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The Press

COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER

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Nettie with a picture of her family.



A Disney-loving bookworm with a beautiful smile and an inviting laugh is the next person to share their stories through our Reminiscing with Residents series.

Reminiscing with Residents – Spruce View Lodge Edition with Roberta “Nettie” Ritchie

| By Serena Lapointe

On her grandparents’ farm, just outside of Edson, kitty-corner to the rodeo grounds, Roberta “Nettie” Ritchie was born on July 20, 1936. Her story saw

her travel around a bit before landing in Whitecourt in January of 1972 with her family in tow, ready to start their lives in a new community.

Ritchie said she did much of her schooling

in Edmonton, living in Jasper Place. “There were three schools: one for grade one. One for middle school kids, and one more with two floors for grade 7 and

continued on page 2

Two grants are being sought by the Town of Whitecourt to further reduce the community’s wildfire threat

| By Serena Lapointe

The Town of Whitecourt has been very successful over the years in acquiring grants from the Forest Resource Improvement Association of Alberta (FRIAA). Created in 1997, FRIAA is a non-profit that collects and administers indus-

try funds to enhance the province’s forest resources. Stumpage fees, paid by firms for the right to harvest and based on the market value of standing trees, are measured in dollars per cubic meter.

Historically, according to www.friaa.ab.ca, these fees went into general revenue.

FRIAA was created to oversee the Forest Resource Improvement Program funds, which were designed to ensure that some of the stumpage fees paid were used directly to enhance the forest resource, benefiting Albertans.

From that modest

continued on page 7



Town of Whitecourt photo

Department members doing FireSmart training in 2023.



Town of Whitecourt photo

The Town is seeking dollars through FRIAA in hopes of upping the community’s safety. A summer crew for next summer is one of the requests, as is a toolkit to help builders and homeowners choose FireSmart-approved practices. Pictured is a past FireSmart Summer Crew.



Patrick Carew

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continued from page 1

up,” she explained. Ritchie was three years old when World War II began. “I wasn’t very old when it ended, I was nine years old. I remember the books you got stamps in, and you were only allowed one thing of sugar because of the rationing. And Kilroy was on fences. It would have hands, a big nose and a head, and it would say that Kilroy was here. It was just one of those war things I remember,” said Ritchie. “I had three uncles who went. My grandpa also went. I don’t think he should have gone because he was older, but he was only gone for three months. They all made it back,” she added.

Watching Edmonton change from the forties to now was quite something. “When we first moved there, the roads weren’t paved. It was all dirt, and there were ditches, and they would be full of water. Of course, you would have rubber boots, and my mom would say, don’t get the inside of your boots wet. Well, I got the inside of my boots wet, and all we had were two little rooms and just a little round furnace that you had to put wood and coal in. Nowadays, you can put wet things over the register, but not then. So, drying them was a hassle for my mom,” she laughed.

The family originally started in a small, two-room home when they arrived in Edmonton, eventually moving into a bigger home just down the street. “There weren’t many houses around us there. One block past where we ended up, the houses ended, and the rest of the land was bush. There was an acreage in there, but that was it. Now look at it! It has changed a lot since.”

At some point, Ritchie’s parents moved to Vancouver. When she was 18, and newly married with one son in tow, she and her husband, Walter, decided to move to Vancouver too. “My mom and dad had purchased a house, so we went and lived with them. There was a little house for sale across the street, and my uncle asked me why my husband and



This house in Riverside used to be in the center of the park but the Ritchie's moved it beside the river.

I didn’t buy it. I said that we didn’t have the money for the down payment, so he offered it to us.”

The house, which cost five thousand dollars, became their home. “It was very kind of him. Not many people would do that,” said Ritchie. As for the cost, compared to today? Ritchie had to laugh. “Now they are a million dollars!” By the time they moved into the home, the couple had three children and soon welcomed a fourth.

In 1972, they decided to move back to Alberta and chose Whitecourt. The family settled in at Riverside Trailer Park, taking ownership of the property. At the time, the park didn’t just have trailers. “We called them bungalows. They were in front, a little way from the highway and were two rows deep. There were ten buildings altogether and twenty rooms.”

She said they ran those like a motel until the units were decommissioned and sold off in the late seventies or eighties. “I never kept track of anything. I should’ve because I’m not very good at remembering those things,” she chuckled. “I think one went out to the Eagle River Campground area. One went out to Blue Ridge as an attachment, and Ed Shrum had come to help us dig the basement out for the yellow house by the river, and

we gave him one for coming and helping us.”

Ritchie and her husband sold the trailer park in the early 2000s and settled on an acreage out on the mountain. “We stayed in the area because our kids were raised here. Three of them are still here. My family is great. I’m really lucky.”

One of Ritchie’s favourite pastimes was line dancing, and it’s something she wishes she could still do. “My good friend Dixie asked me to go dancing a few times, and I always said no. Then one day I said, Oh, what the hell. I’ll go. I don’t know how many years it was, but it had to be over twenty at least. Then my hips started to go, and I had to quit. I still would like to be line dancing if my hip was ok, but that’s what happens,” she smiled.

Watching the town change over the years was a sight to see. “There are so many more houses now. Downtown (to the east), there was nothing down there. I was trying to remember where it ended when we first came here, and I think the kids thought it ended where the Repeat Boutique is, so all that over there has been built since then, aside from a few farms along the river, where the golf course is,” said Ritchie.

“The empty building on the corner (across from CIBC), there

were old houses behind it. Those were original homes, and they are gone now. My daughter was a floral designer, and we had a flower shop inside the second house from the alley. I think they are just parking on it now. It was called Floral Impressions,” she said.

Nettie and her husband, Walter, had four children together: Terry, Gary, Kelly and Pam. The family lost Gary in 2018 and Walter in January 2021, at the age of 90. The beautiful legacy created by Nettie and Walter now spans multiple generations, around 30 grandchildren and two sweet great-grandchildren. “It’s nice to see it. There are quite a lot of us. I’m always glad when everyone is around.”

As one of nine siblings, Ritchie said having a big family wasn’t as big a hassle as people might think. “You would go out and have a game of kick-the-can, run-chief-run or hide-and-peek.

There was none of this fiddling with iPads and iPhones. It was just simple. I keep saying, take me back to the fifties. But it never happens,” she laughed.

“They say that my generation, from 1930 to 1945, there’s only one percent of us left. We were the only ones that had played outside all day, like they like to say, and then went home for supper. And, we had par-

ty lines for phones. If you don’t know, that’s where multiple houses shared a phone line. You would pick up the phone to call someone, and there would be somebody talking. So, you would have to hang up and wait. Sometimes they were still talking when you checked again,” she laughed. When asked if she ever stayed on to listen, Ritchie laughed and said, “Not long.”

Over the years, two things that never changed for her were her love for reading and old-school Disney

movies. Having gone to Disneyland several times, and with a few personal mementos in her room at Spruceview Lodge, where she’s lived for the last four years, Ritchie holds to the magic found between the pages of a book or on the screen. “I love the happy endings. Being able to write something like that is a gift.” Thank you for being part of our series, Nettie. It was a pleasure to sit and listen to you, and to share some of your history with our readers!



A memento from Disneyland. Can you guess the movie?

Library Hours:
 Mon-Fri 10am-8pm
 Sat 12pm-4pm
 Sun Closed

OCTOBER 2025 EVENT CALENDER



SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
Fall Scavenger Hunt 			1 Afterschool Program 3:30-5:00	2 Afterschool Program 3:30-5:00 Scrabble Night 6:00-7:30	3 Yap & Yarn 6:00-7:30	4 Family Movie: Hotel Transylvania 2 1:00
5	6 French Homework Help 4:00-5:00 Adult Book Club 2:00-3:00	7 Afterschool Program 3:30-5:00	8 Afterschool Program 3:30-5:00	9 Story Time 10:30-11:30 Afterschool Program 3:30-5:00	10 Adult Art Therapy 5:30-7:30	11 Closed 
12	13 Closed for Thanksgiving! 	14 Afterschool Program 3:30-5:00	15 Afterschool Program 3:30-5:00	16 Afterschool Program 3:30-5:00	17 Soapstone Carving 5:30-7:30	18 Family Movie: Nightmare Before Christmas 1:00
19	20 French Homework Help 4:00-5:00	21 Afterschool Program 3:30-5:00	22 Afterschool Program 3:30-5:00	23 Story Time 10:30-11:30 Afterschool Program 3:30-5:00	24 Crib Night 6:00-7:30	25 Creative Corner: 1:00-3:00
26	27 French Homework Help 4:00-5:00 Tween & Teen Night 6:00-7:30	28 Afterschool Program 3:30-5:00	29 Afterschool Program 3:30-5:00	30 Afterschool Program 3:30-5:00	31	

NOTE: For more Library information check our Facebook page, or call (780) 778-2900

Can you access affordable dental care without dental insurance?

(NC) Dental insurance is often seen as an important perk of a “good” job, but not everyone has access, even if they’re working hard.

But just because you don’t have dental insurance doesn’t mean you can’t get access to affordable dental care. There are options available, like the Canadian Dental Care Plan, which is now available for all eligible Canadian residents with an adjusted family net income below \$90,000, and no access to dental insurance.

The plan helps cover the cost of many important oral health services, including examinations, cleaning, fillings, X-rays, dentures, root canals and oral surgeries.

Are you eligible? Applying is quick and easy

online or by phone. To qualify, you’ll need to meet four criteria:

- You’re a Canadian resident for tax purposes.
- You filed your tax returns in Canada for the previous year. If you have a spouse or common-law partner, they also need to have filed their tax return.
- Your adjusted family net income is less than \$90,000.
- You don’t have access to dental insurance.

Will it cover 100 per cent of your costs? No—it’s not a free dental care plan. The plan will reimburse a portion of the treatment costs, but you may have to pay additional charges directly to your oral health provider if:

- Your adjusted family net income is between \$70,000 and \$89,999—you’ll have a co-payment and need to pay a share of all covered costs.
- Your oral health care services cost more than what the plan will cover.
- You and your oral health provider agree to services that aren’t covered by the plan.

How long does the plan last? You can get coverage for as long as you’re eligible, but you do have to renew every year, online or by phone, by calling 1-833-537-4342. If your adjusted family net income changes, you may see a change in your co-payment.

Learn more about the plan at canada.ca/dental.



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albertanewsprint.com → Careers.**



Golden hues of autumn reflect perfectly on the still waters at Festival Park, capturing the serene beauty of fall in full bloom.

HELP WANTED

Tim Hortons in Whitecourt is looking to fill the following positions:

Food Service Attendant
Full Time / Shift Work

Food Service Supervisor
Full Time / Shift Work

SHIFT INCENTIVE FOR OVERNIGHTS

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Meet Faculty
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Oct 25 | 9 am – 2 pm



SEPTEMBER 24, 2025 2025 MUNICIPAL ELECTION – CANDIDATE OFFICIAL RESULTS

Woodlands County received the following official candidates for the 2025 Municipal Election:		Division 5	Blue Ridge	Exley, Chris	
Division 2:	Whitecourt West	Burrows, John Michael		Haydock, Robert William	
		MacNeil, Patricia Ray	Division 7	Wright, Jenna	
Division 4	Whitecourt East	Burgoyne, Andrew		Kluin, Dale	
		Edney, Deb	Division 1:	Whitten, Benny	
		Sergeew, Jeremy James	Division 3:	Dave Kush	Acclaimed
		St. Martin, Karen	Division 6:	Alan Deane	Acclaimed
				Peter Kuelken	Acclaimed

Information on special ballots and dates and times for the advance and general vote will be posted on www.woodlands.ab.ca/p/2025-election.

DISCRETIONARY USE DEVELOPMENT PERMIT APPLICATION

Woodlands County Land Use Bylaw provides opportunity for any person who may have comments on the proposed development to deliver to the Development Officer, a written statement of their concerns indicating: their full name and address and the reasons for their comments to the proposed use.

If you have any comment or concern regarding this proposal you may provide a written statement via email to planning@woodlands.ab.ca prior to 4:30 p.m., October 9th, 2025. The Development Authority will be making a decision on the following development permit application following this deadline.

Comments received will be taken into consideration by the Development Authority.

LEGAL DESCRIPTION	APPLICATION NUMBER	PROPOSED USE
SE 23-56-10-W5M	15-076-2025	Small Animal Boarding & Breeding

Information regarding this application may be obtained by inquiring prior to **4:30 pm, October 9th, 2025**.

Attention: planning@woodlands.ab.ca
 Woodlands County
 Box 60, #1 Woodlands Lane, Whitecourt AB T7S 1N3
 Telephone: 780-778-8400
 Toll-Free: 1-888-870-6315

NOTICE OF ELECTION AND REQUIREMENTS FOR VOTER IDENTIFICATION FORM 7 - LOCAL AUTHORITIES ELECTION ACT (SECTIONS 12, 35, 46, 53)

LOCAL JURISDICTION: WOODLANDS COUNTY
PROVINCE OF ALBERTA

ELECTION DAY: MONDAY, OCTOBER 20, 2025

Notice is hereby given that an election will be held for the filling of the following offices:

Office(s)	Number of Vacancies	Division Number
COUNCILLOR, WHITECOURT WEST	1	2
Councillor, Whitecourt East	1	4
Councillor, Blue Ridge	1	5
Councillor, Fort Assiniboine/ Timeu	1	7

Voting will take place on the **20th of October 2025** between the hours of **10:00 am and 8:00 pm**. Voting stations will be located at:

DIVISION 2 Whitecourt West DIVISION 4 Whitecourt East	DIVISION 5 Blue Ridge	DIVISION 7 Fort Assiniboine/Timeu
WOODLANDS COUNTY MUNICIPAL OFFICE #1 WOODLANDS LANE WHITECOURT, ALBERTA	BLUE RIDGE COMMUNITY HALL 304 VETERANS AVENUE BLUE RIDGE, ALBERTA	Fort Assiniboine Regional Municipal Office 61053A Hwy 33 Fort Assiniboine, Alberta

Advance Vote Dates are as follows:
 Thursday, October 16th, 2025 from 3:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.
 Saturday, October 18th, 2025 from 12 noon to 4 p.m.

Divisions and Locations for the Advance Vote:

DIVISION 2, Whitecourt West
DIVISION 4 Whitecourt East
DIVISION 5 Blue Ridge
 Woodlands County
 Municipal Office
 #1 Woodlands Lane
 Whitecourt, Alberta

DIVISION 7 Fort Assiniboine/Timeu
 Fort Assiniboine Regional Municipal Office
 61053A Hwy. 33
 Fort Assiniboine, Alberta

In order to vote, you must produce identification for inspection. The identification must be one government issued photo identification with name and address such as driver's license, or any of the following with name and address: bank/credit card statement or personal cheque, tax assessment notice, insurance policy or coverage card, pension plan statement, residential lease or mortgage statement, utility bill and vehicle ownership, registration, or insurance certificate. **For a more complete list visit our website at: woodlands.ab.ca**

DATED AT THE TOWN OF WHITECOURT, IN THE PROVINCE OF ALBERTA THIS 24TH DAY OF SEPTEMBER 2025.

Returning Officer, Tracy Mindus



DAVE KUSCH
Mayor
 Councillor for Assiniboine
 Division 1
dave.kusch@woodlands.ab.ca
 Phone: 780-779-9337



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
 Phone: 780-775-0654



JEREMY WILHELM
Councillor for
 Whitecourt East Division 4
jeremy.wilhelm@woodlands.ab.ca
 Phone: 780-779-4264



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: 780-264-2425



DEVIN WILLIAMS
Councillor for Fort Assiniboine/
 Timeu Division 7
devin.williams@woodlands.ab.ca
 Phone: 780-305-1825



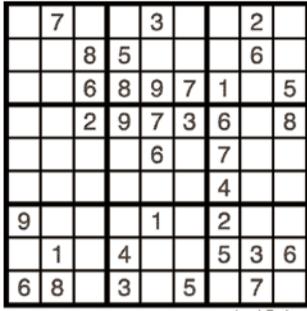
A look at the local weather

	Wed., Oct. 8	Thu., Oct. 9	Fri., Oct. 10	Sat., Oct. 11	Sun., Oct. 12
P.O.P.	Showers	Showers	Mainly sunny	Mix of sun and clouds	Mix of sun and clouds
High	40%	30%	40%	30%	30%
Low	11°C	7°C	9°C	6°C	5°C
Wind	4°C	1°C	2°C	-1°C	-1°C
24-Hr Rain / Snow	W 12 km/h <1mm	NW 15 km/h <1mm	NW 9 km/h -	N 17 km/h -	NW 22 km/h -

SEE SOLUTIONS PAGE 15

SUDOKU

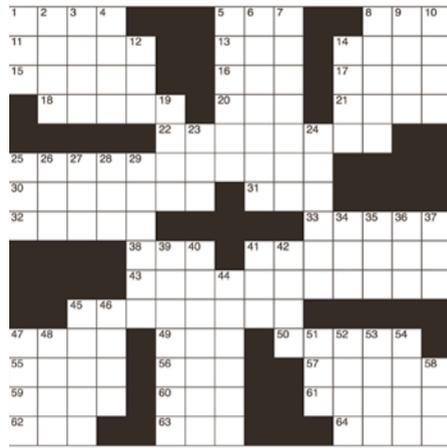
CROSSWORDS



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: Beginner



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. Comedic actor Rogen
- 5. Bits per inch
- 8. Tire pressure measurement
- 11. Angels great Mike
- 13. Own (Scottish)
- 14. Notable FI racing team
- 15. Upper bract of grass
- 16. Tax collector
- 17. Electronic counter-countermeasures
- 18. Informal loan clubs
- 20. Skeletal muscle
- 21. Popular fish type
- 22. Salts of acetic acid
- 25. Arriving early
- 30. Worded
- 31. Single Lens Reflex
- 32. Amphibians
- 33. Warm greeting
- 38. Belonging to a thing
- 41. Segmented worm
- 43. Concerns
- 45. Audacious
- 47. Wings
- 49. Type of drug
- 50. Wind chill formula scientist Charles
- 55. Island close to the

U.S.

- 56. "To the ___ degree"
- 57. Daniel ___, French composer
- 59. A way to march
- 60. Where golfers begin
- 61. Spiritual leader
- 62. Of she
- 63. Mental disorder concerning body odor (abbr.)
- 64. Tall, slender-leaved plant

CLUES DOWN

- 1. Engine additive
- 2. Amounts of time
- 3. Fragrant brown balsam used in perfume
- 4. Color properties
- 5. One who hands over
- 6. Thieves of the sea
- 7. Put in
- 8. Nocturnal rodents
- 9. Pouches
- 10. Systems, doctrines, theories
- 12. Greek alphabet letter
- 14. Greek goddess of youth
- 19. Satisfy

- 23. Partly digested food
- 24. Dictator
- 25. Parts per thousand (abbr.)
- 26. The 17th letter of the Greek alphabet
- 27. A major division of geological time
- 28. Angry
- 29. St. Francis of ___
- 34. Romanian monetary unit
- 35. Stale
- 36. Go quickly
- 37. Commercials
- 39. Canadian city
- 40. One who slices
- 41. Perform perfectly
- 42. Nest of pheasants
- 44. Tactile sensations
- 45. Sword
- 46. Climactic
- 47. Adrenocorticotrophin
- 48. Fisherman's tool
- 51. Swiss river
- 52. Plant that makes gum
- 53. A French abbot
- 54. One point east of northeast
- 58. Get free of

ADOPT A DOG WORD SEARCH



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

WORDS

- ADOPTION
- ADULT
- APPLICATION
- BEHAVIOR
- BOND
- COMMITMENT
- COMPANION

- DONATION
- FOREVER HOME
- FOSTER
- KENNEL
- LOVING
- MICROCHIP
- NEUTER
- PUPPY

- RESCUE
- SCREENING
- SENIOR
- SHELTER
- SPAY
- TRAINING
- TRANSPORT
- VOLUNTEER

LIVE ON SITE AUCTION

W/ WEBCAST BIDDING

WESTCOVE EXCAVATING (RICK & KIM SEYMOUR RETIREMENT)
(WEBCAST ITEMS STARTING AT APPROX 2:30 PM)
LOCATED: FROM ONOWAY: 11.5MI W ON HWY 43 TO RGE RD 42A
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SATURDAY OCTOBER 18 @ 1PM LIVE ONSITE



RICK & KIM SEYMOUR ARE RETIRING TO B.C. & SO DISPERSING A LIFETIME OF WESTCOVE EXCAVATING ASSETS INCLUDING HD EQUIP, HD TRUCKS, VEHICLES, HD TRAILERS, SAW MILL, QUANTITY OF (TOOLS, SHOP EQUIP, PARTS, STORAGE, ETC), SEA CANS, HOE & SKID STEER ATTACHMENTS, HOUSEHOLD, IND. GENERATORS & MUCH MUCH MORE

HEAVY EQUIPMENT * 14 Wacker Neuson 6003 Excavator (2100 hr) * 00 JD 450 6-way Dozer (Rebuilt Undercarriage), 8621hrs * 04 ASV Tracked Skid Steer, 103hp

HD TRUCKS & VEHICLES * 05 GMC 5500 HD 4x4 Deck Service Truck, Duramax * 05 GMC 7500 Dump truck, 129k km * 87 Ford F800 Dump Truck * 04 Freightliner Cube Van * 10 Ford Ranger Ext Cab 4x4 * 10 Ford Lariat F150 Crew Cab Project * 97 Dodge Ram 5.9 Cummins Project w/ Matching Parts Truck * 99 VW Beetle

DIRECTIONAL DRILLING PIPE (Quantity of) * Single Use 20' American Auger 2 7/8 IF * 2.06 Firestick 2 * 4.25" OD

ATTACHMENTS * 88" Bobcat Land Leveler * Skid Steer & Excavator Buckets (2 @ 96" Snow, 72" Grapple, 72" High Volume, 72" Tooth, 38" & 45" Clean up, 12" HD) * Custom Built Spinning Power Pole Grapple/ Setter * 48" Pallet Forks * Trailer Hitch Plate * Excavator (Hyd Tilt Bucket * Auger Power Head, 12" & 15" Bits, 4' Extension, Compaction Plate, Rake, Ripper Tooth, Stanley Breaker)

TRAILERS * 15 Load Trail 24' BP Tridem Hydraulic Tilt Deck * 16 SWS 26' GN w/ Rear Stabilizer Jacks * 09 Load Trail BP 7'x16' Equip Trailer * 03 Express 35' Tridem Low Profile * 82 Fruehauf 26' Van * 12 SWS 30' GN Tridem Dually w/ Beavertails * 14 Asi Tandem Dually Deck Over Equip w/ Beavertails, 16,000lbs axles

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SEA CANS, SAWMILL & YARD * 3 @ 40' Containers * TMG 26" Band Saw on HD Steel Skid, 14hp Kohler * Lift of Mill Logs * Gas Wood Splitter on Wheels * Husqvarna 25hp Lawn Tractor * Rain Barrels * Etc.

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continued from page 1

beginning, FRIAA has evolved and now offers funding through several programs, including the Community Reforestation Program, the Forest Resource Improvement Program, the FRIAA FireSmart Program, the Mountain Pine Beetle Program, the Wildfire Reclamation Program, the Caribou Habitat Recovery Program, the Community Fireguard Program, and the Enhanced Reforestation of Legacy Disturbance.

There are 22 companies within its membership, including ANC Timber Ltd., Blue Ridge Lumber Inc., Millar Western Forest Products Ltd., and Weyerhaeuser Company Ltd, and as a whole, FRIAA is accountable to the Minister responsible for forestry, currently held by Minister of Forestry and Parks, Todd Lowen.

Whitecourt has successfully received hundreds of thousands of dollars, including regular vegetation management (mulching) under the FireSmart funding stream, zone work in the forests within and directly surrounding the municipality, an updated Wildfire Mitigation Strategy (2016), a Sprinkler Deployment Plan to use in the event of a wildfire, and public education projects to increase awareness of FireSmart among residents.

Dollars were also obtained from the Community Fireguard Program to build a fireguard around the eastern portion of the community, from Highway 43 near the Kanata Inn to the edge of the community down behind St. Joseph's School. Most recently, over the summer, it was announced that Whitecourt, along

with Woodlands County and Swan Hills, had successfully secured funding from FRIAA for a Regional FireSmart Coordinator, who will engage with the communities, to build local awareness, promote FireSmart practices and enhance the area's resilience to wildfires.

Now, the Town of Whitecourt is applying for two more grant opportunities through FRIAA. The first is for the development of a Wildfire Resilience Toolkit, for \$25,000. At the September 22 Town Council Meeting, Lee Hardman, Director of Community Safety, outlined what the toolkit would entail. He explained that it would comprise four parts: FireSmart guidance documents for developers, builders and homeowners, promotional and educational materials, stakeholder engagement sessions, and training, plus a resource toolkit for municipal staff.

"This toolkit supports one of the key priorities of the Whitecourt FireSmart Working Group to enhance community-level FireSmart integration," explained Hardman. He said the group had motioned at its meeting on September 16 to forward a recommendation to Council to support the grant application. Whitecourt Town Council unanimously agreed to support it.

The guidance documents, as one example, will be tailored for developers, builders and homeowners in Whitecourt, providing information on FireSmart principles and giving those building a new project or doing renovations to learn about things they could voluntarily adopt during



A recently completed home assessment.



Bush before being cleaned up with FireSmart practices.

the permitting or construction stage.

The second grant is one that the community has received many times before: The FireSmart Summer Crew. The crew consists of four members who complete various pre-determined vegetation management projects on Town

and Crown land. This year's request from FRIAA is to complete work in zones 13, 14, 14a, 14b and 17.

Zone 13 is located behind Ravine Drive, and zones 14, 14a and 14b are behind Park Drive and Beaver Drive, as well as in the treed section between Blueberry Drive and Caxton

Street. Zone 17 is just behind the Hilltop East Industrial Park, off 33 Street and 33 Avenue. The grant application also seeks funding to treat approximately 27ha in Zones 20 and 21, in the area below the ski hill, along the tracks.

If the Town is successful in receiving

funding for the 2026 FireSmart Summer Crew Project, it would be another \$199,000 in FRIAA dollars, helping to increase the community's safety profile in the face of a wildfire, which, given the last few years of heightened activity in Alberta's forests, is money well spent.

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FORM 7 - NOTICE OF ELECTION and REQUIREMENTS FOR VOTER IDENTIFICATION Local Authorities Election Act, (Sections 12, 35, 46, 53)

LOCAL JURISDICTION: TOWN OF WHITECOURT, PROVINCE OF ALBERTA

Notice is hereby given that an election will be held for the filling of the following offices:

Office(s)	Number of Vacancies
Mayor	1
Councillor	6

Voting will take place on the 20 day of October, 2025, between the hours of 10:00am and 8:00pm. The Voting Station will be located at:

St. Joseph Parish Hall
5538 Mink Creek Road
Whitecourt, AB

If you are unable to attend the Voting Station on October 20, you can attend an Advance Vote on either October 14, 2025 or October 18, 2025. Advance Voting Stations have been scheduled from 10:00am to 7:00pm at:

St. Joseph Parish Hall
5538 Mink Creek Road
Whitecourt, AB

To vote, you **MUST** produce for inspection one or more of the acceptable forms of identification required by Section 53 of the Local Authorities Election Act.

DATED at the Town of Whitecourt, in the Province of Alberta, this 23 day of September, 2025.

Marlene Kellier-Pinchbeck
Returning Officer

GONE ON ELECTION DAY? Apply for Your Special Ballot!

Are you a student attending school outside of Whitecourt? Are you a snowbird, or do you have a vacation planned in October?

If you are unable to attend either of the Town's Advance Votes on October 14 or 18; or the General Municipal Election on October 20, you may be eligible to receive a SPECIAL BALLOT.

Voter identification must be submitted as set out in the instructions which will be included in the Special Ballot package.

Requests for Special Ballots **MUST** be made **before 12 Noon on Friday, October 17** and can be made in person, in writing, or by email:

Town of Whitecourt
5004 – 52 Avenue, Box 509
WHITECOURT, AB T7S 1N6
Email: election@whitecourt.ca

Special Ballots MUST be delivered to the Town Office by 12 Noon on Monday, October 20, 2025 to be deemed valid.

For more information on Special Ballots, contact Tara Gallant at the Town Office at 780.778.2273 or by email at election@whitecourt.ca.

For further information on the 2025 Election, visit www.whitecourt.ca.

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TAKE PART! GIVE BACK! Opportunity for Public Participation

Every fall, the Town of Whitecourt recruits citizens to fill volunteer positions on various boards and committees that 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.

Communities in Bloom Committee

"To work collectively to foster civic pride, environmental responsibility, and beautification in Whitecourt."

Interested community members are welcome to apply throughout the year to be a part of this hands-on committee. For more information, or to apply to this committee, please contact Kelly Sadoway at kellysadoway@whitecourt.ca.

Community Services Advisory Board

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

(2) Members – terms to expire in October 2028

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

Economic Development Committee

"To set up and establish an economic development program to further the interests of the Town of Whitecourt in the areas of economic development and tourism."

(1) Member – term to expire in October 2027

(1) Member – term to expire in October 2028

Health Professionals Attraction & Retention Committee

"To develop and support a sustainable and collaborative system for health professionals' attraction and retention that will support ongoing health care services to the community and provide a welcoming environment for health care providers and their families."

(1) Member – term to expire in October 2028

Municipal Planning Commission Committee

"To deal with land use planning matters with particular emphasis on the Land Use Bylaw."

(2) Members – terms to expire in October 2028

Town of Whitecourt Library Board

"To work towards maintaining the vibrancy of our library and meeting the social needs of community members through the creation of policies and planning."

(1) Member – term to expire in October 2026

(2) Members – term to expire in October 2028

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 at <https://www.whitecourt.ca/your-town/mayor-council/public-participation> or picked up at the Town Office. Applications must be received before 12:00 noon, Monday, October 20, 2025 to:

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

Applications are also being accepted for the:

Youth Advisory Committee

"To work collectively to ensure the needs of Whitecourt's youth are met."

(10) Members – term to expire September 2026

Youth between the ages of 13 and 18 years old (as of December 31, 2025) from Percy Baxter Middle School, Hilltop High School, École St. Joseph School, and the community at large are eligible to apply. New applicants are required to complete a Youth Advisory Committee Application Form and submit two signed reference forms. Students currently on the committee only need to complete the application form.

Applications for the Youth Advisory Committee must be submitted to administration@whitecourt.ca before noon on Thursday, October 9.

Applications for all committees will be presented to Town Council at the October 27, 2025 Regular Meeting.

Questions?

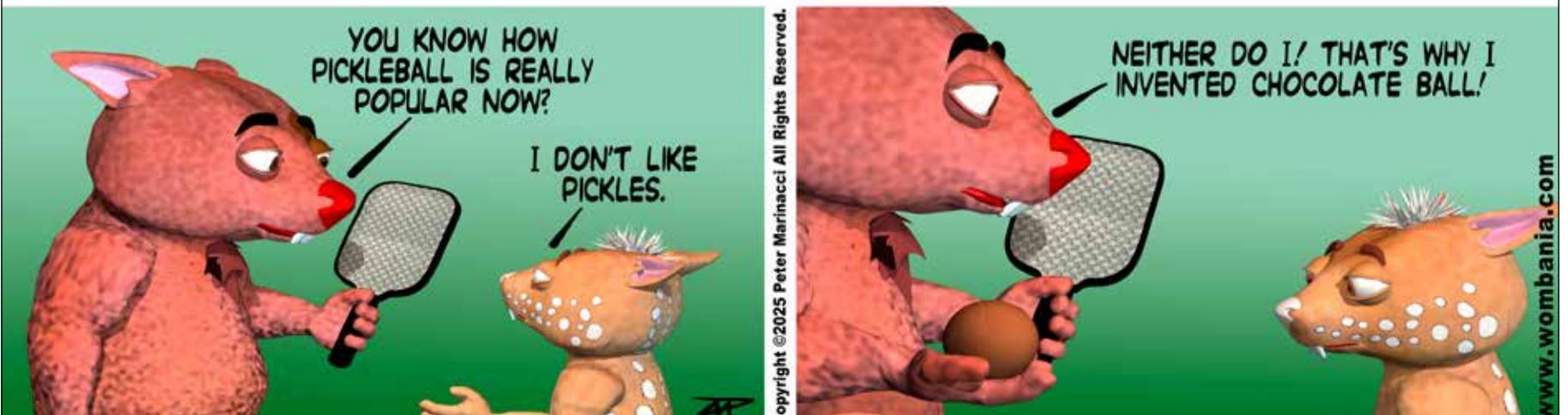
Contact our Administration Department at 780.778.2273 or email administration@whitecourt.ca.

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



WOMBANIA™

by PETER MARINACCI



Gold rush? A look into what's driving gold's relentless rally

By Carol Kamel, ATB ECONOMICS

Gold rush? A look into what's driving gold's relentless rally

Gold prices have surged to new heights, currently trading near US\$3,825 per ounce, up ~40% this year. Gold's current rally makes it one of the strongest-performing assets of the year, far outpacing equities like the S&P 500, which has gained about 14% over the same period. With such a remarkable run, the natural question - and the topic of today's Twenty-Four - is what's fueling this rally and what does it tell us about the broader state of the global economy?

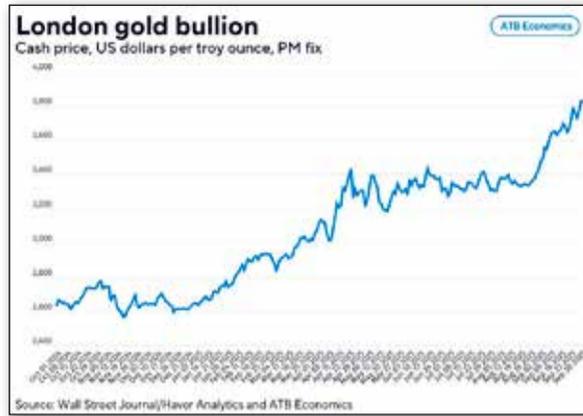
Gold has always played a unique role in financial markets. It pays no interest, but is trusted in a way few assets are. Historically, its rallies have coincided with times of economic fragility or uncertainty: the inflation shock of the 1970s, the

global financial crisis of 2007-2009, and the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020. In those and similar moments, gold has functioned less as a commodity and more as a barometer of confidence in the global financial system.

The role gold plays today

While today's backdrop bears similarities to past gold price rallies, today's prices reflect a convergence of forces: rising global debt levels, a weaker U.S. dollar, trade policy uncertainty, questions about the sustainability of fiscal policy, and an unusual dynamic where gold prices continue to rise despite higher Treasury yields. These factors together have encouraged both private investors and central banks to lean more heavily towards gold as a strategic reserve.

One of the most striking developments is that for the first time since 1996, gold represents a larger share of



central banks' reserves than U.S. Treasuries*. Data from the International Monetary Fund's COFER database and the World Gold Council show that Treasuries, as a share of reserves, have steadily declined in recent years. Several forces are at play. Central banks in emerging markets, particularly China and Russia, have been motivated to diversify away from Treasuries in response to sanctions risk and geopolitical fragmentation. For others, it's about insulation: in a world where fiscal trajectories look more uncertain, holding gold is

a way to hedge against a myriad of possibilities. This shift does not signal an abandonment of the U.S. dollar, which remains the dominant reserve currency, but it does mark a subtle rebalancing in how countries manage their financial security.

A softer dollar and bond market jitters

Another catalyst supporting gold is the U.S. dollar. The Dollar Index, which tracks the currency against its major peers, is down around 10% this year. A weaker U.S. dollar tends to support gold, which is priced in U.S. dollars and becomes

more affordable for international buyers. Today the U.S. faces a persistent deficit, rising interest payments now exceeding a trillion dollars annually, and uncertainty surrounding trade and tariff policy.

Bond markets add another dimension. Yields on longer-dated Treasuries remain elevated, a level that would normally deter gold buying since as a non-interest bearing asset, investors could earn higher returns by buying Treasuries. Yet, the demand for gold keeps rising. Recent treasury auctions have shown softer demand, with yields clearing slightly higher than anticipated (higher rates at auctions signal softer demand, as the Treasury has to entice investors to buy U.S. debt). While not alarming in isolation, the pattern suggests investors may be more cautious about absorbing recent issuances, especially at

a time when fiscal deficits show no signs of narrowing.

The takeaway is not that the U.S. dollar is in imminent decline or that Treasuries have lost their place at the core of the financial system. Both remain dominant. But gold's ascent highlights a subtle recalibration: confidence in these traditional pillars is being re-examined. With global debt sitting at 235% of global GDP, fiscal paths increasingly uncertain, and central banks diversifying their reserves, gold's role has seemingly shifted from a cyclical hedge to structural safeguard. Its rally is less about the metal itself and more about what it reflects.

*Central banks hold reserves - a mix of foreign currencies, government bonds (primarily U.S. Treasuries and dollars), and sometimes gold, as insurance to stabilize their currencies and economies.

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Idea

SCHOOL NEWS



Pat Hardy School photos

Pat Hardy school students enjoying Outdoor Learning Day.

Social media star Mai Pham returns to Whitecourt, supports local youth with generous donation

| By Haylee Winger

Mai Pham, a global social media influencer and proud former Whitecourt resident, returned to her hometown last week for a heartfelt visit that combined inspiration, generosity, and community spirit. On October 1, Pham visited Hilltop High School—her former school—where she donated custom Alechmai sweatsuits to all the school's sports teams. Alechmai is a community-driven fashion label founded by Pham, reflecting her passion for self-expression and empowerment through style.

Later in the day, she

toured the future Culture & Events Centre site with Whitecourt Mayor Tom Pickard and Deputy Mayor

Bill Schlosser. She expressed interest in how the new facility will create positive opportunities for local youth,

especially in creative and digital fields.

Pham launched her YouTube channel at just 13 years old while living in Whitecourt and has since grown her audience to more than 3.46 million subscribers. Beyond her online success, she has made a name for herself in the fashion and beauty industries—appearing on the cover of Harper's BAZAAR Vietnam and collaborating with top global brands such as Sephora, Google, Marc Jacobs, and the NHL.

Her visit underscored her strong ties to the Whitecourt community and her commitment to uplifting the next generation.



Town of Whitecourt photo

From left: Whitecourt Mayor Tom Pickard, social media influencer Mai Pham, and Deputy Mayor Bill Schlosser during a visit to the Culture & Events Centre site.

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Dollar Values as of October 8, 2025

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1-877-303-2642
- Addiction Helpline
1-866-332-2322 •
Health Link 811

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**

Putting a face on suicide



Palmerston R. K. Burk

Age - 14

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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Notice of Election and Requirements For Voter Identification

Local Authorities Election Act (Sections 12, 35, 46, 53)

Northern Gateway Public Schools

LOCAL JURISDICTION: **The Northern Gateway School Division**, PROVINCE OF ALBERTA.

Notice is hereby given that an election will be held for the filling of the following offices:

Office(s)	Number of Vacancies	Ward or Electoral Division Number (if applicable)
School Board Trustee	2	Ward 2

Voting will take place on the **20th day of October, 2025**, between the hours of **10:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m.** Voting stations will be located at:

Woodlands County Municipal Office, #1 Woodlands Lane, Whitecourt
St. Joseph Parish Hall, 5538 Mink Creek Road, Whitecourt

In order to vote, you must produce for inspection one or more of the acceptable forms of identification required by section 53 of the *Local Authorities Election Act*.

DATED at the Town of Whitecourt, in the Province of Alberta, this 23rd day of September, 2025.

Original Signed

Returning Officer



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Help Needed!

The Whitecourt Legion is in need of a trumpet player for the Remembrance Day service at the Allan and Jean Millar centre, November 11th, 2025

To play "Last Post" and "Rouse". Sheet music is available.

Anyone who might be interested or if you know of anyone who might be interested, please make contact with Ian McDermid, Poppy Chairman, 780-778-2711. You can leave a message if necessary.




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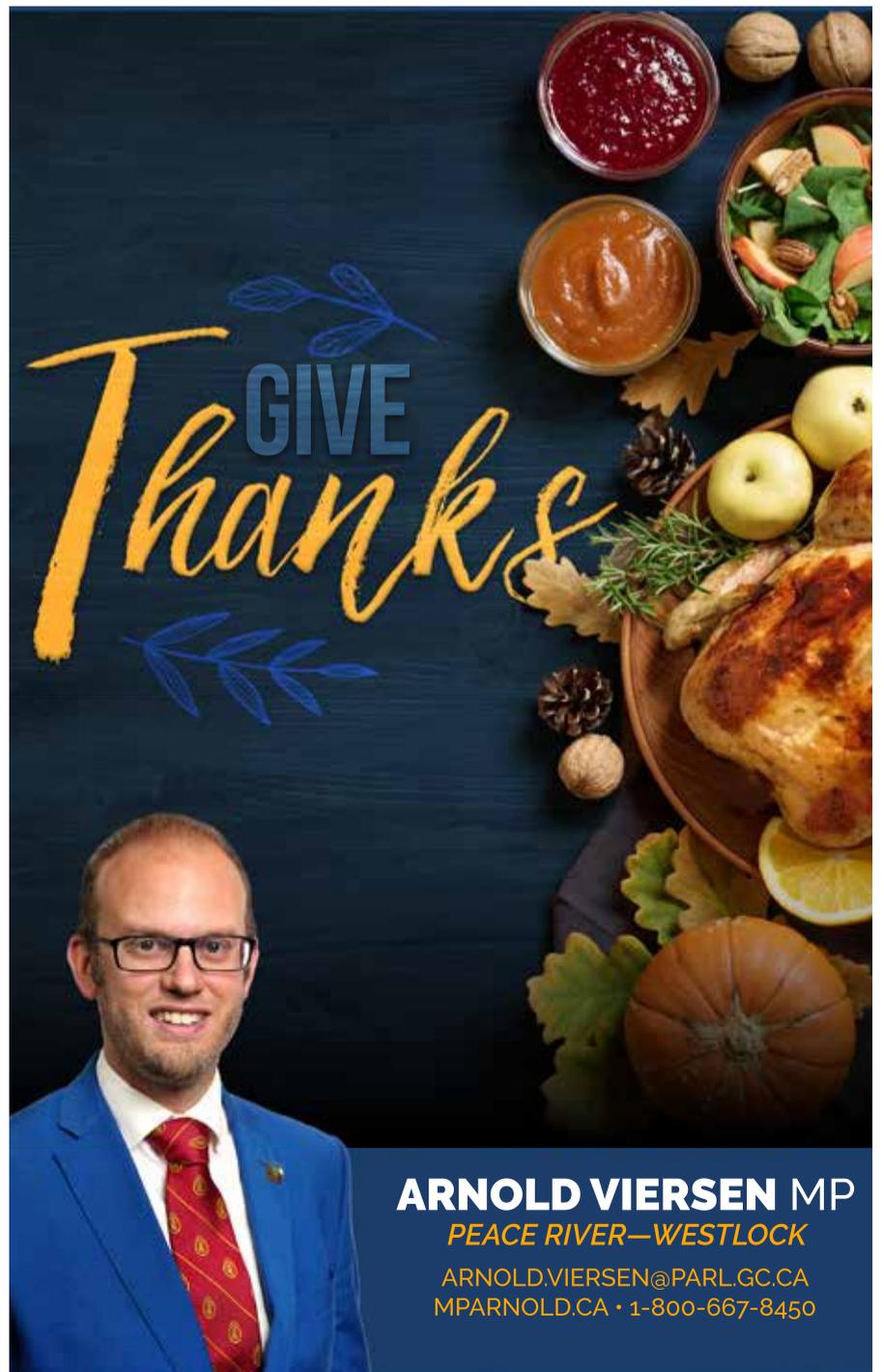
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Providing timely and easily accessible financial support for Whitecourt patients and their families who are dealing with a cancer diagnosis.

This can include help with parking costs for hospital visits, living expenses and unforeseen medical expenses. Applications can be made through the Drs at both Whitecourt Medical Clinics or (office hours, can leave a message): **Kim Nendsa** (President of Whitecourt Cancer & Wellness Society) **780-778-0932** **Aimee Grierson** **780-262-0222** <https://wctcancerwellness.com/>



General Meeting notice, Thursday October 9th at 7:00 in the Legion Hall. All members are welcome to attend. Many interesting items on the agenda!



Support group on Tuesdays 6:30 pm – 8:30 pm, September 16 – December 2, Crossroads Community Church, 4719 44 Avenue Mayerthorpe, Pre-registration is required

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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.whitecourtshester.ca

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

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Whitecourt Martial Arts Center photo

On September 20, these Whitecourt kids were all geared up and ready to hit the mats at the Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu tournament in Spruce Grove!

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 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.

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Something's in the works



A sold sign popped up on the old hotel a few weeks back prompting excitement and curiosity on what would be coming next for the downtown's largest commercial building, aside from industry. The full plans remain hush-hush for the most part but late last week crews could be seen putting a brand new coat of paint on the building, choosing a bright, creamy white colour instead of the red brick.



Colourful October

Given the cooler temperatures coming, enjoying the last colours of the summer, while they are with us, is a must. These beautiful flower beds are in front of the Town Office and they absolutely pop off the muted tones of the building and surrounding landscaping. All summer long, these pink and purple beauties have swayed in the wind and basked in the sunshine. If you haven't seen them yet, go take a peek before the fall temperatures consume them. Kudos to the staff who selected them and kept them happy all season long.