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## Santa's helpers



TRIBUNE PHOTO BY LANA MEIER

The Integrity Auto Inc. family were all decked out in their reindeer gear for the Teulon Drive Thru parade Saturday night. See more photos inside.

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# Stonewall woman, 100, forced to give up hospital bed

By Patricia Barrett

Age doesn't matter when it comes to mandatory transfers of Interlake-Eastern Regional Health Authority patients from their hometown hospitals to facilities in other health regions as the provincial government tries to create acute care bed space.

Ruth Sampson, who is 100 and a half years old, was in the Stonewall hospital recovering from a serious fall she had at Thanksgiving, but became a transfer victim last week when the Stonewall & District Health Centre sent her to Crystal City.

Crystal City is in the Southern health region, near the Manitoba-North Dakota border. It's about 214 kilometres southwest of Stonewall.

The IERHA was following the provincial government's mandatory patient transfer protocol, which came into effect in October, to free up hospital bed space for COVID patients and other acute care patients.

Sampson's niece, Linda Tyerman, and her husband David said they were given fewer than five hours' notice on Nov. 23 that their aunt was being transferred to the Rock Lake Hospital in Crystal City. When they protested — saying family members, including great-nieces and nephews, would have no opportunity to say goodbye — they were given a reprieve until the following morning.

"We had absolutely no say in this

decision. It was all up to the IERHA," said Linda last Friday. "Some people were transferred to Roblin and Russell, we heard. I heard that one person was going to be transferred to Flin Flon but that got stopped because they probably took their family member home. This is just ignorant on the IERHA's part."

Linda, who is her aunt's primary caregiver, said they drove to Crystal City on Nov. 24, about an hour after the ambulance left with their aunt, to ensure she didn't feel abandoned and had family with her to help her settle in.

"There was no way in hell I was letting my Auntie Ruth be taken halfway across the province to an unknown hospital all alone," said Linda. "There were many, many tears and that was very hard to see. Very hard."

David Tyerman said the forced transfer of a 100-year-old senior far from her family and her friends, and from the only home she has ever known, showed a complete lack of compassion.

"She's 100 frickin' years old and she's lived in this community for 100 years. On top of that, some of our relatives who work in health-care are saying, 'Why are we working so hard, putting in all these hours to support this system when we can't even keep our centenarian aunt in our own community?'" he said. "What's it all for when some-



TRIBUNE PHOTO SUBMITTED

One-hundred-year-old Ruth Sampson was transferred from the Stonewall & District Health Centre to free up bed space for COVID patients and others requiring acute care. Pictured with Ruth is her niece Linda Tyerman and nephew David Tyerman.

body turns you around when you're 100 years old and gives you a good swift kick and says, 'We're done with you. Bye-bye.'"

The forced transfer is having a ripple effect through their family, said David. And Ruth's friends, who are in their 80s and 90s, can't make the 200-plus-kilometre drive down to Crystal City to visit her.

"There's not a hope they can make that journey. Before this, Ruth was a block and a half away. And she has lots of friends. She has been in the Lions [club] for 15 years," he said.

Linda said it didn't make any sense sending her aunt from one hospital to another hospital. And taxpayers are the ones picking up the tab for the ambulance ride out of the region. They'll also be paying for the ride back should capacity in the IERHA improve and patients are allowed to return.

"People are going to hear about this [transfer protocol] and might be scared to go into the Stonewall hospi-

tal because they could get shipped off to Timbuktu," she said.

The Tyermans received a letter from the IERHA dated Nov. 24 — the same day their aunt was bundled into an ambulance and taken away — stating the health region, in accordance with "provincial patient transfer protocols," is relocating low acuity patients outside the region because of COVID-19 pressures and to "accommodate ongoing non-COVID related acute care needs."

It goes on to say that Sampson's repatriation to a personal care home in the region is a priority.

"Transfer will be arranged at the first opportunity that a personal care home bed becomes available in the region," states the letter.

The problem is PCH beds in the IERHA are at a premium. Linda said her aunt has already been "panelled" (had a request for placement in a personal care home approved), but she

Continued on page 5

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# Kinsmen Christmas trees sales underway at Home Hardware

By Jennifer McFee

It's easier than ever to get into the holiday spirit since the Stonewall Kinsmen's annual Christmas tree sale has begun.

The Kinsmen are selling trees from Home Hardware's lot as a fundraiser, and all funds raised remain in the community.

Kinsmen member Chris Luellman of said the fundraiser usually brings in about \$3,000 for community projects. Each year, they donate towards Cystic Fibrosis Canada. Locally, they recently completed a years-long project of building the splash pad at Kinsmen Lake. They've also helped out families struggling with cancer and built ramps for community members to improve accessibility.

"We've been selling trees in Stonewall for 45 years and we've generated quite a lot of revenue to support different causes in Stonewall," Luellman said.

"Over the years, the Walmarts, Canadian Tires and IKEAs of the world have started selling trees at a much lower price, but that money doesn't remain in the community. We've been here for a long time, and we're grateful to our customers and supporters."

Even during the pandemic, the Kinsmen continue to work hard for the community, he added.

The trees come from RBM Gardens in Headingley, Kinsmen member Kerry Hendry added.

"We've been guaranteed 125 trees with the hope that we can get more trees if we run up short," he said.

"This year it's going to be tighter because there is a tree shortage in North America."



TRIBUNE PHOTO BY JO-ANNE PROCTER

Four-and-a-half-year-old Maverick Moore picked out a Premium Fraser Fir tree for his family last Sunday at Home Hardware in Stonewall.

On behalf of the Kinsmen, Hendry expressed gratitude to Home Hardware for giving the space to set up a tree lot. At the same time, the Kinsmen remain grateful to Tami Couch of Stonewall Florist for allowing them to use their lot in the past for nearly 10 years.

"We don't have our own location, so we're always dependent on a retailer who gives us a location to put up a lot. At Stonewall Florist, we had the lot at the back, and they took care of our sales during the day until we arrived in the evening," said Kinsmen member Kerry Hendry.

"Two years ago, we transitioned over to Home Hardware for the fact that we have much greater exposure



TRIBUNE PHOTO SUBMITTED

The Kinsmen received their delivery of Christmas trees at Home Hardware in Stonewall last Sunday. Pictured from left to right: Chris Luellman, Marshal Patterson, Chad Sheppard, Derek Frost-Hunt, Kerry Hendry, Adam Luellman, Laurie English, Martin Mailman (president) and Derek White.

being right on Main Street. Being in front of Home Hardware allowed us greater opportunity for sales, which helps. Home Hardware has provided a fenced compound, which saves us a lot of time since we don't need to move all our fencing independently."

Andrew Kirk, manager of Home Hardware, said they're happy to help out with this festive cause.

"The Kinsmen do a lot of good in

our community. This is a way of giving them a nice outlet to sell their Christmas trees," Kirk said.

"It's efficient because we can pick up the slack in the hours that they're can't be around. They built the whole water park, so it's nice to give back."

The Stonewall Kinsmen are always accepting new members. For more information, visit [www.stonewallkin.com](http://www.stonewallkin.com).

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## Annual District Meetings

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# Holiday floats lift spirits

By Nicole Brownlee

Teulon community members welcomed back an annual tradition on Nov. 27 in a different way.

The Teulon Christmas parade is usually celebrated with a procession of floats on Main Street, but this year, following public health restrictions, the Teulon & District Chamber of Commerce encouraged visitors to drive through a stationary parade.

"It was a huge success and an absolutely beautiful turnout," said Jan Lambourne, chamber president.

With the help of the town of Teulon and the Green Acres Art Centre, families drove through a winter wonderland.

Floats were parked along the fence at Green Acres Park, and from 7 p.m. until 8:15 p.m., cars drove by the park, marvelling at the spangled park and the 23 floats decorated with inflatables, lights and music. One float held children singing carols and dancing along to the tunes.

"We took advantage of the fact that it was stationary. We decorated the entire parade line, so three sides of the park were lit up," said Lambourne.

"Everybody really enjoyed it and especially the part where you could stay in your car and be nice and warm."

The Teulon-Rockwood Fire Department handed out around 400 goodie bags to passing cars filled with treats and a ticket for a surprise draw.

Eight-year-old Miles Davis took home the prize turkey hamper, gift cards and toys.

Christmas elves also visited cars and gathered letters for Santa Clause.

The end of the parade was punctuated with a fireworks display.

"We had a beautiful night," said Lambourne.

The Teulon Christmas Cheer Board collected monetary donations, non-perishable food items and toys at the parade.

The cheer board collected \$539.91 in monetary donations and filled over 20 shopping bags with non-perishables and toys.

"We have about 45 registrants right now, but our cut-off isn't until Dec. 10, so we're expecting a lot more," said

Amy Waluk, chair of the local cheer board.

The board prepares 50 hampers minimum per year for the Teulon, Gunton, Inwood, Komarno and Malonton areas.

Waluk and cheer board vice-chair Amanda Hepples encourage more donations of non-perishable food items and toys.

Items can be dropped off at the Teulon Sunova Credit Union, SPR Hair Salon, the Teulon & District Seniors Resource Council and Kozy's Productions. Bigway Foods and The Bargain Shop are collecting monetary donations for the cheer board.



TRIBUNE PHOTOS BY LANA MEIER



## > FORCED TO GIVE UP HOSPITAL BED, FROM PG. 2

won't be able to come back to Stonewall because the town's Rosewood Lodge PCH has a two-year waiting list. They've instead had to put Ruth on the waiting lists of nursing homes in Selkirk. She has no idea when her aunt will be allowed back.

Linda and David said they reached out to their local MLA, who "never responded," to their MP, who gave them phone numbers of people to call, Manitoba's health minister Audrey Gordon and the IERHA. Only non-Conservative MLAs responded to their plight.

"Our focus is Auntie Ruth. But we want to have accountability, too," said David. "We're tired of governments having no accountability, making decisions and doing stuff that we have to live through."

Stonewall Mayor Clive Hinds said his thoughts are with Ruth Sampson and her family, and council is extremely sympathetic.

"I'd like to give my sympathy to the family," said Hinds by phone last Friday. "We'll do what we can."

Ruth's longevity is remarkable, he said, and he was sad to see her transferred so far from home. Given her age, he thought the IERHA could have found somewhere closer to home for her.

"For a 100-year-old lady that has lived here her whole life, it's sad to see this," said Hinds. "It's sad we have to lose a lady of this stature from our community, but on the other hand we have to be thankful there is a facility that can take her away from the COVID patients coming in. At 100, you're vulnerable to sickness. I'm thankful they got her out of that environment, but it could have been somewhere closer to home like Selkirk. I would like to see the lady make 120 as a Stonewaller."

Shared Health, which oversees health-care delivery, declined to comment on the Ruth Sampson case. The provincial health organization instead forwarded the *Tribune's* questions to IERHA, which then alerted the *Tribune* that its chief executive officer Dr. David Matear would respond.

Shared Health did, however, provide

patient transfer statistics from the time the protocol was put into effect sometime in October. Twenty-one patients from the IERHA and 29 patients from the Winnipeg RHA have been transferred (as of Nov. 26).

Matear said he's unable to comment on individual patient cases because of privacy legislation but understands the hardships the provincial protocol is having.

"I'm not underestimating the amount of distress this causes. It does," said Matear last Friday. "[We've had] difficult conversations and taken difficult decisions in terms of how we're maximizing capacity in the health-care system, especially as patients are older. That's what we're dealing with, more or less, older patients and most of them are in the ALC [alternative level of care] category. Some are panned, waiting to go to PCH beds."

The patients being transferred aren't acutely ill and don't require the type of care an acute care facility is set up to deliver, he said, and are thus categorized as ALCs.

In order to free up bed space for COVID patients and others requiring acute care (e.g., cardiac or cancer patients), ALCs are being transferred to facilities that can appropriately meet their needs, he said, because acute care is not a "long-term option." Unfortunately, capacity is available in other regions of the province. There is more capacity in the Prairie Mountain, Southern and Northern RHAs than there is in the Winnipeg and Interlake-Eastern RHAs.

"We actually have capacity in the health-care system in the province, but the issues we're having are in the regions where we don't have capacity. We also have to look at capacity in settings such as homecare support, assisted living, supportive housing and personal care homes," said Matear.

Unvaccinated people who acquire COVID — and who are several times more likely than vaccinated people to require both hospital and ICU care — are driving down capacity in acute care. That has also led to a backlog in surgical and diagnostic procedures, which has reached 136,000, according

to Doctors Manitoba.

Matear said the health-care system is doing everything it can to make COVID vaccines available, including third doses, and informing the public about the protective benefits of the vaccines.

When asked why the government wouldn't just set up a field hospital for COVID patients so that there'd be no need to transfer patients hundreds of kilometres away from their home health region, Matear said he's not against field hospitals per se, but the government wants to utilize the system's existing capacity.

Liberal Leader Dougald Lamont said the government's transfer protocol is really a storage protocol that

overlooks the fact that there are humans on the receiving end.

"We're dealing with patients here. It's not like having empty storage space where we can say, 'OK we filled up all our warehouses here with boxes, but we've got some space in warehouses in the South or in Prairie Mountain or in Flin Flon that we can use,'" he said. "That's the way the government is running this. When you look at the board of Shared Health, it's not doctors running the organization; it's all accountants."

The transfer protocol comes down to a government unwilling to "put up the money" to sustain the health-care system, he said. And it's telling RHAs to make do.

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**Saturday, December 4 Special**

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## Federal throne speech full of recycled promises: Bergen

By Ashleigh Viveiros

The Liberal federal government's speech from the throne in Parliament didn't illicit much confidence from Portage-Lisgar MP Candice Bergen last week.

Bergen, who is also the Conservative deputy leader, voiced her concerns about what the 44th parliamentary session will accomplish in the weeks ahead.

"After waiting over two months to bring Parliament back following the federal election, Justin Trudeau has returned with the same recycled promises as before with no plan to curb inflation, fix supply chain issues and make life affordable for Canadian families," Bergen said. "As a Western-Canadian MP, I'm nervous about the blatant neglect of the agricultural sector and the doubling-down of Justin Trudeau's attack on our energy workers."

"In Portage-Lisgar, businesses are

continuing to experience staffing shortages, farmers are still being hit with the carbon tax, and the cost of everyday items are skyrocketing," she continued. "Instead of focusing on these important issues, Justin Trudeau is more interested in focusing on issues that divide Canadians."

Premier Trudeau stressed in a released statement that the fall election gave the Liberals "a clear direction to work together to put the COVID-19 crisis behind us and find the real solutions needed to build a better future for all Canadians."

"The Government of Canada has listened to Canadians, and we are ready to finish the fight against COVID-19, take strong climate action, make life more affordable, walk the shared path of reconciliation, put home ownership back in reach, create jobs, and grow the middle class."

Getting the pandemic under control is the first step, Trudeau noted, stress-

ing the importance of vaccination.

"The government will better support all Canadians by taking action to clear the backlog of delayed procedures caused by COVID-19, strengthening long-term care, and improving access to mental health and addiction treatment," he said. "We will keep Canadians safe and healthy now and into the future."

Bergen noted the Conservatives will be holding the Liberals to account in this session, in addition to "presenting solutions to the inflation crisis, labour shortages and skyrocketing deficits. Conservatives will be focused on a recovery that champions jobs, the economy and Canadian energy."

"Conservatives have a positive vision that will unify our country and put Canadians first," Bergen said. "I look forward to the new session of Parliament and being the voice of the people of Portage-Lisgar in Ottawa."

## Rosser council news in brief

By Jennifer McFee

- Rosser council accepted a \$35,000 funding request from the Rosser Woodlands Recreation Commission. The expense will be included in the 2022 financial plan.

- Coun. Angela Emms has been appointed as the RM of Rosser's deputy reeve for 2021-22.

- Council denied concurrence of the location and design of a proposed telecommunications tower due to concerns that the proposed tower location is at the nearest side of a

property adjacent to two residences.

- The RM of Rosser will approach Rosser Elementary School and Grosse Isle School to participate in a naming contest for the hiking trail located near the transfer station.

- The RM of Rosser declared Nov. 15 to 21 as Interlake Community Foundation Week.

- A resident has expressed interest in replacing and extending an existing culvert on Road 68, and which needs replacement by the municipality. Council approved the culvert ap-

plication. The cost of the culvert and installation will be split between the RM and the resident, based on the proportion of the pipe extension.

- Council also approved a culvert application from Hoas Farms Ltd. for one approach onto Road 70N. The applicant will be responsible for the cost of the supplies and installation.

- Council conditionally approved a subdivision request from Meadowview Acres Ltd. and Rock Lake Holding Ltd.

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TRIBUNE PHOTO BY KEEVIN ERICKSON

Mother Nature provided a spectacular view on Lake Manitoba with interesting ice formations as far as the eye could see last weekend. Help the *Tribune* record the weather of the week and send in your photos of friends or families enjoying the outdoors. Email: [weather@stonewallteulontribune.ca](mailto:weather@stonewallteulontribune.ca).

## letter to the editor

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

### The need for personal care homes is at a crisis

It was heartbreaking to read that 100-year-old lifetime resident of Stonewall Ruth Sampson has been sent to a care facility that is a two-hour drive from Stonewall. Even without the pandemic, it was painfully obvious that Stonewall and district were in dire need of more assisted living facilities, more palliative care beds. A little history, perhaps, will help me explain why this story resonates so much today.

When I was mayor of Stonewall, I tried to get this situation addressed. Meetings were arranged with the

Interlake Regional Health Authority, who acknowledged that this need was overwhelming for our community. From there, we scheduled meetings with the Town of Teulon, RM of Rosser, RM of Woodlands and the RM of Rockwood. The province asked that we invite the RM of St. Laurent as well as they indicated that having a Métis component would be important.

The RM of St. Laurent would not even return a phone call to entertain a conversation even on our proposal. Stonewall council was 100 per cent on

board with the project and we identified the site for construction and made two significant land purchases to allow for a site of construction. We developed a financial plan to help fund the proposed facility. The Town of Teulon, Rosser, Woodlands and the Rockwood joined 100 per cent in support of making this happen.

In October 2018, our Stonewall CAO Wally Melnyk and I had a meeting with Ralph Eichler and his team members at the Legislature. So, tell why are we now closing out 2021 with there being not "a peep" about the need for this facility in our community?

- Lockie McLean  
Stonewall

### Respect our veterans

I agree with the town wanting respect for their employees. At the same time, it disappoints me that the town council disrespects our vet-

erans by not lowering their flags on Remembrance Day. The fact that it is not law does not mean they can disrespect those that died for them and

those that fought for your freedom. I would strongly suggest that the mayor and councillors make sure in the future they make it policy to respect our veterans.

- Russ Linklater

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"You're worthless.  
Nobody wants you."

Mayling is devastated. Seventeenth family interview, seventeenth rejection. That's a record at this orphanage. Clutching her doll, she prepares for the worst. The other girls start laughing, spitting and pulling her hair as she walks by.

Suddenly a bucket smashes her from behind. Sprawled on the floor, she hears the cruel headmistress join in.

"Might as well clean the floor. You'll never amount to anything." Just then, everyone notices a heart-shaped birthmark on her heel. "Funny birth mark for someone nobody loves."

Mayling just lies there weeping. Is this all there is to life? Why was I even born? Suddenly someone lovingly pulls her to her feet — a small girl with kind eyes.

"Listen. I think you're the Emperor's daughter. She was kidnapped at birth and never found. She had a birthmark like yours. I read about it."

Mayling can't believe it. Like really. And spends 12 more months scrubbing floors, crying herself to sleep. Hated and rejected by everyone but this one kind girl who tries to convince her every chance she gets.

Eventually, she sneaks away from the orphanage — all the way to the Emperor's palace. The guards and maids don't believe her — they're taunting her as the Emperor runs up.

He frantically checks her heel and then under her left armpit. Matching birthmarks. Embracing her, he falls to her feet, weeping.

Imagine the next year of Mayling's life. Not worthless. Not rejected. Loved completely. What would she and her Father have missed if she never believed the little girl?

Spoiler alert. You have a Father in Heaven who loves you. Do you believe it? This article is evidence that He wants to spend more time with you. Are you ready to join His family? Jesus can help.

Paul Emmer  
YFC Stonewall  
[ThatPaulGuy@iCloud.com](mailto:ThatPaulGuy@iCloud.com)



# Conservatives lay out their plan for new Legislative session

By Lorne Stelmach

There was a strong emphasis on collaboration as the Manitoba government set out its new course last week.

The throne speech delivered by Lt.-Gov. Janice Filmon on behalf of new premier Heather Stefanson set out what the government billed as a new vision for a strong economic and social recovery with a focus on the health and well-being of all Manitobans.

"Our government is embarking on a path in a new direction. We are committed to working side by side with all Manitobans in the spirit of collaboration, co-operation and reconciliation," said Stefanson.

"As we continue to address the challenges posed by COVID-19, we are also focused on creating a stronger, more sustainable health-care system, providing greater supports for families, seniors and vulnerable Manitobans, improving education and training opportunities and laying the ground work to foster investment, job creation and economic growth."

Key initiatives cited in the throne speech include:

- Working with Indigenous leaders, elders, knowledge keepers, families and community members to advance shared goals and seek reconciliation, healing and a path forward together.
- Removing barriers that delay Manitobans from getting the medical care they urgently need.
- Addressing the nursing shortage with increased and targeted training opportunities.
- Implementing a renewed seniors strategy so aging Manitobans are able to stay safe in their own homes, close to family and their personal support systems, for as long as they choose.
- Improving access and co-ordination of mental health and addictions services.
- Working with community partners to meet the needs of single parents, Indigenous youth and people with disabilities.
- Expanding supports for those experiencing family violence.
- Accelerating the implementation

of the federal-provincial agreement on early learning and child care.

- Improving the kindergarten to Grade 12 education system to better prepare students for their future.
- Promoting collaboration between advanced education and training institutions and employers to provide Manitobans with the right skills to succeed that meet the evolving needs of the labour market.
- Advancing the skills, talent and knowledge strategy to accelerate post-pandemic economic recovery.
- Ensuring Indigenous and new Canadian students are given opportunities to participate in post-secondary education and training.
- Partnering with the federal government to boost immigration and provincial nominee programs.
- Implementing a venture capital framework to attract international investment and help businesses grow at all stages of their development.
- Committing to a renewed partnership with the Government of Canada to advance shared priorities and op-

portunities including transportation and strategic infrastructure, agriculture and food production.

- Creating a greener Manitoba with an energy policy framework to explore innovative technologies that will reduce emissions and stimulate the economy.
- Preserving nature and heritage spaces, and promoting tourism and the arts and culture sector throughout Manitoba.

"Our government is here to listen to Manitobans, to engage and collaborate with Indigenous leaders, all levels of government, business leaders and owners, members of the public sector, the private sector and non-profit organizations so we can emerge from this pandemic together," said Stefanson. "While we still face difficulties, I am confident that together, we can build a more prosperous, inclusive and safe future for all Manitobans."

To read the speech from the throne in full, you can visit [www.manitoba.ca/thronespeech](http://www.manitoba.ca/thronespeech).

## Throne speech misses the mark on affordability: NDP

By Ashleigh Viveiros

Official Opposition Leader Wab Kinew of the NDP says last week's throne speech from the Conservatives missed the marks on a number of fronts.

"The big thing that stood out to me, that was very notable with its absence, was there was no mention in the throne speech about affordability, inflation, the rising cost of living," Kinew said a few hours after Premier Heather Stefanson's government laid out its plans for the Legislative session.

"To me, this is something that's causing so many people pain and stress right now, the fact your groceries are going up, the hydro bill's going up, the price at the pump's going up — everything seems to be getting more expensive and yet the government didn't even mention it.

"To me, Manitobans need some help there and I think they would be reasonable to expect that the government would have at least some ideas for how we could make life more affordable in Manitoba given everything that's going on with inflation rates."

A week before the government's throne speech the NDP released their own alternative throne speech calling for an independent, expert-led inquiry into Manitoba's pandemic response.

Kinew was disappointed the government didn't officially commit to such an investigation.

"To me, it's the responsible thing to do after such a big, disruptive experience like the pandemic. We should just take a bit of time and ask what worked, what didn't, what do we have to do now.

"One of the areas that we want to

look at in there is seniors care, personal care homes," Kinew continued, noting the throne speech raised this matter as well but in a way that didn't sit well with him and other government critics.

"They're basically patting themselves on the back when it comes to seniors living in personal care homes, older adults," he said. "To me, that was pretty tough to take given what we know about what's happening with so many families right now, where their loved ones are being moved to personal care homes hundreds of kilometres away from where they live.

"It was just another sign of how the throne speech today seemed to be out of touch with the reality that's facing a lot of people in the province right now.

"We know there's a lot of challenges in personal care homes. We've got to

do better."

In the session ahead, the NDP will continue in its role of holding the governing party to account, Kinew said.

"I think there's still a lot of those lingering questions about health care, many rural centres that are dealing with closures or even temporary shutdowns of health facilities in their region, so we've got to deal with those issues, including health care for seniors.

"And then at the same time we want to bring forward some of our plans and ideas, like, for example, our need for an inquiry to give us some recommendations for after the pandemic. How can we strengthen the economy, strengthen health care, improve mental health, improve education? Those will be some of our focuses as we go through this session."



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# No cases of Omicron variant in Manitoba yet: officials

## Staff

The first cases of the new variant of COVID-19 have been identified in Canada, but Monday's COVID-19 bulletin from the provincial government noted no cases have been detected here yet.

Two cases of the Omicron COVID-19 variant, which has been declared the fifth variant of concern by the World Health Organization, were announced in Ontario over the weekend.

The variant was first found in South Africa but has since popped up in other parts of the world, prompting many countries, including Canada, to issue travel bans for certain regions.

Scientists are still doing research to determine how dangerous omicron might be, including whether it is more transmissible, causes more severe illness, or may have an impact on vaccine efficacy.

"Vaccine still provides one of the best defences against COVID-19," the province stressed in its release, noting it will continue "to monitor the situation and work with federal officials in the fight against COVID-19 and its variants."

In the meantime, Manitoba reported 11 new deaths due to COVID-19 on Monday and 495 new cases of the virus since the previous Thursday. A total of 1,315 Manitobans have died due to COVID-19 since the pandemic began.

Southern Health once again leads the way in new cases with 216, followed by Winnipeg with 148, 52 in Prairie Mountain, 50 in the Northern health region, and 29 in Interlake-

Eastern.

Manitoba's active caseload is at 1,493, with 142 people in hospital with COVID-19.

Fifteen of the 25 patients in ICU on Monday due to COVID-19 were from Southern Health, which has the lowest vaccination rate in the province.

Chief provincial public health officer Dr. Brent Roussin expressed his concern over the rising case counts and high test positivity rates in Southern Health at a press conference last week.

"It's certainly a level of concern right now when you see a test positivity at that level," he said.

The last official update from the province had test positivity in the region at over 14 per cent, though there have been media reports putting it at

closer to 17 per cent last week.

Roussin wouldn't rule out additional regional restrictions if these numbers continue.

"It's certainly a level of concern right now when you see a test positivity at that level, so I wouldn't say I'm confident that no further restrictions won't be required."

In the Interlake-Eastern region: Arborg/Riverton, 13; Beausejour, 5; Ericksdale/Ashern, 5; Fisher/Peguis, 5; Gimli, 1; Northern Remote, 5; Pinawa/Lac du Bonnet, 1; Powerview/Pine Falls, 1; Selkirk, 6; Springfield, 23; St. Clements, 13; St. Laurent, 3; Stonewall/Teulon, 8; Unknown District, 2; Winnipeg Beach/St. Andrews, 7; and zero in Whiteshell.

# Few takers for RM of Woodlands COVID relief grant

## By Nicole Brownlee

The RM of Woodlands offered a grant to help organizations that struggled to pay bills during the COVID-19 pandemic, but few took the municipality up on their offer.

The provincial government gave municipalities money in 2020 to distribute to communities to help assuage the financial impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The RM of Woodlands received \$200,000 in January 2020. They received around 10 applications from community organizations and gave \$65,000.

"This is just another way to make sure our businesses stay intact and our user groups," said Lori Schellekens, RM of Woodlands' reeve.

"I don't want to keep the doors closed. Once they're closed, they're usually closed forever."

A portion of the remaining money was used to pay for COVID-19 related expenses in the community, and the municipality has \$100,000 left to offer to organizations in need, said Schellekens.

"There's not that many people reaching out for it."

Around five groups had applied for the relief grant by Nov. 24.

Schellekens said maybe there's little interest in applying for the COVID relief grant because organizations are unaware of the opportunity. The municipality's recreation director position, which would usually disseminate information about upcoming grants, has been vacant since August.

"(Our previous director) would

reach out to all of these user groups and tell them, hey, this is coming out. So, we're finding that sometimes a lot of this stuff isn't getting out to the people we need," said Schellekens.

Organizations applying for the grant were asked to submit financial statements from the past three years to prove they have been financially impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. They were also asked to include the reason for the grant and how much the organization would need.

"We try to make sure everybody gets a little piece of the pie," said Schellekens.

Applications were due by Nov. 30.

The council will review the applications and release the approved grants in the new year.

Another grant community organizations can apply for will be offered in January 2022, said Schellekens.

Groups looking for money to help with the cost of improvements, community enhancement or a major project can apply to the municipality by Jan. 15, 2022.

"We can look at the (Jan. 15 applications) before the 2022 budget goes

through, and then we can figure out how much we can allocate."

In 2021, the municipality allocated \$150,000 to the general operational grant.



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**Community Futures East Interlake Inc.**

Box 1620, Gimli MB R0C 1B0

Phone: 1-800-378-5106

Email: [tdziadek@eastinterlake.com](mailto:tdziadek@eastinterlake.com)

or [ezalevich@eastinterlake.com](mailto:ezalevich@eastinterlake.com)

[www.eastinterlake.com](http://www.eastinterlake.com)



# Vaccine rollout begins for kids

By Jennifer McFee

Local kids have started rolling up their sleeves to join in the vaccination efforts against COVID-19.

Kids aged five to 11 are now eligible to be immunized against COVID-19 with a pediatric dose of the Pfizer vaccine.

Brothers Kolby and Rogan Pozernick got their first dose of the vaccine on Saturday, Nov. 27 at the Stonewall legion.

Kolby, a Grade 4 student at Balmoral Elementary, said he wanted to get the vaccine so that he doesn't get really sick from COVID while also doing his part to protect his family and friends.

"It felt like a little bug bite, but it was over with very quickly," said nine-year-old Kolby.

"I feel safer that I got my first dose and can't wait to get my second shot to really feel safe."

Rogan, a Grade 1 student at Balmoral Elementary, is extremely happy the first dose is done. He explained that he wants to stay healthy and looks forward to having play dates with his friends inside soon.

"It hurt a little bit, kind of like a little pinch," said six-year-old Rogan. "Don't look at the needle and it will be over faster."

Kolby also offered some advice for others getting the shot.

"Close your eyes, count to three and it will be over that quickly. Nobody likes getting needles, but it's important to get protected," he said.

"I would thank all of my friends who got their first shot to help in keeping me and my brother safe too."

Their mom, Laurie, was up at 5 a.m. on the day of their appointment because she was so excited.

"It was even more exciting to actually take them to receive their first doses on Saturday at the legion in Stonewall," said Laurie, who works as a registered nurse at Seven Oaks General Hospital.

Laurie and her husband Grant have been nervous about their kids catching COVID.

"We had decided this year to scale back on extracurricular activities and keep things as close to our small community as we could this year for that reason," she said.

"Despite best efforts to follow the fundamentals, it just takes one person to contract it and spread quite easily, whether it be schools or sports teams. The increased school cases this year has made it very difficult to feel comfortable with even just sending them to school at times."

As parents, they've always done everything they could to protect their kids and to keep them safe and healthy.

"This includes all vaccines, and COVID is no different. We have watched the unvaccinated populations continually be hit hard with the virus, and the last few weeks has been the same with the five- to 11-year-olds," she said.

"The more people vaccinated, the less the virus will be able to circulate, creating a safer community for everyone."

For anyone who is feeling uncertain about whether to get their kids vac-



TRIBUNE PHOTO SUBMITTED

Rogan Pozernick, left, and his brother Kolby Pozernick attended the COVID-19 vaccination clinic at the Stonewall legion Saturday morning.

nated, Laurie stresses the importance of fact-checking with credible professionals. As a nurse, she has seen firsthand how devastating COVID can be, particularly for the immune-compromised population.

"If you have questions about the vaccine, please call your pediatrician or family physicians — and stay off of Google for the answers you are looking for. There is so much misinformation circulating, and it can be extremely difficult to know what is actually real or what is completely made up," she said.

"A lot of the misinformation circulating is what tends to stick with people because it's very difficult to forget

something you've read or heard."

Now, with more young Manitobans getting vaccinated, many parents feel a sense of relief.

"We were extremely happy to hear so many appointments were made that first day," Laurie said.

"It's a comforting feeling to know that so many people are taking COVID seriously and doing their part in the fight."

For more information about booking a vaccination appointment, including an interactive vaccine finder, visit [www.protectmb.ca](http://www.protectmb.ca).

Appointments can also be booked by phone at 1-844-626-8222.

## New COVID variant, Omicron, confirmed in Canada

### Travel ban from southern Africa implemented

By Patricia Barrett

A new COVID-19 variant that is making swift progress in southern Africa, and has already found its way to Canada, has prompted the Canadian government to restrict travellers from that region.

The World Health Organization has named the new variant Omicron (B.1.1.529). It was confirmed in Ontario on Nov. 28.

Last Friday the federal government placed a two-month travel ban on foreign nationals from the southern Af-

rican region, including from countries such as South Africa, Lesotho, Eswatini, Botswana, Zimbabwe, Mozambique and Namibia.

Foreign nationals who were in the southern Africa region within the last 14 days will not be permitted entry into Canada. Canadian citizens who were there are required to quarantine for two weeks and undergo testing, according to a statement released by the Public Health Agency of Canada.

Two cases of Omicron were detected in Ottawa in individuals who recently arrived from Nigeria, according to a Nov. 28 statement from the Ontario government.

The virus has also been confirmed in the Netherlands, Israel and the U.K.

South Africa was the first country to report B.1.1.529 to the World Health Organization on Nov. 24, according to

the WHO.

"The epidemiological situation in South Africa has been characterized by three distinct peaks in reported cases, the latest of which was predominantly the Delta variant. In recent weeks, infections have increased steeply, coinciding with the detection of B.1.1.529 variant. The first known confirmed B.1.1.529 infection was from a specimen collected on 9 November 2021," states the WHO.

The WHO decided to designate the virus a variant of concern because of the alarming number of mutations it has and its potential for increased transmissibility and severity of disease — although those have yet to be determined. What is also unclear at this point is how well COVID vaccines will stand up to the variant, as well as drugs such as corticosteroids.

Studies are already underway to evaluate the variant's transmissibility, disease severity, immune escape and diagnostic or therapeutic escape, says the WHO.

The WHO is asking countries around the world to enhance their surveillance and sequencing efforts, share genome sequences, report initial cases and, where capacity exists, assess immune responses and severity of the variant.

The organization is also reminding individuals to continue to wear well-fitting masks, practise physical distancing, avoid crowded spaces and get a COVID vaccine.

Canada's travel ban from the southern African region is in place until Jan. 31, 2022.



# Teulon Cheer Board accepts registrations, donations

By Jennifer McFee

'Tis the time of year to spread some cheer.

The Teulon Cheer Board is gearing up for a busy festive season, and community members are welcome to contribute towards holiday hampers.

Three years ago, Amy Waluk and Amanda Hepples took over operating the local cheer board, which serves the areas of Teulon, Gunton, Komarno and Inwood. Each year, they put together anywhere between 40 and 75 hampers.

This year, about 40 registrants have signed up already, ranging from single recipients to larger families.

Typically, hampers include items such as turkey, ham, bacon, eggs, bread, milk, butter assorted canned goods, oil, stuffing, hot chocolate, coffee, tea, pasta with sauce, Kraft Dinner, Hamburger Helper, Sidekicks, pancake mix, syrup, cake mix, icing, cookies, peanut butter and jam.

"We make sure that all kids new-born to 18 get gifts," Waluk said. "We also make sure to put a box of chocolates and candy canes in everybody's hamper so they get a little something to enjoy."

This year, they're accepting donations of non-perishable foods as well as toys, books and hygiene products such as shampoo, conditioner, deodorant, body wash, toothbrushes and toothpaste. They'll also gladly accept socks, toques, scarves and other gift items geared for teenagers.

"The Teulon Christmas Cheer Board does everything local," Hepples said. "The money comes from the people

within our surrounding areas, so we support the local businesses here."

Hepples believes that every child deserves a nice Christmas, and it's rewarding to know that they're spreading joy on that day.

"I believe hampers are important as they provide each family that registers a little happiness throughout the season, knowing there are people out there who care," she said.

For Waluk, the Christmas spirit runs in her family.

"When I was growing up, my dad always played Santa and I was his elf. We used to always give to the families. As an adult working with Sunova, they take pride in helping out in the community. So when this opportunity came up, I thought it was a win-win," she said.

"It lets me volunteer, and I remember seeing how happy people were when we showed up as Santa and his elf. It was just like Christmas magic. It's a way to give back and feel good knowing that you can help people have a good Christmas."

It will be easier than ever to donate on Saturday, Dec. 11 since Red Apple and The Bargain Store locations across the country will be hosting the fifth annual Fill the Sleigh toy drive — including those in Stonewall and Teulon.

Through this initiative, customers help to fill a sleigh with toys for kids in their community, and 10 per cent of all sales from stores across Canada will be donated to local charities — including the Teulon Cheer Board. The nationwide goal is to collect \$650,000



TRIBUNE PHOTO SUBMITTED

Red Apple and The Bargain Store are holding their fifth annual Fill the Sleigh toy drive on Dec. 11. Toys can be donated in Teulon and Stonewall.

of toys this holiday season.

At the Red Apple store in Stonewall, Pat Melo said a selection of gift ideas will be set out on a table to make it easier for customers who want to donate.

"We want to try to fill that day with toys as much as we can," she said. "There is a great need for that. It's been a struggle for a lot of families."

At The Bargain Shop in Teulon, manager Johanne Boivin encourages community members to get involved.

"It's for the kids in need, the ones who don't have much," she said. "It all stays in the community."

In addition to the Fill the Sleigh

event, donations can be dropped off at Sunova Credit Union (76 Main St.), Sole Purpose Reflexology and Hair Salon (75 Main St.) Teulon and District Seniors Resource Council (54 Main St.) and Kozy's Productions (92 Main St.). Local schools, businesses and organizations are also helping to gather items to fill the hampers.

For anyone hoping to receive a hamper, the deadline to register is Friday, Dec. 10. To register, call Waluk in the evenings at 204-513-0616 or email teulonccb@gmail.com. A six-digit Manitoba Health number is required for registration to prove catchment area and family size.

## Santa Claus came to town



TRIBUNE PHOTO BY JO-ANNE PROCTER

If you were in Stonewall last Saturday evening around 5:30 p.m., you may have been fortunate enough to see Santa Claus cruising around town in the Coca-Cola Holiday Truck. Santa traded in his sleigh for an iconic red Coca-Cola Canada Holiday Truck festively decorated with twinkling lights to travel coast to coast delivering seasonal joy. The Holiday Magic Tour kicked off in St. John's, N.L., on Nov. 13 and the last stop will be in Victoria, B.C., by mid-December.

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# Interlake-Eastern RHA closes beds in three hospitals

By Patricia Barrett

At least three hospitals in the Interlake-Eastern Regional Health Authority have closed acute care beds because they're unable to maintain safe patient care.

The IERHA's chief executive officer Dr. David Matear said the bed closures at the Gimli, Stonewall and Beausejour hospitals are temporary suspensions and were necessary as the hospitals don't have enough staff to care for patients.

"If we can't safely care for a patient, we aren't [keep beds open] because that puts a patient at risk. And, obviously, we want to make sure the staffing levels support the acute care units, as well as the emergency departments because ... that's essential as well," said Matear during a virtual briefing for municipal leaders Nov. 24. "It's not an easy scenario to face and take these difficult decisions. It's not easy for communities. We want to help the communities as much as we can. We have a mandate to care for communities and we're doing our best to be able to provide those services."

Gimli's Health Centre (Johnson Memorial Hospital) shut down six beds and the Stonewall & District Health Centre closed five beds. Beausejour hospital closed 10 beds (as of Nov. 24).

Gimli hospital has a total of 26 acute care beds; Stonewall, 15; and Beausejour 30, according to the IERHA's website. The bed closures represent losses of 23 per cent, 33 per cent and 33 per cent respectively.

A spokesperson for the IERHA, responding to a follow-up request for

more information, said the bed suspension process started Nov. 1 because of "nursing shortages," but the beds weren't taken out of commission until the patients occupying them were discharged.

"We don't fill them with more patients once they are suspended. By suspending beds, it ensures that nursing staff are available to support both safe in-patient care and emergency department care," said the spokesperson by email.

During the briefing with municipal leaders, Matear shared slides showing the percentage of nursing vacancies in the three hospitals' acute care units.

The Gimli hospital is suffering an acute care nursing vacancy of 29 per cent while Stonewall is suffering from a 32 per cent vacancy. Like Stonewall, Beausejour hospital also has a 32 per cent vacancy.

Matear said the IERHA is actively trying to recruit staff and intends to re-open the beds.

"We've got ongoing recruitment efforts [underway] to as quickly as possible open those beds again and take that suspension away," said Matear. "We're working on that on a day-to-day basis."

The IERHA also moves staff between sites to fill the gaps, uses overtime and pays for agency nurses, which are hired from private organizations.

"We do try to move staff between sites wherever possible to be able to support acute care beds. But where that is not possible, we look at overtime and agency

## Influence of COVID-19 hospitalizations in Manitoba

- Staffing pressures - Nursing vacancies in acute care

Stonewall	31.7%
Beausejour	31.5%
Gimli	28.5%

### NURSING SHORTAGE GRAPH COURTESY OF IERHA

The graph shows nursing vacancies in acute care units at the Gimli, Stonewall and Beausejour hospitals. The three hospitals have closed a combined total of 21 beds since Nov. 1 because there aren't enough nurses to safely care for patients.

costs. If we can secure agency [nurses], we do. We know that over time that's a higher cost," said Matear. "We're looking at how we can structure a staffing model to maintain our acute care beds in Beausejour, as well as in Gimli and Stonewall."

Municipality of Gimli Mayor Lynn Greenberg said he had been alerted about the bed closures at the hospital before they occurred.

"I'm not sure exactly when it [bed closures] happened, but they did phone me to say it was going to happen in the near future because of a shortage of staff," said Greenberg by phone last week. "It's not anything the municipality can do anything about. We can't control that. We can lobby them to open the beds, but they're doing this out of necessity."

Greenberg said rural municipalities are trying to mitigate the health-care crisis. While he was at the Association of Manitoba Municipalities conven-

tion last week, a resolution was introduced by the RM of Stuartburn to lobby the provincial and federal governments to work on the retention of medical staff in rural areas by offering incentives. And other communities, such as Altona and Niverville, asked for a stretcher service and a reduction of hours required by emergency personnel to complete training.

Stonewall Mayor Clive Hinds, who had taken part in the IERHA's virtual briefing Nov. 24, said by phone that the town was notified roughly two weeks ago about the hospital's bed closures.

"At the end of the day, I am thankful it was only five beds in Stonewall as compared to other jurisdictions where they had 10 beds taken out," said Hinds last Friday. "We're dealing with a lot of seniors in this municipality and we are mindful of that. We're trying to do our best as municipal leaders to get those beds reinstated as soon as possible."

Hinds said he has lived in Stonewall for 50 years and the hospital is the mainstay of the community.

"We need our hospital here," he said. "We also need to get some renovations done to get the hospital up to date, which they discussed with us last year."

Manitoba Liberal Leader Dougald Lamont said the nursing shortage was critical before the pandemic arrived in Manitoba. As early as January 2020, the Manitoba Nurses Union had warned about the system having been cut to the bone.

"The [bed closures] are shocking to me in part because these are hospitals that are really close to Winnipeg and they should be able to maintain staffing levels," said Lamont last Friday. "But we knew as far back as January 2020 — before the pandemic hit here — about nursing shortages and that the Manitoba Nurses Union was warning that there was no surge capacity in the system at all."

Continued on page 17

## KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION



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INTERLAKE SCHOOL DIVISION requests that all parents/guardians of children eligible to attend Kindergarten in the 2022/2023 school year contact their local school between December 1st -15th, 2021 to register their child.

There will be no in-person registrations at this time.

Please call or email the school to initiate the registration process. Please visit our website for school contact information - [www.interlakesd.ca](http://www.interlakesd.ca)

Kindergarten programs are offered at Teulon, Balmoral, Stony Mountain, Rosser, Argyle, Warren, Woodlands, and École R.W. Bobby Bend School in Stonewall.

Brant-Argyle School offers a divisional Multi-level Learning program with all day Kindergarten every day. Please contact the Brant-Argyle School (204-467-2683) for details regarding this program.

French Immersion Kindergarten is offered at École R.W. Bobby Bend School.

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# Weather phenomena throughout the Interlake



TRIBUNE PHOTO BY PAT PAYJACK

Ice pancakes were spotted at Winnipeg Beach last week.

## Staff

Mother Nature has been providing very interesting sights on the lakes throughout the Interlake.

A weather phenomenon has left Lake Manitoba near Steep Rock covered in balls of ice.

Experts believe snowflakes freezing on top of the water, mixed with waves or wind can cause everything to turn and create snowball shapes.

Meanwhile in Winnipeg Beach and York Landing, ice pancakes have been spotted.

Greg McCullough, a geographer at the University of Manitoba, said the formations are created when ice crystals start gathering in little groups on the water's surface in slightly wavy conditions.

"They'll tend to grow outwards in roughly a circle, and then gradually the ice will form up and these groups will be jostling around together. So they will rock around and they will knock any rough edges off and you end up with a whole lot of fairly rounded pancake shapes," said Mc-



TRIBUNE PHOTO BY ADRIENNE HALKOWICH PHOTOGRAPHY

Ice balls formed on the water at Steep Rock last week.

Cullough.

He added with the waves, the ice doesn't get the opportunity to stick together and form one big sheet and that will only happen as the water calms.

McCullough said these formations

are neither rare nor common and that if people search for them, they will find them eventually, adding the right conditions are needed to make the shapes.

(with files from Devon McKendrick - CTV News Winnipeg).

## Just what the doctor ordered



TRIBUNE PHOTO BY JO-ANNE PROCTER

Last Friday residents at Rosewood Lodge Personal Care Home were all smiles when 14-year-old Red Dun Paint, Doc and his owner Corrine Nykorak stopped by for a surprise window visit. Jarvis Baryliuk was overjoyed to see the handsome guy decked out in his Christmas outfit.

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- Choose outfits for the family to wear to upcoming events or to get that perfect family picture for cards if you haven't sent them out yet.
- Buy the last of your gifts as well as wrapping paper, bows, ribbons and name tags.
- Hang stockings on the mantel, and put up the rest of your indoor decorations.

And to get you in the holiday spirit... This week, put on some holiday tunes while you flip through old holiday photos or set up a miniature Christmas village!

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# Beautiful event supports local café in Stonewall

By Jennifer McFee

Beautiful things can happen when community members support each other.

A fundraiser for Community Living Interlake at Something Beautiful Café and Gift Shop created an opportunity for guests to enjoy mouth-watering food, toe-tapping tunes and a night out in town.

On Friday, Nov. 26, the Celtic group called The Bards of Rhiannon performed two sets at the local venue for a group of 50 attendees.

The event also featured a three-course dinner prepared in-house, starting off with braised pork belly, followed by potato, sausage and kale soup. The main course offered a choice of roast beef with Yorkshire pudding or smoked turkey with cranberry sauce and stuffing, both served with a variety of side dishes. Diners could also opt to purchase coffee and dessert at the café.

Rick Williamson is involved in the local ukulele club that meets regularly at Something Beautiful. The café and gift shop are a social enterprises run through the Association of Community Living Interlake, an organization that supports adults who live with intellectual disabilities.

Williamson wanted to find a way to bolster support for the café, which often extends its hours to accommodate the ukulele club.

"Something Beautiful does so much for our community, and I wanted to do something to help them get through these challenging times. When I lived in Portage la Prairie, I was part of a Celtic band and we did several fundraising performance at the William Glesby Centre," Williamson said.

"Everyone in the band is very excited to have an opportunity to play again and really wants to do this performance as a fundraiser. It is wonderful that the show was sold out eight days in advance and we certainly appreciate the support that has been given."

Jimm Simon, executive director of Association of Community Living Interlake, expressed gratitude for the fundraiser.



Chef Ryan McMorris plates up braised pork belly, the first course of the evening.



Todd Wenzoski, right, served Town of Stonewall Mayor Clive Hinds, left, a smoked turkey dinner.

"It's great. We love this kind of thing. These third-party fundraisers are fabulous for us," he said.

"We get funded by the government for the very basics of housing, but we need to do fundraising for anything extra."

This fundraiser allows the organization to raise some money while also presenting an opportunity for clients to get involved. Some clients watched the performance, while others worked at the event.

"That's part of the idea of the social enterprise. It's not just fundraising; it's also creating jobs and skills," Simon explained.

"The people we support get to meet people from the community, and peo-



TRIBUNE PHOTOS BY JO-ANNE PROCTER

Celtic group The Bards of Rhiannon performed two sets for guests at Something Beautiful in Stonewall last Friday evening at a unique fundraising Christmas dinner.



Dinner, drinks, entertainment and great company were on the menu last Friday at Something Beautiful in Stonewall. Pictured left to right: Carol and Larry Brown and Cal and Kathy Turner.

ple from the community get to meet the people we support. That's one of the beauties of our café and one of the things we like."

In spite of the pandemic, Simon said it's been a good year for the Association of Community Living Interlake.

"We've been really fortunate. Moving to Main Street and having our two social enterprises — our store and our café — has attracted a lot of attention to us," he said.

"There are more

people who are aware of our programs, and they're doing fundraising and giving us donations. Stonewall is a very supportive community for our organization."

**CHRISTMAS CHEER BOARD**  
Help needed! The Stonewall & District Christmas Cheerboard is looking for donations to help those in need this Christmas. Donations of toys and monetary donations would be greatly appreciated and can be made at Sunova Credit Union, mailed to Box 1991 Stonewall, MB R0C 2Z0 or made by e-transfer to stonewallcheerboard@gmail.com. Donation receipts will be given if name, address and donation of \$20 or more is received.

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# Stony Mountain Community Association receives recreation award

By Jennifer McFee

Congratulations are in order for the Stony Mountain Community Association, which received a special award last week.

At the Nov. 24 Rockwood council meeting, Ian Goodall-George presented an award on behalf of the Interlake Municipal Recreation Association.

"The IMRA or Interlake Municipal Recreation Association has been giving out the awards for eight years. They were developed to recognize the unsung community heroes of recreation that all too often are taken for granted but without them our communities would not be the same," he told the *Tribune*.

"The impact of these volunteers has become even more apparent with the pandemic, which, due to required public health orders, have limited everyone's ability to participate in recreation. In a time where cancelling was easier than doing or was the only option, these volunteers persevered and found new ways to get things done."

The awards are usually presented at an awards dinner, he said, which allowed folks from throughout the Interlake to gather and celebrate the nominated volunteers' achievements.

This year, the organization decided to present awards during council meetings in each winner's community. As a result, they could have a safer celebration while still recognizing the winners' achievements and contributions.

"We had two community organizations and six individuals recognized this year, ranging from a husband and wife who have contributed to various community groups for over 30 years to a community volunteer who has fundraised for recreation in his community and is the first to show up and last to leave whenever work needs to be done," Goodall-George said.

"Also recognized are two community groups who have taken the lead on spearheading community improvement projects that will serve their communities for generations to come, a veteran who not only served to protect his country but also is now serving future generations through leadership at his legion, and two community volunteers who could be being honoured for ensuring kids along Highway 6 have the skills to swim that could save their lives."

Goodall-George outlined the reasons why the local community association was chosen as an award recipient.



TRIBUNE PHOTO SUBMITTED

Left to right: Tom Huffman, Dave Van Heyst, Marcia Desmedt, Shawna Legault and Dalice Clearwater

ent.

"The Stony Mountain Community Association has done an incredible job of turning these challenging times into opportunities for creative thinking, and they have managed to provide an amazing number of unique experiences and opportunities for their community," he said.

"Previously held group events were adapted to meet whatever restrictions were in place at the time — the large annual community run changed from a group event to individuals and families logging and submitting their own race times while still exploring our trails, wearing the SMCA T-shirts and sending in photos to the run website. The community scavenger hunt was done in individual groups and still met the goals of encouraging outdoor activity while exploring our community and socializing in a safe way."

In addition, there had been plans to hold a first-ever community music festival at the old pool site, he added. Instead, the focus shifted to grant writing.

"A small group came together to construct a beautiful new structure that has been used for small group and family gatherings all through the pandemic, while awaiting the official grand opening and music festival," he said.

"Soccer, baseball, ball hockey and slow pitch plans and registrations went on and things had to adapt quickly as restrictions changed. Some seasons shortened or changed, some were cancelled, and money and time was spent fixing up field and diamonds."

Meetings took place with the municipality and the Disc Golf Association to work together to set up a world-class disc golf course in the quarries.

Last year, the large annual community Remembrance Day service was pre-recorded at Memorial Park (when 10 people were allowed to gather) and all community members were able to view it on Nov. 11 with an invitation to bring their poppies, one family at a

time, to lay on the wreath at the cenotaph. One military family was showcased and the ceremony was lead by the local United Church minister.

"They are currently working to adapt the annual community scavenger hunt and community run, as well as submit grant applications to create an off-leash dog park in the quarry area. And be sure to check out all the witty 'Pick up after your dog' signs and bag dispensers throughout the trail areas," Goodall-George said.

"Although the pandemic put a halt to all of the large gatherings and fundraisers, the Stony Mountain Community Association has been very busy adapting and collaborating to continue to provide interesting and exciting activities and spaces for the community of Stony Mountain."

These awards are a small step to recognize the volunteer spirit of the Interlake.

"It is hoped it will encourage people to stop and take a moment to thank the hundreds of volunteers in our communities not recognized with an award but who are doing just as valuable work," he said.

On behalf of the Stony Mountain Community Association, Marcia Desmedt expressed appreciation for the award.

"The Stony Mountain Community Association is very proud to receive this award and to be recognized for our hard work, especially during the challenging recent times. With many events being cancelled, we have had to change our approach to how to put on events. When large groups were not allowed, we came up with ways to do things as individuals, as family groups, and even virtually as in the case of Remembrance Day," she said.

"We spent time behind the scenes applying for grants and working on creating our beautiful Bison Bandstand in preparation for many years of community concert and events. I am very proud to be a part of this incredible team and also to be working with such a supportive community."



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# 2022 Kingfisher Walleye Tournament begins next month



TRIBUNE PHOTO SUBMITTED

The trophy for the kingfisher walleye tournament made it to Gimli last week. Juliana Roberts, the New Iceland Heritage Museum manager, stands beside the six-foot, chainsaw-carved walleye now on permanent display in the visitor centre by the wharf.

## > CLOSES BEDS, FROM PG. 12

Lamont said mandatory nurse overtime and subsequent burnout needs to be addressed now before it gets worse. Legislation could remedy some of that.

"I'm getting emails from nurses who are afraid they'll hurt or kill somebody because they're so tired," he said. "Right now, if you have one terrible traumatic event, you can get coverage for that. But if you break down during a pandemic because you're exhausted and worn out, that isn't covered. That means we're losing staff from the health-care system because we're not helping them. That's the critical missing piece — there's nothing for burnout."

The use of agency nurses, where you pay a temporary nurse for service and also pay a fee to the agency for the use of that nurse, is a "massively expensive band-aid solution," said Lamont. "The PCs [provincial Progressive Conservatives] have cut and cut until there weren't enough people to do the work safely. That's where we're at."

Shared Health, which delivers health-care services, is funded by the provincial government yet can't be held to account because of the way the PCs set up the organization, said Lamont. As an MLA, he can sit on legislative committees and question the CEOs of Hydro, MPI and Liquor & Lotteries and their board chairs but is not allowed to question Shared Health.

Given the multiple health-care crises in the rural regions — critical shortages of nurses, doctors and paramedics, ongoing periodic ER closures and now bed closures — Lamont said it's time for a reckoning.

"We have a health-care system where no one, including MLAs, can get any answers from the people who run it. That's why we introduced legislation (private member's bill) last week that would require Shared Health and regional health authorities to answer questions at the Legislature," said Lamont. "Our health-care system is being run by people who are not being held to account."

By Brian Bowman

A very unique series of ice-fishing tournaments will be held in the Interlake beginning next month.

The 2022 Kingfisher Walleye Tournament will consist of four tournaments to take place in four different locations.

"It's a big tournament; it's huge," said tournament director John Wheeler. "This allows you to have the bragging rights of being the champion of the champions. It's plain and simple, you are the best."

The first event will take place in Petersfield on Jan. 22, followed by one in Matlock on Feb. 5, Gimli on Feb. 19, and Powerview/Pine Falls on March 5.

Cost to enter the tournament is \$100, which gives an angler a hole to fish out of. If that same angler wants an additional hole, the cost is \$50. There will be \$80,000 in prize money spread over the four preliminaries and the grand finale.

The top 100 participants from each preliminary will have the right to advance to the grand finale, which will take place in Hecla on March 19. If individuals finish in the top 100 at more than one event, they have the ability

to transfer a ticket or tickets to other people.

The winner from the Hecla tournament will have their name on a beautiful six-foot chainsaw-carved walleye which will be placed on permanent display.

This the first year of what organizers hope will be an annual event. Last year's event was iced due to COVID.

Registration for the tournament closes at 8 a.m. on Jan. 21. Each preliminary is limited to 400.

Proceeds from the tournament will go towards the renovation of the St. Amant Stabilization Unit, which will help countless families who are at immediate risk and near total-family breakdown. With the public's help, more families will have access to immediate stabilization care.

The current list of Kingfisher Walleye Tournament personnel includes Danielle Gagnon (Facebook and website), Gary Roy (advertising and interviews) and Chris Caslake (promotions).

Any questions can be directed to Wheeler by phone at 807-323-2767 or at [info.ticktockfish@gmail.com](mailto:info.ticktockfish@gmail.com).



Merry Christmas

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# Secret Santa for Seniors set for success

By Jennifer McFee

Ho! Ho! Ho!

The Secret Santa for Seniors program is back for its fourth year to provide seniors in nursing homes, hospitals and senior facilities with a gift at Christmas.

Donna Grieve launched the program after being inspired by a similar initiative undertaken by her sister in Alberta.

"While out there to help her, I decided that our community would also benefit from a program like this. Some facility co-ordinators have told me that without this program, many seniors would not receive a gift at Christmas," she said.

"In past years, we were able to actually enter the facilities and hand out the gifts in person and spend some time visiting with each and every one. This year, we are not able to enter and have to drop the gifts off at the door. Hopefully we will be able to resume in-person delivery again in the future."

This year, the program will provide gifts to just over 300 seniors in Stonewall, Stony Mountain, Balmoral and Teulon areas. These gifts might include personal hygiene items, shawls, lap blankets, Christmas ornaments, word search books or puzzles, scarves, mitts, body wash, lotions and small stuffed animals.

This year, Grieve said she had a hard time getting enough sponsors, likely



Before the pandemic, gifts could be handed out in person. Now they're dropped off at the door.

due to the pandemic.

"Times have changed and funds may not be available, so I had to appeal to people to ask their employers if they would consider sponsoring a number of seniors," she said.

"I was a little concerned that I would not be able to include the last two facilities until I received a message from a friend, Neal Steinke, who works at Selkirk Chrysler, that they had a substantial cheque sitting there for me, enough to cover the remaining 40 se-



TRIBUNE PHOTOS SUBMITTED

The Secret Santa for Seniors program will provide gifts to more than 300 local seniors.

niors. A huge shout out to them! Also, the Becker realty team in Stonewall provided me with a donation last year that was used to provide gifts this year. They will also be making another donation this year. Thank you, Heather and Derek Becker!"

All of the seniors have now been spoken for, and Grieve expressed gratitude for all involved who help to make this festive project a success.

"I would like to thank all of the

generous people in the community for sponsoring a senior or seniors to ensure everyone is included. I was thrilled to see some new names of people that had joined the Secret Santa for Seniors Facebook page," she said.

"I get so many messages from my sponsors thanking me for running the program; however, I could not pull this off without them — so kudos to all of them as well."

## get inspired

> MEAL IDEAS



Prep time: 15 minutes  
Cook time: 10 minutes  
Servings: 4

- 2 bags Success Basmati Rice
- 2 tablespoons canola oil
- 1/2 pound mushrooms, sliced
- 1 onion, diced
- 1 cup kimchi, chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 tablespoon ginger, minced
- 4 cups baby spinach
- 2 tablespoons soy sauce
- 4 teaspoons sesame oil

RED RIVER CO-OP FOOD STORE

### Kimchi Fried Rice Bowl with Fried Egg

4 eggs, fried  
Prepare rice according to package directions.  
In large wok or skillet over medium-high heat, heat oil. Stir-fry mushrooms and onions 3-5 minutes, or until softened. Stir in kimchi, garlic and ginger; stir-fry 1-2 minutes, or until well coated. Stir in rice, spinach, soy sauce and sesame oil. Stir-fry 2-3 minutes, or until spinach starts to wilt and rice is heated through.  
Divide rice between four bowls and top each with one fried egg.



Prep time: 20 minutes  
Cook time: 10 minutes  
Servings: 4

- 2 bags Success Jasmine Rice
- 2 tablespoons canola oil
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 3/4 pound boneless, skinless chicken breast, cubed
- 1/2 pound sugar snap peas, trimmed
- 3 cloves garlic, thinly sliced
- 1 Thai red chili pepper, thinly sliced (optional)
- 3 tablespoons soy sauce
- 1/3 cup roasted cashews

Prepare rice according to package directions. Let cool completely.  
In large wok or skillet over medium-

### Thai Cashew Chicken Fried Rice

high heat, heat oil. Season chicken with salt. Cook chicken, stirring, 3-5 minutes, or until starting to brown. Stir in sugar snap peas, garlic and chili pepper, if desired. Cook, stirring, 3-5 minutes, or until chicken is cooked through and snap peas are tender-crisp.

Stir in rice. Cook 2-3 minutes, stirring to combine. Stir in soy sauce. Cook 2-3 minutes, or until rice is heated through. Sprinkle with cashews before serving.

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# IERHA updates municipal officials on nurse shortages, patient transfers, PCH beds

By Patricia Barrett

Although there has been a good uptake of COVID-19 vaccines in the Interlake-Eastern Regional Health Authority, the region needs a shot in the arm as Manitoba's fourth wave magnifies its lack of health-care resources and sees patients getting moved hundreds of kilometres away for care.

The IERHA's chief executive officer Dr. David Matear held virtual briefings for municipal leaders last week to update them on the condition of the health-care system in the region.

The briefing and a question-and-answer session on Nov. 24 addressed bed closures at three hospitals (Gimli, Stonewall and Beausejour), a shortage of acute care nurses, patients transferred out of the region in order to free up acute care beds, personal care home beds at maximum occupancy and the impact the unvaccinated are having on the system.

The uptake of COVID vaccines in the IERHA is the third highest in Manitoba at 83.2 per cent behind the Northern RHA at 85 per cent and the Winnipeg RHA at 89.5 per cent. But that doesn't mean the vaccinated can rest easy because the virus can still infect them (hence the continuing need for facemasks and physical distancing), and they can pass it on to others.

But being vaccinated greatly reduces a person's chances of becoming seriously ill and dying from the virus, which has killed 1,304 Manitobans (as of Nov. 25).

Matear said COVID case numbers are expected to rise.

"The [COVID] case numbers are rising and they're predicted to continue to increase in the current modelling," he said. "Major features of this particular wave are younger populations affected, a heavy reliance on vaccination and we also have the impact of the unvaccinated on our health-care system."

Between December 2020 and the present, the unvaccinated were six times more likely to be infected with COVID than the vaccinated. They're nine times more likely to be admitted to hospital beds (non-ICU) and 22 times more likely to be admitted to ICU beds. They're also 13 times more likely to die than the vaccinated, according to data Matear shared.

With staff and resources focused on COVID care, surgical and diagnostic procedures have had to be delayed. Doctors Manitoba released an updated estimate of backlogged procedures on Nov. 22, putting it at over 136,000, up from 130,000 in mid October.

The IERHA is also burdened by a critical nursing shortage, said Matear, and staff have been pulled from



Chief executive officer  
Dr. David Matear

other parts of the system to support patients.

"COVID-19 has left us with a nursing shortage in hospital and acute care and that's not just in Manitoba but also across the country," said Matear. "There's no pool of nurses available to fill the gaps in the health-care system that arise from those transfers."

Because of nurse shortages, acute care beds were closed this month in three IERHA hospitals: Gimli (six beds closed), Stonewall (five beds closed) and Beausejour (10 beds closed). Matear said the nurse shortage made it unsafe for patients.

The provincial government promised last week to have 400 new nurses trained. In 2019 the party under then-premier Brian Pallister promised to hire 200 nurses.

Matear said it will take several years to get those 400 nurses in place, as well as bring in internationally trained nurses.

"The longer type of capacity-building, the 400 nursing seats in the province and international [nurses], will be several years in the making. You won't see that additional capacity for a number of years," he said. "For internationally educated nurses, we did have a process in place and they were welcomed into our health-care system, but COVID suspended that because they were unable to travel and emigrate to Canada. We're trying to get that back on track now."

In the meantime, the IERHA is having nurses work overtime where feasible. It's also using agency nurses (temporary hires from a private organization), which Matear said are more

Compared to fully vaccinated people unvaccinated people are\*:

6 times more likely to be infected with COVID-19

9 times more likely to be admitted to non-ICU beds

22 times more likely to be admitted to ICU beds, and

13 times more likely to die after adjusting age differences.

\*From December 16, 2020 till November 11, 2021

Source: Ali Millar, Operations, Vaccine Implementation Task Force

PHOTOS/GRAPHS COURTESY OF IERHA

The odds are stacked against people who remain unvaccinated for COVID.

expensive.

The health region's average use of agency nurses increased over the past three months, according to follow-up information obtained from the IERHA. And it's the health region that incurs the cost of those nurses.

"Interlake-Eastern RHA relied on agency nurses to cover gaps in schedules even before the pandemic. Maintaining staffing at some health-care facilities, where we have historically had difficulty recruiting, requires us to rely on the use of agency nurses more frequently than others," said an IERHA spokesperson.

"With the current nursing shortages, we are not alone in our need to access nursing agency staff resources more frequently. Our use of agency nursing staff will fluctuate. Over the last three months, our average use of agency nurses has ranged from 23 to 36 per cent of nursing staff regionally. This compares to a range of 9 to 13 per cent from August to October 2019."

Patient transfers from IERHA hospitals to other health regions under the provincial government's mandatory patient transfer protocol (to free up acute care bed space) has sparked great concern in Ashern, said RM of Grahamdale Reeve Craig Howse, who took part in the briefing. No personal care home capacity in the IERHA meant patients were transferred out of the region.

"You said personal care home beds are almost at 100 per cent occupancy. We've had in Ashern at the Lakeshore General Hospital patients under alternative care being moved," said Howse. "Is there an immediate plan to address personal care home beds? Are you adding more or trying to find more beds because we've had concern from our residents? Some people have been moved three and a half hours away."

Matear confirmed that there is no bed capacity in personal care homes and that's why some patients were

moved to other health regions under the government's scheme.

"We don't have capacity [at local PCH sites] to move patients. That's the reason we're moving patients farther away to an environment or site where they can receive more appropriate care," said Matear. "If there was a local alternative, we would use that. And we continue to explore that."

Patients that have been moved to other RHAs will not lose their place on any IERHA PCH waiting list they're on, he said. And they'll be able to return once a bed opens up for them.

Some communities are still waiting for the provincial government to approve the construction of new PCHs. Councils for the Town of Arborg and the Municipality of Bifrost-Riverton, for instance, had asked the government a number of times since 2015 for permission to construct a new 80-bed PCH in Arborg.

Matear said the provincial government is still reviewing RFPs [request for proposal] for new PCHs. And there's also a need to address other levels of care in the IERHA, such as home care, assisted living and supportive housing, which may be more appropriate than PCHs for patients.

"As far as PCH beds are concerned there were RFPs some time ago [and] some recommendations were made. They are still under consideration by government," said Matear. "Within our region ... we haven't got the capacity in a number of levels of health-care that we should. What we ought to be doing is building up home care to the level at which we can support patients safely at home ... then look at assisted living or supportive housing before we get to a point where a patient requires a PCH bed. We haven't got all those levels of care in place which would be more appropriate for patients who are currently in a PCH or sitting waiting for a PCH bed in an acute care setting."



# sports & recreation

INSIDE > OUTSIDE > UPSIDE DOWN

## St. James stops Stonewall on Sunday

By Brian Bowman

The Stonewall Jets were outshot 47-17 by the St. James Jr. Canucks in a 6-2 home loss in Manitoba Major Junior Hockey League action on Sunday.

Cole Emberly, with his team-leading 14th goal of the season, and Tyler Van Deynze scored for the Jets.

St. James' goals were tallied by Ashton Romaniuk, Rory Neill, Brady Whitely, Kurtis Luke, Trent Thorsteinson and Trent Halfdanson.

Josh Bond made 40 saves in the losing cause.

On Friday, the Jets defeated the St. Boniface Riels 2-1 in Stonewall.

Stonewall's Shane Bear opened the scoring just 1:06 into the game and then St. Boniface's Alec Borger tallied 2:29 later.

Emberly scored the game winner at 16:10 of the first period.

Bond had a strong game in goal, stopping 40 shots for the victory.

Last Thursday, the Jets were defeated 8-3 by the St. Vital Jr. Victorias in Winnipeg.

Stonewall led 3-2 after the first period but gave up three goals in each of the next two periods.

Emmitt Farebrother, Emberly, and Rhett Woods scored for the Jets. Farebrother and Nick Finnson each had two points in the game.

Ben Coppinger (two), Connor Mitchell (two), Devan Vercaigne, Brayden Park, Parker Janz and Ryland Nechwediuk had St. Vital's goals.

The Jets, now 6-13-1, will host the Raiders Jr. Hockey Club on Friday (7:30 p.m.) and then play the Pembina Valley Twisters in Morris Sunday (7 p.m.).



TRIBUNE PHOTO BY LANA MEIER

Jets' goaltender Josh Bond faced 87 shots in two games last weekend. It was his first action since suffering a concussion a few weeks back.

## Jones off to the Olympics

By Ty Dilello

St. Vital's Jennifer Jones will be returning to the Olympics as Team Canada after her team defeated East St. Paul's Tracy Fleury in the finals of the Canadian Olympic Curling Trials on Sunday afternoon.

In a back-and-forth game, Jones actually missed an open hit to win the game in the 10th end. But then in the extra end, Fleury also missed a chance to win the game when a last rock hit overcurled and wrecked on a guard.

"We thought we had lost in the 10th for sure. Jen makes that 99 per cent of the time that shot, so lucky to go to an extra," said Fleury, who took the blame for her final stone in the extra end that left Team Jones escape with the win.

"It felt close, but it caught the curl," she said. "I wasn't positive enough with it."

For Jennifer Jones, she had already been to the Olympics once in 2014 when they took home the gold medal. She is relishing the chance at getting to compete in one more Olympics before her career is over.

"It was a dream come true to get to do this twice," Jones said of getting back to the Olympics. "It's such a privilege to do it with these girls. We've had our ups and downs and worked our butts off, just to see what we can do on the ice and to support each other. It's just phenomenal."

Gimli's Kerri Einarson had a disappointing week at the Olympic trials. Seen as possibly the favourite head-

ing into the event after winning the Scotties Tournament of Hearts the past two years, Einarson finished the round robin with a 4-4 record before ultimately being bounced in a tie-breaker by Northern Ontario's Krista McCarville.

In the men's Olympic trials, Brad Gushue of Newfoundland and Labrador will represent Canada in the Olympics after defeating Brad Jacobs of Northern Ontario in Sunday night's final.

Winnipeg Beach's Colton Lott played third for Saskatchewan's Matt Dunstone during the event and finished with a 3-3 record. Lott will now look forward to competing at the upcoming mixed doubles Olympic trials with his partner and fiancée, Kadriana Sahaidak.

West St. Paul's Mike McEwen finished fourth in the Olympic trials af-

ter going 4-4 and failing to reach the playoffs. Jason Gunnlaugson of the Morris Curling Club also competed and finished out of the playoffs with a 2-6 record.

Jennifer Jones and Brad Gushue will now represent Canada in four-person team competition at the Winter Olympics Games in Beijing, China, from Feb. 4 to 20.

### What's *Your* story?

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**Tribune** Stonewall Teulon

**Stonewall Jets Player Profile**

**#19**

*Come out to support the Jets*

**Michael Spence**

Forward, shoots right

Born 2004, 6'3, 195 lbs



### UPCOMING GAMES

**Friday, December 3**  
Stonewall Jets vs The Raiders  
at 7:30 VMSC

**Sunday, December 5**  
Stonewall Jets vs  
Pembina Valley Twisters  
at 7:00 @ Morris Multiplex



# Merces split weekend games

Staff

The Warren Merces lost their first game of the season on Sunday.

Warren was doubled 4-2 by the Portage Islanders in South Eastern Manitoba Hockey League action.

Portage's Joel Swedlo scored the only goal of the first period but Warren responded with second-period goals from Braydon MacDonald and Mitch Hansen. The goals came just 39 seconds apart midway in the frame.

The Islanders then scored three unanswered goals in the third.

Tanner Waldvogel tied the score at 2-2 at 6:34 and then Jonah Wasylak and Zack Waldvogel tallied 27 seconds apart.

Hayden Dola made 43 saves in the

losing cause.

The Merces defeated the Altona Maroons 3-1 on Saturday evening in Warren.

Trent Genyk gave the Merces a 1-0 lead just 3:53 into the game but the Maroons' Robert Guimond tied the score at 8:07 of the third period.

Warren's Brock Couch snapped that tie with a goal just 1:16 later and then MacDonald iced the win with a goal at 19:17.

The Merces outshot the Maroons 55-32 as Jarrett Hogue earned the victory.

Warren, now 4-1, will visit the Winkler Royals on Saturday for a 7:30 p.m. game and then host the Morden Bombers next Tuesday (8 p.m.).



TRIBUNE PHOTO BY JO-ANNE PROCTER

Warren Merces' forward Braydon MacDonald scored a goal in his team's 3-1 home win over the Altona Maroons on Saturday.

# U18 Lightning winless in November

By Brian Bowman

November was a tough month for the U18 Interlake Lightning "AAA" male hockey team.

Interlake finished the month with an 0-9 record after a 6-3 road loss to the Parkland Rangers on Saturday afternoon.

The Lightning led 3-2 in the third period but surrendered four unanswered goals.

Interlake's Kaydyn McMahon scored a first-period power-play goal and then Hayden Wheddon tallied in the second.

Liam Foley gave Interlake a 3-2 lead with a power-play goal at 3:05 of the

third period.

Parkland's Will Munro scored three power-play goals while Hayden Seib, Carter Zalischuk and Madden Murray tallied at even strength.

Ty Hogue made 32 saves in the losing cause.

On Friday evening, Parkland skated to a 9-5 victory.

Evan Calder scored twice for the Lightning while Wheddon had a goal and two assists.

Rylan Slatcher chipped in with a goal and an assist. Alexander Kaczowski scored Interlake's other goal. McMahon had two assists.

Carter Zalischuk (three), Jayce Le-

gaarden (two), Munro (two), Kyan Gouette and Murray scored for the Rangers.

Hogue and Zack Meadows split the goaltending duties for the Lightning. Interlake was outshot 52-29.

The Lightning, now 4-16-1, will play the Winnipeg Wild on Wednesday (7 p.m.) at the Bell MTS Iceplex and then will take on the Pembina Valley Hawks on Saturday (8 p.m.) in Morden.

The U18 AAA Female Lightning, meanwhile, lost 4-0 to the Westman Wildcats on Saturday.

Westman scored three first-period goals and then added another in the third.

Brooklyn Franklin, Hayley Kolosky, Paige Kozak and Callie Rice scored for the Wildcats.

Lightning goaltender Katelyn Dorsch made 27 saves.

On Friday, Interlake was defeated 5-1 by the Yellowhead Chiefs.

Bre-Ann Windross scored a first-period goal for the Lightning, assisted by Brooke Baryliski.

Levi Derkatch (two), Abigail McKinnon, Kora Tibbatts and Kennedy Wood scored for Yellowhead.

Lightning goaltender Rachel Hall-dorson stopped 41 Chiefs' shots.

# MJHL to host 2021 Futures Camp

From the MJHL

The Manitoba Junior Hockey League is pleased to host the 2021 MJHL Futures Camp on Dec. 27-28 in Niverville.

This event is intended to be an initial introduction to the MJHL brand and sanctioned high-performance hockey for potential U15 (2007-born) junior prospects.

"The MJHL is committed to building lasting relationships with the young talent in this province, this a great ice-breaker event for players to get a taste of what high-performance camps entail," said Kyle Prystupa, MJHL manager of programming and communications.

The camp will be professionally

operated by the MJHL to provide meaningful insight and preparation for future high-performance events in our province such as U16 Program of Excellence camps, MJHL U16 Draft Prospect Camp, MJHL U17 Draft Combine and more. This event will also see MJHL and Western Hockey League scouting personnel attending to evaluate the 80 invited players to compete.


MJHL Futures Camp includes:

- 1 Hybrid skills competition and combine testing session (skaters)
- 1 Goalie Mentorship session (goalies)
- 3 Exhibition games (round-robin)
- Enhanced high-performance exposure

Lunch provided daily for athletes  
MJHL camp jersey and socks  
MJHL apparel item

Invited players were identified through preliminary recommendations from the local MJHL and WHL


scouting network. The full camp schedule and assigned rosters will be announced in December as all plans become solidified.



**Come out and support your Warren Merces**

**Saturday, December 4**  
Warren Merces vs Winkler Royals  
at Winkler  
7:30 p.m.

**Saturday, December 11**  
Warren Merces vs Portage Islanders  
at Warren Arena  
8:00 p.m.





# Rams come back to defeat Wolverines

By Brian Bowman

The Stonewall Collegiate Rams were the comeback kids against the West Kildonan Wolverines last Friday.

The Rams' Max McIvor tipped in a shot from Tristan Shore into the top of the net for a goal with just two seconds remaining in regulation time and Stonewall goalie Dray Sobkow pulled for an extra attacker to tie the score at 3-3.

McIvor played hero once again in the shootout, going five-hole on West Kildonan goalie Jordan Armstrong.

Shore opened the game's scoring with his team-leading sixth goal of the season.

West Kildonan's Dawson Bergagnini tied the score with just three seconds remaining in the first period and then he gave the Wolverines a 2-1 lead with a goal 19 seconds into the second.

The Rams' Reid Byle tallied early in the third before West Kildonan's Liam Russell scored with 1:03 remaining in regulation time.

The victory puts the Rams in a tie for second place with the Wolverines, each with 22 points, in the Winnipeg

Free Press West Division.

Last Thursday, the Rams skated to a convincing 6-1 road victory over the Shaftesbury Titans.

Stonewall's Gage O'Neil and Ethan Rogowsky both had strong games with a goal and two assists apiece.

Shore tallied twice while Carter Boughton chipped in with a goal and assist.

Adam Newcombe scored Stonewall's other goal. Jace Woods and Justis Hellegards had two assists apiece.

Koki Nishikiori scored the Titans' lone goal, beating Rams' goaltender Macrae Gard.

On Nov. 22, the Rams had a five-game winning streak snapped with a 3-2 road loss to the JH Bruns Broncos.

JH Bruns' forward Ryan Tackaberry scored the game winner at 4:06 of the third period, sliding the puck under a sprawling Gard.

The Rams found themselves down 2-0 early in the game as Tackaberry and Zachary Domenico tallied in the opening period.

But the Rams replied with second-period goals from Brody Stovin and



TRIBUNE PHOTO BY JO-ANNE PROCTER

The Stonewall Rams' Gage O'Neil is stopped by West Kildonan goaltender Jordan Armstrong during WHSHL action last Friday. Stonewall won the game 4-3 in a shootout.

Boughton. Stovin had two points in the game.

The Rams outplayed the Broncos, outshooting them 37-11.

Stonewall took on Kildonan East this

past Tuesday but no score was available.

The Rams will host Powerview-Sagkeeng on Wednesday. Puck drop is 3:30 p.m.

## Warren reaches bronze-medal game at JV girls' 'A/AA' volleyball provincials

By Brian Bowman

The Warren Collegiate Wildcats had a great run at the MHSAA "A/AA" junior varsity girls' provincial volleyball championship in Killarney last weekend.

Warren reached the bronze-medal game, losing 2-1 (17-25, 25-18, 5-15) to the Boissevain Broncos.

"I'm very proud of what they accomplished," said Wildcats' coach Andrea Schutz. "The girls, in the face of adversity, did really well on Saturday. Because we didn't have a season last year, this was the first time at provincials for the (Grade) 9s and 10s and there's a lot of pressure to be in a provincial tournament."

The Wildcats showed great energy and enthusiasm throughout the match, said Schutz.

The Wildcats were relegated to the bronze-medal game after dropping a 2-0 (17-25, 9-25) decision to the Gilbert Plains Trojans in a semifinal match.

Schutz felt the Wildcats have the ability to beat Gilbert Plains on a different day.

"We just weren't getting our block up in that game and that was detrimental to us," she noted. "And our serving (stunk) in that game."

Gilbert Plains won the provincial title after defeating Gabrielle-Roy Les Roys 2-1 by scores of 15-25, 25-15 and 15-5.

In a quarter-final game, Warren spiked the Virden Bears 2-0 by scores of 25-18 and 25-23. Jenna Cassidy was named the Wildcats' player of the game.

Warren began action last Friday with

a tough 2-0 (19-25, 24-26) loss to Gabrielle-Roy Les Roys.

The Wildcats' player of the game was Rianna Cassils.

Later that day, Warren defeated the Boissevain Broncos 2-0 by scores of 25-22 and 25-20.

The Wildcats' player of the game was Cassidy.

Warren then beat the Rosenort Redhawks in a thriller 2-1 (25-20, 21-25, 16-14).

Bryn-Lee Procter was named Warren's player of the game.

That victory gave the Wildcats a 2-1 record and placed them second in their four-team pool.

Provincial all-stars included Cassidy - Warren Wildcats, Danika Nell - Boissevain Broncos, Katrine Ferguson - Gabrielle-Roy les Roys, Beth-

any Carter - Gabrielle-Roy les Roys, Nevaeh Payne - Gilbert Plains Trojans and Montana Jubenvill - Gilbert Plains Trojans.

The most valuable player award went to Anika Gulenchin - Gilbert Plains Trojans.

Cassidy was very deserving of the all-star nod.

"I cannot say enough good stuff about Jenna," Schutz said. "I actually told her after one of the games just how much she had stepped up this weekend. She was a constant cheerleader and encourager to all of the girls. She was the one yelling and celebrating every point the loudest. She just led the team amazingly this past weekend. She upped her level of play and her level of leadership on the court."

## U15 'AAA' Lightning suffer shootout loss

Staff

The Interlake Lightning was defeated 4-3 in overtime by the Winnipeg Thrashers Gold in U15 "AAA" action last Saturday in Lundar.

Maddox Malmquist scored on a penalty shot in the OT. It was his third goal of the game.

Cole Swanson and Skylar Farrington

scored first-period goals for Interlake and then Dainen Jacobson tallied in the third.

Winnipeg's other goal was scored by Noah Banera.

Swanson and Talon Hogg each had two points.

Last Wednesday, Interlake defeated the Central Plains Capitals 7-4 in

Stonewall. No scoring summary from that game was posted on the league website at press time.

Interlake will play the Winnipeg Bruins Gold on Wednesday (6:30 p.m.) at Southdale and then will head west to play the Wheat Kings in Brandon on Saturday. Game time is noon.

The U17 "AAA" Lightning, mean-

while, lost 7-2 to the Brandon Wheat Kings on Sunday in Warren.

Brandon Burak scored a first-period goal for Interlake and then Russell Watts tallied in the third.

Brandon goals were scored by Kaelan Huibers (three), Jackson Aldcroft, Declan Hoad, Liam Puchailo and Will Wiseman.

Dylan LeClair stopped 35 Brandon shots. The Lightning will host the Winnipeg Wild on Friday at 8 p.m. in Warren.



# 'It's a huge part of who I am': Stonewall official to go international

By Joshua Frey-Sam

What started as a local part-time job for a teenager has grown into an international endeavour and an integral part of Amy Martin's identity.

Martin, a 26-year-old Stonewall native, started officiating minor hockey when she was 13 years old.

Along with her best friend, she jumped at the first opportunity to referee the sport she loved.

"All the boys were signing up, so it seemed like the logical part-time job for a hockey player," Martin says.

The pair wound up being the only girls in the clinic, but Martin didn't think much about the significance of being an outlier in a male-dominated industry.

But Martin says she leaned on her friend early on as it became clear why officiating is a high-turnover job.

"I would leave the rink in tears," she says.

Verbal abuse from coaches, players and parents is an evolving issue in minor hockey, leading to a shortage of referees across Canada.

The scrutiny took its toll on Martin, who admits the idea of standing up to a grown man as a young girl was daunting.

"It's hard to want to come back to the rink."

She remembers being escorted to her car after games, so she wasn't vulnerable to angry coaches or parents.

"People need to realize these are teenagers making 25 bucks to ref a game," she says.

But Martin persisted, even after her friend stopped officiating.

"I guess I have a competitive streak in me," she says.

The flexibility of the job allowed Martin to keep working games while attending university.

In 2014 and again in 2016, she saw the fruits of her labour when she was awarded the Kenneth R. Styles scholarship in recognition of her contributions as a student-official.

Her officiating career took off, and Martin started

setting goals for herself. First, she wanted to work national games and eventually obtain a level-five officiating status to take on international assignments for the International Ice Hockey Federation (IIHF).

In 2016, she worked her first national event, the Women's U18 nationals in Regina, at 21 years old.

She travelled as far west as Calgary and east as Quebec City for week-long tournaments, covering men's and women's junior hockey.

Now an official of 13 years, Martin received an invite to officiate the U18 Women's Worlds in Sweden, January 2022.

"The idea of being flown somewhere to ref a hockey game was just crazy," she says.

The invitation served as a full-circle moment for Martin, who stopped to reflect on her career to that point.

"I look at reffing as so much of my identity," she says. "It takes up so much of my time, and I've dedicated so much to it [...] It's a huge part of who I am."

Martin recognizes the impact of her role as a female official on the next generation.

"It's so important for young girls to see women in these roles: officials, coaches and all the other positions related to it," she says.

"It means a lot [to be a woman in a male-dominated industry]. I'm just really happy to be a part of the movement."

Martin says the past month has been a huge jump for her career. But, while the anticipation builds for her long-awaited international debut, she knows she needs to think about what she can accomplish next.

"Right now, I've achieved all the goals I thought were achievable. Now I need to come up with some new ones."

As a level V official, Martin recently officiated at the 2021 Western Regional Women's Under-18 Championship in Portage la Prairie, including working the gold-medal game. She currently officiates U Sports women's hockey, the Capital Region



TRIBUNE PHOTO BY LANA MEIER

Amy Martin will be travelling to Sweden to officiate at the U18 Women's Worlds in January 2022.

Junior Hockey League, the Manitoba Female U18 AAA Hockey League and the Manitoba Male U18 AAA Hockey League. Martin has been officiating for 14 years and has represented Hockey Manitoba at several National Women's U18 Championships, including working the gold-medal game at the 2019 National Women's Under-18 Championship in Morden.

# Rams', Wildcats' players named MHSAA Graduating All-Stars

Staff

Volleyball Manitoba announced the 2021 High School Graduating All-Stars from the A-AA-AAA Boys, A-AA-AAA Girls, AAAA Boys and AAAA Girls Divisions.

Warren Collegiate Wildcats' players named AA Graduating Female All-Stars included Lexie Carriere and Abby Cassidy.

Stonewall Collegiate Rams' selected as AAA Graduating Female All-Stars were Alex Clark, Grace Fines, Charli Reimer and Reese Loewen.

The Rams' Liam Pauls was named a AAA Graduating Male All-Star.

Votes were collected throughout November for participating Grade 12 volleyball players from across the province, with selection committees meeting from each division to make the selections.

Selected All-Stars are invited to the Graduating All-Star Banquet on

Dec. 11 at 9 a.m. at the Canad Inns Polo Park. Tickets are required for the event and all individuals 12 years of age and older are required to show proof of full vaccination to attend the Graduating All-Star Banquet. Graduating All-Stars are permitted to purchase a maximum of three tickets for the banquet.

A few major awards will be announced at the Graduating All-Star Banquet. Those awards include:

A Boys & Girls Coaches of the Year  
AA Boys & Girls Coaches of the Year  
AAA Boys & Girls Coaches of the Year

AAAA Boys & Girls Coaches of the Year

Boys All-Manitoba Team

Girls All-Manitoba Team

Urban Referee of the Year

Rural Referee of the Year

Stefan Savoie Memorial Scholarship Recipient



TRIBUNE PHOTO SUBMITTED

The Stonewall Collegiate Rams' graduating volleyball all stars are, from left to right, Reese Loewen, Alex Clark, Liam Pauls, Grace Fines and Charli Reimer.







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**Classified and Notice booking deadline is Monday at 4 p.m. prior to Thursday's publication.**

**Call 204-467-5836**



## 2022 FLOWER TENDER

The Town of Teulon invites quotes for the supply of flowers. Detailed requirements may be viewed on our website [www.teulon.ca](http://www.teulon.ca) or by contacting our office during regular business hours (Monday to Friday 9:00 - 4:30 p.m.)

The quotation is for supply and install.

Quotes will be received **on or before 12 noon on Monday, December 13, 2021** via email [info@teulon.ca](mailto:info@teulon.ca) or by mail to P.O. Box 69, TEULON, Manitoba, R0C 3B0 or via fax (204-886-3918)

For Further Information please contact the office at 204-886-2314

## EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY



## FULL TIME ACCOUNTS PAYABLE CLERK

The Town of Stonewall invites qualified individuals to apply for the full time position of **Accounts Payable Clerk**.

Under the direction and supervision of the Assistant CAO the Accounts Payable Clerk, as part of the Administration Department, shall provide support to management in the running of the day to day business operations of the Town in accordance with statutory requirements and the policies and objectives of Council.

Wage will be commensurate with qualifications and experience based on Town of Stonewall Non-Union Employee Policy 3.1. This position includes an excellent employee benefits package.

The preferred applicant will have a strong accounting skills, exceptional customer service skills, and the ability to positively interact with vendors, management, and staff. Applicants must be familiar with Microsoft Word and Excel, and accounting software applications. Experience with Municipal Software would be considered an asset.

### Procedure for Applying

Qualified Applicants are invited to submit a cover letter summarizing relevant experience, a resume, plus three (3) references to:

Town of Stonewall  
**Attention: Diane Allan**  
Email: [ashleym@stonewall.ca](mailto:ashleym@stonewall.ca)  
**SUBJECT: ACCOUNTS PAYABLE CLERK**  
293 Main Street, Box 250  
Stonewall, MB R0C 2Z0

**Deadline for applications:** 12:00 PM on Friday, December 10, 2021

**Start date:** as soon as possible

A complete job description can be obtained by email at [info@stonewall.ca](mailto:info@stonewall.ca)

**The Town of Stonewall thanks all applicants, however only candidates interviewed will be contacted.**

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## BIRTHDAY



**HAPPY 80th BIRTHDAY  
GORDON**  
on December 4th  
-Love Valerie, Vicki, Stuart  
and families

## OBITUARY



### Gordon Alexander MacDonald

Gord passed away peacefully on Saturday, November 27, 2021 at the Stonewall General Hospital with family by his side.

Gord was born October 11, 1940 in Alexandria, Ontario.

He was predeceased by his parents, Christina (Budge) and Leonard MacDonald; step-father Walter Bremmer; his brothers Kenneth, Keith; his sister Joycelyn; sisters-in-law Zennovia, Jeannette and brother-in-law Jim.

Gord is survived by his beloved wife Annette (Tremblay) of 58 years; brother Don and sister Catherine. His memory will forever be cherished by his children, Joseph (Melanie), Tracy (Blair); and six grandchildren, Hailey (Darrell), Alysia, Quinton, Sylar, Declan, and Abby. He will also be missed by his brothers-in-law, Ken (Donna) and George; sister-in-law Cathy; as well as nieces, nephews and many dear friends.

The entire family would like to express their appreciation to Dr. Graham and the staff at Stonewall General Hospital, and Palliative Care Team for their care and compassion given to Gord over the last few months.

Gord's family will celebrate his life privately.

Messages of condolences can be made online at [www.omegafuneralhome.com](http://www.omegafuneralhome.com)

Omega Funeral Home, Portage la Prairie, MB in charge of arrangements.

*Your memory will live forever Engraved within our hearts*

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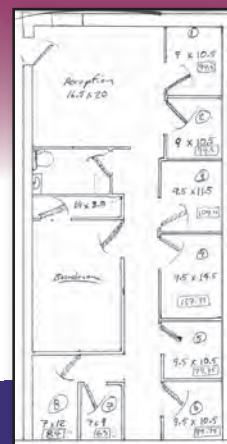
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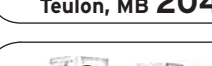
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