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The Press

COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER

Locally Owned & Operated

Vol. 13 - Issue 22 | Wednesday, May 29, 2024

Record numbers for the Whitecourt Fire Department last year, both in calls and members' hours



Three-year trends for the Whitecourt Fire Department showed large jumps in calls and member hours. A busy fire season last year, resulting in members deploying to places like Fort Smith NWT, helped boost member stats to record numbers. Pictured is a controlled house fire in 2017 for training purposes. See story page 6.



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Significant relief for Woodlands County after speedier-than-expected financial recovery

By Serena Lapointe

Following devastating financial news at the Council table in 2019, Woodlands County Council adopted a five-year financial recovery plan to get the municipality's finances back on track. The multi-year plan included a fifteen percent cut to the County's operating budget, a three percent tax increase each year of the plan, and a one percent cost increase through 2022-2024.

"In 2019, we had no idea, as Council, the dire situation we were in. We had a Council meeting, and we were looking to buy two graders, and we were supposed to have six million dollars in reserves, and there was none. In the same meeting, we found out we were out twelve million dollars. I can distinctly remember we had a



Following a few very stressful years of pinching pennies and tightening the purse strings, Woodlands County has surpassed its financial goals by millions and is back in a pre-recovery position. Pictured is Director Andrew World (left) who delivered the good news.

brand-new CAO. He was there for two weeks, and his comment after was, I just started the job, and I find out the County's broke. Our five-year plan was basically of necessity. We had our backs to the wall. We had to do something, or we would

not be able to operate," reminisced Councillor Bruce Prestidge.

Fast-forward to May 2024, and things look vastly different. During its May 22 regular meeting, Woodlands County Council got the news they'd been waiting for.

Andrew World, Interim Director for Corporate Services, explained that the plan's goals had not only been achieved but surpassed.

With the savings measures in place, the plan projected that Woodlands County would have just

over eighteen million dollars in the bank by the end of 2024, a vast difference from the just under two million they had in 2019, which brought things to screeching a halt. However, by the end of this year, it's projected that Woodlands County should have around twenty-seven million. That's a turnaround of about twenty-five million dollars, and roughly seven million more than the plan expected.

Not only that, but Council also spent a bit more on capital and operational expenditures last year and is doing the same this year. "In 2023, Council approved 2.9 million dollars in extra capital and operational expenditures outside of the recovery plan; in 2024, that number was 4.7 million. That's beyond the recovery plan." The expenditures didn't

lower the gains made by the County, showing even more financial strength.


World said the only thing the numbers hadn't captured was how inflation played a role. He added that one reason Woodlands County brought in substantially more money than expected was low tax write-offs and higher collection rates. One of the big reasons the County faced the uphill financial battle in the first place was oil companies' nonpayment of taxes.

"We did write off a lot of taxes, but we made sure we secured our requisitions back from the province, and our collection rate in 2023 was 96.8 percent. We've seen a good collection rate. We do have some concerns about a few ratepayers

continued on page 3





IGA recently visited the Whitecourt Food Bank with a cheque for \$7,454, which they had raised in-store. The Whitecourt IGA is a significant supporter of the Food Bank, and their generosity is greatly appreciated.



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continued from page 2

(currently) in terms of cash flow from natural gas prices, but we are in much better shape on our sub-ledger than we were in 2019, by a long way," said World.

A significant change through the five-year recovery plan was changing how much money was set aside each year to cover unpaid taxes. Previously, setting aside around \$40,000 was the norm; however, when the oil companies didn't pay, that accumulated to millions in one year without the cash to cover it. The plan set aside 2.6 million yearly to cover unpaid taxes, called uncollectables. "In 2020, we had three million (in unpaid taxes) we did not collect, but in 2021, we were at \$378,000. In 2022, (it was) \$458,000 thousand and in 2023 it was zero. So, we had significant extra dollars, and that's what you use to help fund our operations back to pre-recovery levels," said World.

Setting aside 2.6 million every year and not

having to use more than half a million in 2021 and 2022, and none of it last year, resulted in millions of dollars saved. World recommended either continuing to set aside funds each year for uncollectables or creating a reserve that is only used when needed and kept at a specified amount.

For 2024, World said they would be drawing down on reserves a bit due to purchasing graders. "Council did approve four grader purchases, and we will see an additional contribution from the savings on the lease that was going to be used for the graders and the sale of equipment that was in the budget. So, overall, the drawdown is 1.388 million in 2024."

He also said that some projects budgeted for 2023 would carry over into 2024, drawing down a bit more, but that he anticipated that there would be projects planned for this year that would be bumped into next year, balancing it out. "So, I've put in a drawdown of about \$450,000 for that," said World.

"At the end of 2024,

we're expecting to have restricted reserves of 15 million dollars, unrestricted reserves of approximately 8.2 million dollars, for total reserves of 23.3 million dollars. Cash balance of about 27 million dollars," said World. "We have significantly recovered our cash and added significant operating and capital expenditures into the budget. So, if you take it all into perspective versus what the plan was looking for, we've achieved every part of the plan."

World added that Council would be working on

its reserves this year, specifically the unrestricted reserves of eight million. He explained that such a large amount is usually allocated for various projects and moved into restricted reserves, essentially piggy banks for specific projects like road repairs, equipment purchases or replacements, etc. "Council is going to want to sit down and maybe move these reserves around," he said.

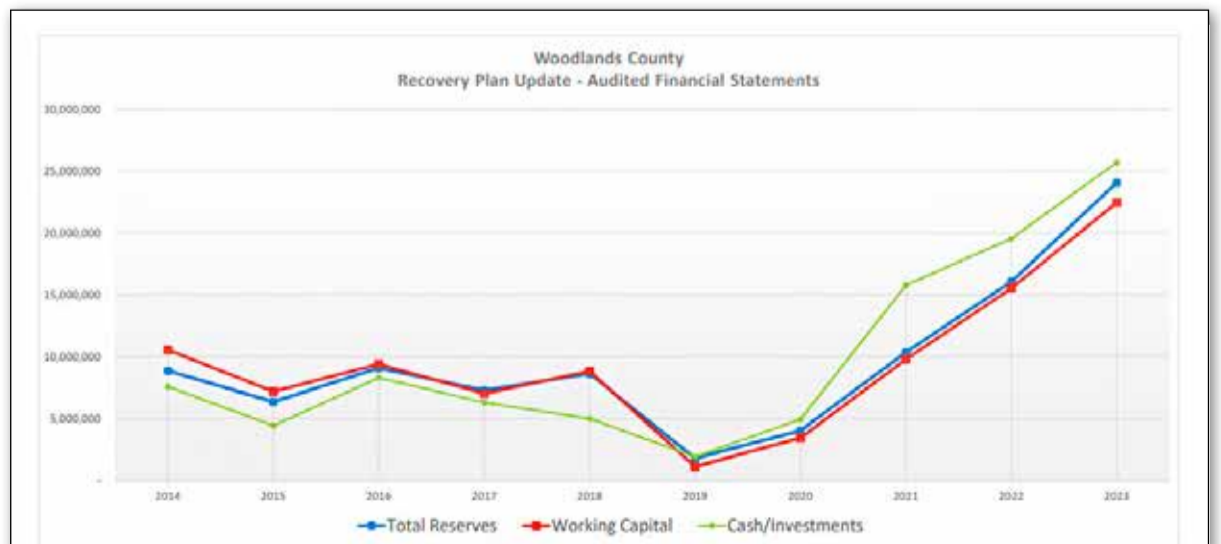
World said they would also compare the County's reserves to those of other municipalities to see what kind of reserves

they should have. He said the County currently had about twenty-eight different reserves. "We need to look at the whole idea of what we need for reserves, including with an investment plan, because we are now sitting on fairly larger cash balances. We think interest rates are going to start going down so it's time to maybe start looking a little longer term on our investments."

Woodlands County was one of many municipalities left holding the bag when oil and gas companies didn't pay their tax-

es. The province's new quarterly reports from municipalities will flag companies in arrears. If those same companies tried to purchase a new license, the province would know they owed a municipality and could deal with that first.

Councillor Prestidge said that compared with the Administration, their role in 2019 was easy. "Council had the easy part of making a motion and putting our hands up, but it was Administration that pulled us through. So, a big thank you to you."



The Total Reserves, Working Capital and Cash/Investments lines on this chart show a drastic plunge in 2019 and recovery 2023. (Source: Woodlands County)

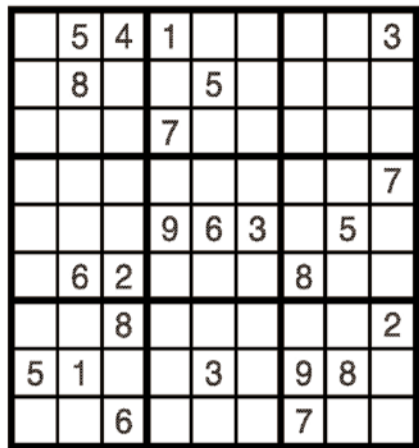


PUZZLES

SEE SOLUTIONS PAGE 15



SUDOKU



Level: Intermediate

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!

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!

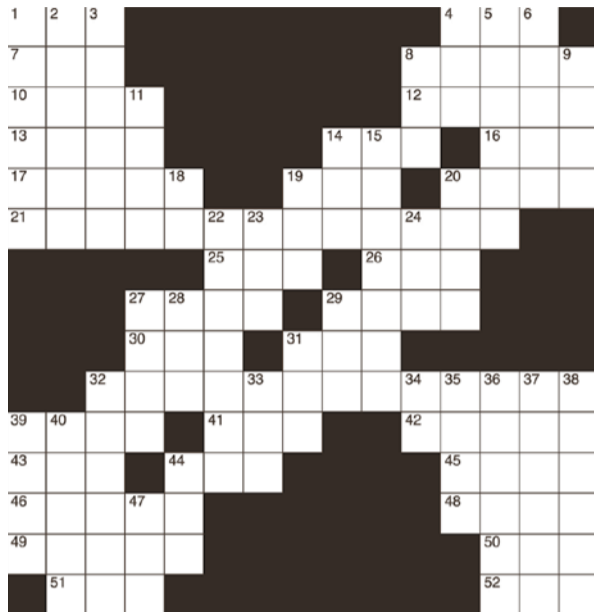
Crossword Clues

CLUES ACROSS

- 1. Fashion accessory
- 4. Engine additive
- 7. Small, faint constellation
- 8. Gives a job person
- 10. Self-righteous person
- 12. Caucasian language
- 13. Surinam toad (abbr.)
- 14. Sino-Soviet block
- 16. Former French coin
- 17. Levels the score
- 19. What stage performers do
- 20. Egyptian Sun god
- 21. Localities
- 25. Spherical body

- 26. Licensed for Wall Street
- 27. Perfect
- 29. It's on many people's heads
- 30. Boxing's GOAT
- 31. Photo
- 32. Popular HBO show
- 39. Popular music awards show
- 41. Pouch
- 42. Lake in Botswana
- 43. Unruly group
- 44. One-fourth
- 45. Very eager
- 46. Edward __, author and writer
- 48. Flying insect
- 49. Dragged forcibly

CROSSWORDS



- 50. Thus far
 - 51. Not just "play"
 - 52. Commercials
- ### CLUES DOWN
- 1. Occur
 - 2. Show up
 - 3. Capital of Taiwan
 - 4. Brother or sister
 - 5. Secret get-togethers
 - 6. Type of tea
 - 8. Where the action is
 - 9. Cast out
 - 11. Crime group
 - 14. Type of vessel (abbr.)
 - 15. Accept and handle
 - 18. Sacrifice hit
 - 19. One who buys and sells securities simultaneously
 - 20. Month
 - 22. Most thin
 - 23. Naturally occurring material
 - 24. Luke's mentor __ - Wan
 - 27. Postmodernist Austrian "House"
 - 28. Aquatic salamander
 - 29. Baseball stat
 - 31. Beginning military rank
 - 32. Talk rapidly and unintelligibly
 - 33. Paddle
 - 34. Caregiver (abbr.)
 - 35. Old Irish alphabet
 - 36. Japanese city
 - 37. In a way, acted
 - 38. Things to see
 - 39. Nursemaid
 - 40. Type of tooth
 - 44. To be demonstrated
 - 47. Defunct European group

HOROSCOPE

ARIES (March 21 - April 20)



You may have a chance to get to know someone better this week, Aries. Trust your instincts rather than listening to what is running through the rumor mill.

TAURUS (April 21 - May 21)



Taurus, you may be ready to shake things up in regard to your social life or even with a professional pursuit. Work out the path you want to take.

GEMINI (May 22 - June 21)



Following your curiosity may lead you down some interesting paths, Gemini. Things can change on a moment's notice, so be prepared to respond.

CANCER (June 22 - July 22)



An intellectual debate could grow somewhat tiresome this week, Cancer. You need to know when to pull out of the conversation to help maintain your mental well-being.

LEO (July 23 - August 23)



Have an important conversation with a loved one, Leo. You need to clear up a misunderstanding that has been growing more significant. Once you take care of this, smooth sailing awaits.

VIRGO (August 24 - September 22)



You may want to rely on someone else to bring some stability and comfort to your life, Virgo. Now may be the time to seek out a new relationship.

LIBRA (September 23 - October 23)



Libra, have a good time over the next couple of weeks. You deserve it. Recognize that fun interactions do not necessarily have to be shallow experiences.

SCORPIO (October 24 - November 22)



It might feel like your peer group has shifted in a way that no longer gels with you, Scorpio. It may be time to find some new friends who share your current interests.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 23 - Dec. 21)



You may seek validation from peers or even people on social media if you feel like you are being inhibited by current insecurities, Sagittarius.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 - Jan. 20)



Proactive changes you make this week may improve your love life, Capricorn. That can be a good thing if you have encountered relationship issues lately.

AQUARIUS (January 21 - February 18)



Aquarius, setting out on an impulsive adventure could be worth the effort right now. It can be refreshing to spend time outside your usual surroundings.

PISCES (February 19 - March 20)



Putting up a tough front may be a protection strategy right now, Pisces. Over time, you may need to let your guard down and ask for some help if the situation is chronic.

ALL IN BLOOM WORD SEARCH

V W N O Y C C D G P A F M W I E L L Z M
 Y A S I N E B D W S R M S O G L O F T G
 D B S N A P D R A G O N H D O S P C B
 I P O P P Y T T A A U Y Y F G L U S F E
 D O S C T I R T A S Z H V Z P C B U O P
 L I R I B V V B I T I G Z Y E G W N F N
 O R D C H D R V N E B O L D U Y M F S O
 G E E A H S A U N R E T R L W L P L T I
 I H N Z H I I N I M G D L O F N I O C T
 R O Y O B L D R Z M O P A I S L S W O A
 A R V D M E I C I E N Y P N D E A E L N
 M Z Z Y R E Z A I E I L I A D O N R F R
 I H A F N A N U H I A I L Z U E F H E A
 H Y L L N O N A W I F L U D M L L F L C
 L H W W E M E G Y H D S T O H C A I A P
 O Y M W O A U P E S N C Y E R F L M O D
 M E S R C H R Y S A N T H E M U M H T N
 F S A I R R I G M V R L W S U H T O I S
 V C U H A B L A V E N D E R R L U G I A
 Y C P N W D B S W H L I S N H Z M B V A

Find the words hidden vertically, horizontally, diagonally, and backwards.

WORDS

- ANEMONE
- ASTER
- AZALEA
- BEGONIA
- BLOOM
- CARNATION
- CHRYSANTHEMUM
- DAFFODIL
- DAHLIA
- DAISY
- DANDELION
- HYDRANGEA
- IRIS
- LAVENDER
- LILY
- MARIGOLD
- ORCHID
- PEONY
- POPPY
- ROSE
- SNAPDRAGON
- SUNFLOWER
- TULIP
- ZINNIA

**If your life is in danger or you know someone's life is in danger
 DIAL EMERGENCY NOW 911!**

If you are experiencing suicidal thoughts, you need to know that you're not alone. You can also call if you are not in crisis, seeking additional information. The new Canada Suicide Prevention Service (CSPS), by Crisis Services Canada, enables callers anywhere in

Canada to access crisis support by phone, in French or English: toll-free **1-833-456-4566** Available 24/7
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in Canada by texting TALK to **686868** to reach an English speaking Crisis Responder and TEXTO to **686868** to reach a French-speaking Crisis Responder on any text/SMS enabled cell phone.
 KidsHelpPhone Ages 20 Years and Under

in Canada **1-800-668-6868** (Online or on the Phone). First Nations and Inuit Hope for Wellness 24/7 Help Line **1-855-242-3310**
 Canadian Indian Residential Schools Crisis Line **1-866-925-4419**
 Trans LifeLine – All Ages **1-877-330-6366**

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Putting a face on suicide



Christopher William Stassi
 Age 15
 7-Jan-2006 ... 9-Feb-2021

Every 40 seconds somewhere around the world someone dies by suicide, that's 99 people every 66 minutes. Every day, that's almost 100 people in the United States alone, and over 2160 worldwide. Putting a Face on Suicide (PAFOS) is a suicide awareness project that creates posters and videos to pay tribute to those we have lost to suicide with dignity and respect. PAFOS humanizes the daunting statistics; lovingly replacing numbers with faces.

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Record numbers for the Whitecourt Fire Department last year, both in calls and members' hours

By Serena Lapointe

Aaron Floyd, one of the Whitecourt Fire Department's two Deputy Fire Chiefs, recently provided Town Council with the department's 2023 Annual Report, which highlighted the work, training, calls and activity from last year.

The Whitecourt Fire Department consists of three full-time staff members (Fire Chief, Deputy Chief, Deputy Chief/Safety Coordinator), one part-time Fire Clerk, six volunteer officers, one Health and Safety Officer, and thirty-six volunteer firefighters. Several volunteers (an education coordinator, one photographer, and two videographers) round out the crew and help with public education and recruitment campaigns.

"This annual report shows the significant contributions our members make around the region," explained Lee Hardman, Director of Community Safety, who joined Deputy Floyd for the late April presentation. "I would like to acknowledge the passing of former Fire Chief Bruce Parrent. He passed away on April 29, 2023. He served as the Fire Chief from 1992 until his retirement in 2010," stated Hardman. After his passing, the Whitecourt Fire Department's training grounds were renamed the Bruce Parrent Training Grounds to



celebrate his memory.

Last year, the Whitecourt Fire Department recruited eleven volunteers, with eight recruits completing their training and officially becoming level-one firefighters. The new members meant that yearly recruitment wasn't necessary to kickstart 2024. In the last decade, the department has only had two years where recruitment wasn't needed. "We've had good retention," said Floyd.

Numerous promotions were handed out last year. Chris Green and Johnley Camposano were promoted to Captain, Bill McAree to Chaplain, and Jerry Adam to Health and Safety Officer. Two members, Denis Beaudoin and Chris

Keay, were promoted to Lieutenants, while Chad Hagen rose to Senior Firefighter. Six members (Jessica Brown, Terry Corke, Justin Labine, Austin Komar, Beomjun Jeon, and Andrew Kentner) reached the highest level of professional firefighter qualification, level two, making for thirteen now at the department.

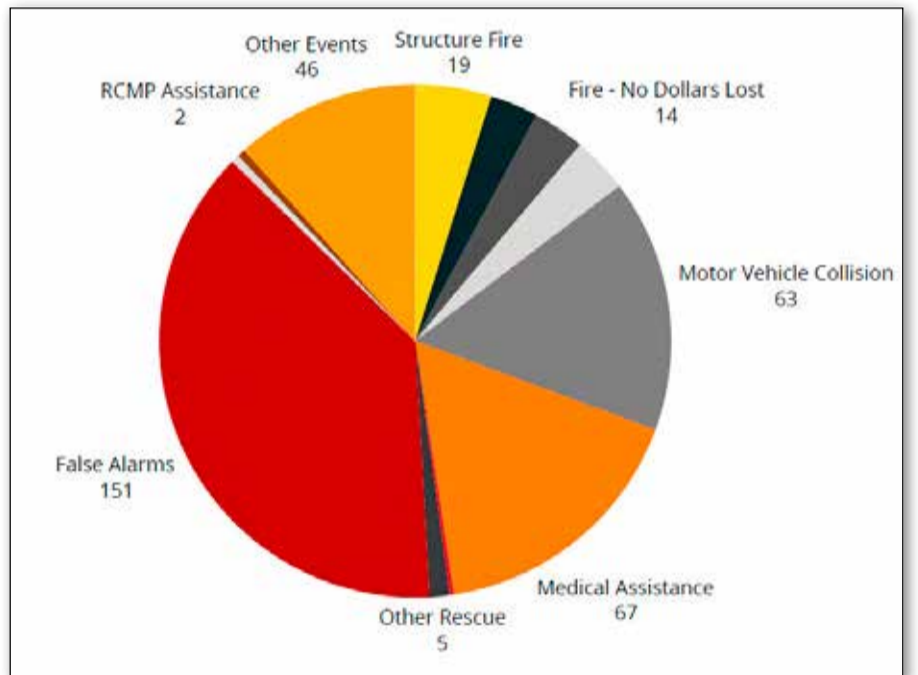
Now to the numbers. "We had the busiest fire season to date. The department logged 14,442 member hours," said Floyd. "Two thousand, four hundred and eleven of those hours were spent on out-of-area deployments, which included the Northwest Territories, Fox Creek, Edson and Parkland County," he added.

Thirteen members spent six days and logged 509 hours in Parkland County, and four members spent one day in Fox Creek,

totalling 28 hours. The last two deployments for members were Edson and the Northwest Territories. Five members spent three days in

Edson for a combined total of 112.5 hours, and a crew of eleven spent 28 days and just

continued on page 7



The largest portion of the graph (red) shows the impact of false alarms compared to other call types.

PUBLIC NOTICE

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ENHANCED DRIVEWAY CROSSING REPLACEMENT PROGRAM

The Town of Whitecourt is continuing the Enhanced Driveway Crossing Replacement Program for those property owners wishing to upgrade their private driveway crossings. The Town will cost share with the owner up to 60% for the costs associated with the removal, disposal and replacement of the residential driveway crossing installed according to the "Minimum Standard for Local Improvements".

The program is intended for driveways in areas with high profile of older, rolled curb and gutter which create a harsh entrance into private driveways.

The program application for 2024 must be completed, signed and submitted with a minimum \$800.00 deposit prior to May 30, 2024 to be considered for replacement in the current calendar year.

Program information and an application form may be found on the Town's website at www.whitecourt.ca or by contacting:

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Email: administration@whitecourt.ca | Phone: 780.778.2273

Teachers are learners too!



On Professional Development Day, teachers at Whitecourt Central School engaged in collaborative discussions using the Teaching Quality Standard to analyze a variety of classroom scenarios for effective instructional practises that support the learning of all students. The TQS provides a framework for the active supervision and evaluation of all teachers.

continued from page 6

over 1,700 hours in Fort Smith, NWT.

“I can honestly say that having the privilege of responding to other communities that the appreciation was felt in these communities, beyond measure,” said Deputy Floyd. “I want to acknowledge the sacrifice of our members, not just those that went there, but also those that stayed back.”

The 14,442 hours collectively logged by the department last year were a combination of seven different categories, including working hours, training, public education, meetings, and deployments both in and out of the response area.

The three categories with the highest member hours were in-area response (Whitecourt/Woodlands County), which had 4,354 hours, working hours (6,766), and training (5,867 hours). “We have a very comprehensive and active training program,” said Deputy Floyd.

Compared to previous years, nearly four thousand more hours were logged than in 2022 and 2021, an increase of almost 36 percent. The uptick also included 41 home assessments, which members do with homeowners to help encourage FireSmart decisions at the residential level.

Regarding calls coming into the department, 2023 was higher with 395. There were 343 calls in 2022 and 353 in 2021. “We did have the busiest year on record, smashing our records from previous years, with nearly 400 calls. A lot of those are false alarms that don’t account for a lot of hours. We are looking deeper into the reasons and making some administrative changes to curb the impact that has on us.”

Of the 395 calls last year, 151 were false alarms, just shy of 40 percent. The next closest type of call on the chart was medical assistance, with 67. When asked why false alarms remain so high, Floyd said smart homes were one component. “The alarm goes off, goes to the monitoring company, then the monitoring company

notifies us, and then they try and get ahold of the property contact,” he explained. The department then heads out with minimal information on what type of call they are responding to. He said they are looking into how they can get more information to try and lessen the impact of false alarms on the department.

Last year, they also saw an increase in structure fires. Deputy Floyd said there wasn’t any particular reason for it. “We were able to determine a lot of the causes and it is spread all the way from not applicable to arson and all the way to electrical. There are no real concerning trends that we need to address, but they are tracked, and we monitor them,” he said, adding that fires account for fifteen percent of their calls.

Public engagement was strong last year, with members attending various events to interact one-on-one with residents. A big part of this was interacting with the youth and being present in the schools. The department also replaced its vehicle extrication and rescue tools with faster and stronger equipment and its Argo with a side-by-side UTV unit to help rescues in hard-to-access areas.

The last piece Deputy Floyd touched on was a two-part grant received from the provincial government’s Supporting Psychological Health in First Responders program. The department snagged first—and second-round funding to create a resource guide of supports available to members and to provide additional training.

In terms of value for the community, Deputy Floyd said he had some numbers to share. “These aren’t exact by any means, but with our fire statistics reporting, we have estimated dollar values and dollar losses to give you an idea of the fire department’s impact on the community. We estimated a 2.8-million-dollar fire loss to the community, which covers everything from vehicles to structures, and a total of 12.5 million in dollars estimated saved.”

LAND USE BYLAW

HIGHLIGHTS

Woodlands County is exploring updates to its Land Use Bylaw. Woodlands County business owners, residents, and ratepayers are encouraged to attend public information workshops. These meetings provide an opportunity for County ratepayers to be involved early, learn about preliminary plans for the Land Use Bylaw, and gather information on the County’s proposals.

Being Discussed:

- How the new Bylaw will benefit those residing in the County
- Gathering preliminary feedback from County ratepayers

Overview of Current Land Use Bylaw:

The County’s current Land Use Bylaw 490-17 was adopted in 2017. Over the past seven years, the Bylaw has become outdated and requires updates to reflect changing development needs. The County identified changes that could be made to the Bylaw to benefit residents and the County as a whole.

INFORMATION WORKSHOPS

Tuesday, June 18, 5:30 - 7:30 pm

Fort Legion (Memorial) Hall
32 State Ave, Fort Assiniboine

Wednesday, June 19, 5:30 - 7:30 pm

Woodlands County Council Chambers
1 Woodlands Lane, Whitecourt

Thursday, June 20, 5:30 - 7:30 pm

Anselmo Hall
AB-647, Woodlands County

Proposed Changes:

The County is exploring the following main areas to make changes:

- Reduce red tape for development and speed up the approval process
- Align the Land Use Bylaw with the Municipal Government Act and the County’s newly adopted Municipal Development Plan
- Introduce general updates to create a more effective and easy-to-use land use bylaw.



Details and additional information are provided at the Land Use Bylaw Public Information Workshop.

More opportunities to participate in the proposed Land Use Bylaw in Fall 2024.



New pavement

The old basketball court at JDA Place received a significant facelift late last week. Brand new pavement was laid on Friday, and the rest of the accessories needed for the basketball court will come soon, alongside some new safety measures to keep vehicles from parking on top of it. For whatever reason, visitors to the duo arenas would often park right on top of the court. Planned changes to the popular space will mean more play time for youth and adults and no more tires.

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Letter to the Editor policy

The Press welcomes readers to write letters to the Editor. A maximum of 300 words is preferred but not necessary. Letters must carry a first name or two initials with surname and include an address and daytime telephone number. All letters are subject to editing. Please email letters to wctpress@gmail.com.



Money Matters

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at an exchange rate of **0.7311** (using nominal rate).



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World Hunger Day



Pembina volunteers manning the BBQ.



Donations from attendees.



Tara Bartsch, Food Bank Coordinator (right) serving up a hamburger.

World Hunger Day was on May 28, and to celebrate, the Whitecourt Food Bank, and generous sponsors Pembina Pipeline and Eagle River Casino, held a free barbeque on Saturday to help raise awareness about chronic hunger. Food bank staff handed out burgers and smokies from 11-3 as Pembina volunteers worked hard at the barbeque, keeping things rolling. Visitors were invited to tour the food bank after lunch and learn how things operate. Over the four hours of the event, \$200 in cash was raised and six bins were jam-packed with food. Roughly 100 people took advantage of the free grub. Staff also had an information table set up with food bank days/hours and instructions on accessing services or donating. The most pressing need currently for the food bank is toiletries and laundry soap, as these are things families need and cannot afford, and the food bank can only provide them if they are donated. As always, non-perishables like cereal, soup, beans, pasta, pasta sauce, baby food, canned meat, sugar, 1L juice containers, and meal supports like Kraft Dinner or Hamburger Helper are always needed.

RCMP ROYAL CANADIAN MOUNTED POLICE

Alberta RCMP remove 173 impaired drivers from roads over Victoria Day long weekend

From May 17 - 20, your Alberta RCMP conducted enhanced traffic enforcement targeting impaired drivers. In part of National Impaired Driving Enforcement Day



on Saturday, May 18, Victoria Day long weekend focused on

removing drug and alcohol impaired drivers from Alberta's provincial roads and highways.

This year, the Alberta RCMP removed a total of 173 impaired drivers from the roads, 42 of which occurred during National Impaired Driving Enforcement Day across 36 organized

check stops.

"While we promote safe driving behaviours all year round, we want to enhance this messaging and our enforcement efforts during holidays or long weekends when more people are out on our roadways," says Sgt. Vinnie Hetu, Alberta RCMP Traffic.

"Impaired driving is a danger to yourself and others. Always plan a safe, sober ride accordingly."

The consequences for impaired driving include a 90-day suspension, one year of mandatory ignition interlock, a 30-day vehicle seizure, a \$1,000 fine, and a criminal record.

SENIOR'S WEEK

2024 Senior's Lunches – Music! Food! Dancing!

Anselmo Hall
Wednesday, June 5

Topland Hall
Thursday, June 6

Doors: 10:30 am
Program: 11:00 am

Entertainment by: John Wort Hannam
Registration is required for these FREE events. Deadline to register: Friday, May 31, 2024

Call 1-888-870-6315 to register.



DAVE KUSCH
Mayor
Councillor for Anselmo Division 1
dave.kusch@woodlands.ab.ca
Phone: 780.778.9337



JOHN BURROWS
Councillor for Whitecourt West Division 2
john.burrows@woodlands.ab.ca
Phone: 780-706-4747



ALAN DEANE
Councillor for Whitecourt Central Division 3
alan.deane@woodlands.ab.ca
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Councillor for Whitecourt East Division 4
jeremy.wilhelm@woodlands.ab.ca
Phone: 780-773-6254



BRUCE PRESTIDGE
Councillor for Blue Ridge Division 5
bruce.prestidge@woodlands.ab.ca
Phone: 780-779-3917



PETER KUELKEN
Councillor for Goose Lake/Freeman River Division 6
peter.kuelken@woodlands.ab.ca
Phone: 780-284-2425



DEVIN WILLIAMS
Councillor for Fort Assiniboine/Timber Division 7
devin.williams@woodlands.ab.ca
Phone: 780.305.1825



Eagle River Casino & Travel Plaza Now Hiring Casino Shift Manager NOC 62022

Responsibilities:

- Co-ordinate, assign and review the work of casino workers
- Establish work schedules and procedures and co-ordinate activities with other work units or departments
- Resolve work-related problems and prepare and submit progress and other reports
- Hire and train staff in job duties, safety procedures, and company policies
- Requisition of supplies and materials
- Ensure smooth operation of computer systems, equipment, and machinery, and arrange for maintenance and repair work
- May perform the same duties as workers supervised
- Perform the same duties as workers supervised
- Assist clients/guests with special needs
- Co-ordinate, assign and review work
- Ensure smooth operation of computer systems, equipment, and machinery, and arrange for maintenance and repair work
- Establish work schedules and procedures and co-ordinate activities with other work units or departments
- Hire and train staff in job duties, safety procedures, and company policies
- Requisition materials and supplies
- Resolve work-related problems and prepare and submit progress and other reports.

Qualifications:

- Completion of secondary school is usually required.
- Completion of college courses related to the area supervised may be required.
- Experience in the occupation supervised is usually required.
- AGLC casino gaming license will be required.
- Must be able complete Smart training courses
- AML certificate

Experience: 3 – 5 years.
Education: Completion of secondary school is required, casino gaming license.
Terms of Employment: Permanent full-time 44-hour work week.
Language: English
Employment Conditions: Shift work, Day, Evenings, Weekends, Holidays, Nights.
Wage: \$23.08 per hour.
Benefits Package: Vision, Dental, and Health after a 90-day probation period.
Location: Twp.Rd.602A, Hwy 32 North, Whitecourt, AB Canada.
Address: Eagle River Casino & Travel Plaza P.O Box 10 Whitecourt, Alberta Canada T7S-1N3.
Contact: 780-779-2727 or Fax 780-706-7451
Visit our Website: www.eaglerivercasino.ca
How to Apply: Send resume to HR@eaglerivercasino.ca, mail or fax.



Eagle River Casino & Travel Plaza Now Hiring Security Guard Supervisor NOC 62029

Responsibilities:

- Co-ordinate, assign and review the work of security guards and other service workers not elsewhere classified
- Establish work schedules and procedures and co-ordinate activities with other work units or departments
- Resolve work-related problems and prepare and submit progress and other reports
- Hire and train staff in job duties, safety procedures, and company policies
- Requisition of supplies and materials
- Ensure smooth operation of computer systems, equipment, and machinery, and arrange for maintenance and repair work
- Monitor quality and production levels
- May perform the same duties as workers supervised.
- Arrange for maintenance and repair work
- Assist clients/guests with special needs
- Co-ordinate activities with other work units or departments
- Ensure smooth operation of computer equipment and machinery
- Establish work schedules and procedures
- Handle emergency situations
- Monitor quality and production levels
- Prepare and submit progress and other reports
- Requisition or order materials, equipment, and supplies
- Resolve work-related problems
- Supervise the operation of mechanical equipment and machinery
- Supervise, co-ordinate and schedule (and possibly review) activities of workers
- Train staff/workers in job duties, safety procedures, and company policies.

Qualifications:

- Completion of college courses related to the area supervised may be required.
- Experience in the occupation supervised is usually required.
- Certification or licensing AGLC.
- Must be able to complete Smart training course
- Must have a valid driver's license class 5
- Must be able to complete AML.

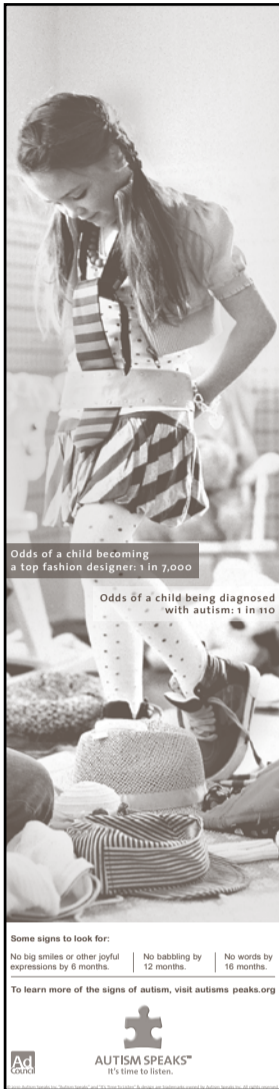
Experience: 2 – 3 years.
Education: Completion of secondary school an asset.
Terms of Employment: Permanent full-time 44-hour work week.
Language: English
Employment Conditions: Shift work, Day, Evenings, Weekends, Holidays, Nights.
Wage: \$20.77 per hour.
Benefits Package: Vision, Dental, Health after 90-day probation period.
Location: Twp.Rd.602A, Hwy 32 North, Whitecourt, AB Canada.
Address: Eagle River Casino & Travel Plaza P.O Box 10 Whitecourt, Alberta Canada T7S-1N3
Contact: 780-779-2727 or Fax 780-706-7451
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Airdrie, AB

A look at the local weather

P.O.P.
High
Low
Wind
24-Hr Rain / Snow

Wed., May 29
Chance of a shower
40%
15°C
66°C
W 20 km/h
~1mm

Thu., May 30
A few showers
40%
15°C
6°C
W 21 km/h
5-10mm

Fri., May 31
Chance of a shower
40%
15°C
6°C
W 21 km/h
<1mm

Sat., June 1
Sunny
10%
18°C
7°C
SE 22 km/h
-

Sun., June 2
Mix of sun and clouds
30%
19°C
9°C
SE 11 km/h
2-4mm



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3 Day Miracle Prayer to the Holy Spirit

Holy Spirit, you who make me see everything and show me the way to reach my ideal. You who give me the divine gift to forgive and forget the wrong that is done to me and you who are in all instances of my life with me.

I, in this short dialogue, want to thank you for everything, and confirm once more that I never want to be separated from you no matter how great the material desires may be, I want to be with you and my loved ones in your perpetual glory.

Amen

You must pray this prayer 3 consecutive days without asking your wish. After the 3rd day, your wish will be granted no matter how difficult it may be. Promise to publish this dialogue as your favor has been granted.

KJB

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If you enjoy a fast-paced, progressive work environment and you have a passion for serving the local community then this may be the opportunity for you! We believe that our values of diversity, collaboration, innovation and mutual respect bring out the best in our team, and we are currently looking to fill the following positions:

- Job# 24-028:** Family Support Diversion Worker – 1 Permanent, Full-Time Position & 1 Temporary, Full-Time Position.
- Job# 24-029,** Planning Assistant – Permanent, Full-Time Position.
- Job# 24-030,** Community Peace Officer Level 1 – Permanent, Full-Time Position.

Please visit www.whitecourt.ca for all employment opportunities and details on how to apply.



News Release



For Immediate Release

White Area Open House

Canfor along with its partners Millar Western, Alexis Nakota Sioux Nation and the Alexander First Nation will be holding two open houses at: One at Goose Lake Community Hall in Lone Pine, Alberta on June 12th from 4PM - 8PM and at the MacKay Community Hall in MacKay, Alberta June 13th from 4PM - 8PM. The general public and stakeholders will have the opportunity to review our planned activities for block and road development, harvesting, reforestation and herbicide treatment for the NoJack, Hattenford and Lone Pine area. Public and stakeholder input is gathered and utilized to influence operations where site specific concerns are identified such as trails, camping areas, recreational areas etc.

Canfor would like to invite you to visit the Goose Lake and MacKay community halls between 4PM - 8PM on June 12th & 13th for more information. Alternately, should you wish to visit the on-line forum please visit the Canfor website at <https://www.canforforestmanagement.ca/whitecourt>

For more information, contact:
whitearea@canfor.com



Got a news tip?

Call Valerie Winger at 780.706.1858
or email wctpress@gmail.com

The Press

Please visit www.whitecourt.ca for all employment opportunities and details on how to apply.

Page sponsored by



Alberta Newsprint Company wishes you enjoyable Spring and Summer seasons in our beautiful surroundings!

We remind everyone to obey local fire bans as posted and be mindful with campfires and fire pits. Protect our forests by checking twice before leaving to ensure your fire is completely extinguished.

For all open career opportunities, please check out our website at albertanewsprint.com -> Careers.

Pumphouse Trail closed

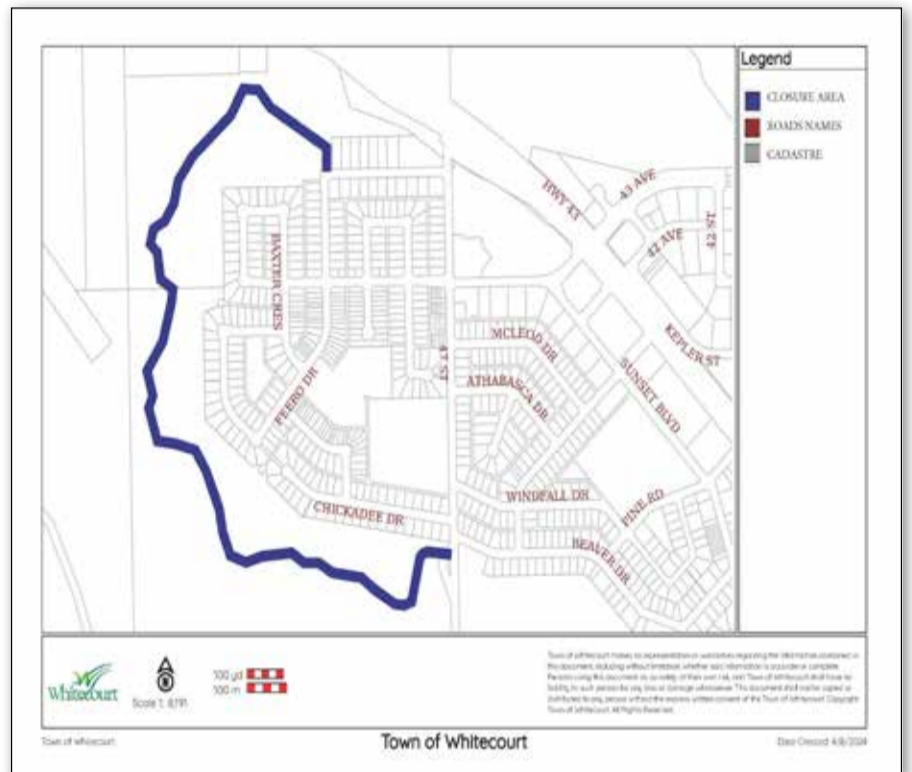
Pumphouse Trail, which runs from Sakwatamau Drive through to the 47 Street Centennial Park entrance, will be closed starting May 24, 2024. The trail will be temporarily re-opened for the Saturday, June 1 Run 4 Fun event, and then close again.

The area will be closed so that asphalt removal and base preparation can be completed in preparation for Phase 1 of the Centennial Park Pathway Improvement Project.

- Residents that back on to the project area, including Sakwatamau Drive, Baxter Drive, Feero Drive and Chickadee Drive, may hear and see activity in the park area behind their property.
- The closure will be marked with signs and barricades. Please do not enter the work site and avoid the active work zone as asphalt removal and base preparation will be completed throughout the closure period.

Questions can be directed to Andre Blanchard, an E-Construction representative, at 780-983-3244. Residents are encouraged to use alternate walking routes in the area.

The work being completed is part of a three-year project that will rehabilitate and widen the trail, as well as improve drainage in the park space. These improvements will also enhance usability, accessibility and safety of the Centennial Park trail system.



Encouraging inflation report ahead of June rate decision

By Mark Parsons, ATB ECONOMICS

Bank of Canada Governor Tiff Macklem and company should like this report. The Bank of Canada has been reassured by recent inflation reports, but wanted to see the trend continue to be more confident.

They have another

month of data to support the cooling inflation trend.

The headline reading - the annual change in the consumer price index - came in at 2.7% in April, down from 2.9% in March.

That was largely expected (matching the Bloomberg consensus).

The deceleration came

despite a faster rate of gasoline price growth. Excluding gasoline, the CPI rose an even milder 2.5% year-over-year (y/y).

The more important news came from the core measures of underlying inflation, which strip out more volatile price movements. The Bank is keeping

an even closer eye on that. The two main measures - median and trim - stayed below 3% y/y and slowed to their lowest since June 2021 (median 2.6% y/y and trim 2.9% y/y).

Core measures are also cooperating when removing year-ago base period effects. The trim measure rose at an annualized rate of only 1.8% over March when calculated on a three-month moving average basis. The median measure was up only 1.5% on the same basis. While that's a slight acceleration from March, it's the second straight month below 2% for both measures.

Shelter costs remain the key inflation driver. Excluding shelter, annual inflation was only 1.2% y/y last month - the lowest since February 2021. Rents are adding fuel to inflation

along with mortgage interest costs.

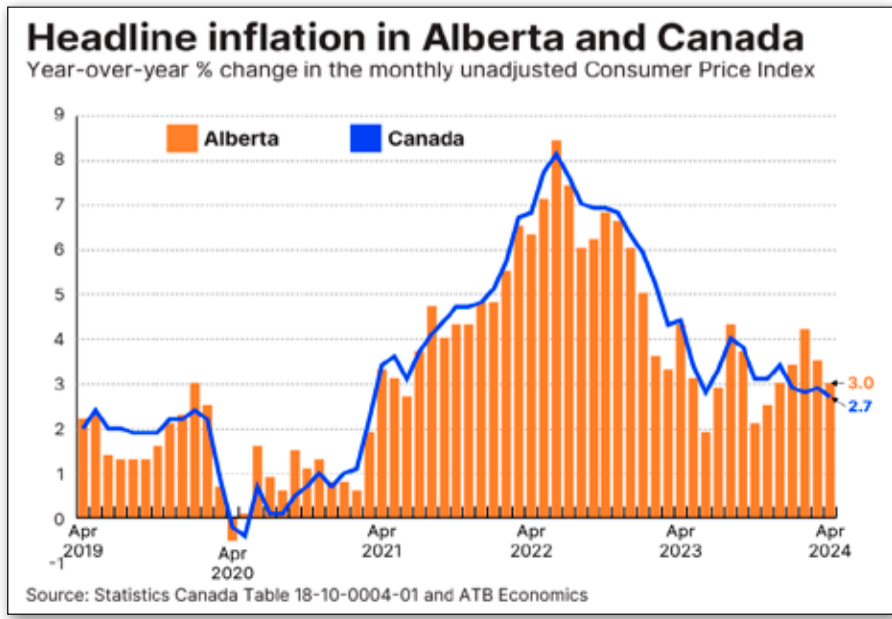
Grocery prices are still very high, but grew at the slowest annual rate since July 2021 (+1.4% y/y).

Will it be enough for the Bank to cut in June? This is an encouraging report, and we think it's enough to justify a cut. But, as we've noted, the Bank may still choose to proceed very cautiously. It could elect to wait for even more data and pivot alongside a new set of forecasts (which won't happen until the July 24 Monetary Policy Report). The Bank will no doubt outline outstanding inflation risks including wages, inflation expectations, shelter costs and moving ahead of the U.S. Fed (which tends to weaken the Canadian dollar). It's a close call, but we are now leaning

slightly closer to June. Either way, we believe that the stage is set for a summer cut.

Closer to home, Alberta's annual inflation rate declined as expected for the second straight month, easing from 3.5% y/y in March to 3% y/y in April.

Energy prices rose at a much slower rate, aided by declines in natural gas prices and a much smaller increase in electricity prices. This is partly due to base period effects, as last year's electricity rate cap was no longer in effect in April 2023 and rebates were smaller that month. Gasoline prices continued to put pressure on inflation in April as did a jump in rental accommodation costs. Excluding energy and food prices, Alberta's core inflation rate was 2.6% (vs. 2.7% nationally).



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"Serving the community for over 30 years"
The Food Bank relies on donations of cash or food in order to help families in need.
Open Mon, Wed & Fri 11:00am to 2:00 pm
Phone: 780-778-2341

Located within the Carlan Services Community Centre
The Whitecourt Food Bank is operated by the Town of Whitecourt Food Bank Coordinator and dependent on volunteers to operate. The Food Bank relies on donations of cash or food from individuals and organizations. Local grocery stores drop off baked goods including bread and pastries weekly. Other corporations and schools schedule food drives throughout the year.
Open: Mon, Wed, & Fri 11 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Phone: 780-778-2341



WHITECOURT GROUP OF NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS

All meetings are in person and online (hybrid)

- Mondays 7:00pm
- Wednesdays 7:30pm

Meetings held at the Family Worship Center upstairs.
ZOOM ID: **818 413 483** PASSWORD: **gratitude**

LORNE'S BLANKET

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Kim Nendsa (President of Whitecourt Cancer & Wellness Society) **780-778-0932**
Aimee Grierson **780-262-0222**

<https://wctcancerwellness.com/>
**Monthly meetings have been postponed due to COVID-19

24/7 CRISIS LINE
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Wellspring Provides a Safe, Short Term, Supportive Residential Environment for Women With or Without Children, Fleeing Family Violence & Experiencing Crisis.

Outreach Support Program:
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Child Support Program:
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Preventative Education:
Provides Workshops, Information and Awareness to Schools, Community Organizations, Agencies and Businesses



Family Resource & Crisis Centre
www.whitecourtshester.ca



GRIEF SHARE

Support group on Tuesdays 6:30pm - 8:30 pm, starting February 20, 2024 at Crossroads Community Church, 4419 44 Ave, Mayerthorpe.
\$35 includes 12 weekly sessions.
Pre-register by calling 780-786-2533.

Whitecourt Alcoholics Anonymous Group



Meetings are three times each week

- Monday 8:00 pm - 9:00 pm
- Wednesday 8:00 pm - 9:00 pm
- Friday 8:00 pm - 9:00 pm

New Women's AA Group on Saturdays @11 am

Located at the United Church Basement 5201 - 50 St
Please Leave a Message for AA member (780)424-5900
or **Contact Addictions Helpline @1(866)332-2322**

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 Timed Online Auction For Jim & Linda Mason & Manfred Harms. Bids Close June 11th
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Unreserved Timed Online Auction for Linda's Market Garden LTD, Smoky Lake
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8	7	1	9	6	3	2	5	4
4	6	2	5	1	7	8	3	9
9	4	8	6	7	5	3	1	2
5	1	7	2	3	4	9	8	6
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