

The Citizen

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LOCAL NEWS

Site Announced for New Niverville High School

■ The province, school division, town council, and a local developer have chosen a site for Niverville's new school—in record time.

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LOCAL NEWS

Niverville Council to Consider Police Petition

■ Two Niverville residents have made it their mission to find out exactly how much a local police force would cost.

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LOCAL NEWS

The Digital Divide

■ Why do rural Manitobans struggle to access affordable high-speed internet services? In this issue, Brenda Sawatzky goes looking for answers.

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SPORTS & RECREATION

Wildcats Win Provincials

■ The U11 Wildcats, with players from across the southeast, emerged victorious from the Provincial A baseball finals in Reston, Manitoba.

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ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

Local Author Completes Fantasy Trilogy

■ Sherry Peters is set to release the final volume in her Aurora-nominated series.

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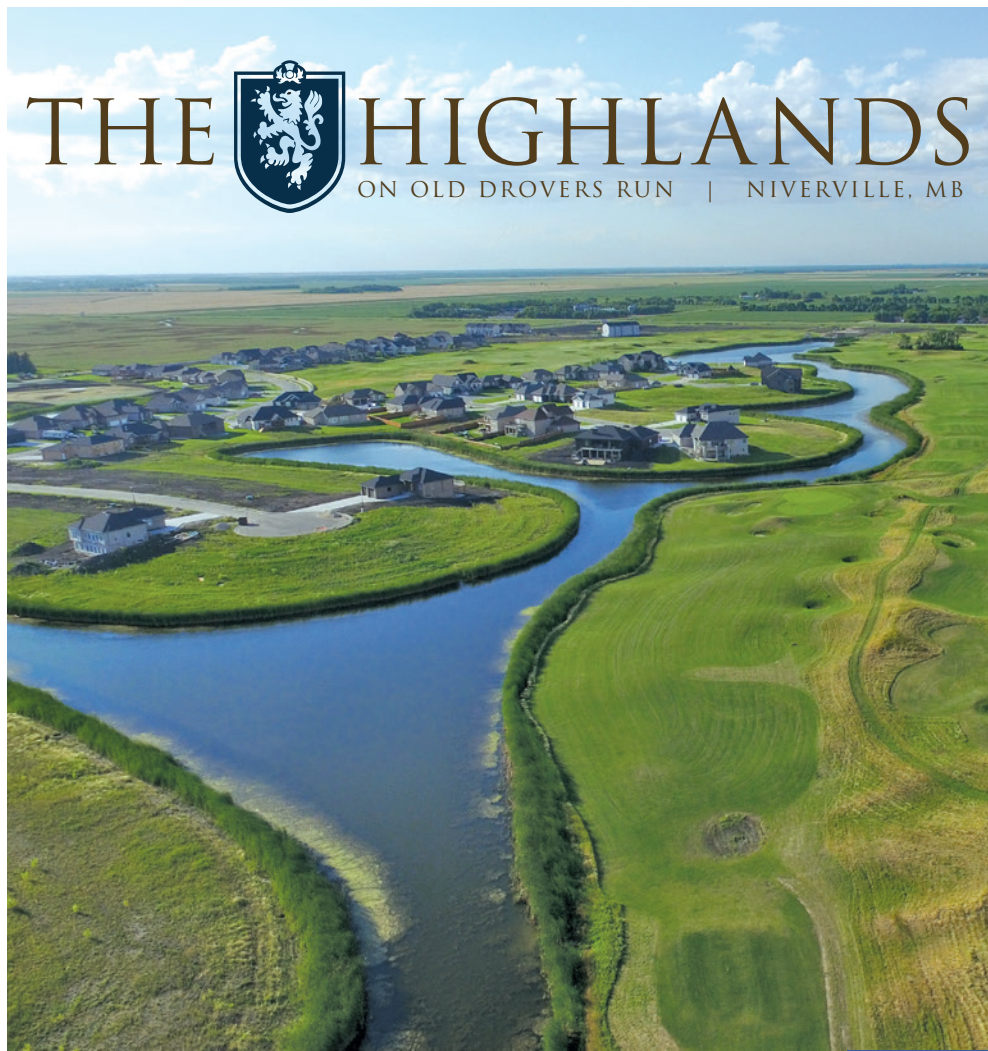
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The Citizen

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Development of Niverville Business Park Underway

By Brenda Sawatzky

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Nearly 15 years since its inception, the Niverville Business Park is seeing some significant development. On July 13, Niverville's council, representatives of Edie Construction Ltd. (ECL), and invited guests met at the entrance to the new business park on Sixth Avenue North for the official ground-breaking ceremony.

The business park has undergone many changes over the years. It began as Hanville Business Park, a collaboration between Niverville and Hanover on land that, at the time, belonged to Hanover. Eight lots were developed and quickly sold. Recognizing the need for more space, Niverville's council began negotiations with Hanover to annex two larger parcels of land. The annexation was approved and paperwork completed on January 1, 2017. The name was officially changed to the Niverville Business Park and council began work on development planning.

Questions began to arise among council about the feasibility of the potential \$800,000 in infrastructure costs needed to develop the land. The decision was made to send out a request for proposal (RFP), actively seeking a developer interested in partnering with the town.

By June of this year, negotiations began with ECL, a firm based out of Dugald, Manitoba—the same firm



Mayor Myron Dyck, Calvin Edie of ECL, and Councillor Chris Wiebe at the site of the new business park. **BRENDASAWATZKY**

that assisted Niverville with the construction of a dike in 1997. ECL has a solid reputation as the developer of numerous residential, commercial, and cottage developments throughout Manitoba and western Canada.

"What this project does is check another box in the Town of Niverville's council mandate to improve and enhance business development in Niverville," said Mayor Myron Dyck at the ground-breaking ceremony.

According to Dyck, a strategic plan for business development began in 2012. At that time, 87 percent of Niverville's properties were residential with only 13 percent business.

"In speaking with other reeves and mayors, in order to be a financially sustainable community, that ratio needed

to be closer to 60 percent and 40 percent respectively," adds Dyck. "Today, with 21 new business lots of varying sizes coming onstream, this provides the opportunity for new businesses to set up in Niverville and for existing business to expand."

Increasing tax revenues to help offset residential taxes and creating jobs close to home were cited as two of the primary reasons for council's interest in the business park expansion.

The partnership with ECL is viewed as a win-win for both parties. While full ownership and title of the land remains with the Niverville Community Development Corporation (NCDC, a branch of the Town of Niverville), development costs will fall fully on ECL. As the lots sell, the town will compensate ECL with 72 percent

of the sale price and retain 28 percent.

This kind of partnership means that the town will bear less risk if sites go unsold, and no capital dollars will be tied up in infrastructure development. ECL will benefit by finishing the project in a timely manner in order to quickly recoup their investment.

"We have the ability to gain expertise in the development business, which ECL brings to the table," says Eric King, Finance Administration Manager for the Town of Niverville. "We also gain ECL's network of contacts in assisting in the sale of lots, and finally we have no risk on cost overruns. ECL has the potential to make more money under this process if the sale of lots goes well and ECL correctly estimated their construction costs of developing to the construction

standards of the town."

King will assume the role of sales and marketing manager for the project and admits that he already has a list of potential buyers he has been meeting with since the park's grand opening. He says they are opening up opportunities to existing Niverville businesses first before they consider marketing to outside buyers. Once an offer to purchase has been signed by a buyer, the agreement must be authorized by a representative of both the town and ECL.

The first phase of the project will include 21 lots. This is the only phase for which the partnership between the Town and ECL has been formally negotiated. Upon the completion of the sale of these lots, ECL will have the first right of refusal for the development of the next phase.

King says that NCDC is already taking steps to subdivide the section that will become phase two in order to prevent delays should phase one sell out quickly.

The first two access roads in phase one have been named to commemorate people from Niverville's historic past: Kuzenko Road for Niverville's first mayor and Schultz Road for the town's first postmaster.

The lots in phase one will start at \$31,000 and are expected to be completed and ready for possession as early as September and October of this year.



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New High School to Be Built Alongside Multiplex

The province, school division, town council, and a local developer have worked out a deal to construct a new high school in Niverville adjacent to the proposed multiplex.



EVAN
BRAUN

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It's official: after years of lobbying, Niverville is getting a new high school, and the site has been identified as the future home of the Niverville Multiplex.

"I've learned enough in political life to know that there are things that might take you ten years to do," says Mayor Myron Dyck, "and then there are things that miraculously come together in a month."

The new high school is one of those rare together-in-a-month things. That's about how long the various parties have been working behind the scenes to get a deal in place.

"It is very unusual," says Hanover School Division trustee Ruby Wiens. "It is not typical at all."

Let's review the timeline of events. On April 26, Minister of Education Ian Wishart remarked to reporters that a high school in Niverville was one of the province's top two priorities, the other priority being an elementary school in Winkler. On June 16, the



HSD trustees Ruby Wiens and Shannon Friesen with Superintendent Randy Dueck and Niverville mayor Myron Dyck at the site of the future school. EVAN BRAUN

province made the official announcement that funds were in place for the new school. Most recently, on July 18, the Hanover School Division made a joint announcement with the Town of Niverville pinpointing the multiplex site.

Anyone who follows politics at any level could certainly agree that this kind of speed is unheard of.

"When the announcement came that Niverville was getting the high school and site selection became an issue, we simply said [to the province], 'Would you be interested in a

community campus model?'" says Mayor Dyck. "We always hear from the province talk of return on investment. Partnerships. Regional. All these kinds of things. So we said, 'Hey, if we were to work together and if a site could be chosen where this could occur, what would you guys think?' You're now talking to a developer, the province, the school division, and town council, all working together to see what the opportunities might be and what the barriers might be and to see how we might be able to overcome them."

With the timelines set by

the province, the details had to fall into place quickly. Town council hired Stantec, an engineering firm, to perform a study on the multiplex site, a study which they then presented to Hanover, hoping to demonstrate that locating the school and the proposed multiplex on one site made the most sense on many levels.

"Hanover School Division reviewed it and they came forward and said, 'Yeah, we agree with that,'" says Dyck. "So what this does is it gives the community an opportunity to see the synergies of the multiplex in a shared initiative. As you

can see from the model, there's shared parking, a shared impact on the environment, shared infrastructure, and shared space."

Although other sites were considered, Niverville councillor Kevin Stott says there was no question that the multiplex location was the best all-around choice.

"One of the big things we realized together is that, thinking about the infrastructure, this was the closest [site] to being ready for sewer, water, and roads," says Stott. "Whereas when you went to one of the other sites, you had

to bring all of that in, and we didn't know if we could meet those deadlines."

Wiens agrees with that assessment. "In fact, we know we wouldn't. I guess there was the option of pushing the building back a few years, if we would want to wait, but that actually wasn't [an option]."

HSD Superintendent Randy Dueck is very excited about the possibilities of including the school in the multiplex campus.

"The parking lot is going to be shared by both the multiplex and the school," says Dueck. "It will be large enough for both, but because typically during the school day there isn't as much going on in the multiplex and in the evening there's a bit more, we think that there's some really good shared opportunities there. We're also exploring the opportunity of sharing geothermal [heating], and if there's an arena in this multiplex, there could be a huge opportunity to swap energy."

Essentially, it takes a lot of energy to cool down an arena, producing heat which can then be diverted to the school. Dueck says this is a



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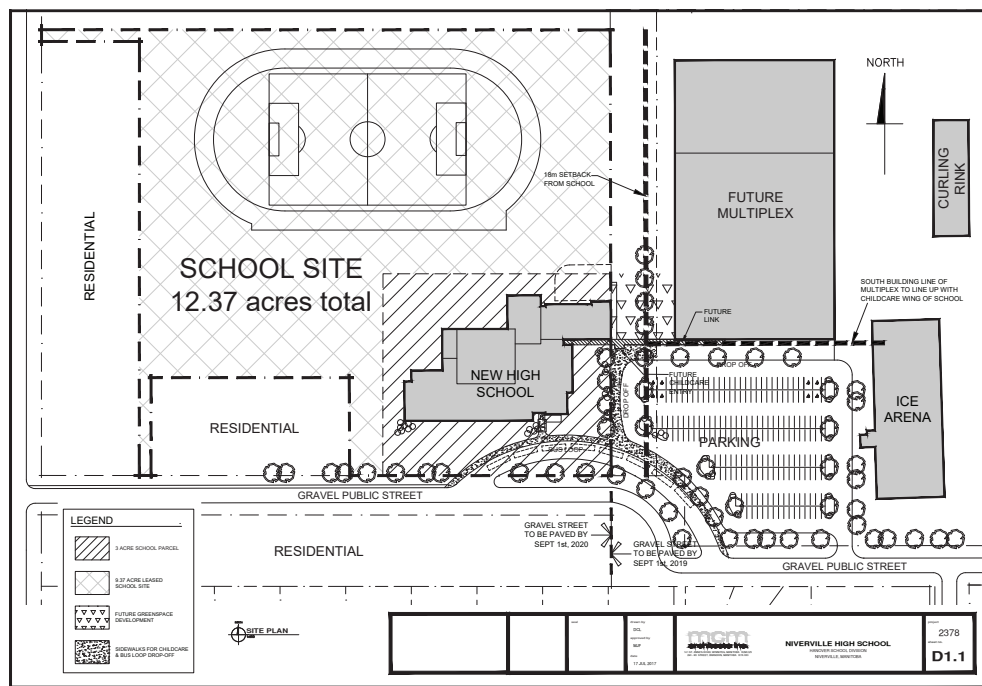


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Site map of the joint high school/multiplex campus.

HANOVER SCHOOL DIVISION

perfect example of how the shared facilities can support each other and find financial savings in the process.

Dueck also points to the joint infrastructure. "As we develop roads that come in here," he says, "there will only need to be one road developed for both [buildings]. If we were elsewhere, we would need a road, they would need a road. Now it's one road. One piece of community infrastructure."

Potentially even more exciting, HSD anticipates entering into a shared service agreement with the town so that students and staff can make use of the multiplex's extensive recreation facilities.

"We've actually got a hard link that we're going to build between the two buildings so our students during the day can go through that link to make use of the fieldhouse, can make use of the arena programming, etc.," says Dueck. "There are just some great programming opportunities for us and for our students. We also will have a daycare here, and my understanding with the multiplex is that there's going to be a kids play area in the multiplex. The kids in the daycare can go through the link into the multiplex and make use of that shared play

area."

Another opportunity will be large tournaments, something Niverville used to be far too small to accommodate. To start with, Dueck says that the new school's gym will be a large one. "With this new gym, and with the gym of a proposed fieldhouse and the current gym at NCI, within basically a square mile there are three good-sized gyms, so we can run all kinds of tournaments in a place like this. Provincial tournaments or whatever else that may lead to."

Since the site was announced in mid-July, some residents have expressed concern about locating the school on the west side of the railroad tracks when most of the town's population currently lives on the east side.

Stott says that most of the town's future development is going to occur on the west side, and the construction of the school and multiplex will further spur that trend in the coming years.

"We've been moving in that direction anyway," Stott says. "On the east side of town, anything we have for residential is basically full. If you look out [west], there's 900 acres out here. So sooner or later, you're moving 50 percent across this

way, or 50 percent across that way."

Stott points out that the town and the division are very concerned about railroad safety, but because of future development to the west, they would have been forced to tackle those concerns no matter what.

Mayor Dyck says that although plans for a future pedestrian crossing over the tracks are in their infancy, the discussions are top of mind.

"Council had at one point gotten as far as to get a price from CP to do a pedestrian walkway under the tracks," Dyck explains. "The engineering came back at \$400,000, which basically told council, 'Take a hike.' That is just not a real number at all. Having said that, I am planning on attending a CP function on August 4 in Winnipeg. One of their VPs will be there and I hope to speak to him and those of his employees that look after the Niverville area. My goal is to have the CP reps come to our town for the purpose of discussing rail safety in light of a growing community."

Dyck indicates that there are three possible options for a pedestrian rail crossing: a tunnel under the tracks, a surface crossing with arms and lights,

and an overhead bridge. He notes that the overhead bridge is generally the least favoured option by rail companies.

"There has been discussions [about pedestrian walkways]," says Wiens. "And there will continue to be discussions."

So when will this all happen? The province has set some ambitious goals, according to Superintendent Dueck.

"We've been told we have to have the doors of this place open and filled with students in September 2019," Dueck says. "What that means is that we have to have shovels in the ground by March 2018. We've already started doing a massive amount of work on site design and site development. We had to submit on July 21 the design plans, so that's ready to go. We've been working with MCM Architects to do that. Then we've got to tweak the design and get it ready for tender. Tender, I think, will happen in January for construction, with shovels in the ground by March."

Mayor Dyck says that he is grateful for all the parties coming together to make this happen, even though it imposed inconveniences on everyone involved.

"I've got to give a lot of credit to Randy and the Hanover School Division. They were supposed to break for summer on June 28, but he and they have kept working through this with the province, with the Public School Finance Board, with emails, texts, and phone calls from people on vacation. They're excited about this and they want to see this happen. So we're so appreciative to Randy and his team for just being willing to think about something that's unique and different, and of course for their hard work."

Standing on the site of the future campus, Dyck looks around with a huge smile on his face. "All I can say is that if reasonable people that have been hired and elected to do a job exercise reasonable judgement, you can do unreal things."

CITIZEN POLL

THIS MONTH'S QUESTION:

What do you think of the notion of eliminating recess for middle-years students in Manitoba schools?

SEE ARTICLE ON PAGES 14-15.

- ☐ **A** – Recess is a necessity in order for students of that age level to excel, and schools should ensure that this need is met.
- ☐ **B** – Recess is not a requirement, and these students should be able to adapt to a similar schedule to the one kept by older students.

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LAST MONTH'S RESULTS:

What do you think about the proposal from Niverville's town council to build the new high school and the multiplex on the same site?

A – The campus model for the school and multiplex makes perfect sense.

94%

B – I have reservations about this proposal. (Leave a comment and tell us why.)

6%

YOUR COMMENTS:

This works great in Churchill Manitoba. Not only do they have the school and multiplex they also have other necessities of the community like town office, hospital and many other. It's become a one stop shop for members of the community. It helps for security of the community as well.

I think this would be an ideal concept - I would like to see the facilities joined together as the synergies would be fantastic. A facility such as this would be a major draw to our community for school and recreation, provincials and other tournaments. Lets get it done!

Too far and the extra expense and environmental issues of all the extra required bussing.

Because land is only available on the outskirts of town, no matter where you build the school it will end up being far away from at least one area of town or another. You simply won't be able to please everyone and have the school in a central location. At least with this approach, there will be the unquestionably positive addition of the multiplex and arena.

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Ritchot Elects a New Council



By Evan Braun

✉ editor@nivervillecitizen.com

The recent political drama in the RM of Ritchot came to a quick end on July 19, with Chris Ewen sneaking past incumbent Jackie Hunt to be elected mayor. According to the official results, Ewen received 742 votes compared to Hunt's 650. Other mayoral challengers included Gene Whitney (413 votes) and Marianne Curtis (106 votes). Overall voter turnout was 39 percent.

"I'm ecstatic about the support," says Ewen. "I can't believe how many people came out to vote. I think it's a great number for a municipal election. So I was very happy, and I'm so thankful for my supporters. It humbles me."

Ewen, who is well known in the region for owning and operating the popular Capo Coffe Lounge restaurants in Île-des-Chênes and Niverville, campaigned hard in the weeks leading up to the election, knocking on more than 2,000 doors and talking to as many people in person as he could.

"The last time I door-knocked was the day before election day. I was at 2,000 doors, and in the evening I said to myself, 'Okay, I think I've done as much as I can. Now it's

time to focus on election day."

On election day, Ewen kept busy making phone calls to get out the vote. He also paid visits to each polling station to get a count on how many people had voted so far. This helped him to determine where to focus his attention in the last couple of hours.

After polls closed at 8:00 p.m., he held a wine-and-cheese celebration at Capo in Île-des-Chênes to thank supporters and the general public for their support.

"My strategy was a little bit of old school and a little bit of new school, which is door-knocking and social media," he says about his approach. "I truly believe that the reason I won is because of the great support I had and the hard work that went into this, not just myself, but everyone who was involved in my campaign."

The hard-fought election was triggered by a series of resignations in late April, when Hunt stepped down alongside councillors Jeannot Robert and Ron Mamchuk over allegations of bullying. Robert retained his council seat by acclamation, and Mamchuk was re-elected in Ward 2 (St. Adolphe) with 224 votes. Mamchuk defeated Jeff Egan (190 votes), Robert



Chris Ewen is sworn in as mayor of Ritchot.

CHRIS EWEN

Doiron (122 votes), and Karen Jorgenson (43 votes).

In addition to Ewen, there will be two first-time councillors at the table. Shane Pelletier emerged victorious in Ward 3 (Île-des-Chênes) and Janine Boulanger pulled out a win in Ward 4 (Grande Pointe).

Pelletier says that a lot of people were asking if he was excited or nervous on election day.

"I was a little bit of both," Pelletier concedes. "But at the same time, I don't see it as a big stretch for me to move into this role. Having said that, after going through the orientation, there's a lot of things [the three new council members] are going to have to learn pretty quick."

Boulanger agrees that

there's a lot of information to get caught up on. On election night she celebrated with a toast at home alongside her friend and campaign manager, and ever since she's been doing a lot of reading.

"We were given a binder of information, mostly budget information, and I have been spending a lot of hours reviewing it to familiarize myself with current subjects," she says, adding that she has attended two orientations so far. "[Provincial administrator] Roger Bouvier spent some time with us on how council should operate and what the duties of council are. It was very enlightening."

Ewen is pleased with the new makeup of council, which has a good mix of newcomers

and councillors with experience. "It's going to bring a fresh [dynamic]. There are some who really know what they're doing, as well as some new faces in there. We'll mix it up and be a completely different council."

"I think it's going to be a great team," agrees Boulanger. "We have spent some time together already and it seems like we're all on the same page."

Pelletier concurs. "I've worked with Ron [Mamchuk] and Jeannot [Robert] before, in my dealings with the arena and the TransCanada Centre, so I've already got a rapport with them. Chris I've known since he moved to Île-des-Chênes. Janine, I don't know her that well, but I've bumped into her in the circles of the Grande Pointe Homeowners Association. I think we've got a good group of people that are going to look at the common good—and hopefully not get cranky with each other."

In order to avoid any conflict of interest, Ewen says that he has relinquished all his shares and investments in his Capo Coffee Lounges, limiting his involvement to managing the restaurants' social media accounts.

"People tell me mayor is a full-time position, and I believe that," Ewen says. "The

compensation may not be there, but it's not about the money for me. It's about the commitment I want to make to the municipality. And I'm willing to be in the back of Capo instead of the face or the front—to prove my worth, to prove myself. I only have 15 months to prove myself, which is going to be near impossible, but I'm going to work hard."

All towns, cities, and municipalities in Manitoba have fixed election cycles, with the next vote scheduled for October 25, 2018. By-elections are those which are necessitated in the middle of a four-year term, to fill council vacancies. This results in a short 15-month term for the current council.

Nonetheless, Boulanger says she has much to look forward to in the months ahead. "Being involved and gaining the knowledge that I've always wanted to learn so that I can in turn pass on to my fellow constituents," she says of her priorities, "and finding out where current projects are at and seeing what we can do as a council."

"I'm just looking forward to serving with this council and getting as much done as we can in the short amount of time that we have," Pelletier says.

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New Sidewalks Spruce Up Main Street Niverville

By Evan Braun

✉ editor@nivervillecitizen.com

Over the course of the summer, the Town of Niverville has been busy upgrading its Main Street sidewalks, a project which began two years ago and has taken a big leap forward in 2017. The upgrades include removing the old paving stones, many of which were uneven, and adding bike racks.

"The town is happy to not have the sidewalk paving stones to trip over," says Mayor Myron Dyck. "They were posing a hazard to pedestrians and thus having this liability removed is a good thing. As to the aesthetics, the new sidewalks, along with the new bike racks, look great."

This year's new sidewalks are being installed on the south side of Main Street from the Niverville Credit Union to the Chicken Chef, and also from Wiens Furniture until just before Co-op. The reason for stopping short at Co-op is that the business anticipates they



Sidewalks under construction in Niverville.

JOEY VILLANUEVA

may build an addition soon.

"Rather than cut a new sidewalk, it was decided after speaking them to wait until they know if they are expanding or not," says Dyck.

The remaining blocks are earmarked for sidewalk improvements in the next couple of years.

In addition to these improvements to Main Street, the walking path along the south side of Highway 311

from the railway tracks to Krahn Road has been paved and undergone extensive repairs, improving pedestrian access to Old Drovers Run, Tim Hortons, Shell, and The Highlands.

Sunset Estates, developer of The Highlands, also plans to reconstruct the walkway from St. Andrews Way to the Shell station later this summer.

Ste. Agathe Man Named BSI CEO

By Evan Braun

✉ editor@nivervillecitizen.com

On July 1, Ren de Moissac of Ste. Agathe took on the CEO reins of BSI Insurance Brokers. De Moissac, who has been with the company for more than 11 years, says he has served in many capacities, including in customer service, IT, Human Resources, accounting, and marketing.

"We have been pleased to see him develop within the company and we are very excited to see him lead the company into the future," says the company's president, Richard Barnabe. "I know Ren is really looking forward to sharing his own ideas about what the future looks like for BSI and trust that he will do a great job with the help of his team."

Upon assuming the mantle of CEO, de Moissac says his top priorities are to put in place a new long-term strategic plan for the company, kindle a better, leader-modelled



Ren de Moissac with his wife Kayla, son Martin, and daughter Corinne. REN DE MOISSAC

organizational culture, and a more engaging workplace for everyone.

"These goals are all tied to each other, as no particular one goal can succeed without the other ones," de Moissac says, adding that he is grateful to company's many employees for their hard work and dedication. "BSI is lucky to have great people!"

De Moissac, who grew up

in St. Adolphe, has deep ties to the community, having coached minor hockey with Clipper Ice Sports and baseball in the Carillon Minor Baseball League. In addition, he has served for the past 11 years as a director of the Ste. Agathe Community Development board. He notes that this board was recently honoured with the 2017 Premier's Volunteer Service Award.

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IN BRIEF



RAY DOWSE

Politicians Host Niverville Barbecue

About 150 constituents showed up on Thursday, July 6, to meet a pair of local politicians at Hespeler Park in Niverville. The barbecue, hosted by Ted Falk, MP for Provencher, and Shannon Martin, MLA for Morris, took place from 6:00 until 7:30 p.m. under sunny skies at the picnic shelter. Both Falk and Martin made public comments, then visited and answered questions. Dinner included hot dogs, pork on a bun, coleslaw, and chips.



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Niverville Gets Big Beautification Improvements

By Brenda Sawatzky

bsawatzky@nivervillecitizen.com

Niverville's Communities in Bloom (CIB) committee has set a hectic pace this summer. Working in partnership with the Town of Niverville, local business owners, the Hanover School Division (HSD), Niverville Funeral Aid, and a few local churches, the committee has been actively working toward a more beautiful, visitor-friendly Niverville. Evidence of their hard work is blossoming all around the town.

The Heritage Gardens, located at the heart of the Heritage Centre's outdoor campus, has been abuzz with landscaping and construction. With the design and planting complete, the next phase will include benches, lights, trees, and life celebration plaques throughout the gardens.

The committee has a variety of fundraising initiatives underway to fund these garden accoutrements. The committee was honoured to accept a generous donation from Perimeter Concrete towards the gardens.

The third stage will include the construction of a grain elevator replica to be used as a pavilion and historical focal point within the gardens.

While that project continues to unfold, plans for Main Street beautification are also in full swing.

"There are three projects that the Niverville CIB has proposed, with the intent to effect improvement and increase interest in the appearance of Main Street," says Shirley Hoult, CIB committee member. "The HSD has provided support with the approval to place signage on the new elementary school fence along Main Street. The Niverville Funeral Aid, along with the United and Chortitzer Churches, have approved and support the recommendations for the improvement of the Niverville Heritage Cemetery."

First, historical signage will appear along the railway tracks facing traffic approaching from



Newly installed historical signage.

SHIRLEY HOULT

the west, visible on the walls of Shop Gym and Artel Farms buildings consecutively. These large black-and-white graphics will commemorate pictures of the first grain elevator as well as Niverville's early train station.

Installation of historical signage will follow along Main Street. These points of interest will be located along the fence bordering the elementary school. Six picture boards with text commentary will depict Niverville's colourful history. Hoult says this concept is intended to build on the "Now and Then" project initiated by Niverville Collegiate students in 2016.

Finally, improvements will continue at the Niverville Heritage Cemetery.

"As part of our Main Street, we feel it is important that [the cemetery] reflect positively on the community," says Hoult. "Part of that improvement will be the installation of memory boards with pictures and stories of persons resting in the cemetery."

Hoult says these boards will create a remembrance wall around the existing poppy garden and cenotaph. Poppies will be included on the memory boards of persons who served in the Armed Forces. While the boards are still in the design and pricing phase, the committee expects that they will

be ready for purchase by the end of August. The proposed size of each board is 16 inches by 12 inches.

"This will be a self-funded, not-for-profit project," adds Hoult. "It will be quite amazing when completed."

While new beautification ideas are always on the committee's mind, the maintenance of Niverville's buildings also takes a high priority for them.

"The Niverville CIB committee was concerned over the increase in graffiti around town and its effect on the community," says Hoult. "Following some research into how other communities have dealt with this problem—in particular, New York City's 'Broken Window Theory'—we requested attendance at a council meeting to put forward some suggestions."

The Broken Window Theory stemmed from the work of two criminologists who used broken windows as a metaphor for petty crime in neighbourhoods. They believed that when a neighbourhood, community, or city regularly monitors and quickly cleans up areas subjected to vandalism, this creates a perception of order and lawfulness, thereby curbing more serious crime.

The CIB committee proposed a partnership between the town, residents, and the Chamber of

Commerce. They called it the Graffiti Patrol Initiative. Their hope is that residents will begin to report to town council on any new graffiti seen on public and private property. The recommendation to council was that they request residents and businesses remove the graffiti. If the request is not followed up in a timely manner, town staff would take care of it and submit an invoice to the property owner for services rendered.

"A number of businesses have responded very favourably and some graffiti has been removed," Hoult says. "It's a difficult issue to successfully respond to due to the time of activity and identification of persons responsible. The graffiti on the post office building is particularly offensive, and has been there for a considerable amount of time. [With it] being such a focal point in the community, it would be really good to see it removed."

Town council responded to the committee by saying that the removal of graffiti will continue to be the responsibility of the property owner, since staff members are already taxed with regular community maintenance and upkeep. The town will likewise set an example by promptly removing graffiti placed on public buildings.

The CIB committee would like to see this initiative taken a step further, finding people willing to monitor areas of repeated graffiti occurrence, monitoring the sale of spray paint, and reporting graffiti activity to the RCMP. They are pleased with the town's initiative to place surveillance cameras along Main Street and believe that it could play a part in curbing this crime.

"Our main purpose in bringing forward the proposals was to get some discussion on the topic and action taken," says Hoult. "It's our understanding that town council is continuing discussion with the Chamber on how best to deal with this issue."

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IN BRIEF



BSI's Ryan Hamm (Regional Branch Leader) and Jake Neufeld (Branch Protection Specialist) present a cheque to Nicole DePauw, Tourond Creek Committee Treasurer.

Ducks Unlimited Gets a Boost from BSI

By Evan Braun

editor@nivervillecitizen.com

As part of their ongoing community development initiative, BSI has donated \$1,000 to Tourond Creek Ducks Unlimited. The funds have been earmarked for dam maintenance to protect against overland flooding that occurs every year.

The site, located along Highway 311's western terminus at St. Mary's Road, is a beautiful wetlands and greenspace maintained

entirely through fundraising. The project is especially vulnerable to flooding.

"Wetlands are a natural filter to remove contaminants from overland flooding and field runoff," reads a statement from BSI. "This keeps pollution out of our rivers and lakes and ultimately out of our drinking water. Ducks Unlimited was also a huge part of the rebuild of Niverville's lagoon revitalization project, which ultimately saved millions of dollars for the taxpayers of Niverville."

Growing Minds Still Feeling the Daycare Crunch

Although daycare solutions are on the horizon, Growing Minds in Niverville faces big challenges accommodating growth in the short-term.

By Brenda Sawatzky

bsawatzky@nivervillecitizen.com

In the past few years, Niverville's only licensed daycare provider, Growing Minds Child Care (GMCC), has seen limited growth. This trend is not for lack of foresight or desire, but rather, they say, a reality imposed by lack of adequate funding from the provincial government.

In spring, GMCC received notice from the landlords at their 166 Main Street location that they will be required to vacate the premises in the near future. This is one of two locations that GMCC occupies to provide space for before- and after-school care. It's also an optimal location due to its proximity to the Niverville Elementary School.

In June, a letter was sent to parents with children enrolled in GMCC, advising them of the impending closure. Thankfully, GMCC has confirmed that they will be able to accommodate all of the School Age 2 children (166 Main Street) at the School Age 1 location at 25 Main Street. The consolidation of the two facilities is scheduled for December 2017.

What GMCC cannot guarantee at this time is whether provisions will be available for children moving from their preschool care to their before- and after-school care. These are the children currently enrolled with GMCC who are moving from Kindergarten to Grade One this fall. Although they are hopeful all of these children can be accommodated in the after-school program, fluctuations in enrollment over the summer months makes for too many unknowns until later in the summer.

"As a result of this [loss of space at 166 Main], the 15 School Age childcare spaces that were created in August 2016 will be closed," says Jennifer Duff, Chairperson of the GMCC Board of Directors. "These 15 spaces have not yet been approved for provincial funding and the government recently advised that the spaces do not meet the criteria for priority approval of funding. Due to a combination of losing existing lease space and the lack of foreseeable provincial funding that is critical to our operations, we will not pursue finding additional lease space in the community."

GMCC's inability to access

to childcare and that there are 550 fewer home-based childcare spaces in Manitoba today compared to 17 years ago. He said that the reduction in spaces has been due, in part, to the cumbersome regulatory regime which governs the development of childcare facilities in Manitoba—and the Progressive Conservative government was hoping to change that.

A part of the government's new daycare mandate, according to Wishart's 2016 statement, is to "work in partnership with school divisions to increase the number of childcare spaces in public schools."

"The lack of foreseeable funding for our centre remains our greatest challenge to expanding our childcare programs within the community and will be a key decision factor to any new initiative."

Jennifer Duff, Chairperson of the GMCC Board of Directors

additional funding raises questions about the Progressive Conservative government's pledge last year to increase childcare spaces.

"With more than 12,000 children waiting for a space, Manitoba families are facing a childcare crisis," said Ian Wishart, Minister of Education and Training, in a press release in April 2016. "Families have told us clearly they want childcare close to home or close to school. Simply throwing money at this is clearly not working. We have a plan to ensure [that] safe, affordable childcare spaces are available for Manitoba families."

Wishart added that more than three-quarters of Winnipeg families do not have access

Along with the recent announcement of a new Niverville high school scheduled for the fall of 2019, the province is also behind the initiative to include an integrative daycare facility within this new school. The facility will provide 74 new daycare spaces, including 20 infant and 54 preschool spots.

In the future, all new Manitoba school projects are expected to be equipped with daycares. According to Wishart, the number and type of childcare spaces to be included will be determined through a needs analysis of the community and surrounding area where the new school will be located.

"Manitoba's new government recognizes that school-based early learning centres

are a great way to help children prepare for Kindergarten and further learning, while making the most of existing school infrastructure, such as gyms and playgrounds, year-round," says Wishart in a recent email to The Citizen. "Manitoba Education and Training is mandated to include childcare facilities in all new school and major renovation projects."

When asked whether Niverville's new daycare spaces would guarantee funding for this facility when it is ready, Wishart says, "Manitoba Education and Training coordinates with the Department of Families to ensure childcare spaces constructed in schools are provided with operational and start-up grant funding at the completion of the project."

According to Hanover School Division's Helene Connelly, Executive Secretary to the Superintendent, the only role they will play in the new daycare is to facilitate in the rental of the space to a daycare provider that has yet to be determined.

GMCC's response to assuming that location is one of guarded ambiguity.

"GMCC is always open to exploring opportunities to improve and expand childcare services within our community," says Duff. "As a non-profit centre, we are critically dependent on provincial operating grants to operate a sustainable and efficient program. The lack of foreseeable funding for our centre remains our greatest challenge to expanding our childcare programs within the community and will be a key decision factor to any new initiative."

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A New Kind of Protection for a New Kind of Threat

By Eric Peterson

In the old days, the thieves came at night. Dressed in black they would skulk around a home or business, breaking a window here, jimmying a lock there, making off with merchandise or some petty cash before the cops showed up.

And while old-fashioned smash-and-grab crime remains a concern, and definitely in the news, many small businesses are waking up to the fact that there is a new breed of criminal seeking to victimize them. Cybercriminals come armed not with crowbars and getaway trucks but with far more sophisticated tools. For many companies, that means turning to professionals to help combat the threat.

"There's been a huge shift in how small businesses think," says Mathieu Managré, CEO and President of Avenir IT, a Winnipeg-based IT firm. "Things we've been preaching for a decade, [for] the last two or three years it's been people approaching us saying, 'We're worried about this. Can you help us?'"

Managré, a resident of Ste. Agathe, recently gave a presentation to the Niverville Chamber of Commerce on cybersecurity and how local businesses can protect themselves. He says that while attacks on big companies like Sony get most of the publicity, it's small- and medium-sizes businesses that are the low-hanging fruit for cybercrime.

"It's not someone sitting in the basement. It's all automated," Managré explains. "And small businesses, they're the ones who often aren't as ready and may be holding on to credit card info."

Avenir is focused on helping such businesses get ahead of the criminals and stop cyberattacks before they happen.

"The plan is [to provide] a better way to support small and medium businesses. Helping them be more proactive and preventative," he says. "Help out businesses that aren't large enough that they would have their own IT guy."

Avenir was founded in 2008 and now works with more than 50 companies. During the last decade, Managré has seen cybercrime increase to the point that it will be a two trillion dollar a year business by 2019.

That's 12 zeros, if you're counting.

While the crime techniques and volume of attacks have advanced, so have the methods used by companies like Avenir to protect businesses.

"We used to support a lot of fixes," says Managré. Locking the hen house after the fox did his damage, so to speak. But now the emphasis is on keeping the foxes away entirely. "We've decided we want to be preventative at all costs."

This prevention includes an array of technologies and techniques which keep IT teams in constant touch with their clients' networks.

"We have TVs in our office,

alarms that will alert us if something is off," says Managré. "We have special software with monitoring that will report back to us in real-time. So we know if something's up right away. It basically lights up and says, 'Hey, check on this client.'"

Managré adds that a lot of people are surprised to find that the biggest threat to the safety of their business isn't floods or tornadoes but the very people they work with everyday.

"The number one threat is staff," he says bluntly. "Opening an email and clicking an attachment they're not supposed to. Most of the time I would say it's accidental. But sometimes you have competition willing to pay for something. Sometimes you have someone wanting to collect data before calling it quits. There's credit card info. People might be harbouring grievances."

He adds that many small businesses don't even have an acceptable use policy governing what you can and cannot surf online. At big companies, employees sign those agreements on their first day.

Some analysts estimate that businesses face about a million new cyber threats per day.

Because of this, Avenir expects the prevention business to remain brisk. Cybercrime isn't going away anytime soon. The thieves are still lurking; they're just hiding in different places.



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Policing Petition Presented to Niverville Council

By Brenda Sawatzky

bsawatzky@nivervillecitizen.com

On July 18, two Niverville residents presented a petition requesting an audience with the five-member council to demonstrate what Niverville residents have to say about alternative policing options. Together, Barry Piasta and Lindsay Unrau offered a list of 540 signatures which they had spent the previous three weeks collecting in a door-to-door campaign.

The petition included a thoughtfully articulated overview of its purpose: "We the residents of Niverville Manitoba request that Town Council immediately develop a feasibility study to determine the effectiveness of establishing its own police service as an alternative to utilizing the services of the RCMP."

Three main incentives were behind the request. One, the RCMP's recent stats show a significant increase in crime in Niverville. Two, the community's growth trend indicates the possibility of reaching 5,000 residents by 2018. Three, some are concerned that council will delay addressing police services until 2021, after the next census is released.

"The main goal, for me, was to have the town look into policing options, comparisons of cost, and the types of service we would get for those costs," says Piasta.

The duo's goal has been to encourage council to take a more aggressive approach into researching the policing options available to the community. Both Piasta and Unrau admit that an independent police force may, in fact, not be the right fit for Niverville, but

the residents won't know for sure until detailed research is in and the numbers have been crunched.

"[Our objective was] to give the residents of Niverville a voice [and] to remind town council that they are representatives of the residents," says Unrau. "The main goal overall is to find a solution to our ever-expanding crime rate, because what we currently have is not working."

The duo worked tirelessly, visiting as many homes as possible in the weeks prior to the council meeting. Though they were unable to visit every home, Unrau says they made a concerted effort to collect signatures from a variety of neighbourhoods, including a broad spectrum of age groups and income levels.

"Five hundred [signatures] may not be the entire town... but it is a really great unbiased sample of all voices from Niverville," says Unrau. "Whether they live in the newer areas where higher taxes are paid, or in the older area of Niverville where taxes are lower, we managed to accumulate all different types of voices."

Unrau says that they aimed for door-to-door visits of two minutes or less in order to cover as much ground as possible.

What they discovered was the passion the subject evokes from residents. Many were unaware that council will be required by law to invest significantly more tax dollars for RCMP services once the next census indicates the community has reached 5,000 residents or more.

Unrau also notes the high level of misinformation people have about policing services,



Lindsay Unrau and Barry Piasta.

BRENDA SAWATZKY

demonstrating the need for a feasibility study.

"Residents responded well to our petition," Unrau says. "Many didn't hesitate to sign once they'd learned that we were there to ask them for support in telling council that we wanted more done about our crime. Many were very honest and willing to share their own personal stories of how crime in Niverville had affected them. It was incredibly eye-opening and heartbreaking to learn just how many of our residents have been victimized over the last few years."

She adds that, out of the 300-plus homes she visited, only 10 to 15 people chose not to sign the petition. For her, it was another good indication that the majority of Niverville's residents are interested in change.

Piasta wants part of the study to include a cost comparison between a solo police force for Niverville alone and a police force that's shared with other municipalities, like Ritchot. He believes sharing the services would distribute the costs over a larger population and make the endeavour more feasible. He personally

hopes council will make this information readily accessible to residents in all of these communities, with an option for Niverville residents to decide through a referendum in the upcoming 2018 municipal election.

He also lists examples of spin-off benefits that a community or region could derive from a police force, such as new jobs, construction and maintenance of a centralized building, local repairs and maintenance to police vehicles, and growth for the region as new families move into a safer community.

The petition included a deadline of late November, by which time residents should expect the study to be complete.

"November is typically the month when the town budget is assembled," says Unrau. "We hoped that [council] could implement the cost of a feasibility study into next year's budget."

She adds that if the study is completed earlier, and a decision for an alternative police force is made, the costs to create it could be factored into a short- or long-term budget

plan.

"If we had no deadline, then there could be the potential for council to drag it on longer," says Piasta, adding that they also had concerns that the policing issue could be used as a platform for the 2018 election. Performing the study now means that some direction will already be in place before the campaign begins.

Overall, the duo was happy with council's response. Council indicated to the pair and others present that they would take the request seriously and attempt to provide answers on or before the deadline. Councillor Nathan Dueck reminded everyone that, though a formal study may not have been in their plans at present, improved policing options are constantly on their minds.

Since that time, Mayor Myron Dyck has shared information about how council has begun the process.

"Council met today to discuss policing and also met with the RCMP Staff Sergeant and one of his corporals," wrote Dyck on a community Facebook group earlier this month. According to the mayor, town office staff will begin seeking someone who can perform a police study specific to municipalities. Staff will also research the costs incurred by other communities with independent police forces.

Regarding their meeting with RCMP staff, Dyck indicates that the RCMP will provide Niverville with a weekly update on crime which will be released regularly to local media. The RCMP have also set up a special task force to mine data about the areas where crimes take place and at what time of day.

"This will allow the Staff Sergeant to better apply the necessary resources to those places and times and peak periods of criminal activity in our community," says Dyck. He adds that nine arrests have been made in conjunction with thefts in town since January. He goes on to stress the need for continued call-ins of suspicious activity to the RCMP.

RESIDENT TASK FORCE

As for Unrau and Piasta, they say the formation of a resident task force is their next step.

"We have a few people already on board, one who is a correctional officer," Unrau says. "We would like to find a group of Niverville residents who will represent the community as a whole."

The purpose of the task force would be to give guidance to a new policing initiative should the community decide to move in that direction. They hope to create a committee of members of all ages and income levels, including members who have worked in the emergency medical field and RCMP officers who may be allowed to invest time in such an endeavour.

"We have no agenda other than to make Niverville a safer place for all residents," says Unrau. "We understand that this is a sensitive issue and we fully believe that more information, collective opinions, and experience is the key."

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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Securing Your Home

By Constable Dominic Renaud

St. Pierre RCMP Detachment

Without a doubt, safety is an issue of concern for all individuals. It is also a right of every citizen of Canada. That is why citizens employ police agencies: to assist them in this regard. From a desire to see their situation improve, citizens make demands of their police, and the police try their best to answer those demands. Nonetheless, one thing is certain: people can only go to a certain length when asking for help if they are not ready to help themselves.

Numerous break-and-enters and thefts from vehicles have happened in the area recently. Most of these offences are due to a simple factor: doors are left unlocked. Criminals always look for easy targets. There is no reason to make their lives easier by leaving the doors of your house or car unlocked. Lock your vehicle, your house doors, your house windows, and your shed



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Another issue is that valuables are left where they can be easily seen. If citizens empty their cars every now and then of valuables, their chances of being victimized are reduced. Criminals steal items to make a profit on them. If you remove all potential items of value, criminals will be less likely to break in, since it's not worth the risk.

The rural towns around Winnipeg used to be much smaller than they are now. With the expansion that's occurred in recent years, they are becoming much more populated. The villages in which some used to live, where everyone knew everyone else, are gone. The reality has changed and it is important to change with it.

Ritchot Council Moves to Clear Backlog

By Evan Braun

editor@nivervillecitizen.com

Ritchot's new council is on the job and moving quickly to conclude some pressing business that's been on hold since the spring, most notably the municipality's 2017 financial plan. Also, the distribution of property tax notices has been delayed.

Despite this delay, the tax due date of October 31,

2017 will remain unchanged. Those residents who made early payments prior to July 31 still received their regularly scheduled discounts.

A number of variances and conditional use hearings will be heard on the council's Wednesday, August 16 meeting at 7:00 p.m. A full list of the measures is available on the municipality's website (see below).

Anyone is welcome to

attend these public hearings to speak for or against the proposed measures. For those who wish to address these matters, but cannot make it to the meetings, they may file written submissions either in person at the municipal office or by email at pgiesbrecht@ritchot.com.

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Parents Concerned for Middle-Years Students

By Brenda Sawatzky

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It is said that the conundrum of the middle child is that they are easily overlooked. They are not the oldest, breaking new ground and receiving firstborn privilege. They are not the youngest, whose baby-of-the-family status induces extra attention from doting parents. The middle child is stuck somewhere in between, easily forgotten and perpetually in hand-me-downs.

A collection of parents with children in Niverville Collegiate Institute (NCI) feel the same is true for their middle-years students. They are stuck in a system that revolves around the needs of high schoolers, trapped on a playground of hand-me-down structures and about to inherit a school building that was designed with older students in mind.

"There is [virtually] nothing outside, in terms of space and equipment, for children to play with at recess," says Leslie Bardal, parent of two NCI students. "My son and his friends have shared that they are bored at recess and outdoor gym time and they miss how much was provided for them at Niverville Elementary School."

Another parent whose child will be transitioning to NCI this fall agrees. Due to a request for anonymity, we will call them Parent X.

"My concern is that the play activities that are already there have always been there and weren't put in place with Grades Five to Eight [in



Members of the NES Play Structure Committee at the structure's ribbon-cutting a few years ago.

LESLIE BARDAL

mind]," says Parent X. "It really isn't the right setup for these kids. When I ask my child how they feel about going over to Grade Five, they say they would love to see monkey bars and things to climb. When we cycle or walk past the school, they think it looks very boring."

In 2011, plans were implemented to begin moving the Grades Five and Six students from the overcrowded elementary school into portable huts installed at NCI. Until that time, NCI had catered to Grades Seven through 12. The high school underwent a few nominal changes outside of huts to accommodate the younger students. The outdoor recreation area saw the inclusion of a new swing set with eight swings.

The relocated children missed their opportunity at a brand-new play structure at NES introduced to the school's playground just a few

years later. The structure, a labour of love created through years of Parent Advisory Council (PAC) fundraising efforts and community participation, cost about \$70,000. It had been designed with all ages of children in mind and included unique accessibility features for children with special needs.

Leslie Bardal and Tanya Pomaranski were both members of the NES PAC during those years and recall vividly the amount of time, effort, and commitment it required to see this play structure project through to completion. It was a proud day when community volunteers, teachers, and the principal arrived to help erect it. They were prouder still to see a young handicapped student be the first child to use it, rolling in his wheelchair onto the structure's accessibility ramps.

The idea to incorporate these

mobility-friendly features came from the students themselves. The NES PAC of the time made it a point to involve children in the planning. This gave the children opportunities to express their desires and feel included in the process, giving them a heightened level of excitement as the project unfolded. Several students had raised concerns in the early stages that their handicapped friend may not be able to use the structure along with them.

Since that time, this young special-needs student has moved on to NCI. His mother, Lyndsay Eidse, is disappointed with her son's inability to enjoy recesses at the new school.

"Special-needs kids need interaction with other peers," says Eidse. "It's so important for them, and also for [mentally or behaviourally challenged] kids, to learn how to interact and communicate with each other.

[It builds] social development and prepares them for life as an adult. If these kids don't get the social interaction with kids during recess, when will it happen? They don't typically get invited to friends' houses to play. Right now, there are a few swings which are surrounded by pea gravel and there isn't one for wheelchairs."

Eidse says that she'd like to see a child-focused approach to the discussion about outdoor play enhancements, similar to NES's approach.

"We, as parents, could all say what we would like to see for our kids, but why don't we take a student-led approach and let our kids know that their voices matter?" says Eidse. "Have a discussion with your kids in the NCI and ask them what would they like to do at recess?"

THE FUTURE OF RECESS

The lack of playground enhancements is only one of the concerns these parents share.

Bardal says that the middle-years students have been exposed to a drastic and sudden decline in play and recreation. She adds that, in conversation with Principal Michael Koester, she's been informed that the NCI administration is entertaining the possibility of eliminating the middle-school recess periods altogether and replacing them with five-minute breaks between classes, similar to a high school model. Koester further indicated to her that the lack of administrative supervision for outdoor recess is a key factor in that decision.

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Due to The Citizen's inability to contact Koester for confirmation, as per the Hanover School Division's media policy and the time of year, no comments could be obtained. Helene Connelly, executive secretary to HSD's superintendent, responded merely by stating that such a decision would be dependent on the school in question and that parents should speak directly to NCI's principal regarding their concerns.

The elimination of recess in middle schools, and occasionally elementary schools, is not a new phenomenon. According to Nicholas Day, in an article for *Slate* entitled "The Rebirth of Recess," many schools around the U.S. went recess-free years ago—but some are starting to reintroduce recess, recognizing the invaluable connection between well-developed children and playtime.

"Every minute of the school day has been scrutinized for its instructional value and recess—a break from instruction—often didn't survive the scrutiny," writes Day. "It was, by definition, a waste of time."

He adds that a school administration's arguments against recess usually centre on the belief that more classroom time and less unstructured playtime will result in better academic performance. But Day doesn't agree.

"Repeated studies have shown that when recess is delayed, children pay less and less attention," Day says. "They are more focused on days when they have recess."

The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) has done extensive research on the topic and published an article in their medical journal, *Pediatrics*, to relay their findings.

"The AAP believes that recess is a crucial and necessary component of a child's development and, as such, it should not be withheld for punitive or academic reasons," says the AAP's Council on School Health in their article entitled

"The Crucial Role of Recess in School." "Recess represents an essential, planned respite from rigorous cognitive tasks. It affords a time to rest, play, imagine, think, move, and socialize. After recess, for children or for adolescents, students are more attentive and better able to perform cognitively. In addition, recess helps young children to develop social skills that are otherwise not acquired in the more structured classroom environment."

PARENTS PROPOSE A SOLUTION

Bardal and Pomaranski believe that airing parental concerns to NCI's administration is important, but it's not enough. Becoming active members of NCI's PAC would have a far greater impact on the overall health and welfare of the middle-school children.

"Leslie and I have learned that middle-years representation and interest in fundraising are not a focus for the current PAC," says Pomaranski. "They have operated as an advisory committee for many years—[which is] acceptable and understandable for a senior years' environment—and are content to manage as such going forward."

Both have expressed an interest in joining the current four-member PAC, but they say that changes to the structure would be required if they and other working parents were to come on board. At present, NCI's PAC meets during lunch breaks, once per month in the principal's office. Upon inquiry, both women received little indication that this meeting time and location is flexible.

Pomaranski, who previously served for six years as president on the NES PAC, says NCI's PAC has outdated policies on their website and provides little information to parents by way of official public minutes of their meetings.

"Moving from a structured environment at NES to a very different environment at NCI is a difficult

transition for Grade Five parents," says Pomaranski. "Parents feel frustrated with communication formats, not knowing where to look to find information or understand what the PAC focus is. Or even how to reach out to them, find out when meetings are, or where to attend. Generally, I would say the group of [middle-years] parents feel ill-informed and unwelcome."

Alison Fehr, chairperson of the existing PAC, says that the advisory council operates fairly.

"Meeting times are in no way set in stone," says Fehr. "The current time of our meetings was based on the dynamic of the committed volunteers we had for the 2016/17 school year... [We are here] to work in cooperation with the parents, school staff, trustees, and members of the community to support and enhance the learning experience of the students of the NCI."

The PAC's duties, Fehr says, may include advising the principal regarding school policies, activities, and student behaviour management. Their goal is to establish ongoing communication with all parents of the students, and with community members.

Because Hanover School Division policies allow for only one PAC per school, Bardal and Pomaranski recognize that a second middle-years PAC is not an option nor conducive to a spirit of unity for the entire school. In two years, when the senior high students move to their new school, a separate PAC for middle years will be a necessity.

But the time to begin that representation, they say, is right now.

"Planning and conversation must start now for possible playground enhancements as the majority of money will need to come from grants, donations, and fundraising," says Bardal, who was the chairperson of NES's previous Play Structure Committee.

Both women strongly encourage a contingent of middle-years parents to join the NCI PAC and

provide a stronger voice for middle-years needs.

"Programming, special events, and recess playtime are very different at ages 10 to 12 than at senior years," adds Bardal. "An updated constitution that [offers better] parent advising and input, as well as fundraising for equipment, special events, and playground enhancements would be advantageous."

"We have an opportunity to learn from one another now," Pomaranski says. "With the support of the current administration and PAC, we could certainly be a fantastic, collaborative, and experienced group around the table to assess and meet the middle-years needs at NCI, now and in the future."

Fehr says that she supports any middle-years parents who wish to become more proactive and join the advisory council. "We would love to have more members join. If there are enough committed parents that would appreciate a different meeting time, we can definitely discuss that at our fall organizational meeting. All interested parents are welcome to attend."

Bardal and Pomaranski encourage middle-years parents to seek out and sign the PAC member list, which will be available at NCI on Meet the Teacher night in September. Fehr says that they will attempt to have a notice posted on the school's website regarding the date and time of their first organizational meeting.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

■ Nicholas Day, *Slate*, "The Rebirth of Recess," August 29, 2012 (http://www.slate.com/articles/life/family/2012/08/recess_in_schools_research_shows_it_benefits_children_.html).

■ American Academy of Pediatrics, *Pediatrics*, "The Crucial Role of Recess in School," 2013 (<http://pediatrics.aapublications.org/content/pediatrics/early/2012/12/25/peds.2012-2993.full.pdf>).

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This well-treed Niverville street will soon be home to a 46-unit subdivision of rental apartments.

JOEY VILLANUEVA

New Apartments Coming to Niverville, Some Residents Concerned

By Evan Braun

✉ editor@nivervillecitizen.com

On July 19, Niverville's town council held a conditional use hearing for the second phase of a new development to be built on Fourth Avenue South. Once completed, the development is expected to include a total of 46 rental apartments, with a combination of plans ranging from one bedroom to three. The units will be constructed in a townhouse style.

Council passed the measure. "The development is a go subject to the development agreement being made," says Mayor Myron Dyck. "At that stage, council can put in conditions such as privacy fencing, the appropriate number of parking spots required, and trees and such."

Several residents were present

to voice their concerns about the development. With onsite parking for 102 cars, they say traffic is likely to increase along Fourth Avenue, especially since there will only be one access point to the apartments, as well as a potential lack of parking that could end up clogging nearby streets.

Niverville's policy previously stated that apartment developments must include 1.5 parking stalls per unit, but Dyck says that council has reviewed this policy and will be increasing that number to two spots per unit. Developer Josh Friesen has told council that the current plan calls for 2.2 stalls per unit.

Residents also noted that Fourth Avenue is a designated school route for both Niverville Elementary and Niverville Collegiate students, and that the additional cars could pose

a hazard to students on their way to and from school.

Other area residents expressed concern about the potential loss of many large trees and greenspace, saying that they bought into this "old Niverville" neighbourhood for its natural appearance and that the new homes could be an eyesore.

"Resident concerns can be directed to the town office for matters related to the development agreement," says Dyck. "Having said that, the development was passed by council so the only thing left to deal with is the items mentioned above."

Dyck also notes that the developer will be installing town water, meaning that residents along the path of the new main water can choose to hook up.



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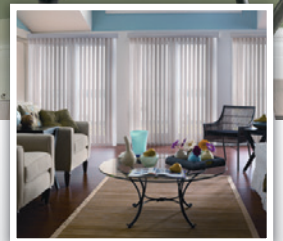
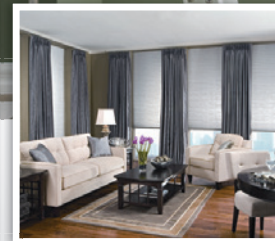
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The Digital Divide

Why do rural Manitobans struggle to access affordable high-speed internet services?



BRENDA SAWATZKY

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The vast and open Canadian landscape, in all its grandeur, has seen its share of innovation to make this great country navigable from shore to shore, and at monumental cost. First came the railway, followed by highways and roads, opening access to some of the most remote parts of the country.

In the late twentieth century, a new highway rolled out: the information highway, connecting Canadians to the entire globe. Since that time, the internet has had a revolutionary impact on the way we live, work, learn, shop, and communicate. So revolutionary, in fact, that the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) made an announcement in December 2016 declaring internet access a basic service to which all Canadians have a right.

"The future of our economy, our prosperity and our society—indeed, the future of every citizen—requires us to set ambitious goals, and to get on with connecting all Canadians for the twenty-first century," said CRTC Chair Jean-Pierre Blais at a news conference in Gatineau, Quebec.

This announcement followed on the heels of a 2016 speech by President Obama in which he proclaimed, "Today high-speed broadband is not a luxury, it's a necessity."

Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg previously addressed the United Nations, calling internet access "a basic human right, like access to healthcare or water."

The CRTC's announcement was in response to the federal government's recent budget commitment to spend up to \$500 million over the next five years to expand high-speed internet services to rural and remote areas of Canada that have long been under-served.

While the majority of Canadians have access to the most basic of internet connections, rural Canada has lagged far behind in the technology race, relying on outdated dial-up or DSL (digital subscriber line) services that travel through archaic copper telephone lines and date back to the early days of internet use. These forerunners of today's high-speed internet connections are problematic, making file uploading slow and connections spotty.

Remote areas, such as many of Canada's First Nations reserves, are especially vulnerable to poor internet options with long data-delivery delays. This can further leave them in a state of perpetual isolation. Without a connection to the outside world, teenage suicide, despondency, and mental health issues thrive while higher education, improved health services, and a wider pool of job options are virtually inaccessible.

"You shouldn't have to leave the reserve to have dreams," says Bruce Buffalo of the Maskwacis reserve in a documentary called *Broadband Bruce: Fighting Canada's Digital Divide*. The filmmaker, San San F. Young, adds, "Access to the internet can end the sense of isolation on reserves and empower problem-solvers from within these communities."

The Rural Development Institute (RDI) at Brandon University prepared a study to present to the CRTC before their ruling.

"The [internet] access in rural Manitoba is not enough," said Wayne Kelly, RDI research associate. He adds that there are a lot of holes in Manitoba where people on farms and in valleys might be too far away from the nearest community or broadband tower to receive access.

Kelly warned, though, that new government initiative grants allowing for one-time infrastructure

installation won't be enough to meet the maintenance requirements down the road.

"It's not something you can do once," Kelly said. "You're going to have to continually improve and enhance this infrastructure."

An Ookla net index report from 2014 showed that the average upload speeds (the rate at which data is sent from your computer) pits Manitoba as the second slowest province in Canada at 2.37 megabits per second (Mbps), trailed only by the Northwest Territories. New Brunswick had the fastest upload speed at 10.66 Mbps.

Canada as a whole doesn't fare much better. In 2014, our nation ranked fifty-third in the world overall. Countries that have faster internet speeds include Kazakhstan, Mongolia, Kyrgyzstan, and Mexico.

"Today high-speed broadband is not a luxury, it's a necessity."

Barrack Obama, Former U.S. President

COMPETITION IS KEY

Along with the promise of financial funding for internet infrastructure to rural and remote Canada, the CRTC also set guidelines on the quality of services citizens should have access to. Their target: 50 Mbps download speed and 10 Mbps upload speed.

Let's put that into perspective. If you're trying to download a two-hour movie using DSL, which might average out to a five- to seven-Mbps download speed, you would need about an hour. On a fibre-optic network running at about 100 Mbps, the same movie would download in four minutes.

Swift High-Speed Internet is one of a number of smaller-scale internet service providers (ISPs) working hard

to deliver quality, affordable internet services to rural Manitobans. But they run up against steep odds, including the government's new initiative.

"Canada is a very large country and, as we see in Manitoba's southeast, there is a lot of distance between population centres," says Evan Schroeder of Swift. "The cost of infrastructure between these centres is very high in both installing and in maintaining, which leads to fewer competitors willing to take on the investment risk."

With vast areas of low-population density, the proverbial "cash cow" doesn't graze here. Big players like Shaw, Bell, Rogers, and their prospective investors see little potential earning capacity in the rural southeast.

For decades, Manitoba Telecom Services (MTS) held a monopoly on our region's internet services. The corporation already had all of the telephone infrastructure it required to offer rudimentary internet service. As technologies evolved, demand for better internet connections grew and competition moved into the more densely populated areas.

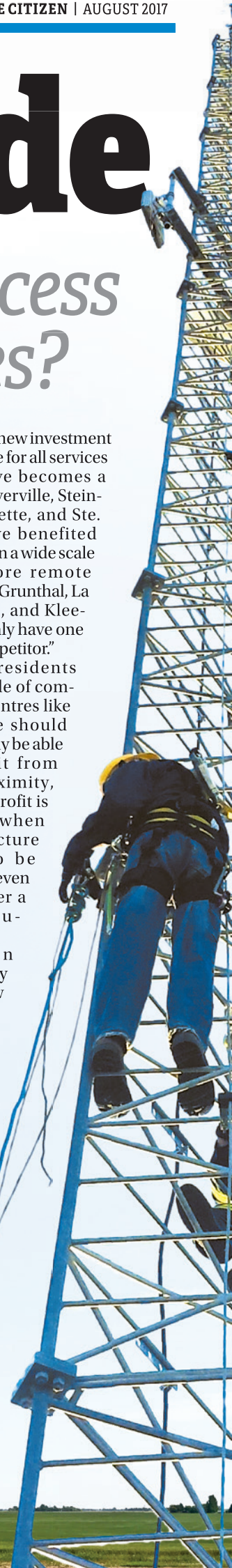
Niverville is one such example. As the low-speed DSL service of MTS approached the end of its life cycle, a competitor moved in—in Niverville's case, Shaw—offering TV, phone, and internet bundling packages, successfully winning over a large contingent of MTS's clients. This threat to MTS resulted in a reinvestment in their original infrastructure which, before competition, there had been no incentive to provide. They came back offering fibre-optic solutions with higher-speed capabilities at promotional pricing, recapturing many of their previous clients.

"Clients win, but only after third-party investment has initiated the cycle," says Schroeder.

"So where new investment is, a chance for all services to improve becomes a reality. Niverville, Steinbach, Lorette, and Ste. Anne have benefited from this on a wide scale while more remote towns like Grunthal, La Broquerie, and Kleefer still only have one wired competitor."

Rural residents just outside of competitive centres like Niverville should conceivably be able to benefit from their proximity, but little profit is realized when infrastructure needs to be stretched even a mile over a low-populated area.

When density falls below whatever internal threshold [minimum]



population requirements] an ISP has set, government incentives or grants are required to develop those services," says Schroeder.

He adds, though, that competitors rarely move in when other ISPs have had access to subsidized infrastructure which should, conceivably, allow them to offer customers reduced rates.

Cue wireless technology. With the impracticality of wired internet across vast open spaces, wireless technology is hitting the rural landscape. Smaller ISPs, such as Swift and 3T Solutions Inc., are setting up towers and remote radio equipment at their clients' rural residences, farms, businesses, and business parks, offering a solution superior to the alternative: engineering, drilling, trenching, and working around existing infrastructure and underground service lines. As expected, the cost of wireless is far lower than wired solutions in hard-to-reach areas. It's still a far cry, though, from the competitively priced options available in high-density areas.

For this reason, the Canadian government is offering grants to companies like NetSet and XplorNet to build wireless infrastructure where DSL, or worse, is the only option.

"Initially, it results in better services for the locals in the new wireless regions, but ultimately it will stunt growth in remote towns and cities as the necessary competition to drive down monthly rates will be further from reality at that point," says



Wireless technology mounted to the top of a local feed mill.

EVAN SCHROEDER

Schroeder.

Rob Dolinski, owner of 3T Solutions Inc., says that, though his company provides exceptional services for wireless solutions throughout the southeast, the federal government's grant provisions disqualify 3T from being able to access the grants.

"Unfortunately, the government is paying other larger companies to compete with us," says Dolinski. "[Having] private investors and a large net worth positions them to apply for the grant money. [Essentially] my taxes are paying for my competition to better their business."

Dolinski adds that the federal government has created maps of areas that are eligible for grant monies, but in southeast Manitoba the area isn't extensive. Extreme restrictions also apply to the portions of infrastructure that the feds will fund.

"After reviewing the maps, we did not find any regions within our service area that were eligible for grants," Dolinski says. He points out that although there was one location northeast of Winnipeg, it only provided for certain portions of the infrastructure install. "[The] overall build costs were staggering and was not a good fit for our company, as we would be overextending ourselves. Being a regional ISP with limited [financial] resources, we prefer to focus our efforts within our region to ensure we provide exceptional service and product."

ONE MANITOBA COMMUNITY'S ANSWER TO INTERNET INFERIORITY

Some communities, like Winkler, the fastest growing city in Manitoba, still only have access to one wired ISP. Seeking to change this, Valley Inter-

net Service Provider (VISP) negotiated with Winkler's city council to fund a wired fibre-optic line that will allow VISP to compete in the area.

"Internet speed has been a constant sore spot in and around Winkler," says Winkler mayor Martin Harder. "This is why we [help] other providers start up, like VISP. As one resident put it, if I want to upload a file, I start it, go for coffee, and hope it is done when I get back."

VISP is promising to move the city from its current average of five Mbps to 1,000 Mbps. The city is paying the internet firm \$500,000 to hook up every civic building. It's further donating approximately 1.5 acres of land for the company's new headquarters and data centre. In return, the company will provide free installation to every house and building in the city.

"The [local] economic environment will receive a huge boost given this new system which benefits every taxpayer," says Harder. "Therefore it is an investment on their behalf."

The cost of this project is steep since Bell MTS maintains a monopoly on all telephone line infrastructure, requiring VISP to install vast lengths of new cable. Still, public opinion is usually in favour of improved internet at a subsidized cost and typically results in a large buy-in from residents.

"There are only a handful of towns and cities across the country that have undertaken this type of project, and I can only recall one successful campaign of the same in Canada," says Schroeder. "Stakes are very high due to the incredible cost of the infrastructure hardware, the staff and safety training, the engineering and permitting, and the time it takes

to roll out without profit during that period."

It's a win for the residents of Winkler to have options that they never had before. However, Bell MTS or another competitor may decide to amp up their strategies should they lose a significant number of clients to the new competitor. After all, improved services and discounted pricing are well within their financial scope. This could result in further client turnaround, leaving a company like VISP, its investors, and the city with huge losses of capital investment which are not being utilized to their full potential.

VISP was unable to make time for comment to The Citizen.

WHO REGULATES THE PRICING?

While the government is working to address concerns about internet access for rural and remote Canadians, affordability remains in question.

"The [CRTC's] approach to affordability has always been through market forces—to make sure we have enough competitors, we have informed consumers that are working in a dynamic marketplace," Blais said.

Yet where competitive markets don't exist, as is the case in rural Manitoba, little is being done to regulate costs.

Another obstruction looms over the affordability factor like a black cloud: metering. Metering, which is used by some ISPs in rural areas, means creating low caps on internet usage and then enforcing hefty overage charges when customers exceed the caps.

In some cases, the very ISPs that have received government grants are guilty of this. In essence, they are

overcharging the customer for use of the infrastructure the customer has already paid for through tax dollars.

Schroeder says that rural customers should be appalled at this. He cites the example of NetSet, an ISP out of Brandon that received approximately \$10 million from the government over a three-year period to develop their rural network. Even after the grant, the company charges their clients up to \$150 per month in user fees, capping the usage off at 240 gigabits (Gb) per month and charging extra for overage fees—in this case, an extra \$25 per 15 Gb over.

At the same time, a customer in Niverville can use Bell MTS or Shaw, delivering user fees of \$72 to \$80 per month with a cap of 1,000 Gb. At that point warnings occur, allowing the user an opportunity to discontinue use and prevent overage fees.

"A rural customer benefiting from government subsidized infrastructure pays double per month for the same speed and still has to pay overage charges, some up to \$600 per month," adds Schroeder. "It's not just remote communities being metered, it's happening within just a mile or two of Niverville."

NetSet Communications did not respond for comment.

According to Schroeder, it's important to check your ISP's pricing strategies before signing on. Few outside of Swift and 3T Systems, he says, offer truly unlimited packages with no usage caps or overage warnings.

He also notes that there is more to quality internet services than just speed in Mbps. The latency of your internet service can also be a concern. Even with high-speed internet services, latency can make your internet feel slow. High latency occurs most often with satellite internet connections and is something you should be prepared to ask your provider about.

"Very high latency levels remove any chance that you can play online games. Skype and Facetime become horrible experiences," says Schroeder.

The next five years will provide an interesting look at the effectiveness of the CRTC's initiative to roll out better internet services to rural and remote Manitobans, both in terms of technological advancements and competitive pricing options.

Possibly just as important, though, is how the ISPs receiving the grants will choose to disperse the subsidized infrastructure geographically. With so much discretion left to the government-assisted ISPs, will \$500 million be enough?

PRO TIP OF THE MONTH

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Michelle McHale and Chris Plett lead hundreds of marchers at the second annual Steinbach Pride parade.

BRENDA SAWATZKY

Hundreds Attend Second Annual Steinbach Pride

By Evan Braun

✉ editor@nivervillecitizen.com

Steinbach's second annual Pride parade was held on Saturday, July 15, with hundreds of people converging on the city. Organizers have said they were uncertain how big this year's crowd would be after the huge numbers who came out last summer, but they described the turnout as amazing.

Although the overall numbers were down, Steinbach Pride co-chair Chris Plett says there were more locals in the march this

year, which means that some progress has been made. He cautions, however, that there is still a lot of work to do on behalf of the LGBT community in southeast Manitoba.

Just like last year, despite the threat of protests and some homophobic comments online, the event went off without a hitch. RCMP calmly directed traffic as marchers walked down Main Street.

Some members of the predominantly Mennonite community have said that homosexuality is inconsistent with their Christian views.

"[LGBT] people are the Christian community," said Michelle McHale, another of the event's co-chairs. "Those things are not mutually exclusive. So to that I would say, that's not fair."

Despite receiving invitations and facing heat from the media, all local politicians were no-shows, including Steinbach Mayor Chris Goertzen, MLA and Minister of Health Kelvin Goertzen, and MP Ted Falk. Although Kelvin Goertzen and Ted Falk have previously stated they wouldn't attend the event regardless of invitations

or scheduling conflicts, Mayor Chris Goertzen issued a statement in advance of the march.

"As community leaders we want to maintain and create a positive welcoming environment that makes people feel safe and accepted not just on one day but continuously as we fulfill our responsibilities throughout the entire year," wrote Mayor Goertzen. "The acceptance includes those in the 2SLGBQ* community and it includes those who have differing viewpoints who also deserve respect and understanding."

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Commentary

The Onus Is On Us

By Greg Fehr

Anyone who has read my commentaries has heard my rants on engagement before. I know I'm not alone in my thoughts. On social media, I often see comments from those who respond to complaints with encouragements for people to get more involved in the community.

What concerns me is that people actually perceive online virtual conversation as true connectedness and engagement. Do not misunderstand me: given the choice between muted annoyance and participating in online forums, the latter is better... most of the time. But online comments, often posted without much thought or research, pale in terms of productive outcomes with actual in-person discussion.

This is the nightmare of government officials, both at local and other levels, who try to both manage the flow of communication and, more importantly, ascertain what the public actually wants.

Originally touted as the best thing since sliced bread, social media and other types of websites have created a challenge for governments. While everyone agrees that these forums can make it easier to hear voices that may not have been heard before, there are two problems to keep in mind: (1) anyone has the ability to connect, including those outside the



123RF

constituency, and (2) most people don't put much thought into their online comments.

Another problem is that leaders are still trying to assess virtual voices from a real-world perspective. In the past, if 50 people from a town the size of Niverville showed up at a council meeting, the issue at hand would have been considered a big deal. If 200 people had stopped a councillor on the street to ask about a problem, that problem obviously would have required greater scrutiny.

But if the government receives an online petition or sees an issue on Facebook with 200 comments, this may be the equivalent of 10 people showing up at a meeting. If our officials were to give virtual voices the same weight as people

who show up in real life, it could result in the dangerous situation of allowing the loudest minority to dictate policy and direction.

Why is this a concern? Because our system—and in reality, our society as a whole—is not designed, and never will be designed, to make any one person happy at all times. Like finding that mythical faith community that matches all your views to perfection, it is an impossibility. Living in a community requires compromise and sacrifice, leaving room for us to reserve discontent only for our true non-negotiables.

With proper moderation, government tends to find a middle ground that likely appeals to few but is acceptable to most everyone.

Before the internet, real-life

engagement came with important checks and balances. For example, if an issue was pressing enough for an individual to feel driven to attend a meeting, write a letter, or engage an official directly, that issue was truly important to them. This had the effect of keeping the issues of mild annoyance out of the spotlight.

At last check, Facebook has no warnings before people hit "post." Perhaps it should have one that reads "Are you sure you want to proceed?" As such, we are granted the liberty to like, dislike, and rant about whatever grabs our attention at the moment. That is, there is no filter.

Sure, our busy world now gives people who cannot, or will not, engage in traditional ways the ability to have their voices heard. For the most part, this is positive. But when responding to issues, our leaders have a responsibility to apply their own filters and understand the context of the complaint. If they don't, they run the risk of making extreme or hasty decisions. And while those decisions may satisfy some, the pendulum may have to swing again to pacify others.

Therefore, the onus is on us as responsible citizens to apply our own filters of decency... because I suspect social media, with its advertising and profit motive, will never apply it for us.

Look on the Bright Side: Just Float

By Jan Kendall St. Cyr

One of the things I love to do on a hot summer day is sit in my inflatable chair and float on the lake. Gently bobbing over the water while the sun warms my face creates a deep sense of calm and wellbeing in me.

As I aimlessly drift, I ponder the currents of my life. Most have been quite tranquil and slow-moving, ripples of peace and calm, easily navigated and maneuvered through. Yet there have also been times when, without warning, I've encountered rough waters that threatened to topple me and carry me off-course.

My most recent experience with the latter was hearing the news that my father was facing a serious health issue. Feeling panicked, my immediate response was to do something, anything that might help. Drowning in anxiety, I picked up those emotional oars and furiously paddled in an effort to escape my hopelessness and find safe harbour.

Only when I was out of breath and out of answers did I hear that still, small voice from within say, "Put down the oars and just float."

This goes against my nature, and at first felt like I was being asked to give up. Upon further meditation, I realized I was instead being asked to surrender—to surrender my fear, frustration, and need for answers, all of which just added weight and threatened to pull me under.

As I resisted the temptation to do something and instead gave myself over to just be, I felt buoyed, lightened, relaxed, and able to float above the conflict. By letting go of what I could not control, I was able to trust that my faith would shore me up and keep my head above water.

As I make my way back to the beach today, bringing with me my beloved chair, my thoughts are with my dad as he peacefully waits for his surgery date. I am quietly reminded that my dad and I are supported in far greater ways than I ever thought possible.

When I relinquish control and let go, peace returns and I feel myself relax and... just float.




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More Than Meets the Eye

By Chris Marchand

As she walked to her vehicle, a younger man came up beside her. Just as he was about to get into his truck, she commented, "Our trucks sure look dirty."

He looked at her, and without missing a beat replied in a snarky tone, "Mine's a work truck. At least I have a reason."

This story was told by one of the people who attend our church's bimonthly support group for those living with chronic and life-altering illness. The others in the room nodded their heads. They understood.

What the young man saw in my friend was a lazy woman who couldn't be bothered to wash her car. If he'd taken just a moment to look a bit deeper, though, he would have discovered that her reason is called "terminal cancer."

Like many others living with chronic and life-altering disease, this woman doesn't look sick. One person in our group recently commented, "People sometimes glare at me when I park in a handicapped parking spot." It's not uncommon to hear people living with illness express feelings of guilt for taking spots that other, "sicker" people might need.

We laughed recently when one terminally ill person told a story of using one of the scooters provided at Costco. They had to endure glares and a few comments that they should "leave the transportation for people who really need it."

She too is living with terminal cancer.

I recall hearing Andrew Neufeld of Niverville Physio once say that there are over 200 people in Niverville living with chronic illness. Many of these folks don't look sick, but they could use our help. We just need to slow down long enough to consider that there might be more to a person's reality than what we can see.

One woman living with Parkinson's recently commented to me how awkward she feels when holding up a line in a store. She looks healthy, but her disease has stolen her fine motor skills. The once simple task of digging change out of her purse has become a slow, tedious, sometimes embarrassing chore.

As we provide support for one another in our bimonthly meeting, we often reflect on those times when we too have misunderstood others. It's uncomfortable to acknowledge that we've often looked at others and come to incorrect conclusions. It's easy to lay on the horn behind a slow, obviously inconsiderate driver, or to sigh deeply when waiting in line while someone tries to operate hands that no longer answer the brain's commands.

We think we see the truth, but what we're seeing is only part of the story.

I wonder what would happen if we would start to consider that there might be more to a person than meets the eye. Once we open the door to

these possibilities, we begin to feel compassion instead of judgement. We might even start treating people with kindness and empathy instead of feeling justified in our hostility.

One of the main problems expressed by those living with chronic illness is loneliness. To combat this, our support group meets at 85 Second Street South.

One woman living with terminal cancer recently said, "I've appreciated these biweekly meetings and the support. It really allows me to feel less isolated and extend my community."

Another member wrote, "I have terminal cancer. The doctors gave me one year to live. That was two and half years ago! Meeting and talking with others living with similar adversity and seeing the progress in their lives is encouraging."

As we gather to support one another, we find ways to see the positive in dark circumstances. We encourage one another, laugh together, visit one another in hospital, and find a way to keep people from feeling isolated and alone.

If you're living with life-altering or chronic disease, we'd love to have you join us. Come find friends who understand and who will share this journey with you.

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Waste / Recycling Regulations

Did you know as part of the Town of Niverville's Waste & Recycling Bylaw (775-17) that the following regulations exist? Residents are asked to take note that effective September 1st, 2017, the following infractions will be subject to an administrative fee:

- 1) **Incorrect loading of materials.** If the lid cannot close completely, the cart is over capacity and materials will not be collected.
- 2) **Waste/Recycling Carts shall not be placed out on a public street for collection prior to 8:00 p.m. on day prior to collection and must be removed from public streets prior to 11:59 p.m. on day of collection.**
- 3) **Waste/Recycling carts must be placed at least one (1) metre apart from any objects (including parked vehicles, objects and other carts).**
- 4) **Incorrect placement of the collection carts (example: sideways, not forward facing).**
- 5) **Placement of prohibited materials within waste/recycling carts (examples: oils, grass clippings, ashes).**

During August 2017, the Town of Niverville will be issuing courtesy notices to residents for these infractions in order to raise awareness and encourage compliance. Effective September 1, 2017, residents who are in non-compliance for any of these regulations will be subject to an administration fee of \$50 per infraction. Where a contravention continues for more than one day, the owner and/or occupant may, at the Town's sole discretion, be assessed an additional administrative fee of fifty dollars (\$50.00) for each day it continues. The Administrative Fee Assessment Notice shall be sent by registered mail, with the cost thereof to be added to the assessed fee. For further clarification on Niverville's Waste and Recycling Management System Bylaw 775-17, visit www.whereyoubelong.ca

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KATHLYN HOSSACK

Low Back Pain and You

**By Kathlyn Hossack,
Athletic Therapist and
Kinesiologist**

Integrative Movement and Katmah Training

Low back pain is one of the world's most prevalent musculoskeletal complaints. Recent statistics estimate that 21.7 million people are affected by it globally on an annual basis. That's a lot of us, and back pain creates one of the biggest drains on the healthcare system across North America.

Chances are you or someone you know has suffered or is suffering with back pain. Low back pain is most commonly caused by poor movement habits, postural deficiencies, long periods of immobility, or repetitive movements. Often, it's a combination of all four. These are the culprits behind many other low back related complaints, such as sciatica.

I've seen my fair share of

back pain complaints coming from those in all walks of life. What I've also seen is how simple most of these cases are to alleviate and prevent. The following are a couple of my favourite strength exercises if you deal with back pain.

First off, wall angels. Lean against a wall with your feet about a foot in front of you and your knees slightly bent. Tilt your pelvis so that the entire spine is touching the wall from the hips to the shoulders. Then move your arms back so that they touch the wall from the shoulders to the wrist. Your back may pop off the wall here. Correct it before continuing. Next, slide the arms up and down the wall, or up and down in front of you, keeping your shoulders active. Repeat this ten times, doing it frequently throughout the day. You'll feel the muscles between the shoulder blades working,

but this does wonders for stretching the low back and correcting posture through the entire spine.

Another common exercise is called the Cobra. It's an excellent workout to integrate into your daily routine, as it reverses the flexion motion—which anyone working in manual labour does a lot of. Using your arms, push yourself up to the level that feels comfortable and lower yourself back down. Breathe in as you move up, and exhale as you come down. Repeat this 10 to 15 times.

Now let's get that core working. The key point in core activation is not to "suck in" but to brace the muscles in the torso by pushing them out or bearing down. Let me introduce you to the McGill curl-up (you can find video demos on YouTube). Lie on your back with one knee bent and

the opposite arm overhead, pushing or bracing the core muscles with the other hand. You should feel the abdominal muscles "pop" into your hand at the hip as if you were laughing vigorously or coughing. Curl the chest off the ground with core activation. Repeat this movement ten times per side, three times daily. If you practice the brace throughout daily movements as well, such as lifting, bending, and twisting, you'll notice a decrease in low back discomfort.

If you're suffering from acute low back pain that is severe in nature or new to you, seek advice from your movement and healthcare practitioner for a thorough assessment. Pain is there to tell you something, not to be ignored.

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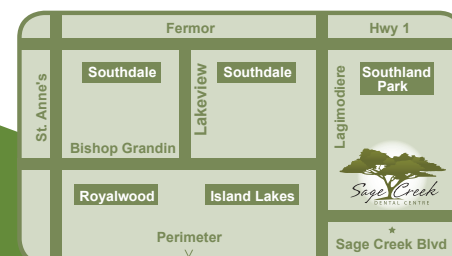
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No Quick Fixes for Good Nutrition



By Crystal Stott,
PN1 Certified Nutrition
Coach

Niverville Shop Gym

The amount of information and misinformation regarding nutrition is staggering! If you've ever been on social media or the internet in general, ads about nutrition pop

up everywhere. So how do you know what is sound advice? Unless you have spent years studying nutrition and the body, it can be very difficult to know where to start.

Nutrition can be complex, but there are some very simple strategies you can use every day to cut through some of the hype. Whenever you see marketing that promises amazing results, ask yourself the following question: does the plan offer a quick fix or does it sound too good to be true? If the answer is yes, it's not likely to set you up for long-term success.

Good nutrition lays the groundwork for a healthy lifestyle. Your body needs a balanced intake of proteins, carbohydrates, and fats to

function properly. Researching and discovering the proper ratio can take some time, as every person is different. Nutrition coaching can help guide you, but if you have the patience to do the research yourself, many online calculators can provide you with nutrient-balance information.

A whole foods approach is what most nutrition coaches prescribe to their clients. Eating lots of green, leafy vegetables, high-quality proteins, some starchy carbs, and healthy fats are the basics of a whole foods diet. Trying to stay away from refined sugars and processed foods can be difficult at first, but if you take a gradual approach, you can phase out a lot of the less healthy foods and replace

them with better, fresher options.

Use your hand as a guide for a simple way to portion your food. Each meal for a woman should contain a palm-size of lean protein (meats or nuts) along with one fist of vegetables, one cupped-handful of carbohydrates (grains and fruits), and a thumb's worth of healthy fats. For men, aim to prepare two palms of protein, two fists of vegetables, two

cupped-handfuls of carbs, and two thumbs of fat. If you are a fitness enthusiast, you will want to add starchy carbohydrates to your plate after your workout.

If you need help getting back on track, a nutrition coach can help you establish a nutrient balance appropriate for your activity level. They are there to assist you with goal-setting and establishing a course to achieve those goals.

They can teach you the healthy habits you need to know to set yourself up for long-term success, offering support and accountability along the way. Nutrition coaches can aid in meal planning and even overhaul your kitchen and grocery shop with you.

Keeping things simple helps create lifelong habits. There are no quick fixes; good nutrition should be an ongoing pursuit.



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Protect Your Teeth: Custom-Fit Mouth Guards for Sports

**By Dr. Sunayn Gupta,
B.Sc, DMD, B.A**

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Sports & Recreation

Summertime Lake Adventures

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By Chantel Todd

✉ ctodd@nivervillecitizen.com

Summer in Manitoba is always so beautiful, and there are many great activities you can take part in throughout the province. Many of us get away to the phenomenal lakes and beaches Manitoba has to offer.

I've grown up at the lake and still enjoy going to this day. I spend every free weekend I can there, just as I did as a child, enjoying the sun and playing in the water whether its swimming, water skiing, wake boarding, tubing, or knee boarding.

I look back especially fondly on the summer I learned to drop a ski and slalom, cutting through the water and waves like a fish. In fact, after spending so many hours on the boat and in the lake, I'm shocked that I'm not half-fish by now.

Over the years, my brothers and I have tried new watersports, adventured into the wilderness, and explored creeks and rapids. We spent hours in the water together, whether we were tubing, doubling on wakeboards, or just plain swimming.

I was always fond of my older



Jeremy Gadiant, Chantel's brother, showboating on the wakeboard.

CHANEL TODD

brother. He had no fear in his eyes as he practiced for hours doing jumps and flips on the wakeboard. I took a lot of pictures of him in midair, and some funny ones with him wiping out after a crazy flip.

The greatest summer experience of all was meeting my best friend of 16 years. We went on countless adventures, always a duo

on the tube or doubling behind the boats pulling us.

I have one memory that's so vivid, it feels like it happened yesterday—even though in reality it was almost ten years ago. My best friend and I were doubling behind my dad's boat—she was knee boarding and I was wake boarding. Standing tall already, I was a giant.

I jumped the wake on the right and she was right there beside me, so I cut hard out, leading back and making a huge spray from under my board. Soaking her completely, we laughed for many hours—and still laugh about it today looking at the picture.

Get out on the water, enjoy summer, and stay healthy!



Carol Dyck and daughter Kelly Friesen celebrate her hole-in-one.

Niverville Woman Hits Hole-in-One

Carol Dyck was golfing with her daughter Kelly on July 13 at Old Drovers Run when something amazing happened while teeing off at the third hole. Dyck pulled back, brought the club forward, and watched the ball fly towards

the green.

And then it seemed to vanish. "We didn't know it went in right away," says Kelly. "We saw it land on the green and that was it. Only realized it was a hole in one when we couldn't find it and Sharon

Rempel decided to check the hole."

Indeed, the ball was nestled at the bottom of the cup. The women broke into cheers, celebrating the unexpected hole-in-one.

"We cheered loudly and high-fived," Kelly adds.

EVENT GUIDE

Strength, Stretch, Cardio & Core

August 2, 8, 16, 22 & 30, 6:00 p.m.
Niverville, Hespeler Park Picnic Shelter, \$12 (drop-in)

Summer Bootcamp (Ile-des-Chênes)

Monday/Wednesdays, 7:00 PM
Gabrielle-Roy School Park

Youth Drop-in (Ile-des-Chênes)

Mondays/Wednesdays/Fridays until August 25
2:00–8:00 p.m., Ile-des-Chênes Arena

Youth Drop-in (St. Adolphe)

Mondays/Wednesdays/Fridays until August 25
10:00 a.m.–4:00 p.m., St. Adolphe Arena

Youth Drop-in (Ste. Agathe)

Tuesdays/Thursdays until August 25
10:00 a.m.–4:00 p.m., Ste. Agathe Arena

Red River Rage Ringette Registration

Early bird registration closes August 15
Online: <https://go.teamsnap.com/forms/65760>
In person: September 12 at the Heritage Centre.

Clipper Ice Sports Hockey Registration

September 30, 2017
Register online: <http://clippersicesports.ca>

Recreation & Wellness Showcase

Tuesday, September 12, 5:00–8:00 p.m.
Niverville Heritage Centre

Niverville Rec Hockey Registration

Tuesday, September 12, 2017
Niverville Heritage Centre

Southeast Youth Rec Hockey Registration (IDC)

Friday, September 29, 2017
Contact to register: seyrhockey@gmail.com

Ritchot Senior Services

Chair Fit: Wednesdays until August 23, 9:30–10:15 a.m.
Strengthen & Stretch: Weds until August 23, 1:00–1:45 p.m.
457 Main Street, St. Adolphe, 204-883-2880

For More Information:

■ www.nivervillecreation.com

Send your event listing to:

■ ctodd@nivervillecitizen.com



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Wildcats Win Baseball Provincials

By Clayton Smeltz

The Niverville Wildcats U11s played in the Provincial A Baseball Championships in Reston on the weekend of July 7-9 and brought home the championship banner. It is said that defence wins championships, and that was very true for this team which allowed only ten runs in six games, outscoring their opponents 41-10.

The Wildcats started off playing Brandon on Friday morning, and they turned out to be the best two teams in the tournament overall. Niverville lost the nailbiter 2-1. In the afternoon they played Red Lake, Ontario, and the bats started to come alive. The Wildcats merced them by a score of 12-2 in four innings.

Saturday morning began with a game against the Portage Phillies, with the Wildcats winning again, this time by a score of 10-0 in three and a half innings.

The top two teams in each pool qualified for the playoffs. The



Back row: Avery Pickering, Josh Bartlett, Logan Wolfe, Joshua Smeltz, Landon Nickel, and Mike Lindsey. Front row: Logan Dearborn, Kade Peters, Austin Spencer, Owen Bunn, Dayton Christensen, and Jace Woytowich. Coaches: Clayton Smeltz, Rod Wolfe, and Mike Lindsey.

TARAN PETERS

Wildcats' 2-1 record, with only four runs allowed in three games, allowed them to enter the playoffs ranked fourth. This set up a Saturday afternoon game against Birtle. The Wildcats again managed to pound the ball and won 9-2.

This placed Niverville in the semi-final on Sunday morning against Killarney. Killarney was ranked second, having closed out the round-robin with a 3-0 record. They had outscored their

opponents by a combined score of 42-6.

The semifinal turned out to be a defensive battle with great pitching and many amazing plays. At the conclusion of regulation (six innings), the score was tied 1-1 with just two hits per team. Niverville, batting first in the second, started with runners on first and second and none out. They managed to get one run past the plate in the bottom of the seventh with a double by Josh Bartlett.

This set up a tense bottom half of the inning, as Killarney also started with runners on first and second and no outs. When Niverville's pitcher Owen Bunn reached his maximum pitch count, relief pitcher Dayton Christensen came in to throw three pitches for a strikeout and the win.

This put Niverville in the final against Brandon, the only team they had lost to in the tournament. Brandon started with two runs in the first inning and Niverville came back with a leadoff triple by Owen Bunn. Niverville cashed in that run to be down 2-1 after the first.

The Niverville bats continued to be hot in the following innings with Joshua Smeltz hitting a two-run double, followed by Austin Spencer's two-run single in the next inning, opening up a 5-2 lead.

Niverville scored one more run in both the fourth and fifth, allowing them to go into the top of the sixth with a 7-2 lead. Killarney scored one run in the sixth, but Niverville finished strong with a fitting strikeout to win the game by a final score of 7-3.

The weekend was an amazing experience for all players.

The Wildcats roster included Owen Bunn, Josh Bartlett, Mike Lindsey, Joshua Smeltz, Logan Wolfe, Landon Nickel, Kade Peters, Jace Woytowich, and Austin Spencer. Dayton Christensen and Avery Pickering were great pickups from St. Adolphe, and Logan Dearborn joined from St. Malo. Players who played with the team in provincials playdowns, but were unable to make it to Reston, were Jasper Doerksen and Jack Wallace from Niverville and Christian Duval from Ste. Agathe.

Niverville Summer Camp Registrations Spike

By Chantel Todd

ctodd@nivervillecitizen.com

As summer approaches the halfway mark here in Niverville, the town's summer camps are also halfway over—and couldn't be going more smoothly.

Niverville Recreation is on its second year of running summer camps in-house. To do this, the department has hired two summer students to plan, organize, and implement the camps. As of the end of July, camp coordinator Jane Fast has seen many returning faces from last year, and many more new campers.

July has been full of fun and excitement, with outings to an escape room, the Steinbach pool, and Fun Mountain. Hollywood Acting Camp made a short film with 13 actors taking the stage, each with individual roles. The campers of Just Girls Camp created fairy gardens and prepared their own homemade ice cream.

Creativity Camp started off with a bang with Pirates vs. Robots and ended the week with a spa day, creating bath bombs and lip scrub.

Registration is up by 38 percent compared to last year, and the department still hopes to see more children register in August. After the August long weekend, several new camps kick off. The Amazing Race Camp (for ages 10 to 13) will take the lead, followed by the CSI Detective Camp (for ages 7 to 12). Ending the summer is the Mini-Explorers Camp (for ages 3-6).

The camp leaders have been fantastic this year, along with the many volunteers who have put in hours helping the camps to go off without a hitch.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

■ If you are interested in volunteering or registering for camp, visit www.niverrillerecreation.com.

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Owen Bunn

Owen started his career in the very little league of baseball at the age of five and has now been playing for seven years. Every year he looks forward to the start of a new season. He enjoys playing short-stop and pitching the most.

It was a baseball-packed summer for Owen in which the Wildcats played 30 games in under 70 days, travelling all the way across the province from Friedensfeld to provincials in Reston. At provincials, Owen helped the Wildcats win the championship.

Owen is a great team player. When he's in the dugout, he's devouring sunflower seeds and cheering on the rest of his teammates!

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Arts & Entertainment

Local Comedian Makes Waves



Matt Falk.

MATT FALK



sstcy@nivervillecitizen.com

On June 23, Matt Falk released a new comedy album called *Generational Gap*, recorded live at a show at the Garrick in Winnipeg several months ago. On the album, Falk muses about everything from Ikea shopping with his wife to learning

different accents and board games. The album hit the top of its iTunes chart within the first week of release.

"The audience was amazing and the set went really well," says Falk. "The album focuses a lot on the differences between the various generations. But what's interesting is that the audience was made up of almost every generation and we all laughed together that night. We

have a lot more similarities than we do differences."

Falk celebrated Canada 150 in Calgary, doing stand-up at a Christian event called Hope 150 at Shaw Millennium Park.

"One of the highlights was getting to stand on stage with all the performers in front of the whole audience and sing the national anthem," Falk adds. "I felt very patriotic!"

The comedian has been travelling a lot with his routine, not only across Canada but also on a cruiseliner this past January. Carnival Cruise Lines had seen Falk perform on *Just for Laughs* and asked if he would join them in Belize. Over the course of three days, Falk performed throughout the day.

"The first few days I had a bit of a hard time finding my sea legs," the comedian says. "I would be on stage stumbling around and ended up holding on to the mic stand so I could stay balanced."

In April, Falk was in Halifax for a comedy festival, and he recently returned from the Kamloops Komedy Festival in B.C.

With all the travelling he does, Falk still says that his favourite place to perform is right here in Manitoba. "Rumors Comedy Club is quite seriously my favourite club in the country, and it may very well be the best club in the country. Not only do they bring in amazing acts from all over North America, but they encourage and develop so many local comics. I can honestly say that if it wasn't for Tyler Schultz, the GM at Rumors, I would not be where I am in my career."

This summer, Falk will be performing at many local fairs, including ones in Grunthal and Rosenort in August.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

You can purchase your copy of *Generational Gap* on iTunes. To see where Matt Falk pops up next, check out www.mattfalkcomedy.com.

EVENT GUIDE

Folklorama

August 6–19
Different venues around Winnipeg

Richer Rough Stock Rodeo

August 11–13
Dawson Trail Park, Richer. \$13–20.

Rainbow Trout Music Festival

August 18–20
Roseau River. \$25–45/day.

Matt Falk Comedy

August 20 | 8:00 p.m.
Hanover Ag Fair, Grunthal. \$15–45.

Painting on the Prairies

August 22–23
Niverville Heritage Centre, Niverville. \$23.81.

Matt Falk Comedy

August 26 | 8:15 p.m.
Rosenort Summer Festival, Rosenort. Free.

Send your event listing to:

■ [sstcy@nivervillecitizen.com](mailto:ssctcy@nivervillecitizen.com)



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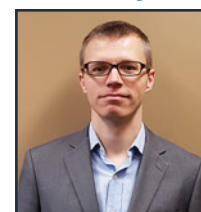
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Author Releases Final Book in Fantasy Trilogy

By Sylvia St. Cyr

✉ sstcyr@nivervillecitizen.com

Sherry Peters, an author from Ile-des-Chenes, is set to release *Mabel the Notorious Dwarf*, the final volume of her trilogy, *The Ballad of Mabel Goldenaxe*, on August 15. The series began three years ago with *Mabel the Lovelorn Dwarf*, followed by *Mabel the Mafioso Dwarf*.

"The character of Mabel came about as a challenge during the Odyssey Writing Workshop, to write a story about a female dwarf, and put on a twist on some of the most traditional fantasy tropes, such as the beautiful female elf that everyone is in love with," says Peters of her inspiration. "She quickly became a character I could embrace as I figured out what a life might be like for a female dwarf."

Peters points out that her books touch on powerful themes that just about everyone can relate to on some level. "Writing Mabel, having the opportunity to play with fantasy tropes and have fun with them, gave me the freedom to address something that all of us face: how to be ourselves when family and society expects us to be something else—married, with kids, looking a certain way, having a certain job or income, etc."

On top of being an author, Peters is also a writing coach for other aspiring writers. Her first coaching book, *Silencing Your Inner Saboteur*, came out in 2013.

She offers different coaching



Author Sherry Peters.

© SIRI KOUSSONSAVATH

options, including one-time sessions, a three-month package, and even an eight-month package for authors working on novels. Each package begins with a consultation over the phone, and then Peters adapts the remaining sessions based on the author's needs.

"My training is for coaching in general, so I can coach anyone who wants it," says Peters, who received her training in 2012. "We were encouraged to come up with a niche, a group of people we connect with most, and since I am a writer and most of my friends are in the writing community, it was a natural fit."

Peters also offers workshops called "But I Have a Day Job," "Plan for Success," and "Silencing Your Inner Saboteur." Each is designed to inspire, encourage, and push writers to keep

going.

"I wanted to share the tools and tricks I learned and developed to help other writers," she says.

Her other non-fiction book, *Blueprint for Writing Success*, can be purchased through her website.

Her Mabel series has also been nominated for the prestigious Aurora Awards, Canada's biggest award for fantasy/science fiction writers.

"I never expected that Mabel would grow into three novels, but I'm glad she did," Peters says. "I still absolutely adore her, probably even more after this third novel than before."

FOR MORE INFORMATION

■ To purchase Peters's books and services, visit www.sherrypeters.com.



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There Ain't No Party Like a Trout Party

By Sylvia St. Cyr

✉ sstcyr@nivervillecitizen.com

This August, Rainbow Trout Music Festival will be hosting its ninth annual festival on the banks of the Roseau River, just south of St. Malo, Manitoba. All ages can enjoy this event by purchasing a weekend camping pass, or just go for the day, from August 18–20.

Music is the centre of this festival, which includes mostly Manitoba-based musicians featuring everything from rock and electro to hip-hop, jazz, folk, and funk.

"Rainbow Trout Music Festival started as a fishing derby, as well as a music festival, at an old abandoned gravel quarry that was stocked with rainbow trout," says Natasha



The band Beth performs at the Rainbow Trout Music Festival near St. Malo.

■ RACHEL COX

Havrilenko, the event's marketing and communications director. "The first event had approximately 70 attendees and has now grown to 900-plus attendees. This event is a true grassroots, do-it-yourself festival success story that is entirely volunteer-run."

Anyone needing to cool off is free to bring a tube and float down the Roseau River, at their own risk. Attendees can bring everything they need, or enjoy one of the three local vendors serving food all weekend.

"We enjoy seeing new faces each year," Havrilenko

concludes.

Day passes range from \$25–\$45 and can be purchased on the day. Kids 12 and under are free.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

■ www.rainbowtroutmusicfestival.com

Local Photographer Launches Art Business

By Sylvia St. Cyr

✉ sstcyr@nivervillecitizen.com

A photographer from St. Adolphe, Sue Leclerc, has set up shop at the St. Norbert Farmer's market this year. Her photographs are available for sale at the market every Wednesday and Saturday this summer.

Leclerc, who's been a professional photographer for two years, says that her muse is often whatever catches her eye, but mostly the beauty of nature.

"I have discovered that there is beauty in everything, from sunsets to back-alley graffiti," says Leclerc, "Beauty is in the eye of the beholder."

Leclerc works at the



Sue's Art Photography at the St. Norbert Farmers Market.

■ SUE LECLERC

Winnipeg mail processing plant for Canada Post, but photography is her passion. Working full-time and then selling photos on the side

keeps Leclerc and her husband, Art, very busy.

"Art began to make unique frames to enhance and add character to my photography,"

she says. "That's when Sue's Art Photography became our passion. These quality pieces of art are uniquely framed by Art, adding that authentic look to every single picture."

These custom prints will be on display at the Richer Rodeo later this month, as well as the Southeast Lifestyles Expo in Île-des-Chênes this November.

"Our plans for the future are exciting as we see growth, development, and learn to enhance our business, which will soon have a website to display our products," Leclerc concludes.

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

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Registration

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Group	Ages	Year of Birth
Initiation/Squirts	4,5,6	2013-2011
Novice	7,8	2010-2009
Atom	9,10	2008-2007
Pee Wee	11,12	2006-2005
Bantam	13,14	2004-2003
Midget	15-17	2002-2000

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Novice	\$600	\$50	\$275	\$275
Atom	\$725	\$50	\$337.50	\$337.50
Pee Wee	\$850	\$50	\$400	\$400
Bantam	\$875	\$50	\$412.50	\$412.50
Midget	\$900	\$50	\$425	\$425

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COMPARE AT \$299⁹⁹
#DLX2141SY



18V 3.0 Ah Battery

SAVE \$40

\$89⁸⁸

REG. \$129⁹⁹
#BL1830



18V 4.0 Ah Battery

SAVE \$40

\$109⁸⁸

REG. \$149⁹⁹
#BL1840



18V 5.0 Ah Battery

SAVE \$30

\$129⁸⁸

REG. \$159⁹⁹
#BL1850

