loricombot@g.prstdmb.ca

Your child's birth certificate or Manitoba Health Card **MUST** be presented at the time of registration.

Please contact the school by phone or email to make attendance arrangements and with any questions.



If you would like to support

The Carman-Dufferin
STANDARD

Congratulate your loved ones with an announcement in the Carman Standard.

\$60 will help record the history & pay for your local newspaper

Shop Local - Stay Local. To purchase an advertisement or announcement call or text Gwen Dyck at 204-823-0535 or email ads@carmanstandard.ca

Classified booking deadline is Monday at 4 p.m. prior to Thursday's publication Please Call 204-467-5836

get inspired

> MEAL IDEAS



Greek Dense Bean Salad

lini Beans, drained and rinsed
1 cup cherry tomatoes, halved
1/2 cup red onion, diced
1 cucumber, seeded and diced
1/2 cup Kalamata olives, pitted and halved

1/2 cup feta cheese, crumbled
1/4 cup fresh parsley, chopped
Greek dressing (directions below)
1 cup tzatziki sauce (directions below)

chicken skewers (optional), for serving

To make dressing: In food processor or blender, blend olive oil; red wine vinegar; lemon juice; Dijon mustard; garlic; oregano; and salt and pepper, to taste, until well combined. Set aside.

To make tzatziki sauce: In bowl, stir yogurt; cucumber; lemon juice; olive oil; garlic; dill; and salt and pepper, to taste, until well combined. Set aside.

To make salad: In large bowl, combine chick peas, cannellini beans, cherry tomatoes, red onion, cucumber, olives, feta cheese and parsley; toss with dressing.

Top with tzatziki sauce and serve with chicken skewers, if desired.

Chef's tip: Store leftover tzatziki sauce separate from salad.

Prep time: 15 minutes
Servings: 6-8
Dressing:
1/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil
2 tablespoons red wine vinegar
1 tablespoon lemon juice
1 teaspoon Dijon mustard
1 garlic clove, minced
1 teaspoon dried oregano
salt, to taste
pepper, to taste
Tzatziki Sauce:
1/2 cup plain yogurt
1/4 cucumber, grated, excess water drained
2 teaspoons lemon juice
2 teaspoons extra-virgin olive oil
1/2 teaspoon garlic, minced
2 teaspoons fresh dill, chopped
salt, to taste
pepper, to taste
Salad:
1 can (16 ounces) Bush's Chick Peas, drained and rinsed
1 can (15 1/2 ounces) Bush's Cannellini Beans, drained and rinsed



Quick Homecooked Chili

salt, to taste
pepper, to taste
sour cream (optional)
sliced avocado (optional)

In large saucepan over medium heat, cook ground beef and onion until meat is browned and onion is tender, 5-7 minutes.

Stir in tomato sauce, kidney beans, stewed tomatoes with juices, diced tomatoes with green chilies and cubed sweet potato. Add water to reach desired consistency.

Season with chili powder and garlic powder. Add salt and pepper, to taste.

Bring to boil then reduce heat to low. Cover and simmer 15 minutes.

Serve with sour cream and sliced avocado, if desired.

Photo courtesy of Unsplash

Recipe adapted from Allrecipes
Prep time: 10 minutes
Cook time: 20 minutes
Servings: 6
1 pound ground beef
1 onion, chopped
1 can (15 ounces) tomato sauce
1 can (15 ounces) kidney beans
1 can (14 1/2 ounces) stewed tomatoes
1 can (10 ounces) diced tomatoes with green chilies
1 sweet potato, cubed
water (optional)
1 teaspoon chili powder
1 pinch garlic powder

Ask the Money Lady

Dear Money Lady Readers: Have you been offered a BN-PL option at a store self-checkout?

It's now the latest thing this fall, being offered only on the self-checkout at your local retailer, whether that be for household goods, car parts or even groceries. So, what is it you ask?

BN-PL stands for "Buy Now – Pay Later" and is a new stream of business almost all financial institutions are getting involved in for 2026. With the rising cost of practically everything these days, banks, credit unions and even smaller companies that offer POS (point of sale) services have now realized there is an opportunity to capitalize on Canadians that are struggling. Of course, you know how this works, right? At the time of purchase, when you are prompted to pay, you will be given the option to defer the payment, "taking the merchandise with you now" and then agreeing at the point-of-sale terminal to "pay for it sometime in the future." Viola, you get to defer the responsibility of payment!

Now some of you may be saying – well Chris, I can do that with my credit card? Sure, you can. But a BN-PL plan is not just for use with credit card holders, it's for debt or cash too. Some banks are now pre-authorizing debit cards and bank accounts to allow you to pay for purchases in installments with the first payment sometimes due at the checkout and then the rest auto-charged to your debit card/account over the next few weeks (usually in two-week intervals) or it could be setup monthly.

And don't think that these are small companies behind this new phenomenon. Moneris is now the biggest proponent of BN-PL through its point-of-sale terminal solutions, owned jointly by RBC Royal Bank and BMO Bank of Montreal. Moneris calls it their one-time recurring payment plan, while RBC recommends it as a way to "grow your business, and give your customers a better shopping experience." RBC says to small businesses: "Turn more browsers into buyers with little effort. There's no development work on your part and PayPlan by RBC will easily integrate into your existing site."

Obviously, you can tell, I disagree to a buy-now and pay-later model for small retail. It's one thing to offer it with big ticket items like, furniture, cars, boats/motorcycles



and homes; but it's quite another to offer it for small household purchases, like a toaster or basics, like groceries and pet food. Are we never to get out from under our debt to retire comfortably? Apparently, the financial institutions would rather us not. This sound like another creative way to get people continuing to borrow. All lenders know that loans and mortgages are their "biggest money-making machines" and when people are struggling why not make it easier for them to borrow even more?

Banks know that if Canadians have a lot of open credit that they eventually can't handle, when offered to amalgamate it into a consolidation loan or at the time of a mortgage renewal – well, they will mostly likely do it to ease the financial pain. Having been in banking for over 35 years and seen the before and after of the 2008 Financial Crisis, this feels like the times before the crisis, when banks and lenders were eager to showcase new clever and inventive products to entice us all to carry more credit.

Please be careful with your money. Make it a habit to stick to a written financial plan or budget and try to resist spending too much as we go into the holiday season. If you would like help with creating a new 2026 financial plan, I now offer one-on-one personalized and confidential money coaching. You can find out more on my website or drop me an email at coaching@askthemoneylady.ca

Good Luck and Best Wishes this Holiday Season,
Money Lady

Written by Christine Ibbotson, Author, Finance Writer and Syndicated Money Coach on BNN Bloomberg. Christine is also part of the everyday lineup on CTV Your Morning in every province. No AI. Follow Christine on Instagram @askthemoneylady, or on Facebook (Christine Ibbotson).