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COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER



The Press

Locally Owned & Operated

Vol. 14 - Issue 7 | Wednesday, February 19, 2025

United Way funding dollars, through Healthy Aging Alberta, is greatly supporting area programs for seniors



Helping aging residents see the possibilities, including recreation.

By Serena Lapointe

For nearly 140 years, volunteers worldwide with United Way have been fundraising to help support initiatives in communities, helping make the world a better place. What started in 1887 in Denver, Colorado, after a woman, a priest, two ministers

and a rabbi got together to make their community a better place, has since blossomed into a massive organization with a supportive reach felt around the globe.

That reach is even felt in Whitecourt. In October 2023, the Town applied for dollars to run the Whitecourt Social

Prescribing Program for a 24-month term. United Way funded the two years through Healthy Aging Alberta, a network of community-based senior-serving organizations across Alberta working together. United Way

continued on page 5

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NGPS is advocating for the "ruralizing" of programs for students



The 2024/2025 NGPS Board of Trustees. See story page 6.



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Qualifications:

- Completion of a college or other program related to hospitality or food and beverage service management is usually required.
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Experience: 3 – 4 years.

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I also collaborate closely with experienced industry professionals, including my mentor Mike LaRue, to continually refine and expand my expertise. Together, we are building a team dedicated to delivering exceptional mortgage services.

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PUZZLES

SEE SOLUTIONS PAGE 15



SUDOKU

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

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!

CROSSWORDS

Crossword Clues

CLUES ACROSS

1. Tropical Asian plant
5. Yankees' slugger Judge
10. Helps to preserve food
12. Plant disease
14. One who predicts
16. Equally
18. Burundian franc
19. Pouch
20. Arizona city
22. Surround
23. Hard, heavy timber
25. Witnessed
26. They __
27. French river
28. A way to drink
30. Small constellation
31. Peruse a written work
33. Type of hound
35. Plant of the goosefoot family

37. Evade or escape
38. A way to confine
40. Volcanic crater
41. Weekday
42. Women's service organization (abbr.)
44. Local area network
45. Sensory receptor
48. Posted
50. Tibetan pastry
52. Licensed for Wall Street
53. Very willing
55. Golf score
56. Consume
57. Touchdown
58. Tends to remind
63. In a way, smoothed
65. Poke holes in the ground
66. Herbaceous plants

CLUES DOWN

1. Body art
2. Boxing's GOAT
3. Film for posterity (abbr.)
4. Prayer
5. Calculating machine
6. Keyboard key
7. Outburst
8. Man-eating giants
9. New Hampshire
10. Type of sword
11. Counting
13. Pants style
15. Political action committee
17. U.S. government legislative branch
18. Civil Rights Act component
21. Contractors take one
23. Spanish soldier
24. A person's brother or sister

27. Expressed pleasure
29. Song of praise
32. Shock treatment
34. Patti Hearst's captors
35. Counteract
36. Goes over again
39. Popular Dodge truck
40. Male adult
43. A part of a river where the current is very fast
44. Rope used to lasso
46. Become less intense
47. Subway rodent
49. Lead alloy
51. Japanese honorific title
54. Advise someone
59. Famous NYC museum
60. Ocean
61. Cathode-ray tube
62. Cologne
64. It starts with these two

HOROSCOPE

ARIES

(March 21 - April 20)



Aries, impulsiveness may cause friction with loved ones this week, so avoid rushing into decisions. Keep an open mind when others come to you with their thoughts.

TAURUS

(April 21 - May 21)



Taurus, expect some clarity regarding a recent financial decision this week. You'll get the answers you need about budgeting and other investments you've been mulling over.

GEMINI

(May 22 - June 21)



This week you may be tempted to overcommit to social endeavors, Gemini. Keep your boundaries in check, especially if you are having difficulty telling other people, "no."

CANCER

(June 22 - July 22)



Cancer, much of your to-do list this week will focus on your home life. Take a break from the hustle and spend time bringing order and balance to spaces in your home.

LEO

(July 23 - August 23)



Your words carry a lot of weight right now, Leo. Be very careful about the opinions you offer and the stories you share. By the weekend you may be called upon for some advice.

VIRGO

(August 24 - September 22)



Virgo, if you have been thinking about making some sweeping financial decisions, now is the time to take action. Putting things off for another day can wreck long-term plans.

LIBRA

(September 23 - October 23)



Sometimes you have to give yourself a pat on the back when others are not offering the feedback you need, Libra. You are doing a great job and learning along the way.

SCORPIO

(October 24 - November 22)



You often keep your cards close to the vest, Scorpio. Others may be surprised to learn a project you have been working on for some time has come to fruition.

SAGITTARIUS

(Nov. 23 - Dec. 21)



Personal ambitions are at the forefront of your mind, Sagittarius. However, you may be placing too much importance on financial matters.

CAPRICORN

(Dec. 22 - Jan. 20)



You are doing quite well in your professional life right now, Capricorn. But in terms of home life, there are definitely some areas that can use improvement.

AQUARIUS

(January 21 - February 18)



Aquarius, you could be feeling a strong urge to declutter personal spaces, such as the garage, closets or even your home office. Find the time to start sorting through belongings.

PISCES

(February 19 - March 20)



All it may take is a simple conversation to clear up some persistent misconceptions, Pisces. Figure out when to schedule that talk and afterwards you will feel better.

FINANCIAL TIMES WORD SEARCH

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

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

WORDS

- ACCOUNT
- ACCRAAL
- ALLOCATION

- AMORTIZATION
- APPRAISAL
- ASSETS
- BALANCE

- BOND
- BUDGET
- DEPRECIATION
- DIVERSIFY

- EQUITY
- GROSS
- INCOME
- INTEREST

- INVEST
- LIABILITIES
- MARGINS
- MARKET
- NET

- PERCENTAGE
- PROFIT
- RATE
- STOCK

Keeping seniors at home is key.



Two programs offered locally, thanks to grant funding from United Way, are having a positive impact on adults 55+ and seniors. The Whitecourt Social Prescribing Program and the newly started Whitecourt and Area Aging in Place Program are helping folks with various non-medical needs.

continued from page 1

helped create Healthy Aging Alberta with the Government of Alberta and leaders in the senior-serving sector to help address the issues faced at the community level and create a unified voice to enhance resources and create more supports.

The Social Prescribing Program aims to bridge the gap between medical and social care services. Through it, healthcare professionals can refer their elderly patients to programs in the community and help enhance quality of life by helping seniors stay in their community for as long as possible. This formal referral process connects seniors with the help they need, be it adequate housing, social support, income support or access to food.

In phase one of the Social Prescribing Pro-

gram, locations were set up in the major centers, Edmonton, Calgary and Lethbridge. Reporting from phase one showed that over 700 social prescriptions were made, and nearly 600 older adults were served. Whitecourt was one of seven locations added in phase two, alongside Jasper, Innisfail, Red Deer County, Wheatland County (Strathmore), Sylvan Lake and Vulcan.

In Whitecourt, fifty percent of referrals were for socialization, twenty-seven percent for assistance and twenty-one percent for food and security support. Clients have been aided in accessing the Allan and Jean Millar Center at reduced cost through the Fund D Program and introduced to isolation-reducing programs like those at the library, Seniors Circle and various volunteer opportunities. Three seniors

also received the maximum annual funding for home improvements through the Seniors Home Adaptation and Repair Program, enabling them to stay home longer, and others have been accompanied to the food bank or assisted with household budgeting.

Last year, the Town applied to the United Way through Healthy Aging Alberta again, this time to seek funding for a 29-month term to provide non-medical home support for area seniors through the Whitecourt and Area Aging in Place Program. In November, word came down the pipe that Whitecourt was approved.

Whitecourt Town Council heard about it during the January 27 Regular Meeting of Council by Fay Arcand, Family Community Support Services Program Coordinator

(FCSS). She said that twenty-five Alberta communities are involved in the funding program. The funding will cover two staff for Whitecourt.

“It has two part-time staff that have been hired to provide services including light housekeeping, yard maintenance- including snow removal and lawn care, meal preparation and grocery shopping,” explained Arcand. She said staff would also be aware of other senior-supporting services locally so they can share that with clients.

The Whitecourt and Area Aging in Place Program is for residents 55+ and provides non-medical support. United Way and Healthy Aging Alberta recommended a fee-for-service model based on a client’s household income. “A fee-for-service model encourages community

contribution, strives for access for all, increases impact for the number of persons receiving services, and avoids undermining other service providers in the market,” said Arcand.

She added that for adults over 65, receiving their Old Age Security with guaranteed income supplement, their annual income would be just over \$22,000. Clients in that bracket, with lower income, could pay the lowest fee of five dollars an hour. However, Arcand said they wouldn’t allow someone’s tax assessment to be a barrier to support.

Funding for the Social Prescribing Program is in place until the end of September 2025, and the Whitecourt and Area Aging in Place Program funding will last until March 31, 2027. Arcand added that they are looking at future funding options to help keep both pro-

grams running, even once funding from United Way ends.

Arcand said the impact of the programs on area seniors is significant, pointing to the many ways that staff can help. “They create a goal. If it’s for reducing isolation, the worker will take them to the Seniors Circle for floor curling if they’ve indicated that they want to do that through the survey. (The staff member) will introduce them to Senior Circle members. The worker will go with the seniors to anything creating a barrier for them.”

She said programs like these ensure that adults in the province have the support they need and opportunities to access so they can age well within their communities and “continue to offer their invaluable wisdom, knowledge and contributions.”

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The Press



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NGPS is advocating for the “ruralizing” of programs for students



Advocacy is a big part of life for municipal governments, institutions and organizations within a community. Northern Gateway Public Schools recently put out its 2024/2025 Board Advocacy Plan, which touches on safety for bus students, affordable access to higher education, and a ruralized approach to student support. Pictured is Superintendent Kevin Bird explaining the concern with CASA Classrooms.

By Serena Lapointe

The Trustees from Northern Gateway Public Schools kicked off the new year by approving their 2024/2025 Board Advocacy Plan, which outlines several key areas the board wants to focus on. The public brochure, which details the advocacy plan, was released shortly after the approval and points to four key issues: equitable funding for rural schools, meeting everyone’s needs, learning for life and capital funding/transportation.

One of the concerns within the equitable funding category concerned CASA Classrooms, which are spaces created for students who need specialized behavioural support. CASA, which started in the late eighties, was the brainchild of a small group of parents, alongside a team

of psychiatrists, who linked up to provide high-quality care for children facing mental health issues.

At the time, services existed for children in government care who needed specialized support, but those same supports were not as easily available for children living with their families. CASA was the answer to that void and quickly expanded into central and northern Alberta. The program focuses on wrap-around support for the child that gets the family involved.

When it was first named, CASA stood for a formal association name, but after it expanded to include more mental health specialties, the acronym stayed the same to keep it simple. It now stands for a phrase instead: “We strive for a community with Child and

Adolescent Services for All,” with child, adolescent, services and all making up CASA.

The issue for NGPS centers around CASA Classrooms, a program started in 2023. Students who attend these classrooms receive both individual and group therapy, psychiatric care, schooling and medication support. Mental health professionals, support staff and specialized teachers care for students.

According to the CASA Mental Health website (www.casamentalhealth.org), students remain in the program for half of the school year and receive transition support for the other half. In an interview shared on the website; CASA Classrooms Senior Manager Lori Roe said the wrap-around approach to support was meant to

reduce barriers. “They do have to come into our classroom in whatever school it is, but it’s something that works well for the kids, it also works well for the families because they don’t have to go somewhere for services – they’re already where their kids are anyways.”

As of the end of 2024, CASA Classrooms have been set up in Edmonton, Fort Saskatchewan, Gibbons, Wetaskiwin, Sturgeon County, Red Deer and Medicine Hat, and each one has up to twelve children in each classroom. “What we’re finding is that because it’s a smaller classroom size, some of those kids who literally haven’t walked through a school door in two years are coming because it’s less intimidating,” says Roe.

Though he sees the potential gain for students, NGPS Superintendent Kevin Bird explained the program needs a rural touch. “You can’t be in a CASA Classroom if you have a diagnosis. So, autism wouldn’t count, or any number of diagnoses,” he explained. CASA is focused on helping students who have not responded to previous therapies as expected and whose symptoms impact many aspects of their lives.

“They must have parental support, and they have to be in the grade range between four and twelve. Our concern, of course, is that that particular model potentially works well in an urban environment when

you have a population to draw from. Rurally, we wouldn’t have enough students in any one of our communities to have a financially efficient classroom,” he said. “For us, we’d like to take the concept and ruralize it. I don’t know if that’s a real term, but it’s a term we’re using,” chuckled Bird, in the January 21 NGPS Board of Trustees meeting. “We want to ruralize it so that it fits better in somewhere like Northern Gateway or Grande Yellowhead or Peace River, where we are having these conversations and design something using similar principles that will actually function within our environment.”

NGPS’s newly released advocacy brochure states that “access to specialized supports for rural students is challenging, costly, and often involves driving long distances to major centers. Local service levels and “ruralization” of urban programs, such as CASA Classrooms that provide specialized behavioural support, should be considered by the government when planning for regionalization of health care.”

Other advocacy items for NGPS for the 2024/2025 school year include seeking tax rebates for rural students attending urban post-secondary institutions and encouraging incentives for post-secondary institutions to provide local campuses, decreasing the financial challenge for

rural students wanting to further their studies after graduation.

The brochure states that “mandating and funding local satellites of degree-granting institutions would allow students to live in, or close to, their home communities, removing the financial barriers currently limiting the training of this pool of desperately needed talent.”

Advocacy is also directed at encouraging the government to fund schools differently if they do not accept students with high-cost special needs, pointing specifically to some Charter schools and divisions that do not accept those types of students. “Divisions that accept all students should receive targeted funding in recognition of the important support provided to these children, youth, and families,” reads the brochure.

One of the last advocacy pieces, transportation, touched on increasing concerns for student safety when drivers pass school buses inappropriately, putting students at significant risk.

NGPS is advocating for changes in the way drivers are handled. They want to see the impounding of a vehicle as a strengthened penalty for those who pass a bus while its red lights are flashing. They also want to see increased signage on secondary highways with stronger messaging on what to do when the bus lights are flashing.

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Aimee Grierson **780-262-0222**

<https://wctcancerwellness.com/>

***Monthly meetings have been postponed due to COVID-19*



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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.

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Family Resource & Crisis Centre

www.whitecourtsheelter.ca

GRIEF SHARE

Support group on Tuesdays 6:30pm - 8:30 pm.

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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

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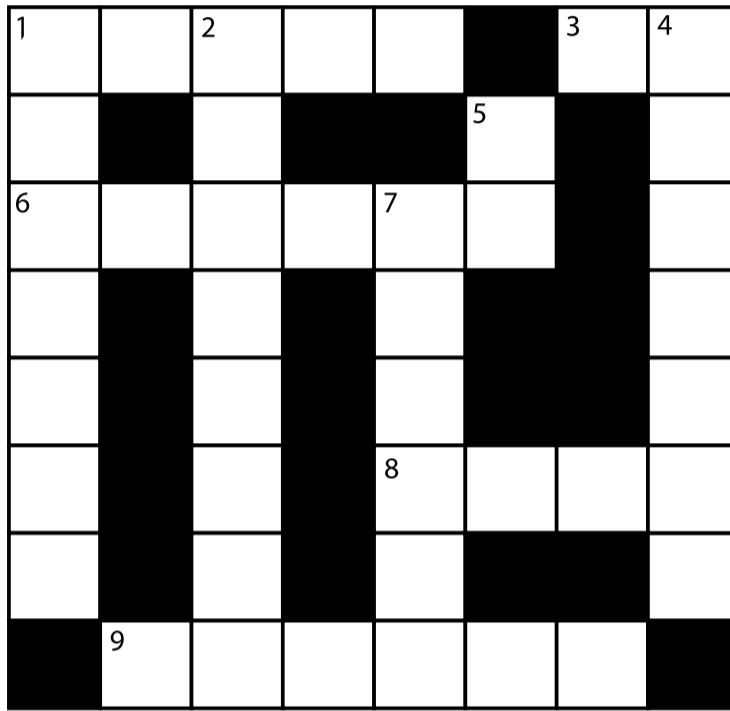
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CANADIAN Kids Corner



Crossword Puzzle



CANADA



HISTORY

1921

Canada's Royal Coat of Arms is established. It is closely modelled after the royal coat of arms of the United Kingdom.

Health FACT:



There are 60,000 miles of these in the average human body.

Answer: Blood vessels

ACROSS

- 1. Chest organ
- 3. Blood pressure (abbr.)
- 6. Dramatic start of an illness
- 8. Discomfort
- 9. Tube blood moves through

DOWN

- 1. Free from illness
- 2. Counteracts poison
- 4. Forcing to move through
- 5. Adequate or alright
- 7. College property

Answers:
 Across
 1. Heart 3. BP 6. Attack 8. Pain 9. Vessel
 Down
 1. Healthy 2. Antidote 4. Pumping 5. OK
 7. Campus

NEW WORD

PULSE

a rhythmic throbbing of the arteries as blood is pumped

How they say that in...

- English:** Heart
- Spanish:** Corazón
- Italian:** Cuore
- French:** Coeur
- German:** Herz

Did You Know?

The average resting heart rate for an adult is between 60 and 100 beats per minute.



Get the PICTURE?



Can you guess what the bigger picture is?

Answer: Blood pressure cuff



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A look at the local weather	Wed., Feb. 19	Thu., Feb. 20	Fri., Feb. 21	Sat., Feb. 22	Sun., Feb. 23
P.O.P.	20%	30%	30%	40%	30%
High	-15°C	5°C	6°C	6°C	7°C
Low	-19°C	-4°C	0°C	1°C	0°C
Wind	E 14 km/h	SW 10 km/h	W 11 km/h	SW 11 km/h	W 24 km/h
24-Hr Rain / Snow	-	-	-	-	-

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
Crisis Text Line (Powered by Kids Help Phone) Canada Wide free, 24/7 texting service is accessible immediately to youth anywhere

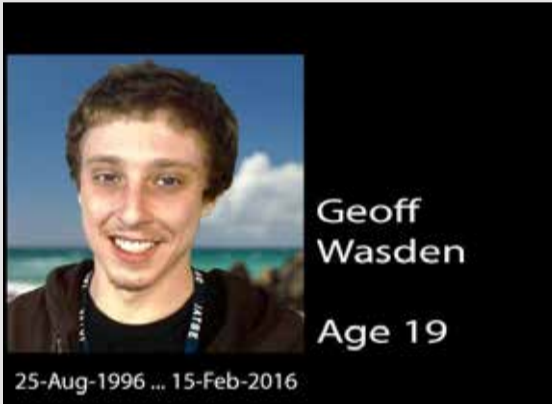
in Canada by texting TALK to **686868** to reach an English speaking Crisis Responder and TEXTO to **686868** to reach a French-speaking Crisis Responder on any text/SMS enabled cell phone.
KidsHelpPhone Ages 20 Years and Under

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**

Have you been bullied, and want to share your story?

Email wctpress@telus.net All submissions remain confidential

Putting a face on suicide



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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Money Matters

One Canadian Dollar = 0.70 US Dollar at an exchange rate of 0.7047 (using nominal rate).



Dollar Values as of February 19, 2025

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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.



The Press

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PUBLISHED EVERY WEDNESDAY

Contact

Valerie Winger at 780-706-1858
Email: wctpress@telus.net



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Primary Care Alberta

Virtual MD service hits milestone: 100,000 calls referred

A Primary Care Alberta (PCA) service that refers Health Link 811 callers to a physician who can assess them over the phone or through a secure Zoom link has surpassed the 100,000-caller milestone.

Launched in 2022, Virtual MD reduces potentially unnecessary emergency department visits. When Albertans

contact Health Link 811, a registered nurse or clinical staff member provides an assessment to determine whether they're in need of further assessment from a physician. On average, 125 Health Link callers are referred to a physician daily through the Virtual MD program.

"Virtual MD has proven to be an innovative solution to provide Albertans with the care they need, often at home or in their com-

munity, easing pressures on our emergency departments," says Adriana LaGrange, Minister of Health.

Of the first 100,000 patients assessed by a program physician, about half were able to manage their condition at home with self-care. Other patients were referred to other forms of in-person care or follow-up that best suited their needs, such as urgent care centres, family medicine practitioners,

other community-based programs and emergency departments.

"Virtual MD is there for patients when they need it at critical points in their healthcare journey," says Patricia Chambers, Executive Lead of Patient Navigation and System Integration with PCA. "To reach this milestone shows us how critical this program is in innovatively meeting the healthcare needs of Albertans, no matter where they are."

The service - available seven days a week

from 6 a.m. to 2 a.m. - involves 90 physicians.

"The virtual option to meet with patients enables us to connect with pockets of Albertans who may struggle to access these services: those with mobility or transportation issues, individuals in rural areas or those who have limited access to care," says Dr. Genelle Dingeldein, a Virtual MD physician. "We can provide immediate advice in real-time and help patients navigate how to self-manage their symptoms or

when to seek higher levels of care when appropriate."

Primary Care Alberta is a made-in-Alberta solution to improve access to the primary care services Albertans rely on. By delivering coordinated services, Primary Care Alberta allows for valued healthcare professionals to do what they do best - care for you. Together, we are creating a future where compassionate, timely and effective healthcare is available to every Albertan at every stage of life.

Eurovision: Alberta's exports to the E.U.

By Rob Roach, ATB ECONOMICS

With the topic export market diversification suddenly hot in the wake of the U.S. tariffs, today's Twenty-Four looks at Alberta's sales to the "supranational" political and economic bloc known as the European Union (E.U.).*

With 27 member states, a population of about 450 million (over 100 million more than

the U.S.), annual GDP approaching US\$20 trillion, and a free trade agreement** with Canada, you might be surprised to learn that Alberta's total merchandise exports to the E.U. were only \$1.8 billion last year out of a total of \$182.6 billion. Major exports include nickel, petroleum products, dog and cat food, wheat, and aircraft parts.

More encouraging-

ly, the value of Alberta's exports E.U. has increased by over half a billion dollars compared to 10 years ago (+40%). With that said, the region's share of Alberta's annual exports hasn't budged; it was 1% in both 2014 and 2024. The E.U. is Alberta's fourth largest customer after the U.S. (which dominates as the

continued on page 14



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Skincare issues seniors should be aware of



(NC) As we age, our immune system weakens, making it more likely that we'll suffer from various ailments. Some of these negative health impacts can affect our skin. Skin conditions can range from skin tone and texture changes to skin lesions, skin cancer, and skin conditions like eczema. We spoke with dermatologist Dr. Aaron Drucker about common skin challenges seniors face.

Skin cancer

"With a lifetime of exposure to sunlight, seniors should take extra care to monitor their skin for new and changing lesions. Changes to moles - such as changes in colour, shape or size should be reported to your health-care provider right away," says

Dr. Drucker. "You can check yourself in a full-length mirror and get assistance to check your back and other areas that are hard to see."

Shingles

"Shingles is a viral infection caused by the same virus that produces chickenpox. Symptoms of shingles can include a painful skin rash. If you had chickenpox earlier in life, the virus stays in your body and can reactivate later in life as a painful shingles rash on your body," says Dr. Drucker.

Adult-onset eczema

Dr. Drucker shares, "While many people might associate the skin condition eczema with babies and children, it can also develop later in life. At any age, eczema causes rash, itch and pain, which can lead to

intense scratching and disruptive sleep. We see many people with adult-onset atopic dermatitis, the most common form of eczema. The good news is that a health-care provider can help ease symptoms and improve quality of life for eczema sufferers of all ages."

Stasis dermatitis

"Stasis dermatitis, also known as venous eczema, can occur when there is poor blood circulation leading to swelling in the lower legs," says Dr. Drucker. "Symptoms include skin discoloration, dryness and itching. If you do detect these symptoms, see your health-care provider."

Find more information on eczema, including treatment options, at eczemahelp.ca.

Why, hello there!



This little cutie was meandering along the walking path behind the dog park, heading towards the river spurs, when he stumbled upon a point where he had to jump to continue on his way. After a brief pause, the youngster leapt over the snowbank and entered the trees, but not before giving one final look back.

PUBLIC NOTICE

www.whitecourt.ca | facebook.com/TownofWhitecourt | 780-778-2273



Whitecourt
2025 BUDGET OPEN HOUSE
 Wednesday, February 26
 4-7pm Allan & Jean Millar Centre
 Drop in, ask questions, share your thoughts.

Meet Town Council and share your thoughts on what is planned for 2025 and future budgets. Information on this year's budget, including budget allocations and service enhancements, will be available.

Drop in between 4pm and 7pm to see what is planned, ask questions and share your thoughts. Feedback received at this event will be considered by Council during final budget deliberations.

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

Current opportunities are posted on the Town's website and when required, are posted on purchasingconnection.ca. Currently, Whitecourt has the following opportunities:

- 2025-22-02: **JDA Place – Arena Restaurant/Concession Services**, Closes: February 28, 2025

For further details on any of these opportunities visit www.whitecourt.ca and search the project title.

NOTICE OF DECISION

The following decision was made by the Municipal Planning Commission:

Application 24-115: NE 32-59-11-W5 – Discretionary Use – 24.97 MW AC Solar Power Facility – Approved with Conditions.

Date of Decision: February 13, 2025 **Appeal Closes at 4:00pm:** March 6, 2025

An Appeal of the above decision(s) may be made by submitting a written appeal and appeal fee (\$310) to the Office of the Secretary of the Subdivision and Development Appeal Board, Town of Whitecourt Administration Building, Box 509, Whitecourt, Alberta, T7S 1N6 prior to 4:00pm on the above noted date. Any person(s) affected by the said proposal(s), has the right to appeal prior to the above date.

TAKE PART! GIVE BACK!

Opportunity for Public Participation

The Town is recruiting citizens to fill a volunteer position. Board members provide Town Council with perspective and recommendations regarding important civic issues. Whitecourt is a diverse, growing town, and citizens are in the best position to provide input on our changing community needs. Get involved! It's your town. Share your knowledge and meet new colleagues.

Community Services Advisory Board

"To create a healthy, strong community by meeting the leisure and social needs of the community."

(1) Member – term to expire in October 2027

Applications will be accepted from residents of Whitecourt or the Woodlands County agreement area.

If being on a Council Committee interests you, please complete an application form which can be found on the Whitecourt website or picked up at the Town Office. Applications must be received before 12:00 noon, Monday, March 3, 2025 to:

Whitecourt Town Administration Office
 Attention: Executive Assistant
 5004 - 52 Avenue, Box 509
 WHITECOURT, AB T7S 1N6
 email: administration@whitecourt.ca

You can also scan the QR code for a direct link to the application form:



Applications will be presented to Town Council at the March 10, 2025 Regular Meeting.

Questions?

Contact our Administration Department at 780.778.2273 or email administration@whitecourt.ca.

SCHOOL NEWS



Students at Whitecourt Central School had fun celebrating the 100th day of school last week.



Pat Hardy School students in 3Robinson enjoyed making their Valentine's Day boxes!

continued from page 12

destination of 88.5% of Alberta's total merchandise exports last year), China (3.7%) and Japan (1.5%). Even if you bracket out Alberta's exports to the U.S., the E.U. accounted for only 8.5% of Alberta's exports to non-U.S. destinations last year compared to 31.8% for China and 12.6% for Japan.

The numbers suggest that the E.U. is a potential growth area for Alberta exporters. That is, however,

easy to say from an armchair observer. In reality, and despite the existence of the CETA, factors such as regulatory challenges, local preferences and demand, distance to market, and competition from other suppliers mean expanding Alberta's exports to the E.U. is easier said than done. The E.U. is, for example, a multilingual market with 24 official languages.

Current challenges aside, there are good reasons why the U.S. is Alberta's main market

for so many of its products: the two places are literally connected and they both benefit from deep and longstanding economic relationships. With that said, increasing sales to Europe is an opportunity worth pursuing.

Future editions of the Twenty-Four will dig into Alberta's trade with other regions.

*We've recently profiled Alberta's exports to the U.S., to countries other than the U.S., energy exports to Asia, and crude oil exports to China.

**The Canada-European Union Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) entered into force provisionally in 2017, meaning that most of the agreement now applies even though only 17 of 27 E.U. members have completed the domestic ratification process. According to the European Commission, the agreement eliminates duties on 99% of all tariff lines, of which 98% were scrapped when it provisionally entered into force.

Woodlands County Council recap

Woodlands County Council discussed the following items at their recent meeting of Council:

Council gave first reading to Bylaw 622/25 – 2024LUA02 – Land Use Amendment for PT. SW 24-58- 12-W5M Roll 235954 & 35572 and a public hearing is scheduled for March 12, 2025, at 5:15 pm at the Woodlands County Council Chambers in Whitecourt. The amendment would rezone the properties from Agriculture Two (A2) to Agriculture Rural Estate (ARE) to allow for the future creation of parcels larger than 10 acres.

Economic Development Officer Bert Roach updated Council on the development and attraction of energy industry projects within Woodlands County and the region. Over the last few years, Council and administration have attended several energy focused conferences and meetings to un-

derstand the needs of the industry and how Woodlands County can adapt and develop opportunities in the county. The investment information page on Woodlands County website will be updated to include current energy projects and proposals ensuring the public is informed and involved in the development process.

Upcoming scheduled meetings:

- Governance & Priorities – Wednesday, February 19, 5:00 pm
- Regular Council – Wednesday, February 26, 9:30 am
- Regular Council – Wednesday, March 12, 5:00 pm
- Regular Council – Wednesday, March 26, 9:30 am

Meetings are held in-person at the Municipal Office in Whitecourt and streamed on the Woodlands County YouTube channel. Agenda packages are available on the Woodlands County CivicWeb Portal.

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Whitecourt Town Council update

Whitecourt will be forwarding a letter to the Province in support of the Government of Alberta's continued advocacy on behalf of the forestry industry. The forest sector is one of the biggest employers in Whitecourt, and ongoing international tariff threats could have severe impacts on local businesses and families.

Whitecourt Town Council has recognized

June 6, 2025 as BGC Whitecourt Day. BGC Whitecourt & District (formerly Boys and Girls Club of Whitecourt & District) will be celebrating its 20th anniversary in Whitecourt, and will also be celebrating the 125th anniversary of the first BGC Club in Canada. Further information on events planned for the day will be posted on www.bgcwhitecourt.com.

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