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# Stonewall resident raises concerns over water quality, urges testing

By Lana Meier

A longtime Stonewall resident is encouraging others in the community to test their drinking water after his family experienced health concerns he believes may be linked to elevated mineral levels.

Ken Klimpke, who has lived in Stonewall for the past 30 years, said his concerns about groundwater and the potential impact of nearby quarry operations on the local aquifer became personal after a health issue in his household prompted questions about water quality.

Klimpke said the family had been drinking Town of Stonewall municipal water prior to those concerns. According to Klimpke, their physician suggested water quality was one of several factors worth examining.

Following that, Klimpke tested their household water using a total dissolved solids (TDS) meter, recording a reading just under 500.

"I just want people to be aware and take precautions," he said. "A lot of us rely on the water here and assume it's fine."

Klimpke brings a practical understanding of water systems to his concerns. He previously worked as a janitor with the Interlake School Division, where he was responsible for maintaining boiler systems at the high school — a role that required close monitoring of water quality to prevent damage to equipment.

As part of that work, an outside company was brought in annually to test and treat the system water, giving Klimpke firsthand experience with how mineral levels are measured and managed.

Curious whether the issue extended beyond the Town of Stonewall into the surrounding RM of Rockwood, Klimpke asked a friend living on Winfield Road to test their water. He said the results were significantly higher than his own, with readings exceeding 900 on a TDS meter.

"To see numbers that high was really concerning," Klimpke said.

Total dissolved solids (TDS) measure the combined content of all inorganic and organic substances dissolved in water, including minerals such as calcium, potassium and magnesium, as well as salts and trace metals. While these substances often occur naturally in groundwater, higher concentrations can affect water taste, hardness and scaling, and may raise concerns for long-term consumption depending on the specific composition.

Klimpke said readings approaching 500 — and especially those nearing or exceeding 900 — should prompt further investigation.

"A TDS meter is a simple tool people can use at home," he said. "It won't tell you exactly what's in your water, but it can give you an idea if something might be off."

He is encouraging residents in Stonewall and surrounding communities to use TDS meters as a first step, and to follow up with certified laboratory testing if elevated readings are found. Laboratory analysis can identify specific minerals or contaminants and determine whether levels fall within recommended guidelines.

Klimpke said his concerns also extend to the broader community, including local agricultural operations.

"We've got dairy farms just five



TRIBUNE PHOTO BY JO-ANNE PROCTER

Ken and Audry Klimpke, Stonewall residents of 30 years, are encouraging local residents to test their drinking water after concerns about elevated mineral levels and their potential impact on health.

miles south of Winfield Road, right in line with the quarry operations," he said. "Water quality is critical not just for people but for livestock and the livelihoods of those farmers."

He believes more attention should be paid to how groundwater systems may be affected by industrial activity, noting that aquifers are shared resources that extend across municipal boundaries.

"At the end of the day, we're all drawing from the same ground," Klimpke said. "What affects one area can affect another."

The Town of Stonewall says it closely monitors municipal water quality through regular testing and is not aware of any current concerns related to mineral levels or impacts from nearby quarry operations.

According to CAO Wally Melnyk, the town conducts daily local testing of chlorine levels to ensure water in the distribution system is safe to drink. In addition, water samples are sent to a laboratory every two weeks to test for bacteria, including total coliform and E. coli.

"The quality of the water provided to residents is of utmost concern to the town," Melnyk said.

He added that the water supply is also tested annually for a range of parameters, including lead, nitrates, arsenic, benzene and ethylbenzene, among other substances.

Melnyk noted that the town does not currently test for total dissolved

solids (TDS) but said officials are not aware of elevated mineral content above normal levels in the local supply.

"Stonewall does have hard water and we are trying to address that issue with the reverse osmosis process being considered for the new water treatment plant," he said.

The town also stated it is not aware of any impacts to the aquifer used for municipal water from existing quarry operations.

Melnyk acknowledged that while the current system ensures safe drinking water through disinfection, there is limited capacity to remove minerals.

"The proposed RO system would expand the treatment capability of the water plant and allow the town to remove increased minerals should that occur in the future," he said.

Klimpke emphasized that his goal is not to cause alarm but to encourage awareness and proactive testing.

"If there's nothing wrong, then you have peace of mind," he said. "But if there is something, at least you can deal with it early."

Water quality can vary depending on local geology, groundwater movement and surrounding land use. Public health officials generally recommend routine testing of private water sources, particularly in rural areas where residents rely on wells or untreated supply.

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# Manitoba-made series serves up diabetes-friendly cooking

By Jessica Eblie

A new Manitoba television series is showing viewers that healthy eating can still be full of flavour while highlighting local food producers across the province.

*The Diabetic Kitchen*, a six-episode cooking series that began airing in January 2026, combines a traditional cooking show format with visits to farms and food producers throughout southern Manitoba. Each episode features a different theme, ranging from game-day eats to vegetarian-style meals.

The series follows host Kevin Beaulieu as he prepares diabetes-friendly meals using local ingredients. Registered dietitian Bailey Lakutsa closes out each episode with a breakdown of each recipe's nutritional composition.

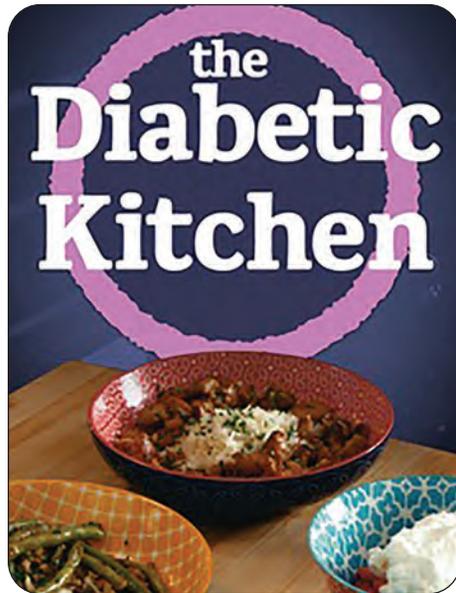
The Manitoba-made series was celebrated at a public screening on March 10 at the Park Theatre in Winnipeg, where three episodes were shown to a large audience.

For the show's cast and crew, the project represents both a health-focused initiative and a celebration of Manitoba's culinary and agricultural communities.

The concept for the series came from producer Karen Tusa, who said the inspiration was rooted in her own family's experience with diabetes.

Tusa explained that her father was diagnosed with the disease years ago, prompting her family to pay closer attention to what they were eating. With other friends and relatives also living with the condition, she said the issue has long been on her mind.

The idea developed through conversations with director George Orallo, a



Official *Diabetic Kitchen* photo from the Bell.ca website

longtime collaborator who also lives with diabetes. While researching the concept, Tusa said they discovered there were few cooking shows focused specifically on diabetes-friendly recipes.

"I did a lot of research, and there are no diabetic (cooking) shows out there," said Tusa.

After pitching the idea to several broadcasters, the series was picked up by Bell Fibre TV1. The network supported the concept, but producers wanted to ensure the program reflected Manitoba's food culture.

Instead of filming exclusively in a studio kitchen, the production team decided to visit local farms and suppliers, tying the ingredients used in each episode to the producers who grow or supply them.

Tusa, who works professionally as a



TRIBUNE PHOTOS SUBMITTED

The cast and crew of *The Diabetic Kitchen* at the public screening of the series at the Park Theatre on March 10.

location scout and location manager, said the approach allowed the show to showcase Manitoba's agricultural landscape and the people behind it.

"I thought, wouldn't this be a cool twist to bring this (idea) into a cooking show?" stated Tusa. "We thought it would be so much better to send our host to the different locations and interview the producers at their place of work so they could share what they do in their environment."

While the show highlights Manitoba producers and healthy home-style cooking, the central goal is to make diabetes-friendly meals accessible

to people looking to improve their health.

Beaulieu brings an unusual background to the role. Unlike most television cooking hosts, he does not come from a culinary or broadcasting profession.

"I sell trucks at the Freightliner dealer in Winnipeg for a living," Beaulieu said. "I've worked there for almost 15 years now."

His connection to the series came through Orallo, whom he has known since high school. The idea for Beaulieu to host the show came during

Continued on page 5

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# Local woman celebrates 100th birthday milestone

By Jennifer McFee

A local woman has joined the centenarian club after celebrating her recent triple-digit birthday.

Mary Abrahams was born March 13, 1926, to Walter and Henrietta Griffin. Along with her three older brothers, she was raised on the family's Teulon farm.

She later met and married Gene Latta, and the couple lived in Balmoral while raising their five children — Don, Jeff, Doug, Bud and Lori.

Mary's husband died in 1975. She later married Arnold Abrahams and moved to a farm outside Argyle. He had four children of his own.

Today, Mary lives at Lions Manor in Stonewall.

Over the decades, she made her mark through community involvement, including volunteering at fall suppers and crocheting blankets for Project Linus. She formed many connections across the region and remained an avid golfer, curler, artist and pianist for most of her life.

Mary is also very family-oriented, cherishing a lifetime of memories with her five children, 11 grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren,



Mary celebrated her 100th birthday with family and friends at Lions Manor in Stonewall on March 13.

in addition to her stepchildren and step-grandchildren.

Her son Jeff Latta said the secret to her longevity likely stems from her active lifestyle.

"She's still pretty independent and in pretty good health," he said. "She golfed until she was about 97. She goes for a walk every day at Lions Manor, and she knows most of the



TRIBUNE PHOTOS SUBMITTED

Mary Abrahams was all smiles at her 100th birthday celebration with eight of her 11 grandchildren: Elizabeth Latta, Sena Debia, Miranda Latta, Stephen Latta, Scott Latta, Ian Latta, James Latta, David Latta and Sam Debia.

people there."

To celebrate her milestone birthday, Mary's family brought a cake to share with the Lions Manor coffee crowd on

March 13. The following day, the family gathered privately to celebrate her 100th birthday.

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# Provincial government requires workplaces to provide free menstrual products

By Jennifer McFee

Manitoba is making history as the first province in Canada to require employers to provide free menstrual products to employees at no cost.

The initiative aims to ensure that workers have access to basic necessities while on the job. Amendments to the Workplace Safety and Health Regulation will now require employers to provide menstrual products such as pads and tampons in workplace washrooms or another accessible location for employees at no cost.

These amendments respond to the consensus recommendations from a five-year review of the Workplace Safety and Health Act, completed by the Workplace Safety and Health Review Committee in January 2025.

The new requirements will come into effect in early August 2026, which will give employers time to prepare and purchase any necessary supplies.

Labour and Immigration Minister Malaya Marcelino announced last week that these changes are about

dignity and fairness at work.

"No one should have to worry about access to basic menstrual products while they are doing their job," she said. "Periods are a normal part of life and workplaces should reflect that reality by making sure workers have what they need."

A provincial government press release states that the cost to provide menstrual products in the workplace will be modest.

"Federal estimates suggest the annual cost ranges from \$10 to \$25 per employee who menstruate, with initial dispenser and disposal container costs ranging from \$20 to \$300," states the press release.

So far, the announcement is being met with mixed responses.

Dawn Green, who co-owns Rockwood Wrecking and Recovery with her husband Steve, questioned whether the estimated annual cost could potentially be too low. Since the family business doesn't have any other female employees, she's not too



TRIBUNE PHOTO BY JENNIFER MCFEE

A basket of menstrual products, including pads and tampons, highlights Manitoba's new requirement for employers to provide free menstrual supplies in workplace washrooms starting in August 2026.

concerned about the impacts to their bottom line but she wonders how it could affect larger companies.

"I don't think it would make or break our business if I did have other female employees working for us," she said, "but I do feel like people would take advantage of it regardless."

Tara Hotson, director of operations for New Life Church in Stonewall, said the church already provides free menstrual products in their bathrooms for whoever needs them.

"We have them in most of our bathrooms here, and we don't lose mass amounts of them. This building is well used with things happening every day with multiple people and multiple groups," she said. "We don't suddenly get cleaned out. It's not a big thing to watch."

Previously in Ontario, Hotson worked for a company called Emco Corporation/The Ensuite Showrooms, which distributes plumbing supplies. When some of the locations would order toilet paper and other bathroom supplies, they also ordered menstrual products for the work-

place.

"They had it in most of their bathrooms. We knew where it was, and it was there if needed. It was so seldom that it was ever taken by the general public," she said.

"Although you might run into isolated problems within your business, I think it's just a conversation to have with your teammates."

Anna Rothney, executive director of the Manitoba Federation of Labour, expressed support for the new requirements.

"This is a really important step for gender equity in the workplace, and for health and safety on the job," she said.

"Treating menstrual products like the necessities they are will lead to healthier and more inclusive workplaces and reduced stigma around periods. It will help make life more affordable for many workers who are struggling to pay their bills."

The Workplace Safety and Health Branch will enforce compliance through existing workplace inspections.

## > DIABETES-FRIENDLY, FROM PG. 3

regular Sunday dinners he hosted for friends.

"One day Orallo said, 'I'm going to do a cooking show, and you're going to be the host,'" Beaulieu recalled.

Like Orallo, Beaulieu also lives with Type 2 diabetes, which helped shape the direction and tone of the series.

The creators wanted the show to feel approachable, especially for viewers who might be intimidated by complicated recipes or specialized equipment. Simple tools — including beginner-friendly gadgets like a slap-chop — appear regularly throughout the episodes.

"We didn't want to intimidate anybody," Beaulieu said. "We wanted to encourage people to try the recipes and make small changes toward better health."

Filming for the first season took place over several days, including visits to farms and food produc-

ers across southern Manitoba, followed by cooking segments filmed in a home kitchen.

Despite the relatively short production schedule, Beaulieu said the experience gave him a new appreciation for television production.

"I've walked away from this with a deeper appreciation of folks that do this for a living."

For Beaulieu, one of the most meaningful aspects of the project was the way it brought together longtime friendships and community connections.

"The show really tells a story of relationships," he said. "Food brings us together as family and friends."

All six episodes of *The Diabetic Kitchen* are now available for streaming on Bell Fibre TV1. The cast and crew hope the series will attract additional distribution and potentially be renewed for a second season.

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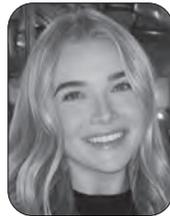
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## Low-to-moderate flood risk across Manitoba; Fisher River basin a concern

By Haley Cvar

The Province of Manitoba is forecasting a low-to-moderate risk of spring flooding across most of the province as runoff season approaches, though higher risk remains in parts of the Interlake.

According to Manitoba Transportation and Infrastructure's Hydrologic Forecast Centre, the majority of Manitoba rivers are expected to see limited flooding under normal conditions. However, the Fisher River basin is facing a moderate to major flood risk, making it the primary area of concern heading into the spring melt.

A moderate risk of flooding is also in place for several major waterways, including the Red, Assiniboine and Souris rivers, along with the Icelandic River in the Interlake and portions of the Saskatchewan River in northern Manitoba.

Flood risk remains low for many

tributaries, including the Pembina, Rat and Roseau rivers, as well as eastern Manitoba's Winnipeg River basin and the Whiteshell Lakes area.

Officials note that conditions leading into spring have generally been favourable. Soil moisture at freeze-up was near to below normal across much of Manitoba, while winter precipitation was also near to below normal in many regions. In addition, frost depths are normal to shallower than usual, allowing for improved absorption of meltwater.

Snowpack conditions are also contributing to the relatively stable outlook. Snow-water content across most Manitoba basins is within normal ranges, though parts of southern Manitoba are below average. The Fisher River basin, however, has normal to above-normal snow levels, contributing to its elevated flood risk.

Lake levels across the province re-

main within operating ranges, with Lake Winnipeg and Lake Manitoba sitting well below normal for this time of year. As a result, inflows into major lakes are expected to be below seasonal averages.

The province does not anticipate operating the Red River Floodway under normal or favourable conditions. However, it may be used if weather conditions worsen to help reduce water levels in Winnipeg. The Portage Diversion could also be activated under unfavourable conditions or to address potential ice jams along the lower Assiniboine River.

Ice-cutting and breaking activities have already been completed on the Red and Icelandic rivers to reduce the risk of ice-jam flooding. Despite these efforts, officials caution that ice-jam

Continued on page 7

## letter to the editor

Letters to the Editor: [news@stonewallteulontribune.ca](mailto:news@stonewallteulontribune.ca)

### Concerns raised over proposed quarry rezoning

I am writing in response to the public meeting held March 19 in Stony Mountain regarding the proposed rezoning of agricultural land for quarry use.

The meeting drew a large turnout, with many presentations and questions expressing concern about the rezoning. The quarry developer, Amrize Canada, also delivered a presen-

tation, which, in my view, lacked critical information.

I presented as well and raised several important questions that were not answered. I would like to share a few of them:

How deep will drilling go? Will it pass through aquifers and, if so, how will those holes be sealed?

Is it true that the first aquifer is the most vulnerable to contamination from mining operations?

The overburden acts as a natural filter that helps protect aquifers from pollutants. Why is it not replaced as soon as extraction is completed in a section?

At present, we are left with square

miles of unprotected aquifer.

The information available today is extensive and easily accessible. I encourage everyone to do their own research on the impacts quarries can have on aquifers — not just this proposed development but others as well.

In my opinion, this rezoning request should not have progressed this far.

This fall, I urge residents to elect councillors and a reeve who will protect our farmland and our way of life. Your voice is strong, and together we can prevent further loss of agricultural land.

- Bruce Huewan

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## Lakeside MLA acclaimed as PC candidate for next provincial election

By Jennifer McFee

Lakeside MLA Trevor King has been acclaimed as the Progressive Conservative candidate for the next provincial election.

King is a familiar face in the community since he was first elected to Woodlands council in 2006 and served as reeve from 2014 to 2018. During that time, he also spent eight years as a board member with the Association of Manitoba Municipalities as the Interlake district director.

In 2023, King was elected as the member of legislative assembly for Lakeside.

"I am honoured that the leader and the rest of the party and PC Caucus has the faith and confidence in me to continue being the candidate for the constituents of Lakeside and all Manitobans," King said.

"What I like best is helping my constituents and all Manitobans in whatever direction they need to help them with issues or opportunities. Meeting with constituents and hearing their concerns is important to me. As an opposition MLA, I don't make any promises — but if I can help in any way, it is the most gratifying part of the job."

During his current term as Lakeside MLA, King has had the chance to advocate for municipalities and residents as the municipal critic.

"I have had 12 years of municipal experience going into this role. Seeing some provincial funding roll into this constituency has been exciting, especially as an opposition MLA," he said.

"It is always a good thing, even though more needs to go around. Seeing some infrastructure improvements has been welcome, even though there is much more work to do such as the paving of 236 and some maintenance to secondary provincial roads." Looking ahead, King shares some

goals for the future of Lakeside.

"I will continue to advocate to help make life more affordable for those who are struggling through these tough economic times of higher grocery, fuel and housing cost of living. I will also continue to lobby for a better municipal funding model for our municipalities," he said.

"Our need for a personal care home in Stonewall continues to be a top priority for me, along with better health-care services and safety in our communities. I will also continue to raise concerns of our provincial road maintenance."

Outside the political realm, King continues to operate a family farm in Warren with his wife and four sons. Over the years, he has volunteered with community groups, boards and sports clubs and was recently inducted into the Stonewall and District Lions Club during their 40th anniversary celebration.

"I very much enjoy spending time with my family — my wife, four boys and my granddaughter," he said. "Of course, making music with my family and friends is my stress reliever. Hunting and fishing with my boys and spending time on the farm with them making hay is also something I love."

He encourages Lakeside constituents to reach out to him with any concerns of feedback.

"I want Lakeside constituents to know that my door, email and phone lines are always open to share their concerns. If for some reason we don't respond, please reach out again. It is a busy life as an MLA and sometimes communication can get overlooked, but it is important to me to hear from all in need," he said.

"Also, any organizations that have events going on in the community



PHOTO SUBMITTED

Lakeside MLA Trevor King has been acclaimed as the Progressive Conservative candidate for the Lakeside constituency in the next Manitoba provincial election.

that they would like me to take part in, please reach out to my office — and if can fit in my calendar, I will do my best to participate."

King expressed gratitude for the community's support — and he hopes that it will continue going forward.

"I thank my constituents for their support during my term and hope going into the next election, whenever that may be, I can count on it once again as it has been a true honour and privilege representing the great people of Lakeside," he said.

"I have been and always will be a lifelong resident of these communities — five generations. I am very proud of the people and organizations and businesses that make it a great place to live and call home."

The 44th Manitoba general election will be held no later than Oct. 5, 2027.

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## WHO IS THE GREATEST

A question posed by the disciples in Matthew 18. Jesus answered by calling a child in the midst of them. Imagine what they might be thinking in that moment. Did he hear us right? What's with the child? Jesus replies in verse 3 & 4. "Truly I say to you, unless you turn and become like children you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven." And there it is. Humility is the most valuable character trait to have. Merriam Webster defines it as; Freedom from pride or arrogance. So to be humble would be to hold high value on others more than ourselves. Just imagine what the world would be like if we all did this. It means, moving out of the way, maybe holding the door open. Sharing and being willing to let go of what is mine for the benefit of someone else. Being someone's greatest encourager and cheering others on.

We all want to do well in life. It is good to have goals and work to achieve excellence but not at the expense of someone else. Sadly it's all too easy to do because we are naturally selfish at heart. This is best seen in toddlers. We must teach them to share and be kind. They need to learn how to love. Could this be what Jesus is talking about? Did the disciples understand that by asking who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven they were missing it? It takes humility to be teachable. It takes humility to say sorry, to extend grace and to learn how to love. A quality Jesus didn't just teach but modelled.

Jesus, 6 who, being in the form of God, did not consider it [b]robbery to be equal with God, 7 but [c]made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. 8 And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross. 9 Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, Philippians 2:7-8

Laura Lawrence  
Church of the Rock NEC Kids  
Rock Coordinator

## > FLOOD RISK, FROM PG. 7

flooding remains possible in historically affected areas, including along the Saskatchewan, Carrot, Swan, Icelandic and Fisher rivers.

The province emphasized that weather conditions in the coming weeks will be the key factor in determining how the spring flood season unfolds. Additional snowfall, rainfall

and the speed of the melt could all significantly influence water levels.

As temperatures rise and ice conditions weaken, Manitobans are being reminded to stay off rivers, retention ponds and other waterways.

The Manitoba Emergency Management Organization says it continues to work with municipalities, First Na-

tions and other partners to prepare for potential flooding, including reviewing emergency plans and coordinating resources.

The full March flood outlook report is available on the provincial government website.

# Rockwood hearing draws strong reaction to proposed quarry near Stonewall

By Lana Meier

A proposed limestone quarry near Stonewall drew a large and vocal response March 19, as approximately 160 people attended a public hearing hosted by the Rural Municipality of Rockwood.

Reeve Wes Taplin chaired the meeting at the Stony Mountain Community Centre, where council heard presentations from provincial planners, the South Interlake Planning District and representatives of applicant Amrize Canada Inc. before opening the floor to public input.

"This hearing is held ... to receive public input on conditional use application RWC 11-25," Taplin said, emphasizing the importance of respectful dialogue.

The application seeks approval to establish an aggregate extraction operation on approximately 370 acres of agricultural land located between a quarter-mile and 1.5 miles from the Town of Stonewall boundary.

Jessie Russell-Edmonds, acting regional manager with Manitoba's Community Planning Services Branch, outlined the provincial review, noting the land is designated agricultural and currently used for farming. While provincial policy supports mineral extraction, she said municipalities must ensure develop-



Judy Stearns, co-founder of Manitoba Black Bear Rescue, speaks at a public hearing in Stony Mountain on March 19, warning the proposed quarry could jeopardize the future of the wildlife rehabilitation facility.



TRIBUNE PHOTOS BY LANA MEIER

Terrence Small addresses council during a March 19 public hearing in Stony Mountain, raising concerns about safety risks and calling for increased setback distances from the proposed quarry site near his home.

ments are compatible with surrounding land uses and do not negatively impact residents or future growth.

She noted concerns can include noise, dust, vibrations and increased truck traffic, and highlighted that portions of the site fall within a one-mile buffer intended to protect Stonewall's long-term expansion.

"Council will need to consider if the proposed operation is compatible with the general nature of the surrounding area and will not be detrimental to the health or general

welfare of people living or working nearby," she said.

Although provincial departments raised no major objections, conditions were identified, including haul route approvals, water infrastructure permits and heritage protections.

Representing the South Interlake Planning District board, acting chair Mike Palmer urged council to reject the proposal, citing the one-mile buffer zone.

"Given the clear policy direction regarding the one-mile buffer zone, the SIPD board believes that new quarry developments within this area would not meet the consistency requirement and therefore should not be approved at this time," he said.

Amrize representatives outlined their proposal, stating the site would be used strictly for extraction, with no on-site processing or public sales. General manager Greg Suderman said material would be hauled to an existing facility.

"This site is not intended for public purchase of limestone products but rather the minimal activity needed to extract this important resource," he said.

Planning consultant Tom Jansen said exploration confirmed high-quality limestone deposits, with development expected to occur in phases over several decades. The proposal

includes setbacks, berms and vegetation buffers, with approximately 25 truck trips per day anticipated.

Jovian Yang, land resource manager with Amrize, said blasting would occur about once per month and remain within provincial limits, with groundwater monitoring in place.

"We are committed not only to meet regulatory requirements but also going beyond them," Yang said.

Two letters of support were also submitted. Geological engineer Jeff Yablonski highlighted the industry's economic contributions, noting quarry levies generate more than \$2 million annually for the RM and support between 120 and 200 jobs. Rockwood resident Michelle Rossnagel cited the importance of limestone for infrastructure and said quarry operations can coexist with surrounding land uses.

However, the majority of speakers voiced opposition.

Judy Stearns, co-founder of Manitoba Black Bear Rescue, said the proposal could force the closure of the facility.

"We chose this location because it was quiet and off the beaten path, and never imagined a quarry would be proposed this close," she said. "If this goes ahead, it would most likely force the closure of our facility."

She said blasting, noise and dust would cause stress to rehabilitating cubs and could affect water sources and habitat.

Lisa Grayson, a longtime area resident, raised concerns about the long-term impacts of quarry blasting, pointing to past experiences in the community. She described what she believes was the collapse of a man-made pond near the Stonewall Trailer Court following a major blast in April



Photos provided by Lisa Grayson show a pond near the Stonewall Trailer Court before and after a 1990 quarry blast, which she says led to a sudden drop in water levels and lasting changes to the site.

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Friday 4-Close 6:30 Meat Draw and 50-50

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Dinner Tickets on Sale for Saturday March 28 -  
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# RCMP offers tips for businesses to help prevent crime

By Jennifer McFee

What can businesses do to help prevent crime?

That was the topic of discussion at a recent Stonewall and District Chamber of Commerce lunch event featuring a presentation by Stonewall RCMP detachment commander Jason Vrooman.

Vrooman offered security suggestions to the group that gathered at Stonewall New Life Church for the event on Thursday, March 12.

To start, he focused on how businesses can bolster their outdoor security. He suggested that business owners ensure there are no dark areas around the property, with bright lights illuminating outside doors and windows.

"We have a lot of criminals in this province — and a lot of them aren't very smart, but they're not in the business of getting caught," he said. "They're not going to come into that property that's well lit."

Another idea is to install security cameras and ensure that they're working.

"It's nice to embrace the technology we have these days. We have a lot of analysts at the district that love surveillance footage," Vrooman said. "They love to compile all the footage of people stealing stuff and breaking into stuff. It allows us to connect various crimes throughout an evening or weekend."

To reduce places for criminals to hide, business owners can trim shrubs and bushes. They can also put up signs indicating that there's no cash or valuables on site.

"Our property crime is directly related to our meth problem," he added. "People need to have their fix so they'll steal property to sell it on Marketplace or Kijiji or wherever to get their money to go buy more drugs. There's a direct correlation."

Inside the business, Vrooman recommends security alarm systems with motion detectors and glass-break detectors. In addition, all safes and cash registers should be removed from the site after hours. If they're kept on site, they should be left open and empty each night. At the end of the workday, it's best to ensure there are no spare keys to offices, registers and safes on site. All valuables should be out of view after hours, and lights should be left on inside.

"We encourage lights to be left on inside," he said. "If it's backlit and someone's walking around after hours, anybody driving by or us on patrol can see if there's somebody in your business."



Robert Price-Lewis, president of the local chamber, hosted the event.

Motion lights and CCTV cameras are also a good idea. As an added precaution, business owners can post the phone number for the local RCMP detachment for employees to access easily.

Doors and windows should all have working locks. Screens on windows should be in good condition without being able to be removed from the outside. Anti-smash security film can be added to windows as an additional safety measure. Sliding doors should have a pin or board to prevent them from opening, and doors and doorframes should be reinforced.

It's also a good practice to record serial numbers for valuable items, including TVs, computers and equipment.

"If you write down the serial numbers for your valuables, it's very easy for us to connect that it's yours," Vrooman said.

At the end of the workday, Vrooman recommends completing a safety check — and he even implements the same practice at home each evening. This safety check should include checking windows and doors while also ensuring that lights are on, CCTV is working and valuables are out of sight.

"Before you lock up and go home, make sure everything is secure," he said. "I know it's sometimes a daunting task because you have other things to do, but taking that extra four or five minutes to secure your business and make sure it's locked up will go a long way."

And what should business owners or employees do if they encounter a shoplifter? Absolutely nothing, Vrooman says.

"That's when you have your really good security cameras and ways to identify people. We might not get them that day, but our job is to get them. We don't want you to put yourself in any harm's way or any threat



TRIBUNE PHOTOS BY JENNIFER MCFEE  
Stonewall RCMP detachment commander Jason Vrooman shared tips about how to help prevent crime.



to you or your employees so you get hurt as a result of someone taking \$100 worth of groceries," he said.

"It's hard to say, but that's the reality. You don't know what kind of condition they're operating under. You don't know what they're capable of. It's not worth anybody getting hurt."

Businesses also have the right to deny entrance on private property.

"You can ask them to leave — and if they don't leave, we'll come and

help you. Through

your approval, we'll have them barred so they're not allowed back in," Vrooman said. "Once they come back, then we can arrest them. We just have to get them on the initial condition, but you can refuse service."

The event wrapped up with a question-and-answer session followed by the regular meeting of the Stonewall and District Chamber of Commerce.

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Manitoba 

# Existing quarry expansion proposal draws strong opposition in Rockwood

By Lana Meier

About 100 people braved stormy weather Tuesday night as Rockwood council heard strong opposition to two Heidelberg Materials quarry-related applications near Stonewall, with residents and town officials warning of impacts on homes, traffic, health and future growth.

The RM of Rockwood hosted back-to-back public hearings on zoning by-law amendment 38-25 and conditional use application RWC 10/25, both tied to proposed quarry expansion in the area.

Reeve Wes Taplin opened the meeting by acknowledging the strong emotions surrounding the issue and urging respectful dialogue.

"We are here to discuss matters that are important to our community and our municipality," Taplin said. "It's essential that we approach this evening with respect for one another and our shared goal of finding the best outcomes for everyone."

The rezoning application would change land from industrial extractive holding to industrial extractive zoning to allow Heidelberg Materials to expand quarry development north of Stonewall.

A separate conditional use application would allow extraction activities to extend westward onto additional lands near PR 236, approximately half a mile from the town.

Jessie Russell-Edmonds, acting regional manager with Manitoba's Municipal and Northern Relations Community Planning Services Branch in Selkirk, said the rezoning lands are identified in the South Interlake Planning District (SIPD) development plan as having high aggregate potential.

However, she noted both applications fall within a one-mile buffer surrounding Stonewall, where planning policy aims to limit land uses that could affect the town's long-term expansion.

For the conditional use application, Russell-Edmonds added the land is designated restricted agricultural area and identified as having low to no aggregate potential, raising addi-



Maggie Fitzpatrick raises concerns about quarry expansion and its impact on nearby homes and the future growth of Stonewall.

tional questions about compatibility with surrounding uses.

Provincial departments raised no major objections, but Manitoba Transportation and Infrastructure indicated traffic impacts on PR 236 and PTH 67 may require further study.

Scott Wozny, area manager for Heidelberg Materials, said the proposals are part of a long-term plan to continue existing operations, not create a new quarry.

"This application does not create a new quarry, and it does not introduce newer different types of activities," he said. "Rather, it allows existing quarry operations to progress in an orderly and planned manner as current permitted areas are completed."

Wozny said operations would continue to include drilling, blasting and hauling, with processing remaining at the existing Glacier plant site for the foreseeable future. He said truck traffic would not pass through Stonewall and the company would work with regulators to determine safe haul routes if operations expand west of PR 236 in the future.

He also emphasized that quarrying is a temporary land use and said Heidelberg conducts progressive reclamation, contributing to a provincial rehabilitation fund and restoring land as operations advance.

Supporters of the industry pointed to its economic importance in the region.

Chris Lorenc, president and CEO of the Manitoba Heavy Construction



TRIBUNE PHOTOS BY LANA MEIER

Scott Wozny, area manager for Heidelberg Materials, speaks during a public hearing in Rockwood regarding proposed quarry expansion near Stonewall.

Association, said aggregates are essential to infrastructure and development across the province.

"Without this industry, building and maintaining the amount of infrastructure we rely on every day would be far more difficult and significantly more expensive," he said.

The Town of Stonewall spoke against both applications.

CAO Wally Melnyk told council the proposals are premature, noting the SIPD is currently reviewing its development plan, including policies around quarry buffering near urban areas.

"The town cannot support this rezoning," Melnyk said.

He added the applications fall within the one-mile buffer zone intended to protect future urban growth and argued council does not yet have sufficient information on traffic, water and other impacts to make an informed decision.

Mike Palmer, acting chairperson of the SIPD board, also recommended against approving new quarry developments within the one-mile buffer, citing the need to reduce land-use conflicts and allow the planning review process to be completed.

Dozens of residents spoke at both hearings, raising concerns about blasting, dust, truck traffic, groundwater impacts, property values and the long-term expansion of quarry operations toward the community.

Pam Palcat, who lives near the quarry area, said residents already experience impacts from existing operations.

"Our property in Rockwood is not only our home but an investment in our future," she said. "If these changes are made, it's extremely likely that

our property value will decrease."

Town of Stonewall resident Maggie Fitzpatrick said the conditional use proposal is particularly concerning because of its proximity to homes and community amenities.

"This one is directly north of my house and in my view from my kitchen window," she said.

She also questioned the long-term growth of quarry operations near the town and urged council to reject the application.

"We really have this one chance for council to make the right decision and deny this application," Fitzpatrick said.

Larry Neufeld said he has experienced years of blasting impacts and worries the situation will worsen if extraction moves closer.

"I do not have one seal in my windows that is not broken," he said.

Other residents raised concerns about potential truck traffic crossing PR 236, the lack of visible reclamation on existing quarry lands and the timing of the applications while broader planning policies are still under review.

Heidi Fingas, a Stonewall resident and educator, said the proposal raises broader concerns about health, safety and quality of life.

"To ensure residents' health and safety is a priority ... ignoring these concerns will force people to move to preserve their health," she said.

Council heard multiple written submissions in addition to oral presentations before adjourning both hearings.

No decisions have been made, and council is expected to consider the applications at a April 8 meeting.



RM of Rockwood council.

# Teulon man coaches athlete at U23 World Ski Championships

By E. Antonio

Glenn Bond is a Team Canada cross-country skiing coach who recently celebrated major success at the U23 Junior World Ski Championships in Norway with his athlete, Madeleine Wilkie.

Bond, who grew up in Teulon and now lives in Vernon, B.C., said he remains proud of his Manitoba roots, noting they helped shape who he is today as both an athlete and a coach.

"I've got lots of memories growing up here," he said. "Teulon is a part of who I am and there's no taking that out of me."

Bond was first introduced to cross-country skiing in Grade 4 while attending Teulon Elementary School. His teacher, John Blackwood, ran a Jackrabbit skiing program at the school — a program that sparked Bond's passion for the sport.

From there, his love of skiing quickly took flight.

He soon began winning regional and provincial races. Later, he earned a spot on Team Manitoba and eventually Team Canada.

"Every level I went to I was simply blown away by the skills and abilities of the other athletes," he said. "They opened my eyes to the sport for sure."

After graduating from Teulon Collegiate, Bond knew he wanted to dedicate his life to cross-country skiing. He moved to British Columbia where he earned a Ski Resort Operations and Management diploma from Selkirk College and eventually made SilverStar Mountain Resort his home base.



Bond took part in the 90-kilometre Vasaloppet cross-country ski race in Sweden — the world's largest ski race — where about 16,000 participants start the course at the same time. Bond recently completed the race while in Europe coaching athletes competing at the U23 Junior World Ski Championships in Norway.



TRIBUNE PHOTOS SUBMITTED

Glenn Bond (right) grew up in Teulon and now coaches Team Canada cross-country skiing athletes at SilverStar Mountain Resort in B.C. One athlete, Madeleine Wilkie, competed at the U23 Junior World Ski Championships in Norway this February.



Madeleine Wilkie races at the U23 Junior World Ski Championships in Lillehammer, Norway. Wilkie trains under the guidance of Team Canada coach Glenn Bond, originally from Teulon.

While working and training at SilverStar, Bond set his sights on qualifying for the 2002 Canadian Olympic team. Although he ultimately fell short of that goal, he still considers the pursuit worthwhile.

"Chasing my Olympic dream proved to me that with motivation anything is possible," he said. "Even though I didn't make it, I still had a great journey and learned a lot trying to get there."

Bond still competes today, although now at a more recreational level.

Recently, he took part in the Vasaloppet in Sweden, the largest cross-country ski race in the world. The event features a mass start of roughly 16,000 skiers, all beginning the race at the same time.

Describing the experience as "totally insane," Bond skied the full 90-kilometre course from Sälen to Mora.

"It was a really great experience," he said. "I finished the race and came away with a lot of great memories."

Another memorable moment from his time in Europe came while watching one of his top athletes compete at the U23 Junior World Ski Championships in Lillehammer, Norway.

Wilkie, 18, was making her first international ap-

pearance. She trains with Bond at SilverStar Resort. She said working with Glenn has been a great experience.

"He has been by my side helping me get sponsors, during my highs and lows of racing and training, and waxing my skis to make sure they're perfect for every race," she added.

She placed 18th in the sprint event and 29th in the 20-kilometre race — results Bond described as impressive for a first international outing. He praised Wilkie as a resilient athlete who pushes through challenges with determination.

"She's mentally tough and has a lot of grit," he said. "To see her progress and do well is incredible. It's been really fun and rewarding watching her compete and I'm over the moon happy for her. Her future is extremely bright."

The championships were also historic for Team Canada, which posted record-setting results, with Wilkie claiming this as a highlight of her adventure.

"Our Juniors achieved some of the best results that we've seen in a while, and I'm so proud to have been a part of our amazing results," she said.

Continued on page 14

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# From Stony Mountain to Hollywood: Animator Jane Baer leaves lasting legacy

By Lana Meier

A pioneering force in animation with roots in Manitoba is being remembered as a trailblazer whose work touched generations and helped shape the animation industry.

Jane Shattuck-Takamoto-Baer passed away Feb. 16, 2026, at her home in Van Nuys, Calif., at the age of 91, leaving behind a legacy that impacted countless lives through her work.

Born Oct. 30, 1934, in Winnipeg, Baer was raised in Stony Mountain, where her passion for art took hold early. She loved to draw and followed in her father's artistic footsteps. Her father, Theodore "Ted" Shattuck, was a letter artist with Brigdens in Winnipeg who worked on projects including the Eaton's catalogue before losing his job after 20 years due to advancing technology.

From a young age, Baer was known for her independent nature. Described by family as "a going concern," she attended St. Mary's Academy for Girls but was expelled before graduating after being caught sneaking out — an early glimpse of the bold personality that would define her life.

After high school, Baer travelled west to Vancouver, where she worked before heading to California. Following a summer spent travelling across the United States and meeting extended family — many for the first time — she returned home and convinced her father to send her to art school.

Recognizing her talent, he agreed. Baer enrolled at the Art Center College of Design in Pasadena, launching what would become a groundbreaking career in animation.



Jane Shattuck-Takamoto-Baer was born Oct. 30, 1934, and passed away Feb. 16, 2026, at the age of 91 years.

"She was always drawing and designing posters," recalled her brother Gerald Shattuck, who also remembered visiting her in California and witnessing firsthand the life she built through her art.

In 1955, Baer entered Walt Disney Productions as an assistant animator on *Sleeping Beauty* (1959), working under legendary animator Marc Davis on Princess Aurora. She worked alongside members of the famed "Nine Old Men" and was trained to the highest standards of draftsmanship and performance-based animation.

While at Disney, she met her first husband, fellow animator Iwao Takamoto.

She later expanded her career into television and commercial animation, working with Ed Graham Animation and Pantomime Studios in the layout department, contributing to productions including *Skyhawks*, *Speed Racer* and *Hot Wheels*.

At Filmation, she continued layout work on animated series including *Aquaman* (1967) and *Journey to the Center of the Earth* (1967), before returning to Disney in 1975, where she worked as an assistant animator on the villain Medusa in *The Rescuers* (1977) alongside renowned animator Milt Kahl.

Her Disney credits also included *The Fox and the Hound* (1981), *Mickey's Christmas Carol* (1983) and *The Black*



TRIBUNE PHOTOS SUBMITTED

Jane Shattuck-Takamoto-Baer (right) and Floyd Norman (left) are honoured with the Animation Guild Golden Award, joined by animation historian Mindy Johnson (right), in recognition of their outstanding contributions to the industry.

*Cauldron* (1985).

During the 1980s, Baer also freelanced as a storyboard artist for Hanna-Barbera on television series including *The Smurfs* and *The Fonz and the Happy Days Gang*.

In 1984, she co-founded Baer Animation with her second husband, Dale Baer. Based in Studio City, Calif., the company became one of the most respected independent animation studios in Hollywood and one of the few fully self-contained animation facilities in the United States, housing departments for animation, digital ink and paint, compositing, sound recording, effects and camera services.

Among its most notable achievements was its work on *Who Framed Roger Rabbit* (1988), where Baer served as supervising character animator for Benny the Cab and oversaw the creation of the entire Toontown sequences.

The studio's camera department handled sequences for *The Little Mermaid* (1989) and *The Prince and the Pauper* (1990), as well as work on *Rover Dangerfield* (1991), *FernGully: The Last Rainforest* (1992) and *The Swan Princess*

(1994), in addition to numerous Warner Bros. and Hanna-Barbera projects.

Baer's work extended beyond animation roles. She served as an animation supervisor or producer on films including *Fletch Lives* (1989), *Tummy Trouble* (1989), *Last Action Hero* (1993) and *The Beautician and the Beast* (1997), wrote and was executive producer of *Annabelle's Wish* (1997), was an animation producer on *Tom & Jerry: The Movie* (1992), managed important sequences on *The Lion King* (1994), and worked as a character designer on *Aladdin and the Magic Lamp* (1982), along with many other credits.

Her company also designed the animated canopy for the Fremont Street Experience in Las Vegas in 1995 — a pioneering example of large-scale "light animation."

Throughout her career, Baer remained deeply involved in the animation community. She was a member of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, the Academy of Television Arts and Sciences, Women in Film and The Animation Guild. She was a founding member of Women in

Continued on page 13

## AI-Anon and AA Meetings Information

**Balmoral AI-Anon Family Group**  
Balmoral Community Hall basement  
6003 E MB-236, Balmoral, MB  
Contact: (204) 470-8972  
Meets every Wednesday 7-8 PM  
Everyone welcome

**Selkirk Red River AI-Anon Family Group**  
Christ Church Anglican  
227 McLean St., Selkirk, MB  
Contact: (204) 482-6287  
Meets every Monday 7-8 PM

**Teulon AA**  
Christian Education Building  
3rd Ave. SE, Teulon, MB  
Contact: (204) 461-0155  
Meets every Tuesday 8-9 PM

**Stonewall AA**  
Parochial Hall  
291 1st St. W., Stonewall, MB  
Contact Denis: (204) 981-7747  
Donna (204) 461-0892  
Meets every Sunday 7:30-8:30 PM

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> JANE BAER, FROM PG. 12

Animation and later served on its advisory board.

After retiring in the early 2000s, she continued to be active as a speaker at panels, festivals and in classrooms, where she loved to tell her stories, answer questions and share how animation had evolved over the decades.

Her contributions were widely recognized. She received a Golden Award honouring her 50-year career in animation, the Inkpot Award in 2022, and was featured in Mindy Johnson's *Ink & Paint: The Women of Walt Disney's Animation*. She also appeared in the documentary *Pencils vs. Pixels* (2023) and travelled on book tours with Johnson, meeting audiences and sharing her story.

Colleagues remembered her not only for her talent but for her warmth and spirit.

"Jane had a remarkable career that spanned decades. I will truly miss her," said longtime colleague Floyd Norman.

Animation historian Mindy Johnson described her as "one of our brightest lights of animation" and "a true trailblazer," whose work and personality inspired generations.

Despite her international success, Baer never forgot her Manitoba roots.

She and Dale Baer co-wrote and illustrated *The Easter Bunny Gang* (1983), dedicating it to the students of Stony Mountain Elementary School,

where her nieces attended. Inside each book was the inscription: "For the Children of the Stony Mountain Elementary School."

Her niece, Lauri-Jane, recalled a visit when the couple returned to the school to teach students how to draw Disney characters.

"They showed us step by step how to draw Mickey Mouse and Donald Duck. The kids loved having them there. I was so proud of my aunt and uncle," she said.

"I know that I've probably missed some things," she added. "She had a wonderful and intriguing life — the things she has done, the people she has met, and the childhoods she has made special because of her talent."

Baer is survived by her son Michael (Beth) of Van Nuys, her brother Gerald (Marlene), nieces Lauri-Jane (Jason) and Erin, great-niece Lily-Jane and great-nephew Justin, along with extended family in Stony Mountain.

She was predeceased by her parents, Ted and Lillian Shattuck of Winnipeg, and her grandparents, David and Ester Good of Stonewall.

A celebration of life will be held at a later date at The Smoke House Restaurant in Burbank, Calif., where family and friends will raise a toast in her honour with her favourite drink



Jane Shattuck-Takamoto-Baer is shown during her early years in animation in the late 1950s as she began a groundbreaking career in the industry.

— a Bombay Sapphire martini with two olives.

She loved her animals. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made in her name to the Best Friends Pet Adoption Center in Los Angeles or

Feral Friends Sanctuary in Winnipeg.

Remembered as smart, funny and endlessly creative, Baer leaves behind a legacy that lives on in everything she has done — and in the many lives she touched through her art.



Jane Shattuck-Takamoto-Baer stands at a street corner on the Walt Disney Studios lot, where the Stony Mountain native built a pioneering career in animation spanning more than five decades.

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# Local grower credits seminar for 1,000-pound pumpkin success

By Lana Meier

A friendly neighbourhood bet in Balmoral has grown into a full-fledged giant pumpkin rivalry — and one local grower is crediting a winter seminar for helping tip the scales in his favour.

Travis Williams captured both first and second place in this past season's Balmoral pumpkin growing competition, highlighted by a massive 1,022-pound entry. The success followed his attendance at the Manitoba Giant Growers Association's Giant Pumpkin Growers Seminar last year.

"A few years ago, my good neighbour Don Slater and I had a bet to see who could grow the biggest pumpkin," Williams said. "In 2024, five families from Balmoral decided to have a pumpkin growing contest. As the size of the pumpkins got bigger, so did the number of entries."

This past season, nine families entered what Williams describes as a "friendly" competition.

As interest intensified, so did the search for a competitive edge.

"The Giant Pumpkin Growers Seminar became of high interest for those looking for a competitive edge," he said.

The seminar, which returns March 28 at the Blair Sharpe Active Living Centre in Miami, features experienced growers sharing techniques on producing pumpkins weighing 1,000 pounds or more.

Williams said the event proved invaluable.

"The seminar is of tremendous value. Arthur Cameron is very welcoming. Milan Lukes is an excellent presenter," he said. "In addition to the table stakes of lots of sunshine, water and space, Milan gave helpful hints

on pumpkin placement, plant maintenance and fertility."

Despite the knowledge gained, the growing season came with challenges.

"Pumpkins love sunlight and water. The smoke from the forest fires reduced the amount of sunlight. May, June and July had very little rain," Williams said. "We can water our pumpkins, but irrigation is not a direct substitute for rainwater."

Even so, he knew he had something special in his patch.

"I could see that my pumpkins were much bigger this year, but I was surprised with how much they weighed," he said. "My dad thought we might have underestimated their size when he could feel the weight of the pumpkin on the tractor when we picked them up to move them."

The competition itself added to the excitement.

"It was kind of like a game of poker," Williams said with a laugh. "There was a lot of posturing, embellishing and bluffing throughout the growing season. We never saw each other's pumpkins until the official weigh-off. We then had to show our hands as we weighed each grower's pumpkins one at a time. The Slater barn was filled with music, cheers and laughter."

When the final weights were announced, Williams stood atop the podium — twice.

"It was rewarding to be on the medal podium holding the championship belt with my family," he said. "Marc Van Hussen and family brought home the bronze with a pumpkin that was more than twice the size of last year's winner."

groomed trails connecting towns and cities.

"The cross-country skiing culture there is unbelievable," he said. "It's an absolute dream — a true cross-country skiing paradise."

During his visit to Lillehammer, Bond also discovered a personal connection to the area. His great-grandmother once lived there, making the trip even more meaningful.

This was not Bond's first experience coaching on the international stage.

Since beginning his career at Silver-Star and launching his own private coaching business, he has helped host World Cup events near the resort, assisted during the 2010 Olympic Games in Vancouver and coached an athlete who competed at the 2018



TRIBUNE PHOTOS SUBMITTED

The Manitoba Giant Growers Association will host its annual Giant Pumpkin Growers Seminar March 28 at the Blair Sharpe Active Living Centre in Miami, offering tips, techniques and free seeds for aspiring growers.

The leap in size from one year to the next was dramatic. In the previous season, the largest pumpkin weighed under 200 pounds. This year, the top three pumpkins tipped the scales at 1,022 pounds, 734 pounds and 414 pounds.

"Everyone grew bigger pumpkins," Williams said.

He strongly encourages others to attend the upcoming seminar.

"Having the correct genetics is super important to grow a giant pumpkin," he said, noting that free seeds are provided. "Art, Milan and other growers are very approachable. The seminar is a must."

For those who may find the idea intimidating, Williams offers simple advice.

"If you're committed to implementing the best practice, be prepared to commit the time," he said. "And remember, no different than farming, that you'll learn something new every year."

The Giant Pumpkin Growers Seminar runs from 1 to 3 p.m. March 28 in Miami. Admission requires an MGGGA membership for growers, while others are welcome to attend by donation. Memberships cost \$10 for individuals or \$15 for families. Free refreshments and snacks will be provided.

## > WORLD SKI CHAMPIONSHIPS, FROM PG. 11

"I found a lot of inspiration coming back from these races because I know there is more competition out there, and that I have so much potential to improve."

Among her role models are Alison Mackie, who was named the U23 World Cup leader.

While Bond does not coach Mackie directly, he still played a small role in her journey to the championships. After racing in the Vasaloppet, he drove Mackie and her coach from Sweden to Norway for the competition.

Overall, Bond said his time in Europe has been phenomenal, particularly because Sweden and Norway are considered the global heart of cross-country skiing. The countries boast thousands of kilometres of

Olympic Games.

Bond said he always suspected coaching would play a role in his life. He enrolled in his first coaching course at just 16 years old while still living in Teulon.

What began as a small side interest eventually grew into an international coaching career — one he says he wouldn't trade for anything.

"I'm doing what I love and I can't believe I get paid to do this," he said. "Yes, there are hard days, but overall I enjoy most of my time working. It's not hard work when you love what you do."

Bond not only coaches his athletes but often trains alongside them. He describes himself as someone who loves nature and the outdoors — a perfect fit for a sport that takes place in some of the world's most scenic environments.

Training takes place year-round, with much of the work done in the summer months through roller skiing, trail running and cycling.

Bond still has a few events remaining to close out the 2026 racing season before taking a short two-week break in April. In May, he and his athletes will return to training as they begin preparing for the next season.

Looking ahead, Bond hopes to continue building on Wilkie's success while inspiring his athletes to pursue their goals.

"The biggest thing I tell them is to dream big," he said. "We are all capable of dreaming, and making that dream is step one. Once you set your mind to it, passion and perseverance can take you a long way. I believe anything is possible if you put your mind to it."

# Teulon council considers request to set up vehicle storage compound



TRIBUNE PHOTO SUBMITTED

Rockwood Wrecking and Recovery is seeking conditional use approval to set up a storage compound area along Highway 7.

By Jennifer McFee

A proposed vehicle storage compound in Teulon is being met with mixed reactions.

Rockwood Wrecking and Recovery is seeking conditional use approval to set up a 190-foot by 100-foot storage compound area enclosed by a commercial grade slatted chain link fence. The base of the compound would be limestone and gravel. The property is located along Provincial Trunk Highway 7 and is surrounded by Petro Canada to the north as well as residential properties to the south, east and west.

"There would be no need for parking outside of the compound as we would be able to drive directly into the compound itself and drop vehicles. Parking stalls would be on the west and east sides of the compound," states the letter of intent.

"The vehicles being stored would be vehicles that we are picking up for Manitoba Public Insurance and vehicle impoundment. Some vehicles may have minor damage or no damage at all — these vehicles will either be 'seized vehicles' or vehicles that are being held on behalf of bylaw enforcement."

For damaged vehicles, spill containment practices would be in place using spill kits and absorbent materials to prevent any potential leaks.

The vehicles wouldn't be dismantled on the property, nor would they be stacked or put on racking. A maximum of 50 vehicles would be stored on site.

"The current property has some greenery throughout — we would be

Continued on page 19

# Tax tips for tradespeople: Keeping more of what you earn

For contractors, welders, HVAC technicians and others in the skilled trades, tax season can be more complex than simply reporting income. With a mix of job sites, equipment costs and, in many cases, self-employment income, understanding what can be claimed is key to keeping more of what you earn.

One of the most important areas to focus on is expenses. Tools, safety gear and work-related equipment are often eligible deductions, provided they are used to earn income. Larger purchases may need to be claimed over time through capital cost allowance, rather than all at once. Keeping detailed receipts and records is essential to support these claims.

Vehicle use is another major consideration. Many tradespeople travel regularly between job sites or transport tools and materials. A portion of vehicle expenses — including fuel, maintenance, insurance and depreciation — may be deductible based on business use. Maintaining an accurate mileage log is one of the best ways to ensure these claims are properly supported.

For those who are self-employed or operate small businesses, additional deductions may apply. This can include a portion of home office expenses if administrative work is done from home, as well as costs related to insurance, licensing, ad-

vertising and professional fees. Staying organized throughout the year makes tax time far more manageable.

Income reporting is equally important. Unlike employees who have tax deducted at source, self-employed individuals are responsible for setting aside funds to cover income tax and Canada Pension Plan contributions. Failing to plan for this can lead to unexpected balances owing at tax time.

Tradespeople may also be eligible for specific credits. For example, the tradesperson's tools deduction allows eligible employees to claim the cost of certain tools, while apprentices in designated trades may qualify for additional supports. Knowing what applies to your situation can make a meaningful difference.

Good record-keeping isn't just about compliance — it also provides a clearer picture of your financial health. Tracking income and expenses regularly can help identify opportunities to improve profitability and plan for future investments.

Tax season doesn't have to be stressful. With the right approach and a clear understanding of available deductions and obligations, tradespeople can file with confidence and focus on what they do best.

After all, the goal isn't just to file a return — it's to make sure your hard work is working for you.



### Spring has Sprung! Get your pets spring ready with the following tips!

#### 1. Start flea and tick prevention

Parasites are probably the biggest concern pet owners have during the warmer seasons. If your dog or cat isn't on a year-round regimen of flea and tick medication, start it up a few weeks before spring arrives. Always check with your veterinarian, of course.

#### 2. Start heartworm medication

Heartworms can cause serious issues, just like fleas and ticks. Year-round heartworm preventative care is recommended because treating the condition once it has started can be very costly. Visit your veterinarian and start your furry pal on medication or a preventative care routine.

#### 3. Make sure vaccinations are up to date

While you're at the veterinarian preparing your dog or cat for parasite battle, make sure his or her vaccines are current. Warmer weather means more social contact and trips to the park, which increases your dog's risk of contagious diseases like Corona, Bordatella or DHLPP (distemper, hepatitis, leptospirosis bacteria, parainfluenza, and parvovirus). It's a good idea to make a copy of your pet's vaccination history and schedule from your veterinarian's records.

#### 4. Watch for seasonal allergies

If your furry pals are constantly itching, have red, irritated skin from hives and rashes, can't stop licking themselves and rubbing their faces, or are losing hair, they may be showing signs of an allergic reaction.

Like humans, cats and dogs can be sensitive to grass and pollen spores. To help prevent outbreaks, monitor the pollen count in your area and once your cat or dog comes in from outside, wipe their paws well with a cool towel.

#### 5. Don't spring into the season

After a winter cooped up inside, it may be hard to contain your and your pet's excitement to get outside. Ease into the season, however. Dogs don't often know their own limits and can become overly exhausted quickly. Heat stroke is also a danger, especially in the first weeks of warm weather when your furry family member isn't used to higher temperatures yet.

For the first few weeks, take shorter walks. If your dog is chomping at the bit you can always go out more frequently. Before you know it, he'll be in shape for warmer weather activities and welcome summer with open paws.



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# First goose arrives at Oak Hammock Marsh

By Jennifer McFee

Spirits are soaring for *Tribune* reporter Jennifer McFee, who closely guessed the arrival of the first goose of the year at Oak Hammock Marsh.

Each year, Oak Hammock Marsh organizes a contest asking participants to guess the date and time of the arrival of the first Canada goose on site. An employee of the Wetland Discovery Centre at Oak Hammock Marsh must see or verify the goose, which needs to be located within the physical limits of the site's wildlife management area. The winner receives a one-year family membership to the Wetland Discovery Centre, along with a plush Canada goose.

Your local reporter guessed the first goose would arrive at 10:07 a.m. on March 10. Indeed, the first goose arrived that day — but two minutes earlier at 10:05 a.m. The next-nearest guess was 10 a.m.

In total, 170 people took a guess in this year's contest, which has been running annually since it launched in 1993.

Besides being a fun tradition, the contest also serves several meaningful purposes tied to nature observation, community engagement and wetland conservation.

"The return of the Canada geese celebrates a change of season. It is one of the best signs that winter is ending on the Prairies. The contest builds excitement around this," said Jacques Bourgeois of Oak Hammock Marsh.

"It gets visitors actively looking and listening for migrating birds, which leads to wanting to learn more about migration, wetlands and the importance of habitats like the marsh. As a major stopover along the Mississippi Flyway, the marsh plays a crucial role during migration. The contest highlights that fact in a fun way. Whether it's families, birders or school groups — we had a few this year — entering their guesses, the contest creates a sense of connection and friendly competition."

At the same time, the contest introduces the idea of tracking wildlife observations, which Bourgeois says is central to conservation.

"Noticing the 'first sighting' helps real scientific monitoring of migration patterns," he said.

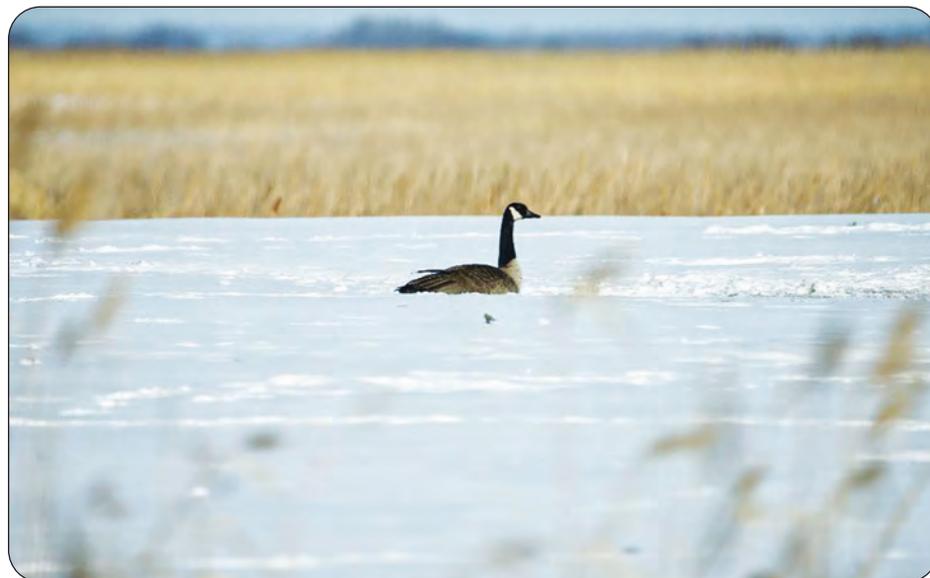
"As a matter of fact, we also keep track of every bird species' first sightings of the year in a friendly staff competition. Our First Goose of the Year contest turns a natural event into an engaging experience that connects people with wetlands."

During spring migration, tens of thousands of geese return to Oak



TRIBUNE PHOTOS SUBMITTED

Ricardo, Sammy, Jennifer and Jacob are enjoying their family membership for the Wetland Discovery Centre at Oak Hammock Marsh, which they won for having the closest guess in the First Goose of the Year contest. The first goose sighting of 2026 took place at the marsh on March 10 at 10:05 a.m.



The first Canada Goose arrived at Oak Hammock Marsh on March 10.

Hammock Marsh as they head north to their nesting grounds. It starts in early to mid-March, when a few hundred geese arrive. The first goose of the year is usually spotted at Oak Hammock Marsh around mid-March. The earliest arrival was on Feb. 21 at 1:45 p.m. in 2017, while the latest arrival was on April 6 at 7 p.m. in 1996.

From mid- to late March, numbers quickly rise to 5,000 to 10,000 daily. Early to mid-April is the peak of spring migration, when up to 20,000 to 40,000 Canada geese can be seen daily.

By late April, numbers taper off as the flocks continue north, but several thousand geese might still stop over. Only a few hundred will remain and nest at Oak Hammock Marsh.

Bourgeois explains why the spring numbers are lower than the fall numbers.

"In spring, geese migrate in smaller groups and don't linger as long. Finding good nesting sites drives them north quickly, whereas fall is about feeding heavily and resting, which is why hundreds of thousands build up then," he said.

"Migration seasons, both spring and fall, are fantastic times to visit the marsh. While fall migration is truly a sight to behold, with hundreds of thousands of migrating waterfowl filling the sky and the marsh, spring migration can be just as exciting, with the arrival of each species inching us closer to warmer days."



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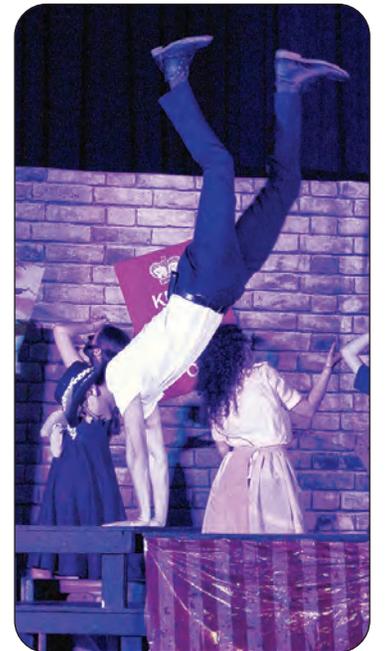
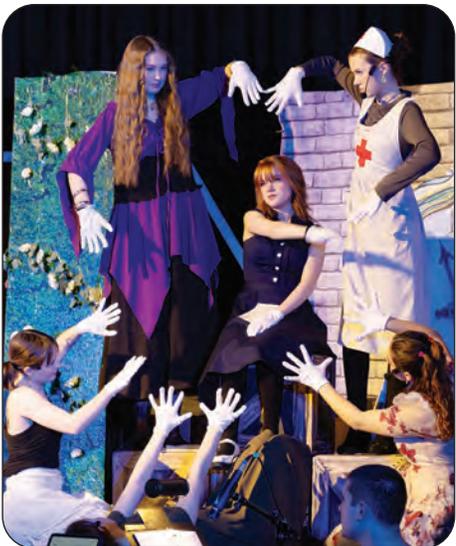
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# Alice by Heart



TRIBUNE PHOTOS BY JO-ANNE PROCTER

Talented drama students from Collège Stonewall Collegiate took to the stage last week with their production of *Alice by Heart*, offering a bold and imaginative retelling of a classic story at the Quarry Park Heritage Arts Centre. Set against the backdrop of wartime London, the musical follows Alice Spencer, portrayed by Kristen Greigson, and her ailing friend Alfred, played by Connor Phillips, as they escape the trauma of a tube station shelter into the fantasy world of Wonderland to cope with loss and uncertainty. The cast delivered emotionally driven performances that balanced moments of whimsy with powerful themes of grief, love and resilience.



## > STORAGE COMPOUND, FROM PG. 15

removing and re-placing this greenery with shrubbery and trees lining the north and west side of the property. The highway-facing portion will also have some greenery, with signage stating our business name, address and phone number," states the letter of intent.

"The appearance of the property will be well hidden once the greenery and shrubbery is grown in. In the meantime, the fence will be constructed of commercial-grade chain link with black slats that will create a barrier of being able to see inside the compound. The height of the compound will block most of the vehicles and the line of sight directly from the highway. There will be no environmental impact on our neighbourhood surroundings."

The business would mainly operate from 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Monday to Friday, with occasional after-hours access for employees only. Access to the compound would be by appointment only.

"The frequency for movement in and out of the compound will vary daily," states the letter of intent. "Access to the location could be two or

three times in one day but could only be two to three a week. This would vary depending on the amount of accidents and seizures within the local area."

Manitoba Transportation and Infrastructure has reviewed the proposal and advised that traffic generated by the proposed vehicle storage compound might impact the operation and safety of Provincial Trunk Highway 7 and has requested that the applicant provide preliminary traffic projections for the development.

The entire property is zoned commercial highway in the Town of Teulon's zoning bylaw. However, only the first 190 feet is designated highway commercial area in the South Interlake Planning District's development plan, with the rest designated as a residential area.

"This split designation is what currently limits the use of the entire property for commercial development," states the letter of intent. "This reflects on our site plan, showing the compound at the front of the property within that zoning area. This will ensure we are complying with both the Teulon zoning bylaw and South Inter-

lake Planning Development Plan."

The South Interlake Planning District noted that several issues should be confirmed prior to issuing a permit, including site drainage, screening, exterior lighting design, commercial signage, site maintenance and security. SIPD also recommended that council consider re-quiring a development agreement with the town as a condition of approval.

An online petition is circulating in the community in opposition to the proposed conditional use. At press time, it had more than 100 signatures.

"One of our primary concerns is the environmental impact. Wrecking yards are known for potentially leaking hazardous fluids, which can seep into the soil and contaminate water supplies. For many of us, our homes rely on well water, making this a direct threat to our health and safety. Studies have shown that chemicals from junkyards can pollute local groundwater, leading to severe health consequences for community members," states the petition.

"Furthermore, the introduction of a wrecking yard may increase unnecessary traffic and noise pollution, destroying the small-town peacefulness

we cherish. Residents like myself fear the potential escalation in crime associated with these businesses, which could fundamentally alter the character of our quiet neighbourhood."

Those who sign the petition also have the option to add a comment.

"My parents and I have lived in Teulon for 39 years, we love this town and we along with my friends and other Teulon residents don't want to see a compound in town and ruin the community of Teulon, my parents and I along with my friends are totally against compound being built in our town," states one comment.

On social media, one commenter expressed support for the proposal.

"Rockwood Wrecking and Recovery is one of the best companies around!" states the post. "The owners are fabulous and very community oriented! This is amazing for Teulon!"

A public hearing took place on Tuesday, March 10. Attendance included two people in support, nine people in opposition and seven for information.

Discussions are scheduled to take place at the March 25 committee of the whole meeting, and council will likely make their decision during their April 14 regular meeting.

## > QUARRY, FROM PG. 8

1990, when water levels dropped significantly over several days and a hole was later found in the bedrock.

Grayson said the effects of blasting can extend well beyond the immediate site, depending on factors such as blast size, atmospheric conditions and local geology.

"The science is out there — effects from a quarry blast can be felt miles away," she said.

She added that more recent blasting has continued to affect her property, located roughly 1.5 miles from existing quarry activity.

"In about six weeks, my house has been struck from blasting three times," she said. "My dogs jump and bark — you can feel it."

Grayson said her family previously attempted to investigate the issue, but lacked the resources to pursue legal

action against a large company.

"We cannot afford to be complacent here," she said.

Terrence Small, who lives just south of the proposed site at the corner of Road 78 and Road 4E, said his primary concern is the safety of his young family, particularly the risk of fly rock from blasting. Small told council his home sits within roughly 150 to 200 metres of the property, with portions of his yard extending even closer to the proposed operation.

"My kids are outside all the time — that's why we moved to the country," he said. "What is the cost of my children's safety?"

While acknowledging the need for industry, Small urged council to go beyond the provincial minimum setback, asking that the buffer distance be increased from 400 metres to at least 600 metres to account for worst-case scenarios and the unpredictability of blasting.

Samantha McKewon raised concerns about traffic safety, citing a personal loss involving a gravel truck.

"With 25 trucks a day, six days a week, those odds are way higher than they were before," she said. "There will be so many families on that road intersecting with those trucks."

Maggie Fitzpatrick highlighted the expansion of quarry operations over time, noting the footprint has grown from smaller than the Town of Stonewall in 1984 to approximately 13 square kilometres today.

"We can't allow the quarries to expand further than this current footprint," she said. "It's time in Rockwood that we draw the line."

Radio host and Black Bear Rescue volunteer Ace Burpee said the facility has widespread public support.

"To have that not exist anymore would be a horrendous look for Manitoba," he said.

Sue Cieslar shared her family's expe-

rience living near multiple quarries, saying they were eventually forced to sell their farm at a loss.

"We were totally surrounded, and no one was ever going to buy our property," she said. "You can't make it work with a quarry."

Wayne Peters raised concerns about groundwater impacts.

"What happens when it's damaged and we no longer have a water source?" he said.

Following the presentations, Suderman was expected to respond to questions from attendees, but that portion of the meeting was adjourned before responses could be provided. Questions raised included concerns about aquifer protection, drill hole depth and whether supporters of the project had financial ties to the industry.

Council is expected to consider the application at a future meeting.

# Jets stay alive with Game 4 win in MMJHL playoffs

By Annaliese Meier

The Stonewall Jets kept their season alive with a crucial 5-2 victory over the River East Royal Knights in Game 4 of their MMJHL playoff series on March 20 at Terry Sawchuk Arena.

Facing elimination after dropping the first three games of the series, the Jets delivered a complete effort to cut

the series deficit to 3-1.

River East opened the series with a 6-3 win on March 13 in Stonewall, followed by a narrow 4-3 victory on home ice on March 15. The Royal Knights then took firm control with a 7-4 win in Game 3 on March 17, despite the Jets outshooting them 47-24.

Karson King scored twice in that

Game 3 loss, with Brody Stovin and Kai Smith adding singles. Stonewall showed flashes of momentum with three quick first-period goals but could not contain River East's offence, which capitalized three times on the power play.

With their backs against the wall in Game 4, the Jets responded with ur-

gency. King led the way with a hat trick, striking twice in the opening period before sealing the win with an empty-net goal late in the third. Cohen Cheung and Gavin Holod also scored, while Peyton Bateman recorded two assists.

# sports & recreation

INSIDE > OUTSIDE > UPSIDE DOWN

## SEMHL unveils new logo, celebrates all-time statistical leaders

By Annaliese Meier

With the 75th SEMHL finals upon us, what better time to look back at those players that have made the South Eastern Manitoba Hockey League such an outstanding league.

The SEMHL is honouring its history while looking ahead to the future, recently unveiling a new league logo alongside an updated list of its all-time statistical leaders — recognizing some of the most accomplished players to ever compete in the senior men's circuit.

Leading the way among career regular season goal scorers is Rob Hamm, who suited up for Carman and Morden and finished his SEMHL career with 376 goals. Hamm also sits atop the league's all-time points list with 764, further cementing his place as one of the most dominant offensive players in league history.

Close behind in the goal-scoring race is Shane Moffatt (Portage/Notre Dame) with 349, followed by Greg Waldvogel of Portage with 311. Other notable names in the top 10 include Mike Mutcheson (291), Dale Rempel (286) and Mike Kehler (279), all of whom were consistent offensive threats throughout their careers.

While Hamm leads in goals and points, Marlin Vanrobaeys of Morden and Winkler holds the distinction as the league's all-time assist leader with 466 helpers. Vanrobaeys also ranks



PHOTO SUBMITTED

With the 75th SEMHL finals underway, the league has unveiled a new logo while recognizing its all-time statistical leaders, celebrating the players who have helped shape one of Manitoba's premier senior hockey leagues.

second in career points with 740, highlighting his playmaking ability and longevity.

Ryan Dyck, Troy Ehnes and Mike Kehler round out the top five in assists, with each surpassing the 300-assist mark during their time in the league.

The SEMHL's all-time points leaderboard mirrors many of the same names, with Hamm (764), Vanrobaeys (740) and Moffatt (674) leading the way, followed by Waldvogel and Kehler. Dale Rempel, Ryan Dyck and

Mike Mutcheson also rank among the league's most productive players.

Physical play has long been a hallmark of senior hockey, and that is reflected in the penalty minutes category. Warren's Darrin Husak tops the list with 1,225 career penalty minutes and remains active, continuing to add to his total. Mark Heinrichs and Ryan Dyck follow, while several other long-time SEMHL players — including Phil Letkeman — are still climbing the ranks.

Durability and commitment are highlighted in the games played category, where Darryl McElroy leads all players with 380 career games. Active players Scott Corbett and Husak are also among the leaders, demonstrating their long-standing presence in

the league.

Longevity is further recognized in the years played category, with Wade Duncan of Warren leading the way at 22 seasons. Husak (20 seasons) and Corbett (19) are close behind and continue to build on their careers.

The updated statistical lists serve as a tribute to the players who have shaped the SEMHL over the decades, showcasing not only elite skill but also the dedication and passion required to compete at a high level in Manitoba's senior hockey ranks.

With a new logo marking the next chapter — and the 75th finals now underway — the SEMHL continues to celebrate its rich tradition while highlighting the players who helped build it.

## Wildcats host AA provincials



TRIBUNE PHOTOS BY JO-ANNE PROCTER

The Warren Wildcats hosted the 2025–26 Manitoba High Schools Athletic Association Varsity Girls AA Provincial Basketball Championships March 19–21, welcoming eight teams from across the province. The host Wildcats opened with a thrilling 65-64 win over Prairie Mountain/Nellie McClung before falling 114-40 to the Souris Sabres and 78-40 to the Immanuel Christian Falcons. Souris went on to capture the provincial title with a 62-52 victory over the Glenboro/Carberry/Baldur Panthers in the final. Wildcats game stars were Mackenzie Boonstra, Veronica Varnes and Kiera Schutz. Pictured: Veronica Varnes drives for a layup while Kiera Schutz prepares to shoot a free throw. Missing from the photos is Mackenzie Boonstra.

### > JETS, FROM PG. 19

Stonewall built a 3-1 lead after the first period and extended their advantage in the second before locking things down defensively. Goaltender Spencer Hunnam was outstanding, stopping 46 of 48 shots for a .958 save percentage.

River East generated plenty of chances, outshooting the Jets 48-28,

but were limited to goals from Cody Allen and Liam Urciuoli.

Game 5 was scheduled for March 23 in Stonewall, with the result unavailable at press time. If the Jets extend the series, Game 6 will be played March 25 in River East, followed by a potential Game 7 on March 27 back in Stonewall.

### MMJHL PLAYOFFS - LET'S FILL THE HANGAR

*Come out and support the Jets*



**\*Game 6 Stonewall Jets Playoffs  
Wednesday, March 25**

Stonewall Jets at River East Knights  
Terry Sawchuk Arena  
Puck drop 7:30 p.m.

**\*Game 7 Friday, March 27**

River East Royal Knights at Stonewall Jets  
Veterans Memorial Sports Complex  
Puck drop 8 p.m.

*\*if necessary*

**Fast-paced junior hockey • Family fun for all ages**

# Skate Stony Mountain hosts provincial championship



Skate Stony Mountain skaters that earned gold medals, left to right: Molly Kingsley (Showcase 1), Clara Kingsley (Star 2 Elements) and Danica Bruel (Star 4 Free Skate).



TRIBUNE PHOTOS BY JO-ANNE PROCTER AND SUBMITTED Skate Stony Mountain hosted the Skate Manitoba Provincial Championship from March 20–22 at the Veterans Memorial Sports Complex and Ice Palace in Stonewall, welcoming more than 500 participants who delivered personal best performances and earned medals across categories. A highlight of the weekend included a Saturday meet and greet with Manitoba athlete Ava Kemp, who, alongside partner Yohnatan Elizarov, recently won gold at the 2026 World Junior Figure Skating Championships in Tallinn, Estonia — becoming Canada's first world junior pairs champions since 1978. Pictured is the Summit Synchro Skating Team, which placed second in Star 8 Synchro.



Katie Roy and Rochelle Steinmetz won silver medals in Intro Pairs.



Stonewall Skating Club's Leona Learning and Zoey Brook earned gold in Group Showcase 1.



Local dignitaries, organizers and a Skate Manitoba representative gathered for the official opening ceremony of the 2026 Skate Manitoba Provincials. Pictured, left to right: Skate Stony Mountain's Ava Yurick, Shannon Roy and Nicole Shymko, Lakeside MLA Trevor King, Stonewall councillor Ron Maryniuk, Rockwood councillor Debbie Pansky and Skate Manitoba representative Amber Lotz.



Left to right: Gaia Turner, Anna Hoff, Lacey Learning and Hayden Young placed first in Group Showcase 3. Turner also placed third in STAR 6 FreeSkate, Learning placed third in STAR 7 Artistic and Young won a gold medal in STAR 2 FreeSkate. Stonewall Skating Club coach Keesha McCutcheon earned a silver medal in Adult 1 Synchro.



Local skaters enjoyed meeting 2026 Junior World Figure Skating Champion Ava Kemp. Pictured left to right: Molly Kingsley, Sofia Lavrova, Ava Kemp, Clara Kingsley, Ava Yurick, Mya Yurick and Sophia Yurick.

## Stonewall's Wheddon wins MJHL scoring title after stellar senior year with top-ranked Nighthawks

By Kieran Reimer

There wasn't much more Hayden Wheddon could have envisioned for his final year of junior hockey.

Playing on one of the top Junior A clubs in his home province while finishing as the top scorer in the entire Manitoba Junior Hockey League highlighted both the personal and team accomplishments of the 2025-26 season for the 20-year-old from Stonewall.

A left winger for the MJHL's Niverville Nighthawks, Wheddon scored 36 goals and added 54 assists for 90 points in 57 games during the recently completed regular season.

The totals helped him capture the Mike Ridley Trophy, awarded annually to the league's top scorer, making him the first Nighthawk to accomplish the feat.

"It's just a lot of the team kind of thing, too. It goes out to them and my coaches for sure, just pushing me every day to be better and giving me the confidence to play how I want and do what I want, so I think that helped a lot for sure," said Wheddon.

This season marked his fourth full campaign in junior hockey after joining Niverville full time in 2022-23 as a Grade 12 student. He previously lit it up offensively in U15 and U18 AAA with the Interlake Lightning, which led to him being drafted by both the MJHL and the Western Hockey League in 2020.

After his first junior campaign with Niverville, Wheddon moved on to the Brandon Wheat Kings of the WHL, where he spent the entirety of the 2023-24 season.

He then returned to Niverville last season, where he began building chemistry with his current centre, Merik Boles, and former minor hockey teammate Adam Vigfusson, who plays right wing on their line.

All three are seniors this season and have formed one of the top-scoring lines in the MJHL. Their success has mirrored that of the team, which finished the regular season with a 51-6-1 record to claim first place.

"A big shoutout goes to Adam Vigfusson and Merik Boles," said Wheddon. "They're two very talented players, so it's not too hard when you're

playing with two guys like that who can see the ice well and play well. My coaches have been pushing me throughout the year and in the off-season, just trying to do what I can to be better for this year and having a good mindset going into every game."

With Wheddon, Vigfusson and Boles all in their final seasons of eligibility, the trio hopes the coming weeks of playoffs can provide a perfect sendoff before they move on to the next stage of their careers.

They will enter the Turnbull Cup playoffs seeking both the franchise's first championship and its first playoff series win. Awaiting them in the opening round is a best-of-seven matchup with the Winkler Flyers, the same team that eliminated them last year.

Wheddon said the team has felt strong support from the community all season, with home games regularly drawing crowds of at least 600 fans at the Niverville CRRC.

With the team's current success, those numbers are expected to climb. Wheddon hopes the group can feed off that energy and deliver an exciting playoff run.

"It's been lots of fun playing with this group of guys. We have a great team, great coaches and great people around us, whether it be trainers or members of the community. It all helps and contributes. It's a great spot to be and I'm just grateful for all of it," he said.

Niverville will host Games 1 and 3, along with potential Games 5 and 7 against Winkler. That home-ice advantage will carry throughout the postseason after the Nighthawks finished first overall.

On home ice, Niverville posted a 25-4 record, second only to the Steinbach Pistons, who went 26-3 at the Southeast Event Centre during the regular season.

Looking ahead to Winkler, Niverville knows it will need to maintain its strong play against a 34-20-2-2 Flyers squad that finished fourth in the MGEU East Division and is a perennial championship contender.

If Niverville learned anything from last year, it's that Winkler plays a physical style well suited to playoff hockey.

The Nighthawks dropped last year's series 4-2,



**TRIBUNE PHOTO SUBMITTED**  
Stonewall's Hayden Wheddon captured the MJHL scoring title with 90 points in 57 games this season while leading the Niverville Nighthawks to a first-place finish.

with a 3-2 double-overtime loss in Game 6 ending their season.

The clubs met six times this season, with Niverville winning five of those contests.

"They're a physical team, they've been good since the break and I think we've been getting better too," said Wheddon. "At the end of the season we went on a little stretch there with a couple of losses, but I think we found our groove again and we're back at it. We've just got to be physical too and be ready for them to have a big push. We've got to stick to our game and what we've been doing all year and just keep going with that."

## Balmoral Rec Hockey hosts Winnipeg Beach at jamboree day

By Annaliese Meier

Balmoral Rec Hockey welcomed teams from Winnipeg Beach for its annual jamboree on Saturday, March 21, filling the Balmoral Recreation Centre with a full day of minor hockey action.

Teams from the U7 through U18 divisions played multiple games throughout the day in a recreational format focused on participation and development.

The U18 matchups against the Balmoral Blizzards highlighted the schedule, drawing strong support from the stands and providing a competitive finish to the day.

"Events like this are a great reminder of what recreational hockey is all about — kids having fun, being active, and enjoying time with their teammates," said Balmoral Rec Hockey committee representative Jen Beirnes, who also thanked volunteers, players and families for their support.

The program continues to operate through volunteer coaches, managers and organizers, with community recreation in Balmoral dating back to the early 1970s.

Arena staff were also acknowledged for maintaining ice conditions and ensuring the event ran smoothly.



**TRIBUNE PHOTO BY CHRISTINE SCHMIDT**  
U9 players were among those taking part, enjoying the pace and excitement of the games while showcasing the fun-first atmosphere that defines rec hockey.

# sports & recreation

INSIDE > OUTSIDE > UPSIDE DOWN

## Rams rally to capture consolation



TRIBUNE PHOTO SUBMITTED

The Stonewall Rams claimed the 2025–26 Manitoba High Schools Athletic Association AAA basketball consolation championship with a narrow 61-58 victory over the Nelson McIntyre Torchbearers. The Rams opened the tournament with a strong 80-46 win over the Sanford Sabres before falling 99-60 to the Linden Christian Wings in their second game. Stonewall rebounded in the consolation final, edging the Torchbearers in a close contest to secure the title. Rams player Jake Bourcier was named Player of the Game in the consolation final. Linden Christian captured the provincial title with a 65-60 win over the R.D. Parker Trojans. Pictured left to right, back row: Edward Futz, Reis Meier, Easton Killbery, Justin Breul, Wyatt Mitchell, Ty Mitchell and Tyler Ammeter (coach); Front row: Mason Rainkie, Ashley Conrad, Myles Murray and Jake Bourcier.

## Stingers take tournament title



TRIBUNE PHOTO SUBMITTED

The Stonewall Stingers Grade 8 boys basketball team saved its best performance of the season for the Lockport Middle School Tier 2 boys basketball tournament, held March 13–14. The Stingers captured the tournament title with a 35–31 victory over River West Park in the championship game. Stonewall advanced to the final after edging Springs Christian Academy 33–30 in a tightly contested semifinal. Earlier in the tournament, the Stingers opened play with a win over host Lockport. Adding to the team's success, Stingers player Jagger Tesluck won the tournament's three-point shooting competition. Pictured left to right, back row: Ryleigh Gruhn (coach), Titus Boville, Cooper Dickey, Thomas Moffatt, Liam Kauk, Crew Corbett, Yuan Biantan and Zach Ward (coach). Front row: Jagger Tesluck, Hunter Krahn, Henry Gemmill, Asher Santos, Ryder Smart and James Noel.

## Strong turnout for Balmoral Curling Club men's bonspiel



TRIBUNE PHOTOS SUBMITTED

The Balmoral Curling Club hosted 24 teams for its annual men's bonspiel from March 5 to 8. Winning the first event were skip Jason Dodd, Kevin Braid (third), Bill Mott (second) and Adam Newcombe (lead). The second event champions included skip Craig Nichol, Ryan Smith (third), Gary Dodd (second) and Blair Dodd (lead). Taking the third event title were skip Marc Arnal, Nathan Arnal (third), Gerry Arnal (second) and Connor Van Hussen (lead). Organizers thanked volunteers for helping make the bonspiel a success, including Balmoral ice technician Geoff Snell and head chef Marg Watts.

# Blues rally to capture U11 A2 female city championship

By Annaliese Meier

The U11 A2 Blues capped a remarkable 2025-26 season with a dramatic comeback victory to claim the city championship.

The season began in unconventional fashion, as the team opened play without a full-time goaltender. Despite the challenge, the Blues went undefeated at the Robwest tournament with players rotating through the position before Reese Maxwell and Gracie Bergen stepped in to share goaltending duties moving forward.

The team faced strong competition at the Brandon Female Hockey Challenge in November, finishing with a 1-2-1 record, but found its stride after the Christmas break.

At the Stonewall tournament, the Blues showed their resilience. In the semifinal against Stars White, Hannah Corrigan scored shorthanded in overtime to secure a 3-2 win. The momentum carried into the final, where Emilia Lazo netted a power-play goal in overtime to lift the Blues to a 2-1 victory over Winkler.

The following weekend, the team added another strong showing with a 3-1 record at the Springfield tourna-

ment to finish third.

The Blues closed out the regular season in second place with a 13-3-2 record, scoring an impressive 107 goals in 18 games — 44 more than the next closest team.

Carrying the slogan “Passion Ignites the Blues” into the playoffs, the team opened with a 4-2 win over Niverville, followed by a 4-1 victory against Stars White. They advanced directly to the A-side final, where they defeated St. Adolphe 6-2.

The city championship final against Stars White proved to be a thriller. The Blues led 2-0 after the first period but trailed 4-2 after the second before mounting a comeback to win 6-5. Esmæ Chartrand led the offence with three goals, while Emilia Lazo and Scarlett Campbell added singles. Janey Gemmill scored the game-winning goal with just 20 seconds remaining.

The Blues finished the season with an overall record of 30-6-3. The turning point came at the Stonewall tournament, where the team found ways to win under pressure — a trait that carried through the playoffs.

The team also recognized Hannah



TRIBUNE PHOTO SUBMITTED

Members of the U11 A2 Blues celebrate after capturing the 2025-26 city championship with a 6-5 comeback win over Stars White. Back row, left to right: Johnny Lazo (assistant coach), Scarlett Campbell, Matt Wutzke (assistant coach), Kaleah Wutzke, Hannah Corrigan, Callie Davis, Annika Marohn, Lance Marohn (assistant coach), Rowyn Findlay and Brian Davis (head coach). Front row: Gracie Bergen, Reese Maxwell, Brooke Vodden, Tenley Lazo, Livie Chatfield, Janey Gemmill, Emilia Lazo, Esmæ Chartrand and Devon Hueging. Missing from the photo is Brett Chatfield (manager).

Corrigan and Scarlett Campbell as its graduating players moving up to the U13 level. Both were key leaders throughout the season.

The Blues coaching staff included head coach Brian Davis, assistant

coaches Lance Marohn, Johnny Lazo and Matt Wutzke, along with manager Brett Chatfield. The team also credited its parent group for strong support throughout the year.

## Blues capture city championship



TRIBUNE PHOTO SUBMITTED

The Stonewall Blues U15 A2 female team captured the Hockey Winnipeg city championship last Friday following a series of tightly contested playoff games. The Blues secured a 4-2 victory over the Stars in the championship final after previously edging the same team 2-1 in overtime in the semifinal. Earlier in the playoff run, Stonewall earned hard-fought wins over the Eagles (5-4), Polar Bears (2-0) and Steinbach (2-1) to advance to the final. Pictured, back row, left to right: Matt Fines (assistant coach), Garrett Gottfried (head coach), Olivia Potter, Rowyn Fines, Emma Sigvaldason, Ashlyn Huard, Lucia Borkowsky, Mackenzie Diell, Alyse Prystupa and Andrew Miller (assistant coach). Middle row: Brittney Miller, Deklynn Gottfried and Rory Stansell. Front row: Abigail Osborne and Brae Jimenez.

## Stonewall Blues city champs



TRIBUNE PHOTO SUBMITTED

Members of the U11A2 Stonewall Blues celebrate after an 8-5 victory over the River East Royals on Thursday, March 19 to win the Hockey Winnipeg A2 U11 City Championship for the 2025-26 season. During the playoff run, the Blues defeated the Seals White (7-3), Royals White (7-1), Winterhawks Blue (5-0) and Regents (5-1). The team opened the year with a tournament win in Brandon and finished with a 16-2 regular-season record. Pictured left to right, back row: Julian Morden, Brad Smith (coach), Jeff Spruyt (coach), Lee Oatway (coach), Ryan Frost (coach), Jen Sonnenberg (coach); Middle row: Davis Comte, Sebastian Noel, Tom Frost, Brody McFadyen, Jace Penniston, Grayson Hammond, Wyatt Smith; Front row: Jackson Oatway, Aden Kauk, Hayden Schilke and Brady Spruyt. Missing from the photo is Nash Lemieux.

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## THE RURAL MUNICIPALITY OF ARMSTRONG PUBLIC HEARING REGARDING THE 2026 FINANCIAL PLAN

In accordance with Section 162(2) of *The Municipal Act* the Rural Municipality of Armstrong shall hold a PUBLIC HEARING to present the 2026 Financial Plan for the Municipality on:

**Thursday, April 9, 2026 at 7:00 P.M.**  
**FRASERWOOD HALL**  
**10140 PR 231 Fraserwood, MB**

The Rural Municipality of Armstrong 2026 Financial Plan consists of:

- 1) The 2026 Operating Budget,
- 2) The 2026 Capital Budget,
- 3) An estimate of the Operating Revenue and Expenditures for the following fiscal year (2026), and
- 4) A five (5) year Capital Expenditure Program (2027-2031)

The purpose of the PUBLIC HEARING is to allow any interested person to make representation, ask questions, or register an objection in respect of the Rural Municipality of Armstrong 2026 Financial Plan.

Copies of the Financial Plan will be available for review and may be examined by any person on the Rural Municipality of Armstrong website at [www.rmofarmstrong.com](http://www.rmofarmstrong.com) or at the Municipal Office at Lot 55 Highway 17, Inwood, Manitoba during regular office hours.

Following the Financial Plan presentation Council will open a discussion regarding Ward Boundaries and possible changes to council structure for the Rural Municipality of Armstrong.

Dated this 19th day of March, 2026

Colleen Mayer

Chief Administrative Officer  
Rural Municipality of Armstrong

## RURAL MUNICIPALITY OF ROSSER THE RURAL MUNICIPALITY OF ROSSER PUBLIC HEARING

### 2026 FINANCIAL PLAN

In accordance with Section 162(2) of *The Municipal Act* the Council of the Rural Municipality of Rosser will hold a PUBLIC HEARING to present the 2026 Financial Plan for the Municipality at:

**6:00 P.M.**

**THURSDAY, APRIL 16, 2026**  
**ROSSER MUNICIPAL OFFICE**  
**0077E PR 221, Rosser**

The Rural Municipality of Rosser 2026 Financial Plan consists of:

- 1) the 2026 Operating Budget,
- 2) the 2026 Capital Budget,
- 3) an estimate of the operating revenue and expenditure for the 2026 fiscal year, and
- 4) a five year Capital Expenditure Program (2027-2031).

At this time the Council will present the proposed 2026 Financial Plan for the Municipality. The presentation will provide an overview of the proposed Financial Plan followed by a forum for questions and comments from the public. The purpose of the hearing is to allow any interested person to make a representation, ask questions or register an objection.

Copies of the proposed Financial Plan are available upon request at the Municipal Office, 77 E PR 221 in Rosser, Manitoba during regular office hours Monday to Friday between the hours of 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m.

Larry Wandowich  
Chief Administrative Officer  
Rural Municipality of Rosser

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

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# Announcements

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**OBITUARY**



**Olga Demery**  
July 18, 1930 - March 15, 2026

It is with heavy hearts, the family of Olga Demery announces her passing on March 15, 2026. She passed away peacefully with family by her side at Goodwin Lodge in Teulon.

Olga was predeceased by her parents James and Anna Hnatchuk, brother John, sister Marie and loving husband Bill Demery. Olga leaves to mourn her son Gordon (Shannon); daughters Lorraine (Joe) and Sharon (John); grandchildren Brigette, Charlene (Derek), Nadine (Rob), Corrine, Jason, Kristal and Evin; great-grandchildren Aiden, Lucas and Gavin.

Olga lived in Teulon her entire life, taking great pride in her yard and garden. Olga will be remembered as a hard worker on the farm as well as off the farm. She worked at the local bakery until going to Red River College for office administration, where she then worked at Dawsons

until she left to go back to work on the farm.

Once retired, she could be seen going to church, where she loved to sing. She was also fully involved with helping prepare for social activities at the Komarno Hall.

The family would like to extend special thanks to Dr. Loudon, the nurses and care team at Goodwin Lodge for taking great care of our mom and grandma.

Funeral service was held in Komarno Holy Trinity Ukrainian Church, Friday, March 20 at 10:30 a.m. Father Stefan Tyrawski officiated. Interment followed at St. Georges Cemetery.



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**OBITUARY**



**Winona Shupenia (Srutwa)**

Winona Shupenia (Srutwa), of Komarno, Manitoba, passed away peacefully at Gimli Hospital on Sunday, March 15, 2026, at the age of 88, with family by her side.

She is lovingly remembered by daughters Marlene (Dennis Boblinski), Donna (Steve Klym), Louise Shupenia (Lavallee), and Wendy (Craig Swanston); her grandchildren Jared and Jodi Lavallee, and Jennifer Swanston; brothers-in-law Mike (Rosalie) and Edward Shupenia; as well as numerous nieces, nephews, cousins, and friends.

She was predeceased by husband, Bill (William) Shupenia (2015); parents Tom and Margaret Srutwa; brothers Victor (Anne) and Tommy; and her son-in-law Lorne Lavallee (2024).

Winona was born on March 8, 1938 in Selkirk, Manitoba and was raised on the family farm near Winnipeg Beach. In 1956 she met the love of her life, Bill, at Crabby Steve's Dance Hall near Komarno. They were married on June 21, 1958 and built a life together farming and raising their family in Komarno.

Winona was a dedicated member of her community. She served as Vice President of the Komarno Sports Centre, Secretary-Treasurer of the Zbruch Community Centre, and was an active member of the Komarno Community Hall. In 1980, she made history as the first female school bus driver in the Interlake School Division after obtaining her Class 2 license. She drove for 27 years and was a strong advocate for bus drivers, working to improve benefits and contractual agreements. She also served as a municipal councilor for the LGD of Armstrong from 1992 to 2003.

Winona enjoyed travelling, including trips to Ukraine, California, Mexico, and Paris, France. She cherished visits to the Calgary Stampede, Banff National Park, and Lake Louise, Alberta. She also enjoyed visiting family in Innisfail, Alberta; Regina, Saskatchewan; and Sudbury, Ontario. Closer to home, Winona and Bill attended many local festivals and community events throughout Manitoba, often sneaking in a dance or two.

Winona's greatest pride were her children and grandchildren. She was a devoted wife, mother, and grandmother who created a warm and welcoming home, always ensuring there was plenty of food and refreshments for family and friends.

Christmas, Easter, and Thanksgiving were especially important to Mom, she enriched and instilled her traditions in us.

The family would like to thank Mom's friends for the daily phone calls, always checking up on her, the visits and immeasurable friendship over the years.

We extend our gratitude to the team at Gimli Hospital for their compassionate care during Mom's brief stay.

Funeral Service was held on Monday, March 23, 2026 at 10:30 a.m. in the Holy Eucharist Ukrainian Catholic Church, 380 Sophia Street in Selkirk, Manitoba. Father Stefan Tyrawski officiated  
Pallbearers: Dennis Boblinski, Steve Klym, Greg Shupenia, Daryl Lucyshen, Christopher Lachuta, Ben Yassenko. Honorary Pallbearers: Jared and Jodi Lavallee, Bernie Lachuta, Agnes Yassenko, Nancy Tuck, Virginia Grabowski, Mike Shupenia, Randy Monaster.

Interment followed at All Saints Cemetery, 4535 Main Street, West St. Paul, MB.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the Heart & Stroke Foundation of Manitoba or a charity of your choice.



204-886-0404

**IN MEMORIAM**

**SMITH, John (Jack)**

In loving memory of our Father who passed away March 26, 1985.

-Forever remembered by son Richard and his wife Sheelagh, children Sheena and Shawn and daughter Judy, husband Ken Paluk, children Wesley and Trevor

**IN MEMORIAM**



**Eileen Loehmer**  
May 1, 1940 - March 24, 2025

Always in our thoughts, forever in our hearts.  
-Love, Elmore and family

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