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THURSDAY,  
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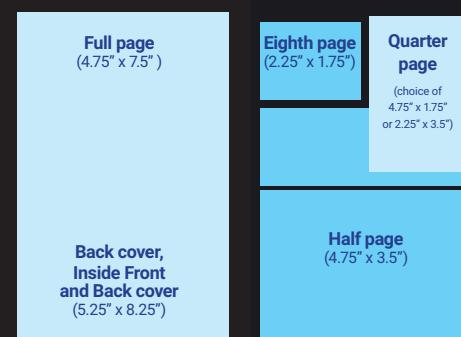
Shirley Stow (left) and Bonnie Latimer attend Habitat for Humanity Carman-Dufferin's Home is Where the Heart Is Valentine's Day fundraiser held Feb. 14 at the Active Living Centre in Carman. Guests enjoyed live entertainment by the Tangled Strings Quartet along with desserts and refreshments during the evening supporting the construction of a new Habitat home at 146 1st St. SE. Latimer was also the lucky winner of the 50/50 draw, taking home her share of the \$1,175 jackpot. Full story in next week's Standard.

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# King Korn Maze named provincial tourism finalist

By Annaliese Meier

A popular fall destination in the Pembina Valley is receiving provincial recognition, as King Korn Maze has been named a finalist in the Small Business category at the Tourism Awards Winnipeg | Manitoba.

The Notre Dame de Lourdes attraction is one of six finalists selected in the category for the fourth annual awards, which celebrate businesses and individuals who contribute to Manitoba's tourism industry through exceptional visitor experiences, innovation and destination promotion.

For co-owner Janik Grenier, who operates the seasonal attraction alongside her sister Taya Grenier and brother Justin Grenier, the nomination carries both professional and personal significance.

"Being named a finalist for this award is a huge honour," Grenier said. "As a business owner, it reflects the time, dedication and behind-the-scenes work that goes into creating an experience people genuinely want to come back to. On a personal level, it's been incredibly rewarding to watch what started as a backyard family project grow into something that's now recognized at a provincial level."

The business has grown steadily over the past eight years.

"When we first opened King Korn Maze, we were honestly just grateful we could cover the gas to fuel the generator that powered the borrowed camper we were running everything out of," Grenier said. "Eight years later, it has grown into something provincially recognized — which we never would have imagined in our first season."

In those early years, she said, the learning curve was steep.

"We learned quickly and adapted constantly. We went from one 'impossible' corn maze to four mazes, added a permanent snack shack, a golf range and a barn with endless potential. On top of that, we've continued developing and refining activities every year."

Grenier said the growth has been guided largely by listening to visitors and understanding what families are



King Korn Maze co-owners, from left, Janik Grenier, Justin Grenier and Taya Grenier.

looking for in a day-trip experience.

"One of our biggest early lessons came from that first 'impossible' maze — we realized quickly that success comes from putting yourself in your customer's shoes," she said. "Listening, adapting and continuing to improve the experience has become part of what we do every day."

She believes what sets King Korn Maze apart is its intentional focus on families.

"From pricing, to activities, to hours, to booking options — everything is built around making it easy and affordable for families to spend time together," Grenier said. "That focus has played a big role in building loyalty, especially in a small rural community like ours."

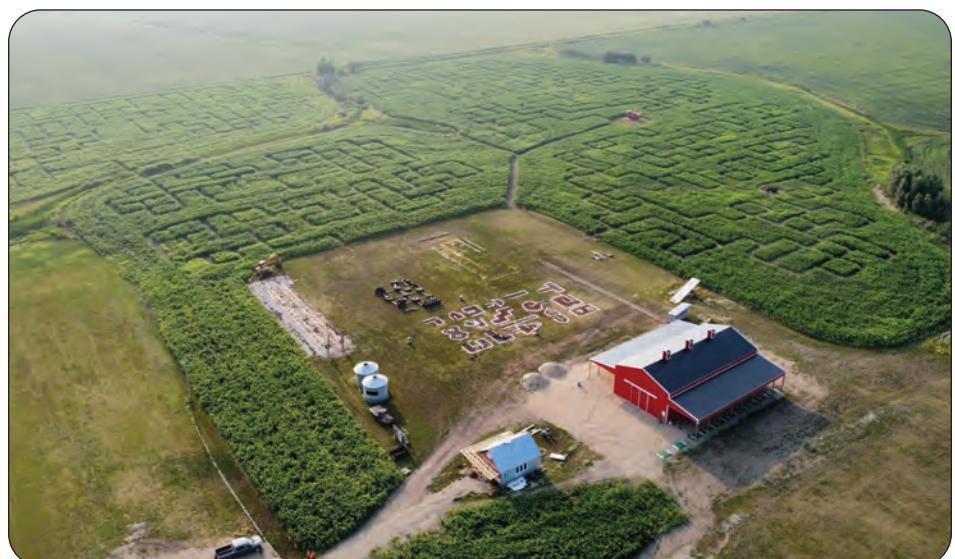
Community support, she added, has been central to the business's success.

"We love collaborating with local

groups and committees whenever we can, and it's one of the most rewarding parts of what we do. We enjoy seeing the familiar faces year after year just as much as welcoming new visitors. Bringing people into our community has been a lot of fun — and it's also our way of giving back to a place that has given us so much."

Beyond serving as a fall attraction, King Korn Maze plays a broader role in regional tourism.

"King Korn Maze offers something



STANDARD PHOTOS SUBMITTED

King Korn Maze in Notre Dame de Lourdes has been named a finalist in the Small Business category at the Tourism Awards Winnipeg | Manitoba, recognizing its contribution to visitor experiences in the Pembina Valley region.

for all ages in the Pembina Valley, which is important because most families include a mix of different ages and interests," Grenier said. "We're proud to provide a local destination that can accommodate an entire family for an affordable price, while also bringing more visitors into the region each season."

Operating a seasonal business in rural Manitoba has come with its own lessons.

"Because we started so young, we learned everything from scratch — from the realities of business ownership to the importance of understanding what guests want," she said. "Even though a seasonal business may only be open for part of the year, we're always thinking about how to make our customers feel happy, welcome and excited to spend a day wan-

dering around a corn field."

Looking ahead, the siblings are continuing to explore new opportunities.

"It's hard to say exactly where the future of King Korn Maze will lead. We look at every new opportunity as a new challenge, and we try to take those challenges on with open arms — which is part of what keeps things exciting and unpredictable."

This upcoming season will mark another milestone for the business as it prepares to host its first wedding.

"We'll see where that takes us," she said.

The awards ceremony will take place April 23 at the RBC Convention Centre in Winnipeg. Winners will be announced during the gala event, bringing together tourism operators from across Manitoba.

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# Carman artists earn top honours in Remembrance poster contest

By Lana Meier

Two Carman students have earned top honours in the Royal Canadian Legion's National Youth Remembrance Contest, winning their respective age categories in the colour poster division.

Kylie DeRuiter was named the Provincial Winner in the Senior Colour Poster category, earning a \$100 award and advancing to national judging. Andrew Gill won the Junior Colour Poster category.

DeRuiter's poster uses a film roll design to reflect different moments of sacrifice.

"In the picture, I was going for three different images on a film roll, each one showing an example of their sacrifice," said DeRuiter. "The main idea of the drawing is to remember the sacrifice that the veterans gave, especially leaving their families behind."

While creating the piece, one historic image stood out to her in particular.

"When I drew this poster I thought of the middle photo, especially the 'Wait for Me, Daddy' photo," she said. "This single snapshot became very famous during WWII. It depicts a touching image of a young boy breaking away from his mother's



Andrew Gill's Junior Colour poster earned top honours in his age category

arms to say goodbye to his father one last time before he left for war. The other photos were also special but the middle one affected me the most."

She hopes viewers pause and reflect when they see the artwork.



STANDARD PHOTOS SUBMITTED

Kylie DeRuiter's Senior Colour poster earned provincial honours and now advances to national judging in the Legion's Youth Remembrance Contest.

"When people see my drawing I hope they are reminded, as my poster states: 'Never forget their sacrifice.' They left their families behind and fought for freedom."

For DeRuiter, Remembrance Day carries personal meaning.

"Remembrance Day reminds me of the ultimate sacrifice that they made so long ago, leaving their loved ones to fight for freedom," she said.

She said she was overwhelmed when she learned her work had won

Continued on page 5

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# get heard

EDITORIAL > VIEWPOINTS > LETTERS

## Province urges measles vaccination as cases rise

By Lorne Stelmach

The province offered an update last week on what has been a severe respiratory season being dealt with by a health care system that is already being challenged by the measles outbreaks.

And the latter has added to the pressure that is always present during the virus season.

"We have to be aware the risk is quite high," said chief provincial public health officer Dr. Brent Roussin during a press briefing last week. "This is even more than what we've seen in similar times during the pandemic."

Roussin did cite particular concern in the Southern Health-Santé Sud health region, but there was now also a larger exposure to measles at the recent Manitoba Ag Days in Brandon.

"We have over 30 cases that we can link to Ag Days right now and counting," Roussin said. "On Feb. 9, we had 12 positive cases; that was our highest number at any point during this outbreak."

At this time, he noted, health officials are not considering mandating vaccination, but their message is clear

that it is recommended, especially for children, adults, and others who may be at risk.

"We're going to continue to rely on our messaging, access, and again trying to build that trust with health care workers and people of these high risk areas," Roussin said.

He emphasized the province is taking a co-ordinated provincewide plan to help manage the pressures and maintain and manage safe care for patients.

"Public health, Shared Health, regional health authorities, and front-line teams work together throughout a province-wide approach. Real-time monitoring, daily co-ordination and activation of surge plans as needed are really responding to this increased demand."

Roussin said those efforts, along with increased investments in staffing and capacity, help to maintain safe care while the system faces increased demands.

"Ever year, respiratory virus season brings increased pressure on the health care system," he said. "We'll see things like influenza, COVID-19,

RSV circulating more widely, resulting in increased visits to emergency rooms, urgent cares and increased demands on hospitals and intensive care units.

"This season has brought particularly high levels of respiratory illness activity with admissions to emergency departments and urgent care increasing to roughly about 3,000 presentations, and this is even more than what we've seen even in certain times even during the pandemic."

Roussin still emphasized that vaccination is the best means to address and manage illness right now.

"This is significantly more important for those at increased risk, so young children, older adults, those with underlying medical conditions ... if you haven't been vaccinated this season, it's still not too late," he stressed. "We often see a second wave of influenza that comes in early spring, so if you haven't been vaccinated yet, please do take us up on that opportunity to protect yourself and others."

He concluded with a few more

Continued on page 6

## The way it was this week in: February 19

By Dennis Young

**100 Years ago, 1926** - Two local rinks fell short in 'spiel due to their rocks being shipped home too early, forcing members to use Winnipeg rocks; Ford Motor Co. shows film promoting their snowmobiles; Dan Aimoe named best on the ice during a fun ex. game; Dept. of Ag denounces "the plant by the moon" lore used by farmers; it's the first year of the United Church of Canada; Roseisle Ladies Aid Society celebrates silver jubilee; in-drawer long underwear is .75 at McClure & McCullough Co.; R.H. Porter's new Tudor car is \$875 or \$40/month.

**75 Years ago, 1951** - Mabel McKnight, Marge Rockey, Madeline Sylvester & Alice Cunningham curl in Wpg 'spiel; tap dancing banned from hall basement unless plywood laid; Carman

Skating Club invited to various towns to perform; Harry Malcolmson, sec. of YMS, donates a silver cup for bacon competition; R.L. Punshon, the CBW transmitter mgr, predicts TV will be an everyday necessity in 3-4 years; Credit Union reports 20 loans totalling \$1,810 in 1950; Dr. Bennett announces he now has a phone, so call 288.

**50 Years ago, 1976** - Buckee Da Beever Daze features poker derby, skatathon, ice sculpturing, jam pail curling, crokinole/whist/bingo tournaments; Gabe Paul rink wins Mb. Sr. Ladies Curling; Ed's Tire offers we-serve gas at 80.9/gal & Bill's Texaco offers self-serve for 78.3/gal; Ian Murdoch decides to lead Chamber; Roseisle Church closes and might move to Carman museum area; Howie Kerr qualifies for Prov. Jr. bowling; Laycock Mo-

tors staff: GM John Penner, parts Peter Kauenhofen, service Gus Comte, mechanics (\$5/hr) Rick Penner, Dave Giesbrecht and Don McLaren.

**25 Years ago, 2001** - Bob McKenzie declares candidacy for CRHA; St. Claude fairgrounds up for sale; Kathy's Fabrics offering 30 per cent off denim; John Hewitt organizes Daffodil Day for cancer; Paul Bergan runs All-Care Carpet & Upholstery Cleaning; Glenn Yeo resigns as minor hockey president due to work; Clarica's Laverne Peters & Edward Jones' Larry Hillmer sell RRSPs; for community hall bookings call Bob McFarlane; Retired Teachers Assoc. meets monthly at the Breakaway; Bueckert Motors sales staff Felix Unger and Jim Glenie have Dodge Rams for sale.

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# Flashback... Highway #3 upgrades and changes

By Dennis Young, with notes from Marg Riddell

With provincial Highway 3 passing through Carman, it is as much a part of the community as the Boyne River. There is no Carmanite who has not travelled its path — navigating the tricky Sperling curve and driving through Brunkild blizzards on the way to Winnipeg. Let's look back.

Highway 3 used to enter Carman from the north, sharing part of the route with Highway 13. For some 20 years, the proposed location of the route between Sperling and Carman was a contentious issue. In 1952, the provincial government announced plans to relocate the highway to the south, entering Carman at the junction of Main Street and Villiard Avenue — known today as the corner of Highways 3 and 13.

However, a delegation from the north opposed the plan and presented a 240-signature petition that brought the project to a standstill. The Chamber of Commerce then circulated a petition of its own, and yet another petition made the rounds near the proposed new route. Eventually, an 1,800-signature document favouring the relocation became the deciding factor, allowing the project to proceed.

In the spring of 1964, work crews began preparing one of the few concrete-paved roads in Manitoba. By August, they had reached the corner of Highways 3 and 13, and by 1966 the Perimeter Highway cut across the route, bringing the city limits closer to Carman. Increased traffic created another problem, as the intersection became a safety concern in the 1970s.

The Provincial Highways Department denied Carman's request for traffic signals in 1977, saying traffic volumes didn't justify the expense. Town council settled instead for four-way stop signs but continued voicing

frustration from drivers and pedestrians who were navigating the congestion.

By the summer of 1981, the province relented and agreed to cover the entire \$45,000 cost — but only if Fourth Avenue, from Women's World east to the Fireside Inn, was converted from diagonal to parallel parking first.

Business owners along that stretch opposed the change and made their feelings known through newspaper articles and delegations to council. Councillors Graboweski, White and Hetherington voted against the "deal," while Burnett, Wiebe and McCartney supported it. Mayor Doug Fletcher cast the deciding vote to pass the new bylaw.

Councillor Ken McCartney noted at the time, "If we would choose not to change the parking, the town would have to pick up the entire cost of the lights." On Dec. 8 at 1:30 p.m., Carman residents had to start paying attention to the community's first set of traffic lights at the busy 3 and 13 corner.

Along with new parking habits came pedestrian training. Highway supervisor Bob McKibbin reminded residents that the walk signal did not activate automatically — pedestrians needed to push the button.

The S-curve at Sperling had long been the scene of many accidents, and lobbying for improvements took time. Senior project engineer Larry Mann announced plans in 1997 to flatten and reduce the curve so it would not be as sharp. Those plans required approval from head office, the RM of Macdonald and local landowners.

Mann said the final go-ahead would be a formality following a meeting in Sperling, where residents agreed to the necessary right-of-way purchases.

Widening and repaving of Highway 3 through Carman was completed in



STANDARD PHOTO SUBMITTED

The corner of Highways 3 and 13 in Carman received traffic lights in 1981, prompting changes to local parking and pedestrian habits.

1998, and motorists were pleased to see the S-curve re-engineered in 1999.

Just recently in September 2025, the Brunkild bridge showed its age and had to be shut down and traffic converted. Built in 1962 it averaged 3,980 vehicles per day and will again by December.

With a smoother, paved route leading directly to Winnipeg, Carman merchants anticipated — and fought hard to counter — the increase in out-of-town shopping. In the end, they lost that battle.

## Correction

### Staff

In the Feb. 12 *Carman Dufferin Standard* story, "Carman family watches Olympic history unfold," the grandparents of Olympic luger Kailey Allan were incorrectly identified.

The story should have stated Wayne and Carol Withers, not Wayne and Carol Allan.

The *Carman Dufferin Standard* regrets the error and apologizes for the mistake.

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## Jesus is the Bread of Life

Jesus Christ is the most remarkable man who has ever walked on this earth. He attracted huge crowds of people because they saw the miracles he did. He healed many who were sick, or paralyzed or blind or deaf or who were tormented by evil spirits. The kingdom of God had come to this earth.

Have you heard the miracle of how Jesus fed the 5,000? One day a large crowd of 5,000 people came toward Jesus seeking him out (John 6:1-14). There was a boy who had five loaves of bread and two fish. Jesus asked the crowd to sit down. Then he gave thanks to God and started to distribute the loaves to all those people. He kept on giving out the bread and then the fish until everyone had eaten their fill.

The miracle is stated so simply, so matter-of-factly. Jesus simply gave out the bread and it never ran out until all were satisfied. In fact, the leftovers that were gathered (twelve baskets full) was far more than what Jesus started with!

This miracle did more than only feed many people physically. It was also meant as an illustration of the spiritual truth that Jesus Christ is the bread of life, the true heavenly bread. It is from him alone that we receive the bread of life, which is true life with God in abundance. When we eat of his bread, we will never be hungry again.

Jesus gives peace and reconciliation with God the Father in heaven. He gives the bread of life which we never paid for. This bread gives true life forever to all those who believe in Jesus. He constantly gives of himself so that we may grow and flourish in God's kingdom. Believe in Jesus Christ and trust in him alone. Receive his abundant provision with thanksgiving and go your way praising and worshipping God from whom all blessings flow!

Rev. Carl Van Dam, minister of Carman East Canadian Reformed Church

## > REMEMBRANCE DAY, FROM PG. 3

at the provincial level.

"When I heard that my drawing had gone on to provincials I was happy. Then when I got the call that it won at Provincials, I was blown away," she said. "I have won multiple times in this contest before, but none of them have made it to win on a provincial level. Now that it's moving on to nationals I really don't know what to think. I guess I'll just have to wait and see."

Having her artwork recognized by

the Legion is meaningful, she added.

"When the Legion recognizes my art, it feels kind of special — like somebody cares," she said.

If she could leave readers with one message, it would be simple.

"Remember their sacrifice," she said. "They left their families and fought. Some didn't come back. Some came back, but they were not the same. The war changed them."

Provincial winners will be formally recognized later this month.

# Pride festivities coming to Winkler for the first time

By Ashleigh Viveiros

After stops in Morden, Altona and Carman, the Pembina Valley Pride 2026 celebration is coming to Winkler.

The 2SLGBTQIA+ organization announced its sixth annual Pride event will take place Saturday, June 13.

"Every year after Pride we ask what worked, what could improve and where it should go next. Winkler kept coming up and last year it was the number one location," said Pauline Emerson-Froebe, president of Pembina Valley Pride. "It's the largest community in the Pembina Valley, so it is time."

The announcement drew both supportive and negative reactions online. Emerson-Froebe said she understands not everyone will agree but hopes participants will be treated with the same respect as any other public gathering.

"We just want people to be respectful and decent to each other. I don't think that's an unreasonable ask."

She said Pride events acknowledge that 2SLGBTQIA+ residents exist and provide a space to connect, something especially meaningful in communities where people may feel isolated.

"It can get lonely wondering if you're the only one," she said. "We're coming to Winkler to show queer people here they deserve to exist and be loved in their community. Every time we visit a new community, it has a real impact."

This year's celebration will not include a march but instead a single-site rally featuring guest speakers, stage performances and activities. Organizers also plan increased security so participants feel safe.

Attendance is voluntary, Emerson-Froebe added, comparing it to any other community event.

"If it isn't your thing, don't attend. We're not trying to change anyone — this is for the community and for allies to show visible support so people aren't alone."

Winkler Mayor Henry Siemens issued a statement noting the event is not city-run but public facilities are available for many types of gatherings.

"Council and I don't personally support all beliefs or ideologies of every group that hosts events, but we do support people's freedom to host their own events," he wrote. He added he



STANDARD FILE PHOTO

Pembina Valley Pride has hosted community celebrations for Pride Month in Morden, Altona, and Carman, and coming to Winkler for a rally planned June 13.

hopes residents respond with respect and kindness.

In a later interview, Siemens said he hopes the community presents itself positively in the months ahead.

"We are an exceptionally generous and supportive community, and I want us to show the world that."

Emerson-Froebe said events like Pride can help prevent people from leaving smaller communities.

"When people feel alone, they often move away and communities lose their talents and personalities," she said. "Having visible support re-

minds people they belong here."

She added allies play an important role by publicly showing support and helping create welcoming spaces.

Organizers say they are excited to bring the event to Winkler and hope it encourages understanding even among those who choose not to attend.

Siemens said he hopes conversations around the event remain respectful and reflect the community's values of neighbourliness and goodwill toward others. He encouraged residents to treat visitors with courtesy.

these rural municipalities," officials stressed.

Infants are at increased risk of measles-related complications, including subacute sclerosing panencephalitis, a progressive and fatal brain condition that can occur around 10 years after measles infection. To maximize protection against measles, public health strongly recommends infants living in the rural municipalities listed above receive an early dose of measles, mumps, rubella (MMR) vaccine, if eligible.

Infants aged six months to under 12 months are eligible for one early dose of MMR if they reside in or travel regularly to and have close contact with residents of health regions of Southern Health-Santé Sud, Interlake Eastern or Prairie Mountain Health. All infants in Manitoba are eligible for their first routine immunization dose of measles, mumps, rubella, varicella (MMRV) vaccine at 12 months old.

Since Feb. 1, 2025, there have been 22 reported hospitalizations, with 16 patients being under age 10, official say, and including cases involving difficulty breathing and requiring oxygen support, lung infections, and dehydration. There have also been nine cases of measles in pregnant individuals and one case of congenital measles.

## Grey advances lagoon upgrades, tax recovery deal

By Haley Cvar

Council for the Rural Municipality of Grey moved ahead with long-planned lagoon upgrades, approved a multi-year tax recovery agreement and supported several infrastructure and governance initiatives during its Feb. 4 regular meeting.

The municipality accepted a \$7,500 contribution through the Association of Manitoba Bilingual Municipalities to strengthen bilingual service capacity and implementation of its municipal maturity model for French-language services, and renewed its membership with the Federation of Canadian Municipalities for 2026-27.

Council awarded a tender to Earth-Max Construction Inc. for continued work at the St. Claude lagoon, with costs to be shared 50-50 with the Manitoba Water Services Board. Administration noted initial project estimates were prepared about seven years ago and rising construction costs required updated pricing and the extended cost-sharing arrangement.

Priorities for the municipality's five-year capital plan submission

to the Water Services Branch were approved, while discussion on the water/sewer connection policy and 2026 ditching plans was tabled for a future meeting.

Drainage improvements were also authorized for land in E 16-9-5, including more than 1.6 kilometres of ditch cleanout and replacement of culverts and piping, subject to provincial licensing requirements.

On the governance side, council entered a three-year agreement with Taxservice Inc. to manage annual tax arrears recovery proceedings on the municipality's behalf, as required under The Municipal Act, and authorized the chief administrative officer to execute the engagement documents.

Council approved a \$250 donation to St. Claude Automania for its June event and referred several pieces of correspondence to administration for response. The municipality received its 2024 draft audit and year-end financial statements for information and later met in closed session to discuss a human resources matter before returning to open session.

### > MEASLES, FROM PG. 4

thoughts about the measles outbreak in the province.

"Manitoba has continued to see high levels of transmission of measles now for over a year ... measles is a highly contagious virus, but it's well understood and very preventable."

He cited the example of the Ag Days cases as to how risky it is as far as being easily spread.

"Events like this that bring together a lot of people ... we have to be aware that the risk of transmission is quite high in these areas ... attending these large events, if you're unvaccinated, is putting you at increased risk of being exposed to measles," said Roussin, who particularly cited the level of concern and need for increased vaccinations here in the south central region around Winkler, Morden, and Carman where "we're seeing persistent high levels of transmission."

On Friday, Manitoba Health's measles update warned the public of widespread community transmission of measles in the rural municipalities of Stanley, Rhineland, Thompson, Dufferin, and Roland.

"Individuals should consider themselves potentially exposed to measles at any public location visited within

# Low German comedy duo returns to spotlight

## Low German video series is back with new skits, readings

By Ashleigh Viveiros

The pandemic is well behind us, but the antics of Mitsch and Sus are back in the spotlight.

In 2021, Flatland Theatre Company's Tina Fehr-Kehler and Angela Klassen got in touch with their Low German heritage to create a pair of alter egos and do a few slice-of-life skits.

"Mitsch is a bit of a silly character and Sus is the long-suffering friend," explains Fehr-Kehler, who plays Mitsch.

"We did five little videos," says Klassen, a.k.a. Sus, explaining that those first sketches detailed life under COVID-19 with tongue firmly in cheek—one saw Sus sewing together a face mask that would allow them to continue to eat sunflower seeds while wearing it.

"I did a lot of the writing but then we also had Conrad [Stoesz, from the Mennonite Heritage Archives] and Andrew Unger [a Mennonite humorist] as part of it," recalls Fehr-Kehler. "It was a lot of fun."

Their *Waut de kuckuck?* YouTube channel drew hundreds of subscribers and tens of thousands of views.

"People just loved them," Klassen says.

"And apparently we're really big in Paraguay," adds Fehr-Kehler with a chuckle.

Those handful of videos complete, the pair went on to take a bit of a breather from the act to focus on other creative endeavours, save for live performances at the Plautdietsche Tietfiedrief event in Neubergerthal.

Their show there last year inspired them to create new videos once again, the first of which was posted on their new channel, *Flatlands Tiet Vedrief*, in December.

That one saw them acting out the vignette *Audee (Goodbye)* by Low German writer Arnold Dyck detailing the long-winded parting ritual between two friends.

In their second video just before Christmas, they presented Reuben Epp's Low German translation of *The Night Before Christmas*.

Their third skit is expected to drop any day now and it will detail a very

touchy subject.

"It's about being a 'bad' Mennonite," Klassen says. "It starts out with Mitsch admitting she doesn't like verenika."

The dumpling dish is a staple in Mennonite households, so it's an admission that causes a fair bit of playful shock between the two friends.

This most recent batch of videos includes English subtitles to make them more accessible to everyone.

"We wanted people who maybe aren't as confident in their Low German to still be able to watch and understand and enjoy and maybe learn a little bit," says Klassen, pointing out that the goal with these videos and the live performances has always been to simply promote the language in a playful way. "A big part of it is preserving the language and just doing fun things in Low German."

"For me, it's actually bettering my Low German and helping me keep it up," adds Fehr-Kehler.

And while comedy is at the heart of many of these skits, Fehr-Kehler hopes they'll be able to broaden their scope in the future.

"What we want to produce are things that show Low German is a versatile language that can be used for a lot of things," she says. "Most people who go to Low German plays expect it to be funny, but my goal is to eventually produce a play that's not a comedy."

"When people talk about German being funny, for me, it's just the language of life," observes Klassen, noting it can capture the breadth of human experience just as well as any other language.

They're already working to translate *The Secret Treaty: A Lost Story of Ojibwe and Mennonite Neighbours*, a graphic novel by Dave Scott and Jonathan Dyck detailing the handshake agreement between the Mennonite settlers to the West Reserve and the Indigenous people already there.

"We've asked permission to translate it into Low German and then create a video about it," Fehr-Kehler says, noting they hope to release that later this year.

Otherwise, the pair intend to keep their eyes and ears open for inspiration for future videos. Head to their YouTube page to catch them as they're released.

**"PEOPLE LOVED THEM... APPARENTLY WE'RE REALLY BIG IN PARAGUAY."**



STANDARD PHOTO BY ASHLEIGH VIVEIROS

Angela Klassen (left) as Sus and Tina Fehr-Kehler as Mitsch in the duo's most recent Low German skit, which begins with Sus sheepishly admitting she's not a fan of verenika.

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**EFFICIENCY  
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# Remembering Ken Tjaden's life in sport and agriculture

By Dennis Young

Ken Tjaden came from a farming family led by his grandparents, who moved two miles east of Sperling — still a Tjaden homestead — in the 1900s from Illinois. Anna and John followed that lead while welcoming six children onto the farm: Helen, Mona, Bob, Jim, Bill and, on March 27, 1943, Ken, the youngest.

He attended all 12 grades in his hometown — the last class to graduate from Sperling — and, a natural athlete, immersed himself in sports. He especially enjoyed Sports Day each spring and representing Sperling School at many meets for track, bonspiels and tournaments for hockey and ball.

After graduation he enrolled in agriculture and played hockey for the Carman Beavers. He carpooled as a team rookie in '63 but went on to play nine reliable seasons, win two league titles and one provincial title, and was named captain from 1969-73.

With his diploma in hand, Ken's first job was with Feed-Rite. Yet you can take the boy out of Sperling, but you can't take Sperling out of the boy. He married his school classmate Marlene Duvenaud in 1965, and two years later he was back in Sperling to begin his farming career — first farming with his dad and Bill, then later with in-laws Louis and John.

Between 1968 and '74, Ken and Marlene had three children: Lynda, Tracy and Brenda.

"We were very fortunate to raise our girls in Sperling as they all have fond memories of growing up there," said Marlene.

Having kids encouraged Ken to serve as a school trustee from 1974-81 and chair of Midland School Division.

In 1977 they bought their own land and built a home south of town not far from Bill. Two years later they built a laying barn and began egg production.

Agriculture was always an important part of Ken's life, whether actively farming or providing support to the industry. He became a member of the Manitoba Egg Producers Market-



The Carman Beavers captured two SEMHL championships and a MAHA title with Ken Tjaden as a valued teammate.

ing Board, vice-president of Canadian Egg Producers, chairman of the Canadian Association for Egg Marketing, a founding member and executive of Keystone Agricultural Producers, and chair of the Manitoba Chamber of Commerce ag committee sector.

Work, however, never interfered with his love of sports. Ken enjoyed playing slo-pitch with the Sperling Spinners, rec hockey with the Odds n' Ends, men's curling and later golf, eventually serving as club chair in 1999.

"He loved the challenge and lasting friendships that were part of the game, and he shared the gift of sportsmanship with everyone who played with him," Marlene said.

The farm was eventually sold and Carman became home. Ken worked briefly at A & M Soil before joining Manitoba Pulse Growers as executive manager in the Carman office. The next year he received a Certificate of Merit from the University of Manitoba recognizing outstanding contribution to agriculture and community.

Making time for Marlene and family was never an issue. Trips to the Caribbean, Scotland and the treasured Hawaii holiday left lasting memories before he passed away March 13, 2000, at 57 years young.

That July the Ken Tjaden Memorial Golf Tournament was held. More than 110 golfers participated and



STANDARD PHOTOS SUBMITTED

Ken Tjaden played a leading role in Manitoba's egg industry, from producer to chairing provincial and national boards.

raised \$11,000 for the Area Foundation, an organization Ken also served as a director.

## FAMILY UPDATE

**Marlene:** "I only have one grandchild left in high school, and the rest are in university or working. I live in a community of side-by-side condos just off McGillivray, doing some volunteer work and enjoying retirement."

**Lynda:** Took nursing at the University of Manitoba and now works as project manager for Emergency, Trauma and Critical Care for the provincial program in Winnipeg.

**Tracy:** Took journalism at Carleton University in Ottawa, now living in Victoria and working for an American business.

**Brenda:** Took agriculture at the University of Manitoba and now runs "Prairie Routes" near Oakbank devoted to helping farmers adapt to climate change.

## MEMORIES:

**Lorraine (Duvenaud) Hand:** "He was a steady hand during seeding and harvest but was especially good

at dinner table conversation about all things farming. Ken was a super supportive uncle to our kids, letting them drive farm equipment and toss misshaped eggs at each other. They recreated the old Young farm and the kids loved it there."

**Glenn Peckover:** "High school weekend bonspiels were great fun, particularly with Ken, Dale and Sandra. We travelled in the Monarch — the Tjaden family car — which was a frequent weekend party scene. Ken was always a standout on the teams we played together. A talented athlete and a very nice guy."

**Linda MacNair:** "I really got to know Ken when we both worked for Manitoba Pulse Growers. Ken was low-key, very easy to get along with and very capable — a delight to work with, and I felt privileged to have the opportunity."

**Dennis Young:** "After a hockey game and roadies, Alex McIntosh, George Picton, Ken and I headed to his farm. Well, we had to see the chickens, right? As Ken was explaining the how's and abouts of eggs, Alex was adding some to his pockets. They did not make it home — Ken gave both pockets a firm slap. Into the house we went laughing hysterically, waking Marlene, who 'happily' cooked us some fresh eggs."

**Art Bilodeau:** "One thing that comes to mind was the kids' skating races at the Sperling Carnival where I always came second to him. Many a night after partying we'd go back to Ken's for eggs. He was always willing to help someone, calm and encouraging, and a great sportsman."

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# Drainage, borrowing bylaw headline Thompson meeting

By Haley Cvar

The council of the Rural Municipality of Thompson advanced drainage planning, infrastructure reviews and several administrative approvals during its regular meeting Jan. 28.

Councillor Cody Faux reported on recent drainage committee discussions, noting multiple sites are expected to move forward for survey and permitting in 2026 as the municipality continues managing water flow and land improvements.

Public works staff updated council on 2025 utility performance, equipment mowing plans, workshop inspections and the use of Starlink satellite internet on municipal equipment to improve connectivity in the field.

At the waste disposal grounds, councillors reviewed quotes for construction of a new landfill cell and discussed annual tonnage, along with

planning for 2026 office and site improvements.

Chief administrative officer Melissa Brunel's report included updates from a recent safety committee meeting, a community night held Jan. 26, and upcoming tenders for mowing and gravel hauling. Composting and electronic recycling initiatives, along with Manitoba Water Services Board capital requests, were also reviewed.

Financial matters included authorization of \$390,952.34 in accounts.

Council gave third and final reading to its annual borrowing bylaw, enabling short-term borrowing to manage municipal cash flow through the year.

A \$1,000 property tax reimbursement was approved for the Miami Arts Association after the group submitted receipts in place of a formal tax exemption.

Council also appointed itself as the board of revision for the 2026 assessment year, with Reeve Brian Callum serving as chair and the CAO acting as secretary. The hearing is scheduled for Oct. 8 at 9 a.m.

A minor subdivision application creating a 14,849-square-foot lot was ap-

proved.

Council further passed a resolution indicating no concerns with proposed entrance roadwork by Manitoba Transportation and Infrastructure, including construction of 6:1 slopes that will extend onto municipal railbed property.



## Manitoba Hydro Integrated Resource Plan & Major New Facility Public Review

On February 2, 2026, the Manitoba Government referred Manitoba Hydro's 2025 Integrated Resource Plan ("IRP") to the Public Utilities Board ("PUB") for its review and recommendations.

The IRP examines how best to meet Manitoba Hydro's expected short-term (2030) and long-term (2035) growth in electricity consumption with different options to increase electricity supply. The primary objective of the IRP is to plan for safe and reliable energy that meets the evolving needs of Manitobans. The IRP includes both Manitoba Hydro's electrical system and the natural gas system operated by Manitoba Hydro's subsidiary Centra Gas Manitoba Inc.

Manitoba Hydro's IRP includes its recommended future development plan, which incorporates a major new generating facility consisting of three new simple cycle combustion turbines at the Brandon Generating Station that will provide approximately 750 MW of capacity. In addition to the IRP, the needs for and alternatives to Manitoba Hydro's proposed new natural gas generating facility will be referred to the PUB for its review and recommendations.

The PUB will be conducting a public regulatory review over the coming months into both the IRP and the proposed major new natural gas generating facility. While these reviews by the PUB will not immediately result in a change to the rates charged by Manitoba Hydro, the costs of the new generating facility and other aspects of the development plan are expected to have an impact on future electricity rates.

Further details related to the upcoming review are available at: [www.pubmanitoba.ca](http://www.pubmanitoba.ca).

You can share your views on the filing with the Public Utilities Board in three ways:

- **As a Presenter** – If you want to make a virtual or in-person formal presentation to the Public Utilities Board on this matter and are willing to respond to questions about your presentation, please submit an application to become an approved Presenter using the application form linked on the PUB website ([www.pubmanitoba.ca](http://www.pubmanitoba.ca)) by June 18, 2026. Presentations are limited to a maximum of 10 minutes and presenters will be scheduled to appear during the hearing in August.
- **Written comment** – If you would like to comment in writing on this review, please go to [www.pubmanitoba.ca](http://www.pubmanitoba.ca) and provide your written comment.
- **As an approved intervener** – If you want to actively participate in the public hearing as an Intervener, please go to [www.pubmanitoba.ca](http://www.pubmanitoba.ca) and apply for Intervener status on or before February 24, 2026. Intervenors are required to represent the interests of a significant group of customers and may be required to combine their intervention with others representing similar interests.

A Pre-Hearing Conference with prospective Intervenors will be held in the Board's hearing room, at the address below, commencing at 9:00 a.m. on Monday March 2, 2026.

Manitoba Public Utilities Board

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**STANDARD**

# Local communities grieve alongside Tumbler Ridge

By Jennifer McFee

While a small B.C. town grapples with the aftermath of a mass shooting, local Interlake communities express empathy from half a country away.

On Tuesday, Feb. 10, six children and two adults were killed in a mass shooting in a high school and a home in Tumbler Ridge, B.C. The 2,400-person community is grieving for students, a teacher and family members of the shooter, who also died of a self-inflicted shot. Many others were injured in the incident.

Communities across Manitoba have lowered their flags to half-mast, including the Town of Stonewall, which will keep its flags lowered until Feb. 17 as a symbol of respect, reflection and solidarity with the sorrow-stricken B.C. town.

"In moments like this, distance does not divide us. Communities may be miles apart, but sorrow travels swiftly and compassion even faster. We pause together to honour lives impacted and to hold space for healing," states a social media post by the Town of Stonewall.

"Our thoughts are with the families, friends, first responders and the entire Tumbler Ridge community during this incredibly difficult time."

Stonewall council shared condolences with the District of Tumbler Ridge after the tragic mass shooting shook the B.C. community.

"We are profoundly saddened by the tragic loss and the many lives impacted. Our thoughts are with the families who are grieving, the friends and classmates facing unimaginable sorrow and the entire community

working to support one another in the days ahead," states a post on the Town of Stonewall Facebook page.

"We also want to recognize and thank the first responders, emergency personnel and all those providing care and support in the midst of this tragedy. Your courage, compassion and dedication do not go unnoticed. From Stonewall to the District of Tumbler Ridge, please know we stand with you. Sending strength, comfort and unwavering support."

Similarly, Rockwood council acknowledged the tragic event and expressed condolences to the Tumbler Ridge community.

"Council members feel a strong connection to the values of community support, resilience and the creation of compassionate, connected communities nationwide," states a social media

post by the RM of Rockwood. "We see you, Tumbler Ridge."

In a letter to Tumbler Ridge Mayor Darryl Krakowka, Rockwood council extended their deepest condolences to the community in the wake of the tragedy.

"Though we are far away, our thoughts are with students, staff, families and all members of your community during this profoundly difficult time. We recognize the challenges your council and community face in supporting those affected, and we hope that knowing people beyond your province are thinking of you brings some measure of comfort," states the letter.

"Please accept this letter as a gesture of our solidarity, sympathy and

Continued on page 13

## Focus on FINANCE



may have overlooked. Defaulting on payments could result in penalties, so it's important to stay on top of your financial commitments.

Once your move is complete, be sure to close your old accounts. Many institutions charge fees for inactive accounts, so it's best to tie up loose ends.

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If switching financial institutions seems

too tedious, there are other ways to improve your satisfaction with your financial services. For example, you can speak up about your dissatisfaction with your current institution. By expressing your willingness to switch institutions, you could negotiate better terms or a more attractive transaction package. Your feedback can make a real difference.

Tip: Before starting a conversation with your financial institution, review the fees

associated with each of your accounts. These fees could be silently eating away at your money, adding up to hundreds of dollars a year. Don't be afraid to negotiate!

Consider doing business with more than one institution. You could keep your current accounts with one and let another handle your investments. This

way, you might snag advantageous rates without having to completely switch everything around.

Do you need help finding a new institution or renegotiating with your current one? Contact a financial expert in your area.



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# Legendary Irish Rovers celebrate milestone touring year

Irish folk favourites perform live in Winkler on March 6

By Lorne Stelmach

It is hard for George Millar to believe that The Irish Rovers are still "roving" after six decades of playing music.

He may be the last remaining original member, with his brother Will having retired and other members having passed away, but he and the other current Rovers, including a son of one original member, are still keen to keep performing and recording music.

"Sometimes it feels like about a hundred years ... this is actually our 60th year. We started in about 1965; I was 16 years old with my brother and my friend Jimmy Ferguson," Millar recalled in a recent interview in advance of the group's March 6 show at the P.W. Enns Centennial Concert Hall in Winkler.

"We were playing the folk clubs across America and Canada, and we thought we would give it a year to see how it went, and it went fairly well. So after all these years, we're still saying oh, we'll give it one more year and see how it goes.

"As long as we're doing the same type of show and the same songs, people seem to be all right with it."

The Irish Rovers are kicking off the St Patrick's Day season with a tour and a release of their latest album.

After years of wanting to record a homegrown album, The Rovers finally hit the mark with *The Belfast Sessions*, Millar said. It was recorded last year at RedBox Studios in Belfast.

"It's been wonderful bringing everyone together in the same space after all those remote recording and file-sharing sessions we did the past few years, including COVID," he said. "RedBox is on three floors of a Victorian house in the city, and it's run by Dónal O'Connor, the son of our fiddle player Gerry O'Connor. We recorded parts of tracks in rooms on the different floors. I put ideas down a scratch track to give the other lads an idea of the tempo and the phrasing of the songs."

The Rovers have been in the spotlight for decades. In 2023, they cracked Spotify's Viral Top 50 in both the US and UK/Ireland. That year they released *No End In Sight* featuring their 1977 version of "The Wellerman" and a new anthem for the era, "Hey Boys Sing Us A Song," which earned a Canadian Folk Music Awards nomination for 2023 single of the year.

The band nicknamed themselves "Dinosaurs" on the final track of the most recent album as a nod to the seasoned, crusty musicians who have paid their dues and kept going in a hostile environment for their survival.

Canada has long been home to The Irish Rovers since their early-60s inception.

"It's a bit odd being from both Ireland and Canada. The fans have found it confusing too," said Millar, who noted this sense of dual identity inspired him to write "Band Without A Country" from the 2020 album *Saints And Sinners*, which was a song



STANDARD PHOTO SUBMITTED

The Irish Rovers take the stage at the P.W. Enns Centennial Concert Hall in Winkler March 6.

and video tracing their journey from Ireland to Toronto and beyond.

Their breakout era began in 1967 with the album *The Unicorn*, whose title track propelled the band from folk clubs to concert halls and TV worldwide.

To honor its 50th anniversary in 2017, The Rovers released *The Unicorn, The Continuing Story*, featuring new recordings of the original album plus a sequel that answers the age-old question: what happened to the Unicorns when the ark left them stranded on shore?

Their most famous song of course really brought them an entirely different level of fame, and Millar noted it is interesting to think it is a song that might be both sung by kids in Sunday school and people in pubs with pints of beer in hand.

"It was the very last song we recorded on that record ... it was all Irish drinking songs basically, and the producer said, 'Do you have anything slightly different?'"

The Irish Rovers was the first Irish band to play the Grand Ole Opry, and in 1971 they hosted the first of three TV series: CBC's *The Irish Rovers Show*, which ran seven seasons and won the ACTRA award for best variety performance.

Since 2010, the band has returned to television with more international specials, letting fans revisit the same early CBC-era locales.

It's been quite a ride, Millar said in reflecting on his storied career.

"When I arrived in the USA from Ballymena, people from the north were an unknown quantity, and luckily for me, almost as soon as I arrived, Tommy Makem took me under his wing. We found that we shared so much through music."

"There was a huge appetite for folk music, and we were all young and able to party after a gig, and the after hours singing sessions were legendary. We'd meet all sorts of people who were passing through such as the Wolfe Tones and Kris Kristofferson and his wife Rita Coolidge. Soon a supportive network began to grow up around us."

Millar observed that there is an eternal appeal to Irish and Celtic music.

"It's a happy style of music ... and even if we're singing about some poor Irishman who was caught and hung and drawn and quartered back in the 1700s, it's still an uplifting sort of tune behind the words," he said. "I'm not sure that people understand some of the words, but the tunes themselves ... I suppose it's like a good polka. If you don't particularly like polka, if you're close enough to it, your toe will start tapping."

"I think Irish music just has that kind of appeal. It's just sort of an uplifting type of music, and it's probably that music that has kept the Irish music going, that and their humour, has kept them going for 800 years through famines and all sorts of different oppressions."

"Music is so important. It's an artwork; it's one of the oldest arts in the world, and I don't think there's a civilization in this world that doesn't have music."

Millar added that they are "very blessed that our fans, after all these years, are still coming out to see us, and that's great. What is really nice about Irish and Celtic music in general is that the young people are still into it ... you don't see it in too many other places. We're still seeing a lot of younger people coming, and that is always great to see."

After 60 years on the road, Millar can offer some advice to young musicians just starting out:

"Firstly, perform as if you're really enjoying it. Of course you should enjoy every gig, but when you are on the road full-time, there will be some shows that are better than others. The audience have paid part of their hard-earned wages to see you, so give them 110 per cent, connect with them, share stories, tell jokes and choruses."

"The second thing is to get on together as a band, enjoy your time and give your band mates space when they need it. An opportunity to make music with your friends does not come along every day."

# Your FARM



## Local companies recognized in Innovation Showcase

By Lorne Stelmach

Three local companies were honoured as Innovation Showcase winners at the recent Manitoba Ag Days in Brandon.

The event featured 28 new products or services in seven categories, and the south-central region was well represented.

In the agricultural equipment category, the CornerStone planter ready row unit created by North Valley Precision Planting located in the Homewood area earned top honours.

Representative Andrew Kippen said it came from a fairly basic idea to help producers.

"We wanted to showcase what North Valley can do with old equipment, so we rescued an old planter ... stripped it down, painted it and made a bunch of different adaptors and mods to fit with all the new tech," he said.

They then took the idea further and created a blueprint for installing it onto equipment.

"We mentioned it to a couple of customers who are actually on the Ag Days board, and they said that's a real innovation there and you should showcase it," said Kippen.

"The whole idea is if you're happy with what you have today, let's retro-

fit and customize and make it fit," he added.

He said there has been a lot of good positive response so far.

"It might not be a build we would do for everyone, but it kind of shows that you can take something that's 50 years old and make it into something that's new," said Kippen. "New equipment is not cheap ... so this is an option for guys who kind of want the new tech but don't want to spend that kind of money."

In the farm safety category, the fence line mower created by R-Tech Industries, also in the Homewood area, received accolades.

Representative Josh Hennan said their innovation also came from a fairly basic need, especially for cattle producers.

"If you have the grass get long and start touching the line, it will short it out, and it will lose its voltage," he explained. "Right now, people are just using weed whackers; that's the main way to do it ... but to go out and weed whack miles of fence line is a little crazy."

They created something that will do the job quicker and more efficiently for producers.

"It's a simple idea for sure, and they



STANDARD PHOTO SUBMITTED

The CornerStone planter ready row unit created by Homewood's North Valley Precision Planting earned top honours in the Manitoba Ag Days Innovation Showcase agricultural equipment category.

do exist in Europe, but it just seemed you couldn't really find them out here in North America."

He saw a need for this relatively straightforward innovation here in southern Manitoba especially, and he appreciates receiving the recognition.

"It's good. It gets our name out there ... it's especially about safety," he

said.

Hennan said they have been receiving good initial response to their product.

"Here's some people who came to Ag Days just to look at it, so there is a need for it," he said, noting they only did testing over last summer and started taking orders at Ag Days.

Another honour in the agronomics category went to the Feed Eazy Pro 3020 tub grinder produced by Kanspar / Allagparts located in the RM of Stanley.

The tub grinder arose through a partnership with a company based overseas that had been distributing a model of a tub grinder.

"They decided they needed to beef their machines up, so they designed their own unit and strengthened the areas where they had issues, and we were able to import these machines into Canada now at over \$20,000 savings over the competition," explained sales rep Todd Botterill.

"It's a stronger machine," he said, noting its advantages include not only its ruggedness but its price as well.

"Cattle producers looking to increase the quality of their feed and using vertical mixers might need stron-

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Continued on page 13

# Your FARM



The fence line mower created by R-Tech Industries was recognized in the farm safety category in the Innovation Showcase at Ag Days.

## > TUMBLER RIDGE, FROM PG. 10

respect. Our thoughts are with your community, and we send our heartfelt support and best wishes for healing and peace."

Across the Interlake School Division, flags are also flying at half-mast.

"I know I speak for our board of trustees and the entire ISD community when I extend my condolences to everyone who has been impacted by this terrible event," said school board chair Alan Campbell.

"We know the vital role that public schools play in communities, especially small rural communities, as sources of safety and inclusion for all students, and we're mindful of the extremely difficult path ahead for families in Tumbler Ridge."

The safety of Interlake School Division students and staff are the first priority for the board of trustees and senior admin team, he added.

"This is reflected in current divisional and provincial regulations, policies and procedures currently in place and kept up to date. Families are encouraged to engage with their school or divisional leadership teams with any concerns or questions they may have," said Campbell, who also serves as the president of the Manitoba School Boards Association and the Canadian School Boards Association.

"Supports remain in place in all schools to support students and staff who may require support in the aftermath of this terrible event."

## > INNOVATION, FROM PG. 12

ger equipment and need up to an hour to an hour and a half to chew up a bale," he explained.

"So it's a lot of wasted time and horsepower ... with a tub grinder like ours, we can use a 170 to 200 horsepower, and it takes five minutes to chew up that bale.

"We're in a more competitive price point. It makes it more feasible for smaller operators to use this machine and improve their feed quality and not spend as much to do it."

Botterill noted the Manitoba Ag Days is the perfect forum for companies like them to showcase what they can offer to producers.

"It's a great program that they have, and the publicity that we get from it

helps a lot."

First-place winners in the showcase received \$500 and a \$1,000 advertising credit, while the runner-ups received \$250 and a \$500 advertising credit.

A spokesperson for Ag Days said it is always rewarding to see the level of innovation that Manitoba companies put in to making things easier and better for producers in the province.

"Farmers really want to see what is new and how it might work for them. They like the opportunity to see products first hand and ask specific questions," said Dwayne Leslie, Manitoba Ag Days innovation showcase committee chair.

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# Katie's Cottage marking 10 years of providing refuge, comfort

By Ashleigh Viveiros

Katie's Cottage kicked off its 10th anniversary celebrations last week with a special event bringing corporate supporters together at the Access Event Centre in Morden.

The come-and-go wine and cheese reception was hosted by People Corporation—a Winnipeg company so impressed by the work of the respite home that they wanted to do something to help them celebrate a decade of community impact.

"My husband had foot surgery across the street at Boundary Trails, so I walked into Katie's Cottage and had to get involved," shared Gabrielle Konowalchuk, a business development consultant with People Corp. "I learned the story and fell in love with Ruth [Reimer, Katie Cares CEO] and here we are."

Having a place to come and get away from the hospital environment was a gift, Konowalchuk said.

"I only heard about it because the hospital mentioned I could stay there if I needed to. I had no idea what I was walking into. It was beautiful ... I was just in awe."

She went back to work inspired to do something to help Katie Cares, which runs the cottage.

"I got back to the office and sat my VP down and said, 'We need to get involved in this. It's a great organization, great people.'"

Jeremy Dick, a group benefit consultant with People Corp., observed that the story of Katie's Cottage is an inspiring example of people coming together to support one another.

"We need more of this in the world today," he said. "It really speaks to the community here in Morden and Winkler more than anything else ... things like what Katie's Cottage represents really speaks to the value of community and what people can do when they really put their minds towards it."

People Corporation reps reached out to businesses across Southern Manitoba to invite them to the gathering last week, where they could learn more about the work of Katie Cares and how they can help them in their mission.

"We made a lot of phone calls in support of Katie Cares, just to bring people out and give them a good kick-off to their 10-year anniversary," Konowalchuk said, noting they plan to continue their relationship with the non-profit, potentially hosting similar awareness and fundraising events in the future.

Ruth Reimer said she was blown away by the company's eagerness to organize this event on their behalf. These kind of partnerships are an integral next step for the organization as it looks at the next decade of service and beyond.

"The southern Manitoba area, they've given so much to Katie Cares. Without them, we wouldn't be anywhere. The community support, the business support," she said. "But we also have to look at it and recognize people are coming here from all over the province, people are asking, 'How can we get involved?' We're operating on a provincial level, for sure."



STANDARD PHOTOS BY ASHLEIGH VIVEIROS

Katie Cares CEO Ruth Reimer holding the napkin her late daughter Kaitlyn got her father, Randy, to sketch out detailing her dream for a respite home in the Pembina Valley. Those plans became Katie's Cottage, which is celebrating its 10th anniversary in 2026.

The milestone anniversary celebrations will continue with a big community celebration July 25, where everyone will be invited down to the cottage for a day of tours, music, inflatables for the kids, and food.

They'll then cap off the year with their annual online auction and Celebration of Life fashion show in Sep-

tember.

Katie Cares is also teaming up with the Winnipeg Kinsmen for a Kin Kar raffle for a \$60,000 Murray Auto Group dealership voucher and 50/50 draw. The draw will take place June 22. Ticket information is available at [katiecares.ca](http://katiecares.ca).

Continued on page 15



Tracy Dandeneau (far left), Jeremy Dick, and Gabrielle Konowalchuk (far right) from People Corporation with Katie Cares' Ruth Reimer at a wine and cheese event held in the charity's honour last week.



Thousands of people from all across Manitoba and beyond have stopped by Katie's Cottage while their loved ones receive care at the nearby Boundary Trails Health Centre. Each pin represents a community a guest calls home.

# Recovery of Hope hosting educational workshop Feb. 25

By Lorne Stelmach

Recovery of Hope is launching a new series of free, community-sponsored mental health workshops aimed at expanding access to mental health education across southern Manitoba.

*Roots of Anxiety: Nurturing Wellbeing in a Worried World* running in Winkler later this month focuses on an issue which they feel has become an increasing concern for more and more people.

Program director Kim Thiessen sees the session as "focusing a lot on just providing people and clients ... with life skill tools ... focusing on stress and anxiety."

"I think we're very much aware that, in our current economic reality, there is some significant stress out there for employers, employees, families ... all of those things like cost of living," she continued. "And quite apart from all of those things that impact us every day, there's also kind of the global reality that we live in a world that just feels kind of uncertain now."

Thiessen sees a key thing here as being how stress and anxiety work their way into our lives and wellbeing both physically and mentally, and they have seen that through an increase in

their client numbers.

"It's not that it wasn't there before, but it feels different," she said. "It feels a little bit more pronounced than it has been in the past."

The workshop is open to all adults, parents, caregivers, educators, faith communities, workplaces, and community members seeking practical tools to better understand anxiety and support emotional wellbeing.

The session will be led by Andrea Dyck, a certified counsellor, in Winkler on Feb. 25 from 7-9 p.m. at 545 Industrial Dr.

The evening will focus on understanding why anxiety is increasing in today's world, how it presents in both adults and children, and practical attachment-safe strategies to support emotional wellbeing.

This workshop series also represents a new approach for Recovery of Hope, which has historically offered educational workshops on a fee-based model. Through a community-sponsored framework, Recovery of Hope is intentionally removing financial barriers for potential participants, Thiessen noted.

"We've learned over time that the

people who could benefit most from this kind of education aren't always able to afford the one-time workshop fee," she said. "This shift allows us to respond to that reality in a way that aligns with our values—ensuring an accessible space to learn, reflect, and grow without cost being a deciding factor."

The community-sponsored model also creates opportunities for local organizations, businesses, churches, and employers to play an active role in supporting mental wellbeing.

In addition to supporting the workshop itself, any excess sponsorship funds raised through the series will support Recovery of Hope's sliding fee scale, ensuring individuals and families can access counselling services regardless of income.

"Community sponsorship allows the impact of this workshop to extend well beyond a single evening," Thiessen said. "It supports ongoing access to counselling for those who need it most, while also giving organizations a meaningful way to invest in mental health within their own communities."

While the workshop is offered at no



SUPPLIED PHOTO

Counsellor Andrea Dyck will be leading the Roots of Anxiety workshop in Winkler later this month.

cost to participants, advance registration is required as seating is limited.

To register, head to [edenhealthcare.ca/events/recovery-of-hope-roots-of-anxiety-workshop-2/](http://edenhealthcare.ca/events/recovery-of-hope-roots-of-anxiety-workshop-2/).

## > KATIE'S COTTAGE, FROM PG. 14

### A DECADE OF CARING

Looking back, it's hard to believe how fast the past 10 years have flown by.

"You blink and we're here," Reimer said, reflecting on how they've learned so much in that time about how best to provide the care and support guests to Katie's Cottage need.

"I think the model has stayed very much the same, except that we've made that model stronger," she observed. "The foundation is so much stronger. The whole concept is stronger because people understand it now."

"People know they can leave the hospital and come here for the day, overnight—whatever they need," Reimer said. Day drop-ins are completely free, while overnight stays come with a modest fee that is a fraction of what a family would have to pay to stay in other accommodations.

They seek to provide a homelike environment, a refuge for people when they need to stay close to the hospital. Last year they rented out 890 rooms,

welcoming upwards of 1,650 overnight guests, alongside hundreds more people who simply stopped in for a cup of a coffee or a quiet place to pass the time.

"All those people who now don't have to go sit in their car or go shopping aimlessly to kill some time while their loved one receives care," Reimer said. "People need a break, they need a space where it's quiet, where the noise and smell and all the hustle of bustle of the hospital isn't, but they're still close by."

It's pretty much exactly what Reimer's late daughter, Kaitlyn, envisioned when she and her father first sketched out plans for a respite home years ago.

"She was at Boundary Trails, in the ICU, and she was very, very low. Her white cells were so low," Reimer recalled. "I was going home and she said, 'Mom, that's so far.'"

The family lived in nearby Winkler, but even that short drive can seem much longer when a loved one is sick and in pain. And what about families who don't live in the area, Kaitlyn wondered. Where do they go to recharge?

"When I left, she said to her dad,

"Take that napkin and let's draw a picture."

That sketch, which now hangs on the wall of Katie's Cottage, was the seed for the facility it is today, depicting a space with plenty of common areas for people to gather and private bedrooms to stay the night.

After Kaitlyn's death in 2012 at the age 15, her family picked up her dream and made it a reality. First continuing the Katie Cares charity which still provides thousands of Beanie Babies and care packages to children in hospitals across the region each year—an initiative Kaitlyn began before her death—and then later spearheading the push to get Katie's Cottage built.

"I think she always believed it was going to happen, she was going to make it happen," Reimer said. And, thanks to the support of the community back then and through to today, it did.

"When we started back in 2014, we had zero dollars in the bank for this," Reimer said. "We raised \$700,000—enough to build this place and start off with no debt. It was just phenomenal the support we got."

In the years since, Reimer and her team of staff and volunteers have re-

mained humbled by the opportunity to be there for families experiencing everything life has to offer—from the joy of birth (and they've actually had one expectant mother deliver their baby right at the cottage) through to end of life care.

"Maybe a loved one can't go far from the hospital, but their family wants to do something special for them one more time, so they have a barbecue in our backyard," Reimer said. "We've done that for families, giving them a chance just to be together here."

"It's full circle. Birth and death, those things are happening here, and in between are all of the other struggles that we have to go through," she said. "We're honoured to be here for people. And I'm honoured that I get to meet so many wonderful people from all across the province."

If Reimer has one message for the community, it's this: thank you.

"Those two words don't do it justice. But thank you. There's no way we could have done any of this without everyone—and I mean everyone—as a community of southern Manitoba coming together and realizing the dream of a 13-year-old was something that was very needed and has had such an impact."

# sports & recreation

INSIDE > OUTSIDE > UPSIDE DOWN

## Cougars sweep Aces, advance to semifinals

By Annaliese Meier

The Carman Cougars are through to the Zone IV semifinals after completing a two-game sweep of the WC Miller Aces in their best-of-three opening-round playoff series.

Carman followed the same blueprint in both wins — absorbing an early push from the Aces before responding with timely scoring and finishing strong — posting 5-3 victories on Feb. 11 at Carman Arena and Feb. 13 in Altona to take the series 2-0.

In Game 1, the Cougars erased a 2-0 first-period deficit with a four-goal second period. WC Miller struck twice in the opening frame on goals by Carson Harder and Kai Hildebrand, but Carman turned the game on its head in the middle period. Grant Friesen started the comeback at 16:53, finishing a play from Griffin Graham and Brody Benner to make it 2-1. Jackson Best tied it at 15:41 off a setup from Bryson Hiebert and Ryder Delaquis, and Carman kept rolling as Linden Findlay scored the go-ahead goal at 11:48 from Delaquis. The Cougars made it 4-2 at 10:57 when Hiebert converted another Delaquis feed, with Zac Pritchard also drawing an assist. Nolan Franz pulled the Aces within two early in the third, but Carman locked it down and Delaquis sealed it with an empty-net goal at 19:55 assisted by Hiebert. Delaquis led the Cougars with a goal and three assists, while Hiebert had a goal and two assists. Friesen, Best and Findlay each scored once. Goaltender Robby Keith made 26 saves on 29 shots.

The Cougars again had to chase the game in Game 2 after WC Miller built another 2-0 lead in the first period on goals by Nolan Franz and Grayden Franz. Carman got on the board late in the opening frame when Friesen scored at 3:00 with assists from Benner and Campbell Park, and the teams went to the third period with the Aces still in front 2-1 after a scoreless second. Carman then broke the game open with four third-period goals. Pritchard tied it at 17:46, scoring from Hiebert and Delaquis. Just 55 seconds later, Hiebert put the Cougars ahead at 16:51 on a play started by Delaquis and Park. Delaquis added an insurance marker at 11:17, and Brayden Poirier made it 5-2 at 9:39 from Lachlan Young before Nolan Franz scored late for the Aces. Delaquis finished with a goal and two assists, Park had two assists, and Friesen, Pritchard, Hiebert and Poirier each scored once. Keith was sharp again, stopping 34 of 37 shots.

The playoff success also came alongside strong representation for the Cougars in the Zone IV year-end awards. Carman's bench boss tandem of Mike Hetherington and Derek Wood was named the league's Coaching Staff of the Year, with the duo also earning an invitation to coach in the Zone IV all-star game. Friesen, a Grade 12 captain, was runner-up for the Heavy Metal Designs MVP Award and runner-up for Top Scorer after finishing second in league scoring with 24 goals and 24 assists for 48 points. Carman forward Nathan Froebe was runner-up for the



STANDARD PHOTOS BY RICK HIEBERT

Altona's captain Nolan Franz leaps to avoid the point shot on Carman's goalie Robby Keith.

Lloyd C. Orchard Most Sportsmanlike Player award. As a team, the Cougars were runner-up for the Charlie Maykut Fair Play Award for least penalty minutes, finishing the season with 290 PIM over 24 games.

With the opening-round sweep, Carman remains perfect in the postseason and will now prepare for the next step in the Zone IV playoff bracket as the

push for a championship continues.

### NEXT SERIES — ZONE IV SEMIFINAL

(2) Carman Cougars vs. (3) Morris Mavericks

Game 1 — Feb. 18, 7:30 p.m., at Carman

Game 2 — Feb. 21, 2 p.m., at Morris

Game 3 — Feb. 23, 7:30 p.m., at Carman (if necessary)



Carman's Zac Pritchard and Altona's Easton Neufeld battle for the puck.



Carman's Ryder Delaquis attempts a wrap around on Altona's net minder Christopher Vetter.

# Hawks sweep Beavers, advance to face Royals

By Annaliese Meier

The Notre Dame Hawks are moving on in the SEMHL playoffs after defeating the Carman Beavers in two straight games in the best-of-three Survivor Series, earning a quarter-final matchup against the first-place Winkler Royals.

Notre Dame opened the series with a 7-4 victory in Carman on Feb. 12 and followed it with another 7-4 win Feb. 14 to complete the sweep.

Carman struck first in Game 1 when Everett Bestland scored just over three minutes into the opening period, assisted by Scott Atkins, but the Hawks responded quickly. Nikita Pecheritsyn scored twice in the first period — both set up by Zander Carels — to give Notre Dame the lead after 20 minutes.

The Beavers pushed back in the second period as Dean Gorchynski and Mikol Sartor, the latter on the power play, briefly restored a Carman ad-

vantage at 3-2.

Notre Dame took control in the third period. Vincent Grift and Max Collet scored 22 seconds apart before Jake Carels added the game-winner on the power play. Jeremie Goderis and Sean Christensen added insurance markers to pull away, while Noah Skorpad also scored for Carman. Dan Wenham made 40 saves in the loss as Christopher Lesage stopped 40 shots for the Hawks.

Facing elimination in Game 2, the Beavers kept pace early. Dean Gorchynski, Mikol Sartor, Scott Atkins and Tyler Park scored for Carman and the teams were tied late in the second period.

From there the Hawks pulled away again. Sean Christensen scored twice, while Jeff Michiels, Max Collet, Eli Carels, Christian Prejet and Nicolas Vigier also found the net, with Carels recording the eventual winner midway through the third period.

Lesage turned aside 49 shots in another strong performance, while Wenham again faced heavy pressure and stopped 40.

With the sweep, eighth-seed Notre Dame advances to face the top-ranked Winkler Royals in a best-of-five series beginning Feb. 15 in Winkler, while the Beavers' season comes to an end after the opening round.

## UPCOMING SEMHL PLAYOFF SERIES

- Game 1: Sunday, Feb. 15, 2026 — 7:30 p.m. — at Winkler
- Game 2: Saturday, Feb. 21, 2026 — 7:30 p.m. — at Winkler

The series is currently tied 0-0, with additional games to be scheduled if necessary.

## Sanford Sabres enter playoffs after mixed week

By Annaliese Meier

The Sanford Sabres women's team heads into the postseason sitting third in the West Division of the Manitoba Women's High School Hockey League with a 16-8 record after dropping a pair of contests last week.

Sanford fell 7-3 on the road to the Garden City Gophers on Feb. 9. Mikalah Grant opened the Sabres' scoring on the power play in the first period, while Mackenzie Jeffery and Liza Bestland added third-period goals, but Garden City built an early lead and maintained control throughout.

The Sabres were then shut out 3-0 at home by Sturgeon Heights on Feb. 12 and will now regroup ahead of the

playoffs.

In Winnipeg High School Hockey League action, the Sanford Sabres boys team sits seventh in the Winnipeg Free Press Division with an 11-12 record after splitting two games last week.

Sanford fell 4-0 on the road to CLR on Feb. 11 but rebounded with a 6-3 home win over Stonewall on Feb. 13. Dyson Dilk, Koston Laramee, Max Nabess and Andrew Schultz scored in the victory, while Cooper Rodewald led the offence with a goal and three assists and Colton Boulanger added a late marker.

Sanford now turns its focus to the upcoming playoffs.

## Top Offensive Lineman



STANDARD PHOTO SUBMITTED

Elm Creek's Logan Deurbrouck, 15, continues to build momentum on the football field. The Portage Collegiate Institute offensive lineman recently returned from an elite camp in Irvine, Calif., was named his school's Top Offensive Lineman of the year, and has now been selected to compete in the 2026 Blue and Gold Showcase — a program reserved for Manitoba's top U16 talent.

## Twisters earn point before falling Sunday

By Annaliese Meier

The Pembina Valley Twisters picked up a single point in Manitoba Major Junior Hockey League play last week before closing the stretch with a loss Sunday on the road.

Pembina Valley dropped a 9-4 decision to the River East Royal Knights and then fell 3-2 in a shootout to the Raiders Jr. Hockey Club, before losing 5-2 to the Transcona Railer Express on Feb. 15.

At Terry Sawchuk Arena on Feb. 10, River East's pressure proved decisive as the Royal Knights outshot Pembina Valley 44-21. Graham Maslow scored twice in the opening period before Ryan Thiessen replied late, finishing a rush set up by Dominic Rooney and Jack Holmes.

River East added three second-period goals from Adam Hryhoruk, Nolan Fielding and Eros Bazan, while Vlad Stepic countered for the Twisters with his sixth of the season off a feed from Josh Guilford.

The Royal Knights struck 25 seconds into the third and continued to build their lead, though Darby Olson scored twice for Pembina Valley in the period, with assists going to Stepic and Owen Vanrobaeys. Rowan Cherkas stopped 16 of 20 shots in relief while Darion Penner made 19 saves in the loss.

The Twisters bounced back Feb. 13 at Morris MultiPlex but came up short in a shootout against the Raiders. After a scoreless first, Guilford opened scoring on the power play at 3:56 of the second, converting passes from Olson and Ethan Wilde.

Cole Kennedy tied it later in the period and Riley Kushnir put the Raiders ahead midway through the third before Pembina Valley forced overtime when Ketema Wall scored with 1:55 remaining, assisted by Olson and Guilford. Neither team scored in overtime and Kushnir netted the winner in the fifth round of the shootout. Cherkas turned aside 31 of 34 shots.

The Twisters wrapped up the week Sunday in Winnipeg, falling 5-2 to Transcona. After a scoreless first, the Railer Express struck three times in the second before Vanrobaeys scored for Pembina Valley, assisted by Stepic and Olson.

Thiessen cut the deficit to one early in the third, but Transcona sealed it with two late empty-net goals. Penner turned aside 37 of 40 shots as Transcona held a 42-37 edge.

Pembina Valley (5-29-2, 12 points) sits 10th in the standings and continues its schedule Feb. 19 at Stonewall, Feb. 20 at home to St. Boniface and Feb. 22 hosting Stonewall.

# get inspired

MEAL IDEAS



**Servings:** 6  
 1/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil  
 3 tablespoons lemon juice  
 1 tablespoon balsamic vinegar  
 1/2 teaspoon fresh minced garlic  
 1 pinch salt  
 2 tablespoons chopped fresh basil  
 1 pound grilled or broiled boneless, skinless chicken breasts, chopped into small pieces  
 2 cups halved or quartered red Grapes from California  
 1/3 cup chopped red onion  
 3 tablespoons cooked, crumbled ba-

## Grape and Chicken Salad with Lemon-Balsamic Vinaigrette

con or packaged real bacon pieces  
 1 large avocado, peeled, pitted and diced  
 freshly ground pepper, to taste  
 6 slices whole-grain artisan bread

In large bowl, whisk olive oil, lemon juice, vinegar, garlic, salt and basil. Add cooked chicken, grapes, onion and bacon.

When ready to serve, mix well then lightly stir in avocado and season with pepper, to taste. Serve with bread slices.

**Tip:** Salad may be prepared 1 day in advance and refrigerated in covered container.



Recipe adapted from "Spacehips and Laser Beams"

6 ounces egg noodles  
 1 cup peas (canned or frozen)  
 2 cans (5 ounces each) light chunk tuna in water, drained  
 1 can (10 1/2 ounces) cream of celery soup  
 1/2 cup milk  
 1 1/2 cups shredded cheddar cheese, divided  
 1/2 teaspoon celery salt  
 1/4 teaspoon black pepper  
 2 tablespoons fresh parsley, chopped, plus additional for garnish (optional)  
 nonstick cooking spray  
 1/4 cup dry breadcrumbs  
 2 tablespoons butter, melted  
 Parmesan cheese

## Tuna Noodle Casserole

Preheat oven to 350 F and cook egg noodles according to package instructions.

In large bowl, mix egg noodles, peas, tuna, soup, milk, 1 1/4 cups cheddar cheese, celery salt, pepper and 2 tablespoons parsley.

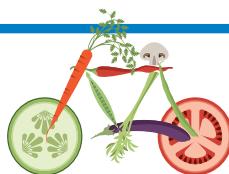
Spray 9-by-13-inch casserole dish with nonstick cooking spray and add tuna mixture. Cover with aluminum foil and bake 20 minutes until hot and bubbly.

While casserole is baking, mix bread crumbs and melted butter. Remove casserole from oven and top with breadcrumb mixture and remaining cheddar cheese.

Bake, uncovered, 5-10 minutes, until breadcrumbs are golden brown and cheese on top is melted. Sprinkle with Parmesan cheese and additional parsley, if desired, before serving.

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## Expert patient here to help!



Susie Schwartz

By Susie Schwartz

So, we're well into a new year. (Ten months 'til Christmas! Sorry. Too soon?) Did you make any New Year's resolutions? If so, I hope they're going well. If not, don't sweat it! Any moment can be a new beginning. You don't need Jan. 1 to start again!

If you didn't resolve to improve your life, I'm here to encourage you to do so—starting now. But probably not in the way you think. I don't buy into societal pressures to do more, eat differently, get a gym membership, blah, blah, blah. (Those aren't bad things, but you won't be successful just by setting a goal because everyone else is. And remember... there's nothing magical about Jan. 1. You have to really want it.)

Okay, so what am I proposing?

Do more of what you love.

On the Harvard Health Publishing website, it says: "A study published online Sept. 11, 2023, by Nature Medicine suggests that having a hobby is good for your health, mood, and more."

Lately, when I'm feeling stressed, anxious, or even bored, I turn to painting. With jazz or acoustic pop covers playing in the background, getting my hands (and arms, and face!) dirty, and creating something from nothing—even if it's not beautiful or technically good—calms me. (Thank goodness I use acrylic paint! Once I bought a tube of oil paint by accident, and it was a permanent disaster. I had to wait for my skin to shed to get it all off!) This activity can only help my hypersensitive nervous system, which causes me all sorts of physical pain.

Yes, I believe that a passion or hobby can improve not only our mental well-being, but our physical well-being as well.

Do you love to read? Get any new books for Christmas? (Okay, if Aunt Sally gave you yet another Danielle Steel novel, you have my permission to buy whatever new book you fancy.) Take whatever time you can to tuck into that book. Did someone give you a Christmas card with flower seeds attached? (They do that over here in England, at least.) Try gardening—you might just love getting dirt under your fingernails. Did you get a puppy? (Oh, I hope so!) Take an online dog-training course focused on games and tricks. You'll probably both love it.

So, do more of what you love. Your body and mind will thank you.

Less health stress, yes?

*A published author and musician, Susie currently lives in the UK. Find her on Instagram @authorsusieschwartz and at www.lessthehealthstress.com. (Email: info@lessthehealthstress.com.) She is the author of *Help the Doctor Help You: 41 Secrets and Tips for Self-Advocacy to Get the Best from Your Appointments*.*



3 scoops vanilla ice cream  
 1/2 cup milk  
 1/3 cup cream of coconut  
 2 tablespoons sweetened flaked coconut

## Coconut Cream Pie Milkshake

1 whole graham cracker  
 whipped cream, for garnish  
 graham cracker crumbs, for garnish  
 In blender mix ice cream, cream of coconut, flaked coconut and graham cracker on high until smooth. Pour into glass. Top with whipped cream and graham cracker crumbs.

Recipe adapted from MilkMeansMore.org.



## WHAT'S SILENT BULLYING?

Silent bullying, sometimes referred to as quiet bullying, doesn't involve loud words or physical harm. Instead, it happens through actions that can be difficult to notice, such as ignoring someone, giving them the "silent treatment," spreading rumours behind their back, leaving them out on purpose or using subtle looks or gestures to make them feel unwelcome. Because it can be hard to detect, silent bullying can be just as damaging as more overt forms of bullying.

Bullying has no place in our communities.

Allyship takes action.



[WWW.PEMBINAVALLEYPRIDE.CA](http://WWW.PEMBINAVALLEYPRIDE.CA)

## PINK SHIRT DAY



*Sprinkle Kindness*

**Wednesday, February 25, 2026**

Wear pink and take a stand against bullying!

This Pink Shirt Day, "Sprinkle Kindness" everywhere we go. Small acts—like a kind word or a gesture of support—can create a world where kindness sprinkles everywhere.

#PinkShirtDay #SprinkleKindness



[carmanmanitoba.ca](http://carmanmanitoba.ca)

February 25, 2026

# PiNK SHiRT Day



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