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The

Winkler Morden

Voice

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Fun on the ice for a great cause

The Morden Thunder hockey team hosted their fourth annual Christmas Cheer Game at the Access Event Centre on Sunday. The teens faced off against the Guns & Hoses, a team made up of local police and firefighters. Admission was by donation, with everything raised going to the Morden Christmas Cheer Board campaign, who sent out care hampers this week. Here, Thunder players Justin Alderson and Jaidon Lawson had a little fun after the game battling the fire department mascot for puck possession. For more photos, see Pg. 17.

PHOTO BY RICK HIEBERT/VOICE

news > sports > opinion > community > people > entertainment > events > classifieds > careers > everything you need to know

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Winkler PD welcomes three new officers

City's first female constables join the force

By Ashleigh Viveiros

The Winkler police department made history in more ways than one this week.

Winkler Police Service welcomed three new constables to the force on Monday.

Travis Krahn, Megan Fallis, and Kendra Derksen graduated from the 20-week course at the Saskatchewan Police College Dec. 15 and returned to Winkler for their first shifts this week.

It's the first time in the department's history they've had so many new recruits join the roster at one time, said Chief Rick Hiebert.

"We came into the year wanting to go from 18 to 19 police officers," he explained, noting, however, that with the retirements of Sgt. Ray Friesen and Insp. Brad Kehler at the start of

the year, they unexpectedly found themselves with a rare three positions to fill.

Fallis and Derksen are also the very first female officers in over a century of Winkler law enforcement.

Bringing more diversity to the department has been top of mind for the city for years, but no suitable female candidates had come forward before now.

"You don't lower your standards in any area. They have to pass the same academics, the same physical tests, etc.," the chief stressed, adding that women have made up a very small percentage of the applicants over the years. "We typically have gotten between 50-60 applicants every time we advertise ... probably 90 per cent of the applicants are male."

The requirements are so high that some hiring rounds the department



SUBMITTED PHOTO

The newest members of the Winkler Police Service graduated from police training last Friday. From left: Cst. Kendra Derksen, Cst. Travis Krahn, and Cst. Megan Fallis.

has struggled find even one suitable future officer, regardless of gender, Hiebert noted.

"You always want the best of the best," he said.

For their part, Fallis and Derksen say it's exciting but also a bit overwhelming to be forging a new path as the city's first female police officers.

"It's really exciting that we're both here together ... but nerve-racking as well because the community hasn't had that before, so it will be a different experience for them for sure," said Derksen.

Continued on page 4

HAPPY HOLIDAYS!



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The Stars Died

from *Creation Moments Radio Program*

Psalm 8:3-4

When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; what is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?



The atheist physicist Lawrence Krauss believes he has life figured out. As a cosmologist, he adheres to the Big Bang view of origins, believing that the universe came into existence from a singularity about 13.7 billion years ago.

The Big Bang theory is not compatible with a biblical understanding, but it would be a mistake to dismiss the theory as if there were only one point to it. Over the decades, as with the Theory of Evolution, a very sophisticated set of ideas has been woven around Big Bang cosmogony.

Krauss has referred often to stardust. "We are all made of stardust," he has opined. The reason for this assertion is an evolutionary concept of the birth, life, and death of stars. Big Bangers have an explanation for how they believe stars formed from the original universal matter and began nuclear fusion. However, these models do not suggest a route to producing enough of the heavier elements found in the universe. So, scientists like Krauss suggest that these stars eventually die and explode, and new stars grow from the older, exploded stardust. He supposes that the only reason we, as humans, could have evolved is because of the production of gradually heavier elements, by second- and third-generation stars. Krauss says, "Forget Jesus – the stars died that we might live." Krauss, like his biology parallel Richard Dawkins, believes in presenting a kind of awe of science to young people. So it is to the stars that he supposes this awe must be directed because they are our saviors.

The Bible, in contrast, explains that the stars are not a subject for awe, except in the sense that they point us to God, so that we worship Him.

Prayer: Indeed, what is man, Lord – what are we that You should care anything about us when we consider the glory of the universe You created? Yet, You intended all this for Your glory, especially that we might come to know You through repentance from our sins and trusting in Jesus Christ. Amen.

For further info. contact *Creation Science of Saskatchewan Inc.*,
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Morden Area Fdn. hits granting milestone

By Lorne Stelmach

The best gift for the Morden Area Foundation this year is reaching another major milestone.

Now in its 25th year, the organization had extra cause to celebrate at its annual Christmas gathering last Wednesday as it has surpassed the \$1 million mark in grants.

"I'm looking forward to the Corn and Apple parade when we can put that on a big sign," remarked president Avaline Widmer.

"A million dollars in grants ... all of the good that's done in the community," she said. "It's just amazing ... when you have endowment funds and you can only spend the interest earned, it's hard to imagine when you started this 25 years ago that you would be able to give back in such a short period of time.

"When you drop a pebble into a lake and it creates a ripple and the ripples spread out and expand ... I think that's kind of the impact the foundation has," she suggested. "Those are things where we don't know the full extent of the ripple and the impact of what our granting is going to have yet in the community.

"The purpose of the foundation is to make our community more resilient, sustainable and enjoyable, vibrant for our local citizens and the surrounding area."

The foundation currently has an endowment fund of over \$1.6 million. The grants distributed back to the community since the foundation's inception stand at \$1,044,000.

Helping put it over the \$1 million mark was a \$12,150 grant to the Darlingford fire department for a new Jaws of Life.

The money covered a significant portion of the total cost of just over

\$35,000, said Chief Cal Funk, who noted it is a significant upgrade from the 1985 set they had been using.

"It is a huge upgrade. We went from about 26,000 pounds of cutting force ... to about 145,000 pounds of cutting force," said Funk.

Their old Jaws of Life were no longer able to cut some of the new steel in cars, he noted, and it was also much more unwieldy to use. The new set is much less restricted by operating on battery power.

"The jaws just need to be stronger to cut that material," Funk said. "So this is a huge deal for us ... we can respond immediately, it is so fast. We can also respond in places where you couldn't typically get these units in before ... this just puts us light years ahead.

"It's quicker, it's easier for us ... it can be five to seven minutes before you actually get going with the old ones. We can take these things virtually into anywhere."

Following the idea of paying it forward, Funk said that the department's old Jaws of Life are being put to good use.

"We took our old set and we passed them on to Notre Dame fire department, who had nothing," he said.

Widmer said the foundation liked that this grant supports equipment that can be shared with Morden and Manitou.

"This is something that's going to be available, I think, for larger than just our immediate community that's going to save lives," she said.

"When we are able to give grants like that, that are really important for the safety and the welfare of our citizens, that's pretty exciting."

It was a great way for the foundation to conclude what had been a successful year for the organization, Widmer noted.



PHOTO BY LORNE STELMACH/VOICE

Representatives of the Darlingford Fire Department were pleased to receive a \$12,150 grant from the Morden Area Foundation last week for a new Jaws of Life.

"The past couple years we had some very successful events," she said, citing the Canadian Fossil Discovery Centre fundraising gala as well as the Power of the Purse luncheon and 24-Hour Giving Challenge as examples, in addition to the Pay It Forward campaign in May.

"It was a year of growth for us. We had significant donations ... I think we had an extra \$42,000 in donations to our endowment fund, so that was

up significantly from previous years," she said. "It helps the foundation grow in not only dollars but in awareness and helps to build community spirit, so we're proud of that."

The foundation is making plans to mark its 25th anniversary in 2018, including at a special event in April where they will hear stories of various donations, celebrate new funds, and honour originating founding board members.



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Constituents bend MLA's ear at holiday tea

By Lorne Stelmach

Meeting with constituents at his annual Christmas tea last Thursday, Morden-Winkler MLA Cameron Friesen got words of support but was challenged as well on some of the issues facing the province.

That's obviously going to happen with him also being the finance minister at a time of upheaval in Manitoba, Friesen acknowledged after the event at the Winkler Senior Centre.

"That is different now because of my new role. It used to be less formal, now it's a little more formal," he said. "It gives an opportunity for me ... a context ... in which to meet with constituents ... convey a message to them, but principally to listen to them."

Now with six years under his belt in the Manitoba Legislature, Friesen observed that there has been a profound change for him with his responsibilities as finance minister and chair of the treasury board.

"When we were first elected, we were all aspiration because we talked about where we wanted to go," he said. "I think the difference now, being 18 months down this path, is that

we are starting to be able to have the ability to quantify the progress we are making.

"We have done some important things," he said, noting the release of the public accounts in September showed the government had achieved a \$147 million reduction in the deficit.

"It certainly does not suggest that now it is all easy coasting from here.

There's a lot of work to do, but it does show that we mean what we say when we talk about the need to fix the finances," said Friesen. "We understand that every dollar spent in deficit is a dollar that cannot go to the important things we need."

Friesen also singled out the importance of the transformation taking place in our health care system.

"Change is always difficult," he said, acknowledging that reforming the system was never going to be easy.

"I believe Manitobans are starting to see that we are managing it very carefully based on research, based on the experience of other jurisdictions," Friesen suggested. "I think that Manitobans are coming to understand that we mean what we say when we say we are doing this work for the purpose of better patient experience.

"It's some results," he continued.

"WE HAVE NOT SOLVED EVERY PROBLEM YET, AND THERE'S A LOT OF WORK AHEAD."



PHOTO BY LORNE STELMACH/VOICE

Morden-Winkler MLA Cameron Friesen invited his constituents to a Christmas tea at the Winkler Senior Centre last week to celebrate the season and chat about ongoing local and provincial concerns.

"We have not solved every problem yet, and there's a lot of work ahead, but I think at this point of time we're saying it's certainly now not just aspiration but also now we're able to point somewhat to evidence."

It all means the Conservative government under Premier Brian Pallister is undergoing a rough ride, but Friesen maintained Manitoba suffered too much for too long under an NDP government that was afraid to take on the challenge of change.

"We're addressing these things head on," he stressed. "I believe a government should be measured on its willingness to address head on the principle challenges of its era. That means we need to have the courage of our convictions ... if we didn't believe in change, maybe we wouldn't have such a bumpy ride ... but we're doing what we're doing because we believe that a better Manitoba lies ahead if we can see these things through."

"We're really excited to have them on board"

From Pg. 2

"I think there's a lot of expectations," added Fallis, "so it will be interesting to see the first little while how things go."

MAKING A DIFFERENCE

All three of Winkler's new officers excelled in their training, with Derksen co-winning the academic award for top in the class.

"It was really exciting to see the reports ... almost all of their exams or tests were above class average," noted Hiebert. "We're just so proud of them. I know they worked their butts off. We're really excited to have them on board."

Becoming a police officer has long been a dream of Krahn's.

"It's a chance to be part of a highly trained and motivated team, and no day will ever be the same," he said. "It's a job where you really feel that you can make a difference, and I think we're all excited to do that."

After receiving a degree in criminal justice, Krahn applied to multiple police departments and was thrilled to get hired in his hometown.

"It is nice growing up in the community that you're policing. You kind of know some of the ins and outs of how the city operates and some of its quirks. And knowing little details, like knowing streets, it will make things a little easier."

"It's always been something I've

wanted to do and just hadn't done it yet," reflected Derksen, who also grew up in the Winkler area. "I went down a different career path as an accountant and it was maybe time for a change."

Donning the uniform gives her the chance to give back by "helping people and working for my community."

Fallis, a Warren native, is the lone newcomer to the city. She's eager to get to know the community better by getting out on the beat.

"I'm just excited to be on patrol," she said, explaining that what drew her to policing was the opportunity to get out from behind a desk each day.

"I was previously a social worker, so I kind of had some experience working with people," Fallis said. "I needed a change of pace ... this will be different every single day."

The trio will spend the next 16 weeks in field training with veteran Winkler officers.

"IT'S A JOB WHERE YOU REALLY FEEL THAT YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE."

Stanley Trail Assoc. buys trail groomer

By Lorne Stelmach

A local volunteer group sees their new purchase having a positive impact on trail use in the area.

The Stanley Trail Association raised the funds to purchase a SnowDog trail groomer for this winter and they're anxious to put it to use.

"We're hoping with this groomer that we can set those trails quickly, and we anticipate a real spike in their use, especially around the Morden area," suggested the association's John Loewen.

"If we get on it quickly after it snows, it will make it much more user friendly for walkers ... those trails get used so much even in winter," he said. "If we can get a good pack on them before too many walkers get on ... it just makes it better for all users, whether it's bikers, walkers, or snowshoers."

Coming at an estimated cost of about \$5,000, the SnowDog purchase became possible thanks to community support from a variety of sources.

Key support has come through the involvement of Peter Loewen of Country Cycle as well as James Elias at Triple E Developments, Cole Hildebrand of Capital Landscaping, and Mike Neufeld of Borderline Fabrication.

"We've pretty well closed the gap ... within about \$500 ... and before the first full snow, so we're ready to go," said association member James Friesen.

He described the SnowDog as basi-

cally a snowmobile track with a motor on top and handles at the back.

"It's pretty narrow, so it fits through single track trail, in tight between trees," said Friesen.

"It's a workhorse, it's designed to pull ... so it pulls the groomer behind it, which basically works up the snow a bit, packs it down, and then it kind of scarifies the surface so that the snow sets up hard, freezes well, and that makes the snow able to hold the weight of a walker or a bike on fat tires."

Founded about 18 years ago, the Stanley Trail Association came together around the mandate of creating the local section of the Trans-Canada Trail.

"It goes on gravel and dirt roads, and there are some sections that are on private land, so we received permission from the landowners to cut trails through," explained Friesen.

"There's some really beautiful sections that connect from one end to the other," he added, noting their involvement has evolved as they have seen growth in interest and usage of the local trail system, especially among the local cycling community.

"The organization has started concerning itself with just supporting trail development in the area because there's so much potential. That's kind of what we've developed into over the years now."

Loewen stressed the involvement of volunteers is vital.

"We currently have a working board



PHOTO BY LORNE STELMACH/VOICE

The Stanley Trail Association is anxious to get out with their new SnowDog trail groomer, which was purchased thanks in part to community donations. Checking it out last week were James Friesen of the Stanley Trail Association along with Mike Neufeld of Borderline Fabrication, association member John Loewen, and Peter Loewen of Country Cycle.

of about 10 people who are pretty regularly involved, and that's primarily the maintenance and rebuilding," he said.

"If we know we've got a new section of trail that we want to build, it's pretty easy to get a core group of enthusiastic people ... the challenge is always

the maintenance.

"Now we're hoping with this trail groomer that we can keep the trails well packed for winter, and it should be pretty functional for helping drag some of the heavier equipment out when we need to do summer maintenance."

Morden council unveils 2018 financial plan

By Lorne Stelmach

The scale of the regional wastewater treatment project is reflected in a 2018 budget for the City of Morden that more than doubles from 2017.

Multiple millions of dollars in both government funding on the revenue side and expenditure for the project are the major factor in a proposed financial plan of over \$34.8 million compared to the 2017 budget of \$15.7 million.

The budget still awaits final approval, though, despite being presented Monday, after an objection to council

suggested proper public notice had not been given.

"To a large extent, most people in town only learned about the financial plan hearing a few days ago, and that's not adequate in my mind," said former city manager Ernie Epp, who raised the concern.

"I think the responsibility of council is to ensure the residents get the notice that they are obligated to be provided and that they have ample opportunity ... to provide comment if they have any concerns."

The hearing also attracted a few other residents with a range of ques-

tions and concerns on such areas as the various reserve funds and other day-to-day operations of the city.

A date for a new hearing on the financial plan was still to be finalized at press time, but details were presented of a new budget that decreases spending in some key areas of community services, economic development, and transportation services, while the cost of other areas such as government services and fire and police protection rises.

The overall impact on taxpayers remains unknown until the Western School Division budget is set in

the new year, but the City of Morden budget projects a 12 per cent increase in overall tax levy revenue.

Increased property assessment does boost that revenue, so the city also decreased the municipal mill rate by six per cent.

They say a property that had been valued at \$200,000 in 2016 and is now valued at \$212,500 could actually be paying 0.35 per cent less in the municipal portion of their tax bill. A similarly valued commercial property could see a four per cent increase in

Continued on page 6

The *Winkler Morden*
Voice



PUBLISHER
Rick Reimer



ADMINISTRATION
Lana Meier



EDITOR
Ashleigh Viveiros



REPORTER
Lorne Stelmach



SALES
Gwen Keller



AGRICULTURE REPORTER
Harry Siemens



PRODUCTION
Tara Gionet



PRODUCTION
Nicole Kapusta

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General inquiries: 325-6888

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Winkler Morden Voice

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getheard

EDITORIAL > VIEWPOINTS > LETTERS

Happy holidays to you and yours

Traditions are kind of a big deal in my family around the holidays.

The Christmas tree ornaments are the same ones that have gone up the first weekend of December for the entirety of my parents' marriage—always with one brand new one to mark the passing of another year.

As we've gotten older, these ornaments have progressed from representing childhood interests—sports (my brother has probably 20 soccer-themed ones), favourite movies (if it's *Star Wars*, you know it's mine), hobbies, and the like—to ones representing

our travels from the past 12 months. There's so many now that it's become an annual question as to whether we're going to fit them all on the tree without it falling over.

The tree itself—be it large or be it small—is always compared to that one year Mom and/or Dad (they still argue about who's to blame) picked out what, upon taking off the binding string, ended up being more akin to a Charlie Brown Christmas tree than anything else.

Hanging on the kitchen wall is the same "Santa coming down the chimney" calendar my brother and I used to run to before bedtime to mark the days left until Christmas morning. After decades of use, it still gets faithfully put up, though we've learned not to actually touch it anymore for fear of it disintegrating in our hands.

And though we're all "grown ups" now (a debatable point sometimes ... what is it about everyone getting together for the holidays that makes us

regress to the familial roles we had as children?), we still put out a plateful of cookies for St. Nick on Christmas Eve (it has to be Oreos, of course, because apparently 1980s advertising worked very well on my brother and I). And while all of us swear we didn't eat them, the cookies are always gone by morning. Christmas magic.

For me, these and other traditions serve as a tangible connection to the past, making the holidays, in many ways, an exercise in nostalgia each and every year—one I can't wait for.

Still, it's so easy to get so caught up in the hustle and bustle of this time of year. Whatever your family's traditions are, I hope you have the opportunity to truly enjoy them with your loved ones over the next week.

All of us here at the Voice send out warm holiday greetings to all our readers and best wishes for an awesome 2018.

> MORDEN FINANCIAL PLAN, FROM PG. 5

its municipal taxes.

On the revenue side, the city is budgeting for over \$11 million in provincial and \$8 million in federal funding, primarily for the wastewater treatment project. There is also expected to be about another \$1.4 million in provincial municipal tax sharing, which would be similar to the 2017 levels.

Other revenue sources are projected to rise, including a nearly 70 per cent rise in added taxes of almost \$400,000. As well, council forecasts an 85 per cent increase to \$331,000 from the sale of protective services such as fire protection for the RM of Stanley.

Other revenue sources are projected to remain level, including almost \$800,000 from recreation services and \$266,000 from Colert Beach at Lake Minnewasta.

On the expenditure side, the wastewater treatment project is reflected under fiscal services, which might normally have a budget nearing the \$2 million mark. The \$24.6 million

budget includes a \$22.8 million contribution to capital funds which last year had a budget of \$3.2 million.

The cost of protective services including police and fire increases 3.9 per cent to just over \$2.7 million primarily as a result of higher salaries and benefits.

Community services comes in next with a budget of \$2.6 million, which represents a 16.6 per cent decrease. It includes decreased spending for parks and recreation but more for the beach and campground, the library and Canadian Fossil Discovery Centre.

General government services, including the city administrative staff and grants to various community organizations, increases by just over 18 per cent to \$1.4 million.

The budget for transportation services comes in at \$1.2 million, which represents a 3.2 per cent decrease. It includes a little more in such areas as snow clearing and road maintenance but a little less for planning and engineering as well as equip-

ment repair and maintenance.

Another area budgeting for a decrease is economic development services with a 24.5 per cent drop to just under \$655,000. This includes about \$454,000 to go towards community development.

Expenditures for environmental health services such as waste collection and recycling stay the same at about \$549,000, while public health and welfare services gets 42 per cent at \$166,000 primarily through support for the Agassiz Medical Centre.

The financial plan also includes the capital budget of \$36 million with \$24 million targeted for the wastewater treatment project.

Other significant projects include redevelopment of the Highway 3 - LaVerendrye intersection, reconstruction of First Street and other road paving to community development incentive funds, sports field development and refurbishment and renovation the Morden Civic Centre.

BTHC Fdn. contributes to new gamma probe

By Lorne Stelmach

Breast cancer surgery can now not only be done closer to home for area patients but also in a much less invasive and more effective manner.

That's thanks to the Boundary Trails Health Centre Foundation and its efforts to raise funds for a new gamma probe that was put on display recently.

The cost of about \$70,000 was raised all in one evening through the foundation's annual gala in 2016 after doctors came to the organization with the need for the new probe.

"We could the surgery with all the lymph nodes here before, but we couldn't do the detection surgery," explained Dr. Elizabeth Thompson, noting as well that they previously worked with a borrowed probe.

"What breast cancer surgery used to be was a significant amount of surgery where you took a lot of lymph nodes out of the armpit, which had a fairly high risk of leaving women with potential complications," said Thompson. "Now that we have a probe, what we can do is detect one, two or three lymph nodes that we

can take as opposed to 14 or 15, which poses a much smaller risk to patients post-operatively.

"It allows us to detect the most important lymph nodes in the armpit to tell us if we think that the cancer has already started to spread," she said. "This probe in particular allows us to do state of the art breast cancer surgery at Boundary Trails without patients needing to go to Winnipeg."

Foundation chairperson Debra Enns pointed out that it says a lot about this area's level of commitment that the foundation could so quickly raise as much as \$77,000 for this purchase.

"We raised all the funds that we needed to purchase this piece of equipment ... all in that one evening,



PHOTO BY LORNE STELMACH/VOICE

Getting a look recently at a new gamma probe for breast cancer surgery were (from left) Boundary Trails Health Centre chairperson Debra Enns, Dr. Elizabeth Thompson, Dr. Mary Jacob and Shannon Samatte-Folkett, executive director of the foundation, which raised \$70,000 for the probe at its 2016 annual gala.

and we're happy to say the probe is here and ready to go," she said.

"We are so blessed to be living in this community where the money

just seems to be available to us every time we ask the community to come through for us ... and they do it ten-fold."

Chamber award nominations due Dec. 31

The deadline is nearing for nominations for the Winkler and District Chamber of Commerce awards.

The P.W. Enns Business Awards will be handed out at the chamber's gala in April, which features as guest

speaker four-time Olympic gold medalist Haley Wickenheiser.

Nominations are open for the Business Excellence, Business Builder Over 10 Employees, Business Builder Under 10 Employees, the Customer

Service Award, and the Not for Profit Award.

Nominations are due in by Dec. 31. Details and forms are available online at winklerchamber.com.

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ABOVE PHOTO BY ASHLEIGH VIVEIROS/VOICE

The Winkler Flyers challenged the kids in attendance at the opening of the Emerado Park ice rink to a game of broomball at the celebrations last Wednesday.



The rink's warming shack was made possible thanks to major donations from Scotiabank (above) and Artspan (below) who had representatives on hand to pose with city council. Right: The rink itself, meanwhile, was built thanks to a \$15,000 grant from the Canada 150 fund in collaboration with the Winkler Community Foundation and the City of Winkler.



Emerado rink opens thanks to community donations

By Ashleigh Viveiros

Winkler's newest ice rink in Emerado Park wouldn't have been possible without the support of the community.

This from Mayor Martin Harder, who lauded the individuals and businesses who stepped up to make the rink a reality this winter.

"All in all, it's probably close to \$30,000-\$35,000 that has been raised to get this all accomplished here today," said Harder, speaking at the rink's grand opening celebration Dec. 13, which included free hot chocolate and cookies and a rousing game of broomball with the Winkler Flyers.

A \$15,000 grant through the Winkler Community Foundation from the federal Canada 150 fund took a huge bite out of the cost of the rink itself, with that amount matched by the City of Winkler.

The site's spacious warming shack, meanwhile, was made possible thanks to significant donations from Winkler's Scotiabank and Artspan, whose names the building now bears.

Additional project funding came in from FB Industries, Triple L, and the Emerado Centennial School.

"So it's been a lot of community groups working together with the City of Winkler," Harder said. "I've said it before, but without the com-

munity we just wouldn't get half the stuff done that we do. This is just another example of how important community really is when they band together in order to make a project work for the benefit of everybody."

Getting an outdoor rink—complete with boards, lights, and the warming shack—into the south end of Winkler was a priority for city council, the mayor said.

"We were struggling with having activities available within walking distance of the southern part of town," he said. "It's always more difficult to go get to the arena or Scotia Park or downtown where the other rinks are. This gives this community something here."

"You can see even by the number of

kids out there today that it's going to get a lot of use."

Harder noted that the city hopes to have the warming shack open regular hours, but they're looking to the community for some help on that front.

"What I would like to see is some community ownership that would come together and say, 'Okay, we're going to man this thing for certain hours of the day,'" he said. "It happens in other areas and that would be ideal if it would take place here, as it would allow us to be much more flexible for when this building is open."

"WITHOUT THE COMMUNITY WE JUST WOULDN'T GET HALF THE STUFF DONE THAT WE DO."



Pine Ridge Elementary is Winkler's newest school

By Ashleigh Viveiros

It's official: Winkler's newest school is Pine Ridge Elementary School.

The Garden Valley School Division's board of trustees announced the winning name at their monthly meeting Dec. 12.

Chair Laurie Dyck said they received over 100 entries in the Name the School Contest for the K-8 facility slated to be built on Roblin Blvd. West.

Eighteen people suggested the name "Pine Ridge" since the school is located in the Pine Ridge residential development.

"It was definitely the most popular name out of all the entries we had,"

Dyck said.

"There were lots of great submissions," she added. "In the end, after all factors were considered, this seemed to make the most sense."

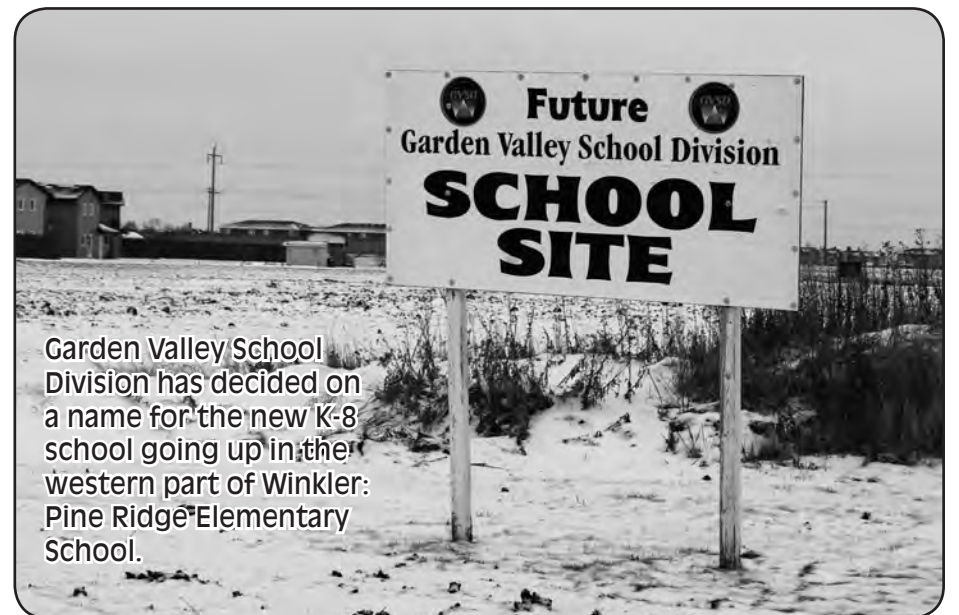
Giving the community the chance to pick the new school's name is a tradition the division was eager to continue.

"It's a community building, owned by the taxpayers," said Dyck. "And we want it to be a part of not just the immediate community but the bigger community of Winkler as well."

The contest winners will each receive a share of the \$250 contest prize.

Plans for the school are moving ahead on schedule, Dyck said.

Project drawings are expected to be



completed by Dec. 31 so the project can go to tender in January.

Construction, then, will begin likely in February. The school will open in fall of 2019.

GVSD and the City of Winkler are also working together on a traffic

study to ensure pedestrian and traffic safety in the school's neighbourhood. The study, which will be completed before the school opens, will review things like speed limits, crosswalks, and pedestrian corridors needed in the area.

> FAITH FOCUS

Celebrating singleness

This fall I got some feedback from singles in our church and it was good to hear honest feedback about their experience.

Here's a quote that represents a lot of what I heard: "Married people haven't a clue what it's like to be single. They say horrible things like, when you stop looking that's when it'll 'happen.' God's getting that special one ready for you. I saw these things happening to the singles in their thirties who are facing the prospect that marriage may not happen and are trying to come to terms with that realization. Married people often don't include singles. They go tribal and singles are not part of the tribe, we have our own tribe right? Church can be a very lonely place, one single friend said. 'It's so lonely sometimes, I sit there with a stomach-ache through the whole service.' I understand that



By Terry Dueck

married people can feel lonely too, I guess it's part of the human condition. I don't understand why God would hardwire us this way for connection and relationship, for marriage, and then not allow it to be realized. I feel cheated. I feel second best, even though there is nothing wrong with me."

If you look at scripture, specifically Jesus, this is not what He wants for singles in the church! In fact, quite the opposite: Jesus and the New Testament writers elevates singleness as a worthy calling to be pursued for the Kingdom, and yet often we exclude singles in our thinking and our planning of community events.

Let's be honest, Winkler is a family-focused community (which is a good thing!), but there is the expectation that if you haven't found your soulmate by the time you're twenty-two, you are running out of time!

In fact, if you're not married or don't have kids, there is something wrong with you. You'd think there was some hidden Scripture that says, "Thou shall be marriedth by this time, or thou beist a freak."

Based on the teaching in the New Testament, we need to stop treating singleness like it's a problem to be solved or a disease that is waiting to be cured. Whether you're single or whether you're married, it's just a different version of awesome.

But that also means that the church needs to live up to her identity as a spiritual family; the church is called to be family for those who have no biological family.

It is foundational to the calling, identity, even mission of the church, to rally around our unity in diversity and to care for one another.

We need to stop going "tribal" and break down our silos based on age or marital status. The beauty of commu-

nity and diversity is worth it, and it's the vision and prayer of Jesus.

As we think about Christmas, I want to encourage you to think about who you will be family to? Who will you invite into your home as way of living out our identity as the people of God to be a spiritual family?

- Terry Dueck is the lead pastor at the Winkler MB Church

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Locals support World Vision Christmas giving

By Lorne Stelmach

Manitobans have embraced the tradition of supporting overseas development work through the World Vision Christmas gift catalogue.

More than 167,000 Canadians have bought gifts over the last five years from the catalogue that offers everything from setting up a family with livestock to supporting education and health care.

For example, you can provide alpacas (one of which can produce up to five kilos of wool annually) or hens that will lay on average up to 300 eggs a year.

In the past five years, Winkler residents have donated more than \$41,000 to World Vision's Christmas giving program while Mordenites have contributed over \$25,000 in gifts that include not just livestock but also training for teachers and medicine for children and families around the world.

"We're very impressed with the response from the area. We know that southern Manitoba is very generous and we're seeing that in the numbers that are coming in each year," said spokesperson Chris Schroeder.

He stressed that residents should know that what they purchase is what people are actually getting around the globe.

"We find out what their greatest needs are, and they actually come



WORLD VISION PHOTO

World Vision's Christmas gift catalogue allows families here to help families in developing countries get ahead.

back to us with their suggestions," said Schroeder. "So this way, we're not giving goats to a community that is already over-populated with goats."

"That's what informs the gift cata-

logue," he continued. "When someone purchases a goat, it is a goat that is purchased. The only time that we may change that, and it's rare, is for instance if the giving for one specific

item actually outweighs the need."

Schroeder observed as well that many donors from southern Manitoba seem drawn to donating animals.

"Livestock seems to be a key thing that is being purchased from the gift catalogue ... things like goats, chickens," he said. "I think for Manitoba in general because we have such a high agricultural population, I think we understand the value of these things."

Schroeder noted he has seen firsthand the impact that these kinds of gifts can have on a community.

"I've had an opportunity to visit one of the goat projects," he said. "It started with three goats and multiplied ... they were able to use the milk, sell the milk at the market ... use additional funds from that purchase sewing machines, and now they are a self sustaining community. That community no longer requires World Vision assistance."

Learn more about the World Vision Christmas gift catalogue online at donate.worldvision.ca.

Council changing up planning session

By Lorne Stelmach

Winkler city council is looking ahead to both the shorter and longer term future.

As council continues to work

towards finalizing its 2018 budget, it is also aiming to do long term planning next month.

Council will hold its annual planning session a little differently this year, Mayor Martin Harder explained when council met last Tuesday.

They are going through the presentations by various departments

on their needs for the year ahead of time, he said.

"What we're going to do this time around is we're going to spend much more time discussing a five year plan," said Harder.

Council has set its three day planning session for Jan. 18-20.

Meanwhile, one issue facing the community right now is the lack of enough available ice time. A delegation is expected at the first council meeting in January to address the matter.

"As council, we appreciate the fact that we need more ice. We want more ice," Harder said.

"We would like to build the exhibition centre complete with a new arena," he added, but funding is a big question mark around it.

Harder noted secondary ice for Winkler had actually once been approved as far back as 1981, but it never went ahead.

"We do not want this to fall off the table," the mayor stressed. "This is a priority. We need it, we want it, but yet at the same time our hands are tied as far as the funding of it is concerned."

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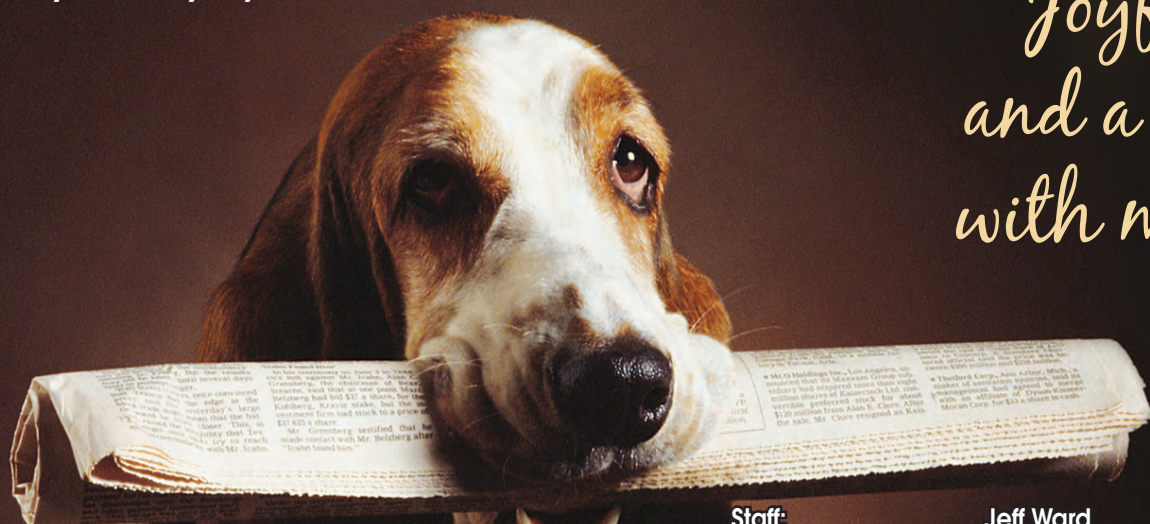
Continued on page 21

Dear loyal readers,

We work very hard throughout the year to keep you informed with the news that matters most to you. Local information is of significant importance because it concerns the various subjects that affect you as well as the projects of the people we have elected, our school, town and municipal council, the local economy and the businesses in our area.

As your local newspaper, it is our mission to connect people through stories to build stronger communities. We will keep you informed and we are very proud to be the local resource for news and information in this community. We sincerely thank you for making our newspaper what it is today. Your loyalty means the world to us.

We wish you a
Joyful Christmas
and a New Year filled
with much happiness!



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What's *Your* Christmas Story?

We asked kids to share their best themed holiday stories with us for a chance at night-at-the-movies prize packs. It was a tough decision, but here are the winning stories and a few other favourites:

GRAND PRIZE, K-4: BRADEN PENNER, GR. 4, MORDEN

Prancina: Santa's next lead reindeer?

I opened the front door to find a baby reindeer with a note from Santa around her neck that read: "Our reindeer stable is full! Please take care of her until I can pick her up next Christmas."

Since I was planning on getting the mail, I thought riding a reindeer might be fun, so I grabbed a helmet. I said, "Can you support me?" I hopped on her back to figure out the answer, and it was yes!

Then I asked her, "Can you fly west and land by the brown red box?" She did exactly what I asked in one minute 55 seconds, there and back.

But now I had to figure out how to approach this situation with my parents! I asked my parents to come outside. While I waited for them, I hopped on the reindeer and told her my plan. Then my mom and dad came out. The reindeer approached them and I handed them Santa's letter. They read it and said, "Sure." I hopped off the reindeer, hugged them and said "Thank you, thank you very much!"

I decided I needed to give her a name. I chose Prancina, thinking she may be related to Prancer, one of Santa's lead reindeer, and I was hoping that Prancina would be one as well.

According to the song "Rudolph the Red Nose Reindeer," reindeer like to play Monopoly ("They never let poor Rudolph join in any reindeer

games—like Monopoly"), so I set up the game and read her the rules. She seemed to understand, so we played. I caught her trying to eat the green money. She ended up winning, but only because she landed on Boardwalk and Park Place first.

She looked tired so I thought grass clippings might make a nice bed. So I got three buckets and asked Prancina if she could take me to the park, which had recently been mowed and would have lots of clippings. She did it precisely, although a bit slower this time since she was really tired. After I filled the buckets we went back home. I laid out the clippings to make a soft grass bed for her to sleep. I went inside to get her a carrot and when I got back, she was already sleeping. So I put the carrot by her bed.

The next morning I got Prancina another carrot and set up an obstacle course. By the time I was done, Prancina had already finished her breakfast. I explained to Prancina how to do the obstacle course. She seemed ecstatic when I told her she would get a reward carrot at the end of the course. She did the course in one minute. I was proud of her time!

I gave her a half hour rest, but I did know that I'd also have to test her endurance. Endurance is very

important when you are pulling Santa's sleigh across the world.

After her nap I got her to bring me to the mailbox and back again, and she beat her time by seven seconds. If she kept this up, it would only take a week or two to be under a minute! This deserved lettuce, so I went inside, got creative, and gave her one sliced head of lettuce with two sliced carrots sprinkled with peppermint. This is how I discovered a reindeer's favourite food.

This was the basic routine that went on for months.

When the day came for Prancina to leave, I wrote a note to Santa that said:

"Thank you for this time with the reindeer! Please try putting Prancina in a harness on the way home. I have tried training Prancina so she could be a lead reindeer. Sincerely, Kevin."

That night I heard a knock on the door. I woke up and realized it was Santa! He asked me if I wanted to be the new reindeer trainer and Prancina could be my helper.

I said, "Sure, but only if my parents allow it."

"I already asked," Santa said.

"Then off we go!"

GRAND PRIZE, GR. 5-8: CARTER UNGER, GR. 5, WINKLER

'Twas the night before Christmas

'Twas the night before Christmas, when all through the house not a creature was stirring, not even a mouse.... Okay, that NEVER happens in the Unger house! The Ungers definitely know that the holiday season has arrived as there is a spike in hockey fun.

On one particular night before Christmas, the Ungers were running, screaming, and cheering as the puck soared around the upstairs of the house. This was the biggest game of the year! It was the Winnipeg Jets versus the Boston Bruins and this match was super tight. Who would win the Stanley Cup tonight?

I was the leading scorer of the night; the first was a nice tip on a pass from

the corner, the second an easy slide under the pad on a breakaway, and the third came on a buried rebound.

I was going in for my fourth, on another breakaway. I did the stick through the legs trick and was about to roof it when the puck got away and flew into our Christmas tree with four Ungers hot in pursuit!

Down went the tree; ornaments flew everywhere! Refereeing Chief (a.k.a. Mom) gasped. Hockey Commissioner (a.k.a. Dad) scowled and then promptly (and rather loudly) cancelled Christmas. We were banished to bed. How sad!

But then, in a twinkling, I heard on the roof the prancing and pawing of each little hoof.



As I drew in my head, and was turning around, down the chimney St Nicholas came with a bound.

"Yahoo! I'm still on Santa's nice list!" I thought to myself. And after he left, I sprang out of bed and raced out to find ... a hockey net, a stick, goalie

pads and a mask, all clearly labelled "Strictly for Outdoor Use!"

"Happy Christmas to all, and to all a good-night!"

Special Christmas traditions

HONOURABLE MENTIONS

"And suddenly there was with the angel, a multitude of heavenly host, praising God and saying, Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace, goodwill toward men," Mom says and she closes the Bible.

My siblings and I jump out of our seats and clamour about who we want to be when we act out the Christmas story.

We gather towels, robes, flashlights and even wrapped gifts to use as costumes and props for our play.

Wrapping the towel around my head and putting on one of the housecoats, I'm transformed into a shepherd ready to look for baby Jesus, like the angel had told us.

After that role, I quickly grab a present to become a wiseman following the star. When the star (the flashlight, held my one of my siblings) lands on baby Jesus (a doll) I kneel and present my gift to him. We are done acting out the Christmas story!

We quickly clean up all our costumes and run to the kitchen to grab my mom's biggest bowls. We place them at our spots by the table so that Mom and Dad can fill them with gifts while we're asleep.

Early the next morning I jump out of bed and wake my other siblings. We all go to my mom and dad's room to see if they're awake. They are, knowing that we would be up early!

While we wait in the hallway, my mom grabs the camera and let's us know that she's ready.

Racing into the kitchen, we laugh and giggle, excited for the surprises waiting for us in our bowls.

Me and my amazing Christmas friend

For a friend I would rather have an elf instead of a snowman because if I had a snowman it would just melt and I would be heartbroken.

But, if I got an elf as a friend, I would be super happy because I could play with the elf forever. Even in summer! That's right, the elf would never melt!

Anyway, I would give piggy back rides to the elf and the elf would give me piggy back rides! But if the elf did that he would probably get squashed. Ya ... that's a bad idea.

— Violet Bell, Gr. 4, Morden



And every year, we do it all over again!

—Jaselah Friesen, Gr. 7, Hochfeld

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What's *Your* Christmas Story?

HONOURABLE MENTIONS



Christmas Elf

One special night on Christmas Eve, I was tucked in but couldn't sleep. But when everybody else was asleep, I went out of my bed and crept down the stairs. When I got down I screamed because there was Santa Claus placing down the presents. He could be at a million different houses but he was at mine!

I started talking to him. He said his workshop had too many elves so he wanted to give one to me! I knew it would be a lot of work but I took him anyway.

Then Santa Claus disappeared through the chimney. It was the best night of my life! I took the elf to my bed and we fell asleep.

The next morning the elf was gone! Elves

are hard to keep track of because they are really short and hard to find. I jumped out of bed and ran off looking for him. I went downstairs ... he was going crazy in the kitchen, running around on the counters and tearing open the cupboards. I grabbed a pot from his hands, next the cereal box, and then I grabbed him. I was exhausted, and that was only the beginning. It was the craziest morning ever!

At lunch he ate everything—and I mean everything—even all my mom's Christmas cookies.

For days I took care of him. It was hard work but I had to do it.

One day I was so fed up I wanted to tie him to a tree with Christmas lights, but then I got an idea: I could set him to work making toys in the garage. Then I would have toys next Christmas for all my friends and siblings and

cousins and even for people I don't know!

When I told the elf my idea, he was thrilled! In a flash, he took a bunch of tools from my dad's tool bench and got to work. By the time next Christmas came, he'd made enough toys for everyone in the whole neighbourhood.

On Christmas Eve, Santa came back and said he had room for the elf. I told Santa I'd like to keep him because he's really helpful here. The elf liked the idea, too.

Santa thought for a moment and said, "You can keep him as long as you take good care of him and give away all the toys he makes."

"OK!" I said, jumping up and down. "Thank you, thank you!"

Then Santa climbed back up the chimney and everybody had a good, jolly Christmas.

—Arjei Hildebrand, Gr. 3, Winkler

My Christmas story

I opened the front door to find a baby reindeer with a note from Santa that read: "Our reindeer stable is full! Please take care of her until I can pick her up next Christmas."

Now, you're probably wondering how this happened. My name is Kam Davis. I am eleven years old. I have red hair, freckles, and blue eyes, and I am a girl.

Ever since I was nine, I'd stopped believing in Santa Claus. Everyone else that was about my age had stopped believing, too. Although I was over it, my sister was six and was not over it. So, my parents went along with it, letting her believe in a man who delivered presents all over the world, bringing out cookies and milk for him.

Of course, I wasn't buying it ... at least until that night on Christmas Eve when I had actual proof.

That night was like every other night: teeth brushed, hair combed, in pajamas, my little sister jumping in my face being annoying.

Finally, we jumped into our beds and the lights went off. Soon, everyone was asleep... except me.

Suddenly, I heard some kind of 'thump.' I got out of bed and headed downstairs.

The whole house was quiet. Nothing was different except there were presents under our Christmas tree and the cookies we put out were eaten.

I looked around cautiously... then I heard the thump again. It was coming from the front door. I nervously stepped towards the door and opened it. There stood that little baby rein-

Reindeer troubles

I opened the front door to find a baby reindeer with a note from Santa that read: "Our reindeer stable is full! Please take care of her until I can pick her up next Christmas. Thank you!"

No, no, no! This is not going to work. Mom's terribly allergic to fur. How can I send her back?

I looked around behind her for some sort of trail. Nothing. Oh, no! I hear footsteps coming down the stairs! The fawn sneezed and I shoved her into the hallway closet.

"Kiley!" Mom shouted. "Are you getting sick too? It's hard enough taking care of your father, you know."

"Um," I struggled to come up with something. "I, uh, my nose just tickled, that's all."

Dad hollered for some more tea and Mom trudged to the kitchen. Whew! Now that was a close one!

Slowly, I peeked into the closet and I had to laugh. My coat was draped over her and one of her hooves was stuck in Dad's boot! As I untangled her from the mess I noticed she had a little tag on her collar. It read, "Tasha." Wait a minute, a collar on a reindeer?

deer with the note around her neck that I was talking about! I read the note over and over again in disbelief.

I knew I had to keep her so I cleaned her up to make a good impression on Mom and Dad. Then I waited for everyone to get up.

When my parents did wake up, I handed them the note, and in the end,

we did get to keep her. Up until next Christmas, of course.

And the next Christmas morning when we woke up, she was gone! Although, sometimes I think I see her on those special nights on Christmas Eve.

—Kate Bergen, Gr. 5, Winkler

That's weird.

"Well Tasha, c'mon." She didn't budge. "Come with, uh, Auntie Kiley." I heard Tasha growl. No, wait, it was Tasha's stomach. "Oh! You eat ... carrots! Right, carrots." I sprinted to the kitchen. Hmm ... no carrots. Celery will have to do.

When I returned with a feast, the front door was open. Chilly air wafted in. Quickly I slammed it shut.

"Tasha! Here girl! Tasha!"

"Who's Tasha?" Dad stood there, clutching a wad of tissues.

"No one. Gotta go!" I replied. Before Dad could object, I hopped into my boots, grabbed my coat, and left.

Hoof prints were scattered across the beautiful, white wonderland—straight into Mr. Craner's strictly off-limits yard.

Without thinking, I dashed into his private property. Tasha was standing there in his greenhouse happily grazing on his prized carrots. Suddenly, I heard sirens. Red and blue lights flashed in the distance. Panicking, I ran towards Tasha, climbed up onto her, and gave her a slap in the be-

hind. Tasha charged forward so fast I almost fell off. She raced through Mr. Craner's back door. We smashed into antique vases and paintings. On top of all that, when the police came in, Tasha just peed right there on the expensive, cashmere carpeting.

"Get that there reindeer! NOW!" Mr. Craner was waving around his cane and yelling.

Animal control came barging in. They broke more valuables than we did, with their big tranquilizer guns swinging around.

Clop, clop, clop. Something was on Mr. Craner's roof!

"GO TASHA!" I shouted. Tasha sped past the so-called "animal experts" and ran out the front door. All of a sudden, she began to fly! Tasha flew right up to where good old St. Nick was waiting for her.

"Thank you! Ho! Ho! Ho!" Then Santa put Tasha in his sled and rode off.

That was an adventure, but now I know what I want for Christmas: to never take care of a reindeer ever again!

—Selina Kauenhafen, Gr. 7, Winkler

What's *Your* Christmas Story?

HONOURABLE MENTIONS

Adventures with Jolly the Snowman

If I could have a snowman friend his name would be Jolly, and this is what we do.

I made him on Christmas Eve and gave him a red scarf and black top hat. He had blue button eyes and a carrot nose. Just then Jolly glowed and the button eyes blinked and Jolly, yelled, "Yahoooo! I'm alive, I'm alive!"

"Wow! You are alive," I said.

"Thanks for making me alive," Jolly, said. "Want to go on a trip?"

"Sure," I said.

"Awesome!" Jolly shouted.

He blew a whistle that came from thin air. Then I heard bells jingling, two deer made of snow came flying, picked me up and then Jolly. We flew around for a minute. We came down and I saw a sign that read: North Pole.

"Are we at the North Pole where Santa lives?" I asked.

"Yep," said Jolly. "But he is already flying around giving presents."

Jolly blew his whistle again and this time penguins wearing tuxedos came

with a table, two chairs, and two silver platters. The penguins set everything up. Jolly and I sat down. The penguins lifted the top off the platter: there was snow cones and candy canes.

"Wow!" I said.

"Thanks guys!" Jolly said to the penguins.

"This is delicious," he said, slurping a snow cone.

When Jolly, and I were done eating we took the snow deer home, and every Christmas Eve after that Jolly



came to visit.

—Madelyn Toews, Gr. 4, Winkler

A reindeer called Trouble

I opened the front door to find a baby reindeer with a note from Santa around her neck that read: "Our reindeer stable is full. Please take care of her until I can pick her up next Christmas. Sincerely, Santa."

I was shocked. I knew nothing about reindeer, much less taking care of one.

I stood there for a moment, still completely mesmerized. Then I stooped down, attempting to scoop up the tiny creature. As I did so, she reached out her long skinny neck and bit down hard on my right thumb. I leapt backward and glared at the pint-sized animal that I no longer thought was cute.

She brayed loudly and dashed past me, stumbling through the front door on her long legs. I hurriedly stepped into the house, quickly shutting the door behind me. She looked at me, a look of betrayal spread across her fuzzy, expressive face. She began

to paw the ground. Her ears were pinned back against her head and her tiny teeth were bared. She continued to paw the ground, then charged, headbutting my knees as if to say, "Hey bub, this is MY turf!" I doubled over in pain, wondering how such a little reindeer could have that much force in its tiny, gangly body! By the time I looked up, the feisty, strong-minded mischief-maker was already gone. I had a feeling in my gut that this little reindeer was going to be a handful.

I jumped up and started frantically searching for her. Finding her was not that hard, but catching her was. I raced into the living room to find a tipped over Christmas tree, scattered Christmas tree ornaments, and a knee deep pile of ripped up wrapping paper. That was just the living room. The rest of the house was also catastrophic. The reindeer (that I'd now named Trouble) had knocked over the table where the fruit bowl had sat and apples, oranges, and avocados were scattered all over the kitchen floor. She'd obviously raided the pantry because there she was, feasting on

Honey Nut Cherrios. No artificial flavours or colours. Yum.

Trouble looked at me for a moment with a guilty look in her dark brown eyes. Then continued eating. Soon, Trouble dozed off again, which gave me the perfect opportunity to tidy up. I scrubbed, swept, and picked up for about two hours.

After I had finished, Trouble toddled into the room, yawning enormously. She plodded up to me, putting her tiny hoof on my knee, begging to be cuddled. I considered this for a moment. How can I bond with this agitator? But I bent down and scooped up the little reindeer. She snuggled into my arms and began to snore quietly. Ever since that moment, me and Trouble did nearly everything together. We'd go on drives together, share ice cream cones in the summer and hot chocolate in the winter.

Then Christmas Day arrived. Trouble was almost full grown. She pranced around the house, running to the door every five minutes. I, on the other hand, was mournful. I tried to hide it, but me and Trouble had grown so close. At exactly 12 A.M.

there was a loud knock at the door. Me and Trouble groggily got out of bed and opened the door. Anyone could recognize that big, red coat and long white beard. It was Santa, no doubt.

All the grogginess left Trouble. She jumped up and down and her eyes shone with excitement. She pranced around Santa, constantly licking his face. Santa laughed, a deep, hearty laugh.

"Well hello there Blitzen!" He bel-lowed. All this time, her name was Blitzen, not Trouble!

Santa's dark brown eyes looked straight into my light blue ones. "Thank you so much for taking care of my Blitzen," Santa said, scratching Trouble behind her ears. All I could do was nod. He hitched her up to the harness and got into the sleigh.

They lifted up and began to fly up into the starry night sky. I knew that's where she belonged, living in a stable with a bunch of other reindeer, being treated like royalty. That was all that mattered.

—Emily Funk, Gr. 6, Blumenfeld School



Elves are fun for Christmas

I want to have Santa's elves so that I can meet the real Santa in his workshop. It would be great because then I would know if he is real or not.

I want to have Santa's elves so that they can make me toys for Christmas.

I would help the elves make toy because I like to share at Christmas.

One of Santa's elves would be a good friend to have because it would be fun to play hide and go seek in the dark with Rudolph's nose.

I wish that I could have one of Santa's elves for a friend because they would be fun to play with when I am bored.

—Neveah Lizée, Gr. 2, Morden

What's *Your* Christmas Story?

HONOURABLE MENTIONS



An elf buddy for Becka

I would like to have one of Santa's elves for a friend rather than a snowman that magically came to life because I would be sad when my snowman melted away. I could skate and play with the snowman, but sometimes I like to play inside.

Santa's elf and I would have a lot in common. He likes to make toys. I like to play with toys. We would play toys together.

Elves like lots and lots of sugar and I do, too. I like candy, candy canes, chocolate, marshmallows, egg nog and hot chocolate.

The elf and I could share clothes because we are the same size. When I grow bigger he could have my old clothes.

I could take him to school to meet my friends and play outside at recess.

The elf could also use magic to clean my room. Then we would have more time to play. He would also use his

magic to make sure I wasn't scared at bedtime.

But the best thing about an elf friend is that he could fix my broken toys. Sometimes parts get broken or lost. Sometimes my stuffies rip because I love them so much! But the elf might be too busy to play at Christmas. That's okay. I could play with my sisters and brother.

Maybe the elf could take me to the North Pole at Christmas and I could help him get ready. He could help me meet Santa, Mrs. Claus, and the reindeer. There is a reindeer named Candycane and I want to play with her.

I could make my elf friend and Santa banana chocolate chip pancakes and teach them how to figure skate.

My elf would be so happy he would magically give me candy.

An elf buddy would be the best.

—Rebecca Kagan, Gr. 2, Morden

A perfect Saturday in December

I rubbed my eyes, and hopped out of bed. I pushed away the curtains, and placed my hand on the frosty glass. It was a winter wonderland outside and pretty flakes were falling from the white sky. I sniffed the air just as the smell of crisp Belgian waffles wafted into my chilly bedroom. I grabbed my slippers and hurried down our creaky, old staircase. Mother was in the kitchen and, sure enough, there were some scrumptious waffles sitting on the dining room table.

I gave my Mother a hug, then rushed over to the table to stuff my mouth with golden waffles, rich red strawberries, and fluffy whipped cream. My plate was now empty and I was about to take my dishes to the sink when Father came stumbling down the stairs, his arms full of Christmas decorations. He put down the boxes, and gave Mother a 'good morning' kiss. Mother handed him a plate filled with the delicious waffles. He sat down at the table with my mother, and I hurried over to the boxes and opened the top one to find lights, garland, and ornaments.

The tree was already up, so I started to string on the lights and the garland. Then came the ornaments. Glass balls, silver candles, wooden angels, sparkly snowflakes, and miniature snowmen. The angel came last; she had chestnut brown hair, a dress

of blue and gold, and had a sparkle in her ocean blue eyes. Father gently placed her at the top of our tree. The tree was lit, and after admiring it awhile, I decided to go outside. I put on my snow pants, my emerald green jacket, my pom-pom toque, and my candy apple red mittens that grandma had made me. I slipped on my boots and headed out the door. I lay down on the snow, and looked up at the winter sky, just as my sister jumped into the white, glittering snow beside me. We made snowballs, snow forts, and had a snowball fight. We made snow angels, licked icicles, and gave each other snow washes!

We brushed off our clothes, then came inside. Once everything was drying by the crackling fire, we grabbed the gingerbread house kit off the counter and I sat down at the

table. I opened the box and my sister placed a mug of hot cocoa in front of me, then sat down as well. We opened all the bags of candy and placed them in bowls. Then we took out the firm, crunchy gingerbread, and the frosting. Mother turned on the Christmas music and joined us at the table covered in goodies. We ate a few gumdrops before starting the actual building of the gingerbread house. I was in charge of the frosting and Mother was in charge of the gingerbread. My sister, well, she just swiped sweets here and there. I loved the look of the smooth, white frosting flowing out of the piping bag! Mother put on some gumballs and peppermint candies, and I added a few candy canes to pose as evergreen trees. We finally finished it and it looked great! Well, delicious at least. I yawned as we cleaned ev-

everything up. Sticky bowls, napkins, and plastic wrap.

I sauntered up the stairs, then turned the corner to my room. I turned off the light, and just as I was about to slide under my checkered covers, I remembered that I had forgotten to eat my daily advent chocolate! I rushed back downstairs and gobbled the milk chocolate up. I brushed my teeth again and headed back upstairs.

I looked out my window, and gazed at the twinkling stars and the moonlit sky. Mother and Father tucked me in and, as I was about to drift off to sleep, I thought to myself, "It doesn't get any better than a Saturday in December!"

—Amy Neufeld, Gr. 7, Haskett

How I know the holiday season has arrived

I know the holiday season has arrived because of all the cozy things.

Cuddling up under a comfy fur blanket, sipping warm hot chocolate.

Watching cheesy Christmas movies and laughing with my friends.

Warm jackets and boots, toques and mitts, scarves, and socks.

All the cozy things.

I know the holiday season has arrived because of all the gifts.

The gifts from family and friends, piled up under the tree.

But that isn't the meaning of Christmas, is it?

On Christmas night, Jesus was born. Among the hills the shepherds jumped in fright, when the angel ap-

peared.

They saw the star shining so bright and they ran off, sharing the news to everyone in sight.

The best gift of all.

—Kamden Fehr, Gr. 8, Winkler

sports & recreation

INSIDE > OUTSIDE > UPSIDE DOWN



Thunder faces off vs. Guns & Hoses



PHOTOS BY RICK HIEBERT

The Guns and Hoses beat out the Morden Thunder 6-5 in a shootout Sunday, but the night's real winners was the Morden Christmas Cheer Board. The annual charity game between local firefighters, police officers, and high school hockey players raised \$3,076.80 for the holiday hamper program. "We're quite pleased with how it turned out," said Rebecca Guillou, who suggested they may try to hold the game earlier next year. Clockwise from above left: The Morden fire department mascot attempts to even the playing field by soaking the Thunder players as they pass; the Guns 'n Hoses goaltender stops Thunder's Jaidon Lawson in the shootout; Thunder goalie Owen Domitruk finds it difficult to play the puck while cuffed to the crossbar; Bryan Gerbrandt and Mitch Penner battle for puck possession.



Winkler Flyers get revenge on Portage Terriers

By Ashleigh Viveiros

The Winkler Flyers finish 2017 in third place after winning one and losing one against the Portage Terriers last weekend.

Friday's match in Portage swung the home team's way 5-2.

Winkler's Trent Halfdanson and Brady Pupp did all of the Flyers' scoring in the first period, while Portage scored two in the opening frame, two more in the second, and slammed in one final nail in the coffin in the third, scoring on an empty net.

Aaron Brunn allowed four goals as Portage outshot Winkler 27-24. The Flyers were 1-for-4 on the powerplay and 0-for-2 on the penalty kill.

Winkler got its revenge and then some the very next night, this time hosting the Terriers in front of a hometown crowd.

The first two periods were rocky ones for Winkler, with Portage scoring the first period's lone goal and then getting three unanswered ones in the second to head into the final period up 4-0.

Winkler came to life in the final frame, chipping away piece by piece at the Terriers' lead.

Lucas Barker and Will Blake were the ones doing the chipping, Barker scoring at 6:04 and 11:50 and Blake firing in goals at 9:57 and 17:08 to force overtime.

The extra period solved nothing, and so the game moved into a shoot-out for a decision.

There, Barker scored the first and only goal for the Flyers, while Nolan McGuire and Matt Christian were denied.

That was all it took, though, as Brunn, who had already made 40 saves through 65 minutes of play, turned away all three of Portage's

shots, giving the win to Winkler 5-4.

Also last week, Winkler rounded out the MJHL Showcase in Winnipeg with a 5-2 loss to OCN Dec. 12, following up on a 5-0 win over Waywayseecappo the night before. Winkler goals came courtesy of Collin Caulfield and Blake, both scoring in the second period. Troy Martyniuk took the loss in net, making 28 saves off of 32 shots.

Winkler's record stands at 23-12 for

46 points, putting them a point behind OCN and nine behind Steinbach. They're also just one and two points ahead of Portage in fourth and Virden in fifth.

The Flyers are off for the holidays until Jan. 3 when they travel to play in Viriden. They then play in Dauphin Jan. 6 before returning home to host Waywayseecappo Jan. 7.

Hawks bounce back from loss to beat Parkland

By Lorne Stelmach

The male Pembina Valley Hawks bounced back this past weekend from a second lopsided loss to league leading Brandon this season.

Having lost an earlier meeting 9-2, the Hawks again collapsed against the Wheat Kings Friday with a 10-1 rout in Brandon, but they got their game back together then to edge the Parkland Rangers 4-3 Saturday in Dauphin.

The Hawks can at least take some solace in the fact they are not the only team having trouble with the Wheat Kings, who lead the league with an impressive 24-2-0-0-1 record for 49 points. The Hawks, meanwhile, maintain a slim hold on sixth place at 14-11-0-1-1 for 30 points.

Pembina Valley only trailed 1-0 after one and 2-1 early into the second before the floodgates opened and the Wheat Kings went on to score three more in the second and then five in the third.

Travis Penner scored the lone goal for the Hawks while Brock Moroz stopped 31 of 39 shots until being relieved after the eighth Brandon goal. Alternate Malachi Klassen came on and allowed two more goals the rest of the way. Shots were 41-31 in favour of Brandon.

Svan Bazin led the way Saturday with a hat trick to pace the Hawks to the victory over Parkland, including the winner at 9:59 of the second period that put Pembina Valley ahead 4-2.

Moroz allowed one more after that

Manitoba Hockey Standings

MANITOBA JUNIOR																			
HOCKEY LEAGUE																			
Steinbach Pistons	GP	W	L	OTL	PTS	GF	GA			Pembina Valley	27	14	11	1	30	89	98		
OCN Blizzard	35	27	7	1	55	174	84			Yellowhead	27	14	12	1	29	91	79		
Winkler Flyers	36	22	11	3	47	132	108			Southwest	27	13	13	1	27	88	88		
Portage Terriers	35	23	12	0	46	126	88			Parkland	28	12	14	0	26	98	114		
Virden Oil Capitals	34	21	10	1	45	136	89			Central Plains	26	9	13	2	22	96	110		
Selkirk Steelers	33	21	10	2	44	151	101			Kenora	27	8	15	0	20	85	100		
Neepawa Natives	35	20	12	2	43	130	116			Interlake	26	6	19	1	13	60	123		
Winnipeg Blues	37	16	18	2	35	134	146			Norman	29	2	26	0	5	79	196		
Swan Valley Stampers	33	15	14	3	34	112	124			MANITOBA AAA BANTAM									
Dauphin Kings	32	13	15	4	30	90	113			HOCKEY LEAGUE									
Waywayseacappo Wolverines	36	9	25	1	20	88	163			Cougars	22	16	5	0	33	126	69		
	38	5	30	2	13	86	227			Chiefs	21	12	8	0	25	83	66		
										Rangers	20	9	8	2	21	80	89		
MANITOBA MAJOR JUNIOR										Hawks	20	9	10	1	19	74	85		
HOCKEY LEAGUE										Capitals	24	6	16	1	14	83	154		
Raiders Jr. Hockey Club	GP	W	L	OTL	PTS	GF	GA			Wolves	22	5	16	0	11	83	183		
Charleswood Hawks	26	19	4	3	41	75	45			Wheat Kings	23	5	18	0	10	54	100		
Transcona Railer Express	26	17	7	2	36	107	74			MANITOBA FEMALE MIDGET AAA									
Stonewall Jets	26	16	9	1	33	85	70			HOCKEY LEAGUE									
St. James Canucks	27	13	12	2	28	81	80			Winnipeg Avros	GP	Reg W	Reg L	T	OTW	OTL	Pts		
Flt.Garry/Flt.Rouge Twins	27	13	13	1	27	77	69			Eastman Selects	17	8	5	-	4	-	24		
St. Vital Victorias	26	12	14	0	24	90	111			Yellowhead Chiefs	18	10	6	-	-	2	22		
Pembina Valley Twisters	26	11	13	2	24	103	100			Westman Wildcats	16	9	5	-	1	1	21		
St. Boniface Riels	27	8	16	3	19	74	99			PV Hawks	16	8	4	-	1	3	21		
River East Royal Knights	27	2	24	1	5	41	142			Central Plains	17	6	8	-	1	2	19		
										Interlake Lightning	16	-	15	-	1	-	2		
SOUTH EASTERN MANITOBA										HIGH SCHOOL HOCKEY									
HOCKEY LEAGUE										GP	W	L	OTL	PTS	GF	GA			
Notre Dame	GP	W	L	OTL	PTS	GF	GA			W.C. Miller Aces (Altona)	15	13	2	0	26	104	33		
Warren	9	6	3	0	12	41	31			Morris Mavericks	13	11	2	0	22	73	42		
Morden	8	5	3	0	10	35	20			Prairie Mountain Mustangs	14	9	4	0	19	70	60		
Altona	9	5	4	0	10	33	34			Cartwright/Nellie McClung/									
Portage	10	4	5	0	9	31	36			Pilot Mound Tigers	15	8	7	0	16	51	57		
Winkler	10	3	7	0	6	32	49			Northlands Parkway Collegiate									
Carman	9	3	6	0	6	30	44			Nighthawks (Winkler)	12	7	5	0	14	50	44		
										Morden Thunder	12	6	6	0	12	51	44		
MANITOBA AAA MIDGET										Carman Cougars	15	3	10	2	8	45	66		
HOCKEY LEAGUE										Garden Valley Collegiate									
Brandon	GP	W	L	OTL	PTS	GF	GA			Zodiacs (Winkler)	15	3	10	1	8	38	87		
Wild	27	22	3	1	46	152	60			Portage Collegiate Institute									
Bruins	26	19	5	1	40	105	77			Trojans	13	2	10	0	5	40	89		
Thrashers	32	18	13	1	37	113	120			STATS AS OF TUESDAY, DECEMBER 19									
Eastman	27	17	7	1	37	108	84												

Lady Hawks in fifth

By Lorne Stelmach

The female Pembina Valley Hawks still sit in fifth place but remain in the hunt in the Manitoba AAA standings.

A 4-1 win Saturday over the Interlake Lightning has the Hawks on a roll heading toward the Christmas break, having won six of their last seven after earlier having dropped five in a row.

"We started off scrambling a little, only had seven shots on net in the first period," noted coach Dana Bell. "The girls got it together for the second and third and stuck to the game plan from there on."

Pembina Valley held period leads of 2-0 and 3-1 on Interlake, who continue to struggle with just one overtime win through 16 games so far.

Sage McElroy-Scott had a pair of goals for the Hawks, while Makenzie McCallum also scored and assisted on the other three for a big four point night. Hannah Petrie also scored for

Pembina Valley, while Kadynce Romijn was only called on to make 18 saves as the Hawks came out head 35-19 in shots on goal.

McCallum now stands seventh in league scoring with eight goals and 17 points, which is just one back of McElroy-Scott at nine goals and 18 points to sit fourth in the scoring race.

Halle Oswald, meanwhile, leads all goaltenders with a 1.37 goals against average and .949 save percentage, while Romijn has a 2.33 GAA and .920 save percentage.

Sitting at 9-6-0-1 for 19 points, the Hawks are only two back of the Westman Wildcats and Yellowhead Chiefs, three behind of the Eastman Selects, and five behind the league leading Winnipeg Avros.

This weekend the ladies host Central Plains Friday and Eastman on Saturday.

Zodaics win Wpg. tournament

The Garden Valley Collegiate Zodaics hockey team claimed the trophy at the Bell MTS Iceplex tournament in Winnipeg last weekend with a 3-0-1 record.

After falling 3-2 in overtime to Shaftsbury, GVC went on to defeat Fort Richmond 6-5 and St. Thomas 6-3 to earn a spot at the championship game against Kenora.

That match saw the lead change hands three times in the third period alone, with the game finally ending at a 5-5 tie.

The resulting shootout went Winkler's way thanks to goals scored by TJ Matuszewski (who had also contributed three goals in regulation), CJ Lambkin, and Arlen Peters for the 6-5 win.

Matuszewski was named tournament MVP.

The Zodaics hit the road once again for a Zone 4 game against Altona on Monday, which they lost 8-1.

Elsewhere in the league, the Morden Thunder beat the Carman Cougars 3-1 Monday night, following up on losses



SUBMITTED PHOTO

The GVC Zodaics found success at the Bell MTS Iceplex tournament in Winnipeg over the weekend, downing Kenora 6-5 in a shootout in the championship match.

to the Pembina Tigers (5-1) and the Mountain W.C. Miller Aces 9-5 on Dec. 12. Mustangs (6-4) last week Thursday and Friday.

The NPC Nighthawk, meanwhile, lost to the

Split week for Royals, Redskins down Maroons

By Ashleigh Viveiros

In South Eastern Manitoba Hockey League action this past week, the Winkler Royals split their weekend games while the Morden Redskins crushed Altona.

Last Thursday, the Redskins defeated the Maroons 6-2.

Morden was up 3-0 after the 20 minutes, with goals fired home by Cole Penner, Victor Knaub, and Derek Holenski.

Altona got one in five minutes into the second, but it was quickly drowned out by goals from Holenski and Jared Leiding.

The final period saw Knaub make it an even six for Morden, while Altona managed to get just one more past Redskins netminder Reed Peters.

That brings the Redskins' record to 5-3 for 10 points, putting them in third place behind the first place Notre Dame Hawks (13 points) and the second place Warren Mercs (12 points).

The Winkler Royals, meanwhile, got the weekend off to a good start with a 2-1 shootout victory over the Portage Islanders.

Both teams did all their scoring in

the opening frame, with Jon Gaudet scoring for Winkler two minutes in.

After three scoreless periods, including overtime, the decision went to a shootout that broke Winkler's way.

There was a lot more scoring action in Sunday's game against the Notre Dame Hawks, though it wasn't in Winkler's favour.

Notre Dame were up 4-0 before Winkler got on the board with a Mark

Hildebrand goal in the second minute of the second period. Cody Friesen halved the Hawks' lead to 4-2 a couple of minutes later. The period ultimately ended 5-2 for Notre Dame.

Phil Letkeman started to chip away at that lead with a goal 3:34 into the third, but that was the last time either side found the back of the net, giving the win to the visiting Hawks.

Matt Krahn made 42 saves in net as Notre Dame outshot Winkler 47-31.

Winkler is currently in sixth place in the standings, ahead of only Carman. They're at 3-7 for six points, trailing the fifth place Portage Islanders by three points.

This week Winkler hosts Altona on Saturday at 8 p.m. and then wrap up 2017 by hosting Warren on Dec. 30.

Morden hosts Carman on Thursday, Dec. 21 at 8 p.m. and then travels to play in Notre Dame on Saturday. They also host Portage on Dec. 28.

Pembina Valley Twisters fall to Hawks, Riels

By Lorne Stelmach

The goaltenders were the stars of the game Sunday between the Pembina Valley Twisters and Charleswood Hawks.

With the shots on goal ending up 45-40 in favour of the Hawks, it was a duel between Travis Klassen of the Twisters and Charleswood's Ben Thorlakson, who had the upper hand in the end with a 2-1 Hawks win.

Charleswood opened scoring on a powerplay 5:59 into the first, but Pem-

bina Valley evened it just 39 seconds later when Alex Tetrault got his 10th of the year on an assist from Fraser Mirrlees, who leads the Twisters in scoring with 15 goals and 32 points. The winner for the Hawks came 6:36 into the third period.

It was a solid effort nevertheless from Klassen, who took the loss in goal with 43 saves.

Monday night's game against the St. Boniface Riels was another defeat for the Twisters, this time by a score of 5-3.

Contributing to Pembina Valley's tally was Wyatt Sabourin, Quade Froese, and Brendan Keck. Klassen made 35 saves as the Twisters outshot the Riels 52-40.

That puts Pembina Valley's record for the season thus far at 11-13-2, putting them in eighth place in the Manitoba Major Junior Hockey League.

The Twisters travel to play the St. James Canucks Friday before breaking for the holidays.

The Winkler Morden
Voice

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Advertising inquiries to: ads@winklermordenvoice.ca

Agriculture

CN says rail traffic competition ramping up

By Harry Siemens

The Alberta wheat producers concerned with a lack of grain movement said bottlenecks in federal legislation and rail capacity are holding up grain transport at a crucial time.

Rail companies are failing to get nearly half of Alberta's wheat to market and Ottawa is dragging its feet in passing legislation to ensure they do, said Kevin Auch, chair of the Alberta Wheat Commission.

David Przednowek, Director of Marketing-Grain, CN took notice of the AWC's comments said it's worth sharing a couple of statistics to put things into perspective.

"A good place to start is going back and taking a look at what we've done over the past couple months. For example, in November, grain movement is not as high on CN as it was last year. Last year was exceptional, record performance, everything pretty much going right across all corridors, terminals being fluid, very fluid network, and we achieved record results, September through April last year," said Przednowek. "You take a look back and put into perspective last year, everything going right, no derailments, no challenges on the network. We moved about 5,800 hoppers per week on average in November. This year we had our third best November ever. It's not the same as last year. We moved just over 5,000 hoppers. So there's a difference, but there are some significant differences between how things looked last year versus how things look this year."

He said November and October numbers looked about the same: not as much grain as everybody would like to see moving in the fall, but it was CN's third-best October on record. Then things started to happen where performance has fallen in the past couple of weeks.

"We certainly had our share of mainline derailment and outage incidents almost on week after week basis that it caused some challenges regarding imbalances in the flow of hoppers in and out of the West Coast," said Przednowek. "In October windstorms in Alberta that knocked out the main line between Saskatoon and Edmonton for four days, and that

screwed things up. It took a long time to recover from that. We've had some challenges moving in and out of the west coast regarding mudslides putting the main line out of action into Vancouver."

Przednowek said the central theme of this year is an uptake in demand for freight movement across some different commodity segments on CN.

"The challenge with that is that you can't automatically flip a switch and bring a bunch of extra resources to bear into the network to deal with that," he said. "There's a lot of long lead times associated with bringing on the assets when you see this strong demand of which a lot of it was unexpected."

He said with locomotives, there's the lease market and right now the

lead time is about nine to 12 months. It takes the same amount of time to train the crews to get them qualified and certified. By the end of 2017, CN will have hired about 3,500 people and plan to add another 2,000 next year.

"You just can't put people out on the railroad and expect them to run trains. We must do it safely and efficiently," said Przednowek.

CN brought 22 new locomotives online early November, another 40 by Dec. 31, and another 60 by the end of January, with most of those assets going into the western region where they see the most robust demand.

With the economy strengthening for other commodities, rail traffic in 2018 will remain competitive.

"CN has a common carrier obliga-

tion to move traffic from all shippers that want to put traffic onto the line, so when demand comes in like that, you must make room," Przednowek said.

He said other Canadian exporters will want increases, too, so it is best to take it in bites.

"We've also advanced probably about \$100 million of spending from 2018 to 2017 to try and deal with some other pinch points and bottlenecks in our network regarding working on the addition of sidings," said Przednowek. "Expect next year's gonna be another strong capital program from CN to continue to increase network capacity by increasing the number of sidings and passing tracks, lengthening sidings, doing double tracking."



By Harry Siemens

American farm broadcaster and mentor Orion Samuelson sat down recently with the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue for their annual year-end interview recently.

"Secretary Perdue is a warm and friendly person with a deep knowledge and love of agriculture," said the author of Samuelson Sez, the forerunner to Siemens Says. "This dairy farm kid from Wisconsin could have never dreamed that one day he would be sitting in the office of the secretary talking about agriculture."

I chatted with Orion about some of the topics they discussed:

HS: What sense did you get when you sat down with him this year?

OS: Well, I got a sense of a Secretary of Agriculture who knows and understands the challenge of farming and ranching. I got a sense of somebody who knows what's going on. I mean, you could ask him the price of corn at the moment and he would be able to quote it.

I have described him as a good, old, down-home boy, great personality,

always smiling, but he knows what's going on in agriculture, and I think he knows how to deal as well with President Trump as anybody in the current administration.

He was very optimistic about getting a NAFTA agreement that would benefit farmers in the US, Canada, and Mexico because he said if it's an agreement that benefits only one, then it's not going to last.

He thinks we'll get a Farm Bill on schedule, which we must have by, I think it's the 30th of September 2018 to avoid going back to a Farm Bill written in 1949.

The one sticking point in the farm bill from critics is farm insurance. *Chicago Tribune* described it as a federal boondoggle to benefit farmers, and of course that couldn't be further from the truth. When you look back at our many times we had to go to Congress to write a disaster bill at the last minute because we had a drought, or we had a flood, or we had a blizzard.

So I gotta tell you, I like him, and I spent an hour and a half with him in his office, talked about family, talked

about the fact ... I mentioned to him he is the first Secretary of Agriculture ever from the State of Georgia, and he said, "Well, you might look a little deeper, because I think I'm the first veterinarian to be a Secretary of Agriculture in the US." And of course he is that, but he's been in the world of politics, Governor of Georgia, he's been in agribusiness with two or three companies that he had to place in trust to become secretary. He knows the business, and he knows how important trade is to the United States and all countries, really.

And so I asked him if he's able to convince President Trump that trade is important, and he kinda smiled and he said, "I'm working on that." So I like him.

HS: That's great. And now that I've had you tell me what your Secretary of Ag thinks, I want to hear what you think.

OS: Well, from the standpoint of NAFTA, it's been interesting to watch President Trump, probably the first businessman we've had in

Continued on page 21

A meeting with U.S. Sec. of Ag

Hog Days successful, but pork quality lacking: judge

By Harry Siemens

Organizers of the Brandon Hog and Livestock Show said the success of the 2017 edition indicates a bright future for hog production in Manitoba.

Organizer Ron Bazylo says the attendance at the Dec. 15 event, which brings industry and producers together under one roof, suggests the pork sector is very stable.

"We have over 135 exhibitors, way up from just over 100 in previous years. The exhibitors show everything from the equipment they have to offer, even including some vehicles, people involved in the feed industry, animal health products, various things like insurance, and a huge array of different displays on hand," said Bazylo.

Winning the event's Pork Quality Competition this year were the Waldheim Colony from Elie. Second place honours went to the Barickman Colony at Cartier. Coming in third was the SkyView Colony at Miami.

Judge Bob McKay said there are three critical factors he looks at: colour, texture, and marbling.

"Pale pork means that it's going to

ooze moisture, it's going to cook more on drying, it'll be very tough to eat. So very undesirable," he said.

Despite what some consumers may think, marbling contributes to the meat's overall taste, McKay said.

"[Customers] want pork devoid of marbling ... the trouble is, if you take the marbling out, people are not going to like it," he said, noting taste tests prove people actually prefer meat with some marbling in it. "What we see with our eyes, is not what we desire with our palettes, and if we want a nutritious meal of pork, you need some marbling."

> SIEMENS SAYS, FROM PG. 20

the White House in decades, and he deals or tries to as much as you can with the Congress, to handle those situations, and I take NAFTA as an example.

He, of course, raised a lot of eyebrows and a lot of criticism when in the campaign he said, "I'm going to blow NAFTA up." But then he watched the reaction for the next couple of days from even the auto industry in the U.S., and certainly from farmers

Finally, texture's important because if it's loose and wet that means the cell membranes are breaking down and it'll cook out very dry.

McKay said the quality of this year's pork is probably the worst year for colour in years.

"I have never seen a situation where the average score on 32 hogs was 1.3 points out of 10 for color. 1.5 out of 10 for marbling," he said. "Texture was good, it was 9.1 out of 10, but the colour and the marbling just weren't there and it's a flashback to what we saw in the early 1980s. We've gone too lean and damaged our carcasses. So a

lot of work needs doing on restoring our meat quality.

"I think our breeding companies ... have to focus on what we're doing really," McKay said. "Carcass evaluation is always a good idea. If we ignore it, we're going to have expensive dog food 'cause nobody's going to eat it. We export the bulk of our pork. If we're producing a product that people don't want, they're not going to buy it. Then what do we do with it?"

The competition's winners donated portions of their prizes to the St. Boniface Hospital, the Children's Hospital, and Boundary Trails Health Centre.

and ranchers, and he watched that reaction, and a couple of days later he is saying, "Well no, I may not blow it up, but I just kind of renegotiated. It's 20 years old, and things have changed, and we've gotta renegotiate." And he seems to do that, approaches to a lot of legislative ideas that are not liked by some people, but then you find that in every phase of government.

So I think that he will negotiate as a businessman rather than as a politi-

cian, and that particularly I think, will happen in trade agreements. So we were disappointed to see the Trans-Pacific Partnership trade agreement, that he did get rid of right away, and that was a disappointment, but on the other hand, exports I think for all three countries, Harry, are still on the upswing, and I think we've got to keep policy in place that will allow that to happen.

New Morden waste bylaw aims to educate

By Lorne Stelmach

Morden has revamped its waste bylaw for the new year with a few minor fines in place.

The aim, though, is more about educating residents than penalizing them, officials stressed last week, as the city wants to ensure all material that can be recycled or composted is diverted from the landfill.

"We're not going to be sifting through people's trash cans looking for recyclable or compostable materials," said Mayor Ken Wiebe. "This bylaw is meant to keep waste away from the landfill and keep our city looking its best."

The new bylaw also aims to further expand composting and recycling by having apartments and all businesses that handle food involved starting July 1, followed by all commercial businesses and construction sites by January 1, 2019.

As of Jan. 1, 2018 the new waste bylaw includes a few fines for all

single family and two-family residences within the City of Morden.

There will be \$150 penalties for a container that is not properly lidded or if items are not placed in the proper containers. If household hazardous waste is in placed out in the wrong container for pickup, the penalty can increase to \$450.

City officials said they want to get

> CITY COUNCIL, FROM PG. 10

Also at the Dec. 12 meeting, council committed \$10,000 to the Winkler Community Foundation for the Vital Signs project in 2018.

Basically serving as a report card on the community, the first Vital Signs report in 2012 examined the challenges and provided statistics in six key areas including learning, health and wellness, safety, the gap between rich and poor, community involvement, and arts, culture and recreation.

"I think it's a very positive thing for our community," suggested foundation president Phillip Vallyelly, who noted they hope to be able to reach up to 7,000 homes in the area as part

away from having material in plastic bags or open top containers to avoid having waste from blowing around.

City of Morden bylaw officer Rick Paracholski explained that residents would be contacted to make sure they understood the new bylaw before any fines associated with it would be issued.

"If curbside pick-up staff notice a

of the project next October.

"To me, it's a no brainer to do another one," said Coun. Marvin Plett, while Mayor Harder agreed it has been an important development tool for the community.

"It's for the betterment of everybody," said Harder. "It's always nice to have a measuring stick of how we do, and there's always things that we can improve on, as we saw last time around ... we'll see if we're doing better."

Harder also commented on the progress made with the community getting on board with the new composting collection program.

household is in violation of the new bylaw, they will notify the city," he said. "I would visit the home owner and advise them of the complaint and make sure they understand the bylaw. The home owners would be given a verbal warning. If there are repeated complaints, I would issue the homeowner a fine."

He estimated to date about 280 compost bins have been distributed to the public.

"By and large, I think the compost bins are being well received," said Harder, who added they are now also focussing on other changes coming in the new year, including moving away from garbage bins to just bags for collection.

"If you're doing the composting and recycling properly, you probably won't have much of a garbage bag. It makes it much simpler, much lighter," he suggested.

Finding the Elf on the Shelf

By Lorne Stelmach

Organizers are pleased with the response to the annual Elf On The Shelf promotion in Winkler.

Aimed at encouraging people to shop locally during the Christmas season, Elf On The Shelf again drew more participation than in previous years, say Winkler Chamber of Commerce representatives, who presented the two grand prizes Monday.

"We've had growth year after year," said executive director Tanya Chateaufneuf, who noted the list of participating retailers increased from 12 to 15. "We had lots of great retailers from the Winkler community participating ... hiding our little elf all over their stores."

Customers who spotted the elf got

their names entered into a draw for the grand prize gift baskets, which were filled with products and gift certificates from participating businesses.

"We were trying to encourage people to shop local ... we did encourage people to actually make purchases this year and rewarded them by putting their name in the draw," Chateaufneuf explained.

"We try to improve on the experience every year ... we had fantastic participation," she added. "It's just a really, really fun experience. We encourage other chamber member retailers to participate."

Winning this year's prizes were Andrew Fehr and Tina Neufeld.

It was Fehr's first time entering the contest. He found the elf hiding be-



PHOTO BY LORNE STELMACH/VOICE

The Winkler chamber's Dianne Friesen (far left) and Tanya Chateaufneuf (second from left) presented the Elf on the Shelf prizes to Tina Neufeld and Andrew Fehr on Monday.

hind a gun at Dominion Outdoors.

Fehr said he'll likely participate again next Christmas, as he prefers shopping locally.

"I don't like going out and shopping ... if I can do it at home, it's good," he said.

take a break > GAMES

SUDOKU

3			4					2
	4	6		7		5		
			8		3		2	1
				4				5
		1			2	6		3
		2		9			6	
			2	8				
9		5						

Fun By The Numbers

Like puzzles? Then you'll love sudoku. This mind-bending puzzle will have you hooked from the moment you square off, so sharpen your pencil and put your sudoku savvy to the test!

Level: Intermediate

Here's How It Works:

Sudoku puzzles are formatted as a 9x9 grid, broken down into nine 3x3 boxes. To solve a sudoku, the numbers 1 through 9 must fill each row, column and box. Each number can appear only once in each row, column and box. You can figure out the order in which the numbers will appear by using the numeric clues already provided in the boxes. The more numbers you name, the easier it gets to solve the puzzle!

7	8	2	4	3	9	5	1	6
6	5	3	1	8	2	7	9	4
4	9	1	5	6	7	2	3	8
3	4	9	2	5	6	1	8	7
5	6	8	7	4	1	3	2	9
1	2	7	3	9	8	4	6	5
9	3	4	8	2	5	6	7	1
8	1	5	6	7	3	9	4	2
2	7	9	6	1	4	8	5	3

Sudoku Answer

O	D	E		A	H	S	V	R	T	M	T	E
W	I	T	S		E	P	V	R	E	S	U	V
T	O	P	E	N	V	K	D	E		R	P	V
V	R	O	V	S	K	O	N	S		H	P	K
S	A	V	B		E		I			S		
V	N	R		T	V	T	S		P	A	R	O
S	O	E		S	V	N	X		S	A	N	V
G	N	I	A	V		A	O	I	M		P	G
G	N	I	P	S	R	S	I	V	H			
C	I	N	H	T	E				E	O	R	E
N	N	I		V	N	V	S	T	L	V	E	T
V	N	R		D	E	T	V	A	P	U	C	E
T	L	P	E	P	O	R	E		O	I	N	U
B	S	S		S	O	K	A	H	S		G	N

Crossword Answer



CROSSWORD

CLUES ACROSS

1. Sharp pain
5. Military hats
11. Software app on a network (abbr.)
14. Genus of freshwater mussels
15. Continent
16. Afghani monetary unit
17. Recovered
19. Ribonucleic acid
20. Refers to end of small intestine
21. Ethiopia's largest lake
22. Hostelry
23. Defunct American automaker
25. Denotes origin by birth or descent
27. Part of a watch
31. Stare with mouth open wide
34. Found in granite
35. Competing
38. Stone film "___ Given Sunday"
39. Junction between two nerve cells
41. Greek goddess of the dawn
42. Fight
44. Thin, narrow piece of wood or metal
45. Ribosomal ribonucleic acid
46. Type of kitchenware
49. Specialty of The Onion
51. Major Mexican river
55. Kilometers per hour
56. Species of mackerel
60. Bones
61. Interest rate
62. New York Mets legend
64. 19th letter of Greek alphabet
65. Shawl
66. Gracefully thin
67. Type of deciduous tree
68. Not classy
69. Taro corm or plant

CLUES DOWN

1. Jewish festival
2. Anoint

1	2	3	4		5	6	7	8	9	10		11	12	13
14					15							16		
17				18								19		
20						21						22		
23					24			25			26			
				27			28	29	30					
31	32	33			34					35			36	37
38				39					40			41		
42			43			44					45			
										48				
49	50								51			52	53	54
55					56		57	58	59		60			
61					62					63				
64					65							66		
67					68							69		

3. More pleasant
4. Type of painting
5. Witness
6. Harm
7. Builder of Arantea (Greek myth.)
8. City in India
9. Used to unlock cans
10. Induces sleep
11. More bouncy
12. A branch of Islam
13. White (French)
18. Legal term
24. Covered with frost
26. Hengyang Nanyue Airport
28. Wash
29. Disorder of the scalp
30. North American tree
31. Helps cars run
32. Mandela's party
33. Aromatic plant of the daisy

- family
36. Negative
37. College student educator (abbr.)
39. Most rare
40. Harm with a knife
43. Folk singer DiFranco
45. Return to
47. One who repairs
48. Eastern England river
49. Hockey players need two
50. Dismay
52. Rebuke
53. Plant of the arum family
54. Fish genus
57. Plant of the mallow family
58. Amounts of time
59. 11th letter of the Hebrew alphabet
63. One of Napoleon's generals

Announcements

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Call 325-6888

IN MEMORIAM



Elsie Neufeld
April 1927 – December 2007
Forever in our Hearts
Tenderly we treasure the past
Memories that will always last;
When we cease to think of you
Will be when God has called us too.

CAREERS



Pembina Hills ARTS COUNCIL

MORDEN, MB.

Job Title:

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Part Time position:

22.5 hours per week

Please refer to Pembina Hills Arts Council's website for job description

**Interested applicants should forward resume and 2 references to maggiem@mymts.net
Deadline for applications is Jan 2/18**

NOTICES

Public Notice

The City of Winkler purchases approximately 35% of its water from the Pembina Valley Water Cooperative (PVWC). The Public Utility Board has approved a rate increase for PVWC in the amount of \$0.16/1000 gallons, effective January 1, 2018. This rate increase reflects a "pass through" rate increase of .06/1000 gallons for Winkler consumers.

Public notice is hereby given that the water rate increase will be 0.06/1000 gallons effective for the March 15, 2018 quarterly billing in the City of Winkler. That being from the present water rate of \$9.44/1000 gallons to \$9.50/1000 gallons. The sewer rate will remain as it presently is, being \$6.42/1000 gallons.

Barb Dyck
City Manager



CITY OF WINKLER
185 Main Street, Winkler, MB, R6W 1B4
204-325-9524 || 204-325-5915

OBITUARY

Tina Margaret Bergman (nee Unrau) 1944 – 2017

On Sunday, December 10, 2017 at Boundary Trails Health Centre, Tina Bergman, age 73 years of Morden, MB, formerly of Plum Coulee, went to her eternal rest.

She leaves to mourn her passing, husband, David; one daughter, Sherlyn and Tim Weselak; one son, Garry and Dana Bergman as well as five grandchildren.

Memorial service was held at 2:00 p.m. on Thursday, December 14, 2017 at the Morden EMMC with interment prior at Southside Cemetery.

If friends so desire, donations may be made in Tina's memory to the South Central Cancer Resource.

Wiebe Funeral Chapel, Morden
In care of arrangements,
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BOXING WEEK BOXING WEEK BOXING WEEK BOXING WEEK

Your Plan of Attack For the **BOXING DAY** SHOPPING FRENZY



December 26 has become more associated with the beginning of huge store sales than the original day of goodwill when wealthy land owners would give gifts to their servants. These days, Boxing Day is one of the busiest trading days of the year when stores offer huge discounts on items all around the store.

People line up for hours before the big department stores open to get pole position for the best bargains on offer. To get the best out of the Boxing Day sale, it's best to have formed a plan. This plan should include the items that you are on the look out for and which retailer is selling it.

During a Boxing Day sale, it is a good idea to eat up before you leave home and maybe even take a snack with you. You should also arrive early to ensure that you can find a car parking spot. Items that generally have the biggest discounts are bedding, home products and decor, kitchenware, electronics, clothing, Christmas items and beauty products.

The Boxing Day sale is the perfect time to stock up for next Christmas. Since Christmas was just the day before it may seem crazy to start the holiday planning a full year ahead of time. However, Christmas products such as wrapping paper, decorations, cards and so on are drastically reduced at this time and can be bought often below cost price. It is a good idea to have a rough idea of the cost of the items before they were on sale

as this will help you to judge whether or not you should purchase. Many retailers have their Boxing Day sales advertised in advance so you can get a head start and start compiling your wish list of shopping items.

The Boxing Day sale is now a tradition in the hearts and minds of shoppers. It is not for the faint hearted as there are massive crowds and many

competitive shoppers on the prowl. However, if you are up to it, you can find some amazing deals and save yourself a lot of money on discounted items that you need.



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Celebrate Boxing Day

For much of the world, December 26 represents just another day. However, in Canada, the United Kingdom and other former and current British colonies, December 26 is a day to celebrate Boxing Day.

Boxing Day is a significant holiday for people with ties to Great Britain. The holiday began more than 800 years ago during the Middle Ages and gets its name from alms boxes, which were collection boxes that were kept in churches to collect money for the poor. On Boxing Day, the boxes are traditionally opened so that contents can be distributed to needy people.

Boxing Day also references a time when servants of affluent individuals were given a day off so they could spend time with their families. The servants normally would have to work on Christmas, and Boxing Day was their respite. These servants may have been given small gifts and boxes of leftovers to take home. December 26 also marked a day when postal workers, butchers, milkmen, and other people who plied their trades might collect their Christmas box or tip.

Boxing Day celebrations in modern times are quite different from those of the past. Today, Boxing Day provides a chance to shop sales and exchange gifts received on Christmas. However, people can put their own unique spins on the Boxing Day festivities.

- Go horseback riding. December 26th is also the feast day of St. Stephen, who is the patron saint of horses. Celebrants can enjoy a stroll on horseback, watch a horse race, visit a farm to interact with equines, or engage in other horse-related activities.

- Donate to charity. To pay homage to the early traditions of Boxing Day, individuals can spend time filling boxes with nonperishable foods or belongings before donating them to charity. People also can volunteer for church functions that involve helping the needy.

- Tip service providers. Use Boxing Day as a chance to tip doormen, postal workers, favorite delivery persons, salon employees, or other service workers with whom you routinely interact.

- Celebrate Wren's Day. Wren's Day also takes place on December 26. This is a Christmastime tradition with Celtic roots. While the traditions surrounding Wren's Day vary in different parts of Europe, the myth most widely told in Ireland is that God wanted to know which bird was the king of all birds, ultimately noting the one who flew the highest and longest would earn the distinction. The birds took to the air, with the eagle outlasting all other birds until it began to drop. When the eagle began its descent, a wren appeared from under its wing and soared higher and further than all other birds.

Boxing Day can be enjoyed in many different ways.



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4 fantastic movies to watch over the holidays

'Tis the season for staying at home and binge-watching movies. Here are a few great flicks to take you through the holiday season into the new year:

Elf. This modern take on standard holiday fare has quickly become a classic. Will Farrell is hilarious as an oversized elf with the unbridled enthusiasm of a five-year-old. If you're looking for a holiday comedy for the entire family, this is it.



Home Alone. Macaulay Culkin stars as eight-year-old Kevin McCallister, a boy who finds himself having to defend his family's home from two crooks looking to rob it after mistakenly being left behind by his parents. The complicated traps, over-the-top slapstick and excellent one-liners make this flick one of the best. Skip the sequels, though — there's nothing quite like the original.

A Christmas Story. This treasure follows Ralphie, a young boy in the 1940s, and his quest to convince everyone with authority in his life, including Santa, that a Red Ryder B.B. gun is a safe and practical Christmas present. But it's the subtle and not-so-subtle detail that make the film a true gift.

Lord of the Rings trilogy. When the holiday events wind down, you're ultimately left with more time on your hands. When this happens, what's better than burning through three well-shot, well-acted and intense fantasy movies? This trilogy is perfect for soaking up all that extra free time. The extended version comes highly recommended, giving you nine hours of adventure.



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There's no place LIKE HOME for the holidays



You've finally finished drawing up your Christmas gift list and you're sure it's going to make all your loved ones happy. You also have to keep working on that endless shopping list for the various holiday gatherings you have to prepare for. But wait; don't jump into your car just yet. Have you thought about shopping locally? It's a sure-fire way to make even more people happy. Not convinced? Here are three good reasons to buy local.

1. PAMPER YOUR TASTE BUDS

Nothing beats buying locally if you

want to serve your guests the ultimate in delicious food. Locally-sourced food products are fresher, more nutritious and tastier. And they aren't as likely to be treated with preservatives to make them last longer or stay fresher looking. Vegetables, cheeses, meats, beers and wines are just a few examples of things you can buy locally during the holiday season. They'll help you make your holiday meals even more delicious than usual.

And how about buying local foods as gifts for your favourite foodies? It's a great idea that will give you the opportunity to make some beautiful and delicious discoveries.

2. SUPPORT THE LOCAL ECONOMY

Are you fond of your area? When you buy local it helps your community become more dynamic. That's because

when you spend your money close to home, you're helping the local economy grow and open up more jobs for the people you know. Promoting economic activity in your region also helps improve the quality of life for workers.

You're encouraging local producers, entrepreneurs and merchants when you do your holiday shopping at the neighbourhood clothing store or at the artisanal butcher shop. You're strengthening the trust between producers and consumers and bolstering your sense of belonging to your community. What more could you ask for at holiday time, which is an occasion for sharing and love?

3. GIVE MORE ECO-FRIENDLY GIFTS

Choosing local products also means reducing the distance between the producer (or the mer-

chant) and the consumer. This, in turn, helps reduce greenhouse gas emissions and pollution related to the transportation of goods. And that's beside the fact that transporting products across thousands of kilometres generally requires more packaging. In short, buying local is an environmentally-friendly gesture.

Shopping locally is also more convenient. Why go to the big shopping centre located outside of town when your own neighbourhood is full of all kinds of stores and businesses? You're more likely to find unique gifts, and you won't have to go as far if you need to exchange them later on. On top of all that, you'll save on gas and produce less pollution. The only person who could do it any better is Santa Claus.

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