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# The Press

COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER

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Canada

Vol. 14 - Issue 45 | Wednesday, November 26, 2025

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## New buses ordered for Whitecourt transit system

| By Serena Lapointe

During the first meeting of the newly elected Whitecourt Town Council, on Monday, October 27, a motion concerning the purchase of three transit buses was tabled in favour of receiving more information on the two-million-dollar purchase before voting. During the November 10 meeting, some of the history was shared.

In 2009, the Town of Whitecourt hired Bannister Research to conduct a survey on system use.

The report found that 32 percent of respondents said members of their household would be highly likely to use a public transit system within the town.

In 2013, the Town Council established the Public Transit Ad Hoc Committee, comprised

of seven public members from the Town and County, a Town Council member and a representative from the Whitecourt Chamber of Commerce. The group recommended adding a non-binding question to that year's municipal election: Would you be in favour of a user-paid public transit system in the Town of

continued on page 3



Image - Town of Whitecourt

The community's transit buses will be replaced in 2027, following a recent vote from the Town Council. The current fleet has been facing maintenance concerns for quite some time due to the inability to access certain components. Pictured is current transit bus.



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# PUZZLES

SEE SOLUTIONS PAGE 11

## SUDOKU

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

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!

## CROSSWORDS

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10					
11						12					13	14	15	
16					17			18						
19				20	21		22	23					24	
25						26					27			
28					29						30			
				31	32					33				
34	35	36	37						38					
39					40	41	42							
43				44						45	46	47	48	
49				50					51	52				
53				54					55					
56		57				58					59			
60					61	62						63		
				64									65	

### 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. Popular wine -- Spumante
- 5. Greatly impressed
- 11. \_\_\_ and that
- 12. Uttered with passion
- 16. Boats
- 17. Veteran actor Harris
- 18. Casserole with game
- 19. Reprehensible acts
- 24. They precede C
- 25. Says under one's breath
- 26. Taxis
- 27. It transfers genetic info
- 28. NFL great Randy
- 29. Where college students sleep
- 30. Major European river
- 31. Taco condiment
- 33. -frutti
- 34. Polish city

- 38. Astronomy unit
- 39. Khoikhoi peoples
- 40. Bears QB Williams
- 43. Scrambled, fried, boiled
- 44. Price indicators
- 45. One-time world power
- 49. When you hope to get somewhere
- 50. Farm building
- 51. Choose carefully
- 53. Magnum was one
- 54. One who combines
- 56. Nursemaids
- 58. Partner to Pa
- 59. Notable river
- 60. Officially honors
- 63. Colorless compound
- 64. A fancy chair
- 65. Email function

### CLUES DOWN

- 1. The central area in a

### building

- 2. Religion of Japan
- 3. Leggings
- 4. Officially distributes
- 5. Arabian Sea seaport
- 6. Spanish doctors
- 7. It cools your house
- 8. Currency of Poland
- 9. Slowly moves into
- 10. Days (Spanish)
- 13. Unit of volume
- 14. Emit
- 15. With two replaceable hydrogens
- 20. Title for a man
- 21. Equally
- 22. Scarlett's home
- 23. One-time tech titan
- 27. Subway dwellers
- 29. One-tenth of a liter
- 30. Central European river
- 31. Distress signal
- 32. Expression of sympathy
- 33. The bill in a restaurant
- 34. Football equipment

### 35. Dance music

- 36. Russian river
- 37. Cosmetics giant Mary
- 38. Gym class
- 40. Automobiles
- 41. Roman honorific
- 42. Losses in sports
- 44. Skin tone in summer
- 45. Distant planet
- 46. Critical humor
- 47. Illegally obtained
- 48. Go back over
- 50. Home appliance brand
- 51. Unit of radioactivity
- 52. Home of the Flyers
- 54. Short official note
- 55. Emit coherent radiation
- 57. Anno Domini (in the year of Our Lord)
- 61. Most common noble gas (abbr.)
- 62. Toward

## HOROSCOPE

### ARIES

(March 21 - April 20)



Right now you are inspired to roll up your sleeves and clear away the clutter so you can focus on what counts, Aries. Your productivity soars this week.

### TAURUS

(April 21 - May 21)



Your words will carry extra weight between this week and next, Taurus. Don't hold back on speaking about what is in your heart. You may navigate your way to romance.

### GEMINI

(May 22 - June 21)



Gemini, this week you may feel energized to pursue new connections with family and friends. Plan a few long overdue catch-ups, and bask in that feeling of contentment.

### CANCER

(June 22 - July 22)



Some may call you timid, Cancer, but not this week. You put all of yourself out there the next few days, and others may be hanging on your every word.

### LEO

(July 23 - August 23)



Money is at the top of your priority list, Leo. You may be dreaming big or content to just make sense of finances that have gotten a bit off the rails.

### VIRGO

(August 24 - September 22)



Virgo, it's all about honesty this week and letting others in. Don't sugarcoat things with the people you love. They will love you even if you're in need of some support.

### LIBRA

(September 23 - October 23)



Libra, release what is draining your energy, especially before the busy holiday season is in full force. Wrap up lingering projects and bow out of obligations that are stretching you too thin.

### SCORPIO

(October 24 - November 22)



Scorpio, you are selective about your social circle, but stay open to new friendships. New allies bring surprising opportunities if you simply let them in.

### SAGITTARIUS

(Nov. 23 - Dec. 21)



Your ambitious streak is on fire right now, Sagittarius. Partnerships and acquisitions are very much within reach, so start conversations now.

### CAPRICORN

(Dec. 22 - Jan. 20)



You pride yourself on telling it like it is, Capricorn. But candor can sometimes be costly. A measured approach in a delicate situation this week can serve you well.

### AQUARIUS

(January 21 - February 18)



Typically "what you see is what you get" is your mantra, Aquarius. Yet, this week you might hold something back to be a bit more mysterious. Others may not catch on right away.

### PISCES

(February 19 - March 20)



Relationships take center stage in your life, Pisces. Talks of further commitment could come up more often than in the past. This is an important time.

## MEN'S HEALTH WORD SEARCH



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

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

### WORDS

ALCOHOL  
ANDROPAUSE  
ANTIGEN

BALDNESS  
CARDIOVASCULAR  
CHOLESTEROL  
DIABETES

HEALTH  
HYPERTENSION  
INFERTILITY  
LIBIDO

MENTAL HEALTH  
MUSCLE  
OBESITY  
PHYSICAL

PROSTATE  
SCREENING  
SLEEP APNEA  
SMOKING

TESTICULAR  
CANCER  
TESTOSTERONE  
WORKOUT

**continued from page 1**

Whitecourt, subsidized by the municipal tax base? One thousand, one hundred and eleven voters said yes and six hundred and sixty-six said no.

“Public transit started back in 2014 with contracted bus services. We had dial-a-bus a few years prior to that. The contracted bus services were quite costly, so we were looking for grants to be able to purchase buses,” explained Chelsea Grande, Director of Community Services. “We were able to secure the Green Trip Grant to purchase the fleet that we have now, with three public transit buses.” Grande said those are the three that they are now looking to replace.

The meeting’s agenda stated that the transit buses are on a 12-year replacement cycle.

However, ongoing maintenance issues and

the inability to find replacement parts have made dealing with the current fleet difficult for staff.

The original supplier that the Town of Whitecourt purchased from, Vicinity Motors, filed for bankruptcy last year, hence why finding components, such as differential parts, which are now obsolete, became nearly impossible, affecting the reliability of the buses and leading to significant downtime when issues arose.

“The current buses, with how they were built, we figured that the manufacturer got parts from all over the world. Unfortunately, some of those parts manufacturers are no longer in business, and that’s why we are having challenges procuring parts. There is a startup company that came up out of the company that went bankrupt (Vicinity),

and they are trying to fill that void because there is a number of Vicinity buses all across North America. But, to remanufacture a part on a bus that is ten years old is challenging,” explained Drew Hatfield, Director of Infrastructure Services.

One transit bus operates throughout the day on a one-hour route and one hour between pickups. A second bus joins the route during peak hours on weekdays, between 6:30 am and 9:00 am and again from 3:30 pm to 5:30 pm, to help cut wait times. A third bus acts as a backup to the fleet, enabling a rotation when another bus is receiving maintenance.

To help purchase new buses, the Town of Whitecourt applied to the Canada Public Transit Fund and the Rural Transit Solutions Fund and was successful on both counts. Following a Request for Decision,

the Town received a proposal from Crestline Coach Ltd for three diesel, low-floor/zero-entry 2026 Arboc Equess transit buses. Town staff visited the manufacturer’s facility in the United States before recommending them for purchase.

The cost for each unit is \$686,838.67, totalling \$2,060,516.01 plus GST, which was roughly \$47,000 over the original budget. The buses are also being equipped for Whitecourt’s climate and outfitted with a Quantum Wheelchair securement system, adding another \$90,000 to the overage.

The Canada Public Transit Fund and Rural Transit Solutions Fund will both provide the Town with \$536,800 for the buses, for a total of \$1,073,600. The remainder of the costs, including overages, will be covered

through the Fleet Replacement Reserves that were set aside to pay for the eventual replacement of the fleet.

“The Community Services Advisory Board reviews the stats and program monthly and annually, and we have made small adjustments throughout the service period, as well as offering peak service, which was done to increase our ridership. It was a successful result. Our ridership has been quite steady since we did that peak service,” explained Grande. In 2024, Whitecourt’s transit program provided over 37,000 rides.

This year, WAT Consulting Group was hired to review the transit system and help develop high-level options for the network, within a set operating budget and available resources. One of the recommendations was to implement a 30-min-

ute express route. The full results of the study will be presented in the new year.

Other projects attached to the transit system, which received grant support, include sidewalk upgrades for better accessibility, updates to shelters/stops, and pedestrian light/traffic light upgrades. The Dial-A-Bus is also being replaced, with funding support from the Rural Transit Solutions Fund, and was previously approved by the Town Council. The same company, Crestline Coach Ltd, will be providing the new Dial-A-Bus.

The Town Council voted unanimously to support the purchase of the buses, with most of the cost captured by grants and the remainder covered by money previously set aside. Once the new buses arrive and are in service, the old buses will be sold.

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**Dollar Values as of November 26, 2025**

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A look at the local weather	Wed., Nov. 26	Thu., Nov. 27	Fri., Nov. 28	Sat., Nov. 29	Sun., Nov. 30
P.O.P.	Mainly sunny 30%	Snow 60%	Snow 60%	Showing with peeks of sun 30%	Snow 60%
High	-5°C	-7°C	-9°C	-13°C	-16°C
Low	-9°C	-10°C	-13°C	-18°C	-17°C
Wind	E 8 km/h	E 8 km/h	NW 8 km/h	N 15 km/h	S 10 km/h
24-Hr Rain / Snow	-	~1cm	1-3cm	1-3cm	2-4cm

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# Much-needed resources for Alberta schools could be coming as soon as January, says Province

| By **Serena Lapointe**

On Friday afternoon, Premier Danielle Smith held a press conference alongside Minister of Education and Childcare, Demetrios Nicolaides, for the release of the final report from the Aggression and Complexity in Schools Action Team. The 25-member team comprises education leaders, including representatives from school boards in Edmonton and Calgary, the Alberta Teachers' Association and other key partners.

Premier Smith said the team consulted numerous education-related stakeholders, including teachers, occupational health and safety officers, speech language pathologists, psychologists, organizations, community-based service groups and special interest and advocacy groups.

"What they heard was very concerning," she said.

The 77-page report from the action team identifies key challenges alongside seven recommendations to address classroom aggression and complexity. As defined in the report, aggression refers to "instances of bullying and violence within the school context." Classroom complexity refers to "the dynamic and complex system of the learning environment impacted by the diverse needs of students, including academic, behavioural, social-emotional, linguistic, and socio-economic factors within the educational setting."

The report outlined some of the challenges being faced by educators. "The rising numbers of students with diverse and severe needs is outpacing available supports. Across the province, qualified professionals such as occupational therapists, speech-language pa-



Minister Demetrios Nicolaides and Premier Smith.

**A report recommending resource allocation for provincial classrooms was released early on Friday afternoon. Premier Danielle Smith and Minister of Education and Childcare, Demetrios Nicolaides, were joined by superintendents from Calgary and Edmonton to make the announcement.**

thologists and psychologists are raising alarms about the growing number of children with complex needs."

It went on to explain that rural and urban communities face some different issues and share others. Rural communities often face limited access to services, while urban areas experience con-

centrated needs, more significant newcomer populations, and socioeconomic disparities.

Both deal with chronic staffing shortages, long wait times for assessments and services, and inconsistent access to qualified professionals, which often results in undiagnosed students or extended wait periods for necessary

interventions.

"We tasked this group with providing immediate and long-term recommendations to the Minister of Education and Childcare for addressing behavioural, mental health and learning needs in schools," said Premier Smith. "The causes of aggression and classroom complexity are

difficult to determine. They can involve academic, behavioural, socioeconomic, linguistic, emotional, and mental health factors," she added.

The seven recommendations from the action team fall under one of five categories: safe & inclusive learn-

**continued on page 5**

## PUBLIC NOTICE

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### NOTICE OF DECISION

The following decision was made by the Municipal Planning Commission:

Application No. 25-141 – Side Yard Setback Variance Request for Accessory Building – 38 Olson Crescent – Refused.

**Date of Decision:** November 13, 2025

**Appeal Closes at 4:00 pm:** December 4, 2025

An Appeal of the above decision(s) may be made by submitting a written appeal and appeal fee (\$310.00) 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 4:00 pm on the above noted date. Any person(s) affected by the said proposal(s), has the right to appeal prior to the above date.

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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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Kyle Patterson

Age 21

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continued from page 4

ing environments, continuum of supports & services, cross-ministry collaboration, early intervention & ECS supports and professional learning & capacity building.

Under safe & inclusive learning environments, the team recommended the design and implementation of a comprehensive Inclusive Education Policy Framework, with consistent provincial guidance. The report states that role clarity is key, “ensuring that expectations are realistic and sustainable.”

Under the continuum of supports & services, the team had two recommendations: ensuring children/students have timely access to supports/services and a collaborative approach for service delivery that includes families and multidisciplinary teams to address students’ needs.

Among others, this includes a formal review cycle every 2-3 years with transparent funding tied to student complexity indicators, and defined scope and boundaries of the educational system’s role in supporting clinical and therapeutic needs.

One of the recom-

mendations that Premier Smith pointed to as already in action was within the cross-ministry collaboration category, which she said they used to create the Class Size and Complexity Cabinet Committee. “That came from the insights in this report,” said Premier Smith.

This category also includes a cross-ministry Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between departments and shared funding models.

Under the professional learning & capacity building category, the action team had several medium-term recommendations, including streamlining certification for out-of-province and international teachers, as well as working to standardize practicum phases and certification requirements with Advanced Education and post-secondary institutions. It includes increasing staff to support professional learning time for teachers/educational assistants, and the expansion of mentoring programs for staff development.

The report features a summary of each session held by the action team from which they crafted their recommendations. Sessions



Chief Superintendent of Edmonton Catholic Schools, Lynnette Anderson (centre).

included frontline staff & community organizations, frontline experts, early learning frontline experts, family & disability organizations, teaching & educational assistants training programs, and school resource officers & social services, all of which took place in the last two weeks of August.

The next steps will see the finalized report given to the Class Size and Complexity Cabinet Committee, co-chaired by Premier Smith and Minister Demetrios Nicolaides, where resources can be allocated. Premier Smith said they will be receiving data from

school boards across the province by Monday, November 24 and will meet as a committee twice before the year ends, adding that they want to get resources out as soon as possible.

“The work is really going to stem from the data that is collected, guided by these recommendations. What we are trying to do initially is identify the oversized classrooms as well as the ones that are incredibly complex so that we can get the extra resources to each classroom,” said Premier Smith.

Also in attendance at the press conference was Joanne Pitman,

Chief Superintendent of the Calgary Board of Education. “While the report does outline significant challenges currently, I need to state that there are many examples of excellent, outstanding programming and supports across school authorities. Our system, schools, and professional teams led by our teachers and classrooms have shown a high degree of commitment to providing strong programming across a broad range of needs.”

She said that in the Calgary Board of Education area, they have 44,000 students where English is a second

language, which is 31 percent of their student population. “That’s seventeen percent higher than the rest of the province,” said Pitman. She added that 1 in 5 students in her area identified with special education needs, and that these were two significant pressure points for them.

To read the report, visit [www.alberta.ca/aggression-and-complexity-in-schools-action-team](http://www.alberta.ca/aggression-and-complexity-in-schools-action-team) and look under Outcomes. Resource allocations are expected to start rolling out in January. Effects on the local community will be reported on as information is made available.

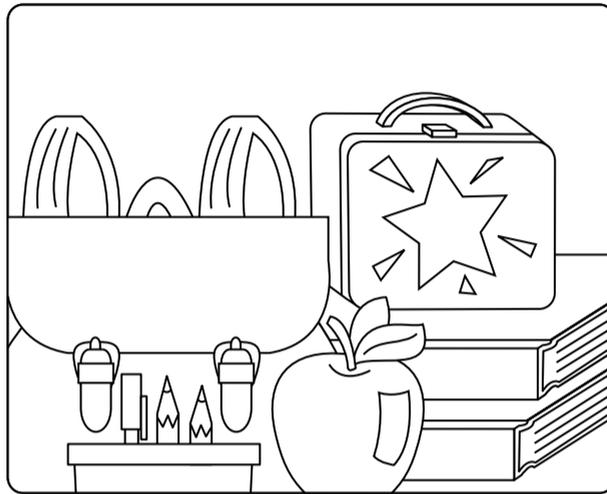


# CANADIAN Kids Corner



### Creative Coloring

Color in this picture to create your own masterpiece.



### THIS DAY IN HISTORY



**1851:** "Moby Dick" is published in the United States.

**1889:** Journalist Nellie Bly begins a successful trip to travel around the world in less than 80 days.

**1960:** Ruby Bridges becomes the first Black child to attend an all-white elementary school in Louisiana.

### Book FACT:



This book by Eric Carle is one of the most popular children's books ever written.

Answer: "The Very Hungry Caterpillar"

### Double Word Puzzle

Unscramble the individual words to reveal letters for the phrase.

RTHEEAC

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

GDREA

6
---

STONE

7
---

LPTO

8
---

1	U	5	7
---	---	---	---

1	4	2
---	---	---

8	3	6	2
---	---	---	---

Answer: Turn the page

### NEW WORD

#### ILLUSTRATE

provide a book with pictures

### How they say that in...

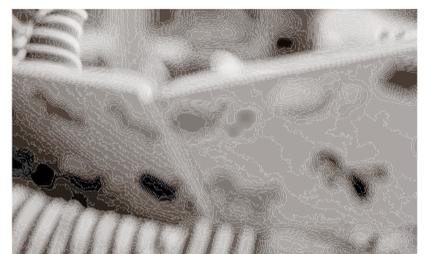
- English:** Book
- Spanish:** Libro
- Italian:** Libro
- French:** Livre
- German:** Buch

### Did You Know?

The vast majority of children's picture books are 32 pages in length.



### Get the PICTURE?



Can you guess what the bigger picture is?

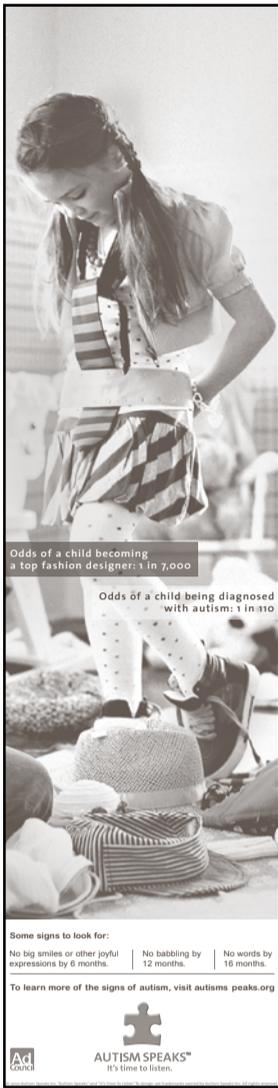
Answer: Children's book



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Odds of a child being diagnosed with autism: 1 in 110

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- No babbling by 12 months.
- No words by 18 months.

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# Not slowing yet: Housing starts pick up momentum in October

By Siddhartha Bhattacharya

| ATB ECONOMICS

Not slowing yet: Housing starts pick up momentum in October.

Alberta's new home construction activity appears to be accelerating again after a relatively slow third quarter. While one data point doesn't define a trend, the recent numbers suggest a pick-up in momentum.

In October, Alberta recorded an average\* of 58,072 housing starts\*\*, an increase from the 54,652 units seen in September. Starts were up 7.6% from last October and towered 71% above the 10-year average for the month.

Housing activity in Alberta has been strong since mid-2023, largely fueled by substantial population growth. Activity reached an all-time high of 69,000 units in May of this year before moderating, averaging 50,934 units in Q3, which coincided with a slowdown in population growth. However, the more recent September and October numbers indicate a renewed surge.

The average for the first 10 months of 2025 now stands at 56,389 units, a 20% increase year-to-date (YTD) and the highest average on record for this period. Multi-unit starts re-

main the primary driver of this year's growth, with a YTD increase of 28%. Single-unit construction is also up, albeit by a more modest pace of 5%.

Calgary drove the majority of the October pick-up, though Edmonton's activity has tempered slightly from its earlier multi-year highs. Nonetheless, both cities maintain a pace of construction above their 2024 levels and 10-year averages. For regions outside of Calgary and Edmonton, although monthly data is limited, starts are collectively up 15% YTD, with notable increases in Grande Prairie and Medicine Hat.

Beyond Alberta, national housing starts are showing some signs of recovery after

annual declines consistently since 2022. YTD starts for other provinces have ticked up 1.3% from the first ten months of 2024, although October starts remain about 10% below the 10-year average for the month.

Housing starts are a vital economic indicator (GDP driver), extending their impact beyond just homebuilding. For example, the 33% surge in starts during 2024 contributed to a 13% increase in residential construction spending, accounting for about a quarter of Alberta's real GDP growth last year.

Alberta is on track for a record-breaking 2025 for housing starts, projected to exceed 55,000 units and surpass the

peaks of past housing booms experienced in 1978, 2006/07, 2014, and 2024. We expect the pace of home construction to slow next year but still remain above the 10-year average, as builders catch-up to historic population growth and as migrant inflows ease.

\*Seasonally adjusted annual rate

\*\*A housing start is defined as the beginning of construction work on the building where the dwelling unit will be located. This can be described in two ways: 1) The stage when the concrete has been poured for the whole of the footing around the structure. 2) An equivalent stage where a basement will not be part of the structure.

### 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](mailto:wctpress@gmail.com).



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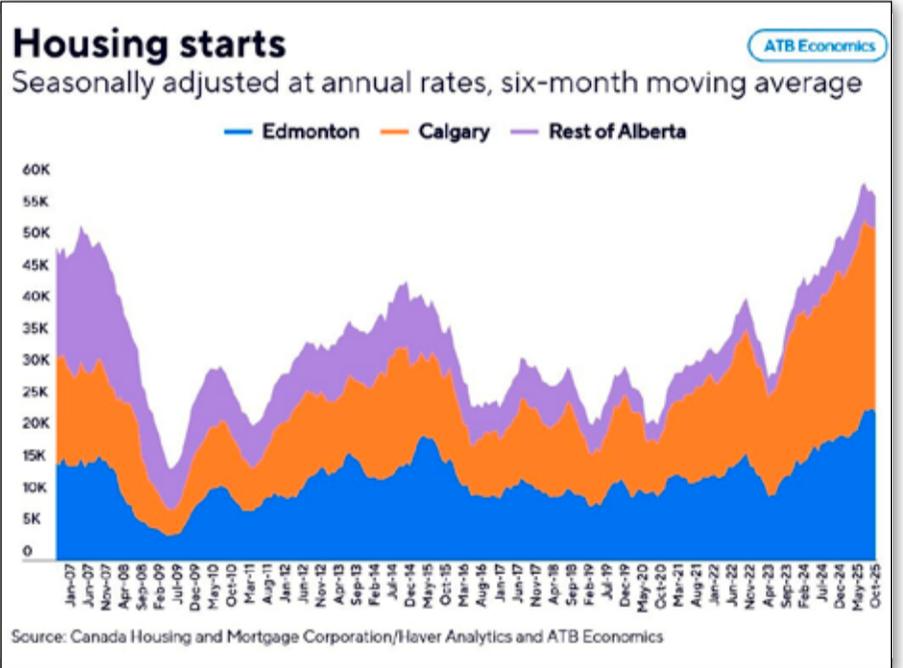
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# SCHOOL NEWS



The Whitecourt Central School Council/ Epic Society provided a generous boost to the Physical Education program, purchasing a range of new equipment for students and staff to enjoy.



Whitecourt Central School photos



Photo by Tammy Charko

Westbound traffic at a standstill near Rochfort Bridge.



Geometric designs on a frozen trampoline.



An unexpected, early morning rain shower and temperatures hovering between three degrees and zero made for a mess last Friday. Streets, driveways, and sidewalks were transformed into skating rinks. Every surface had a coating of ice, from vehicles to decks, patio furniture, and trampolines. As residents opened their doors to head to work, the surprise was unwelcome, to say the least. Shortly after 6 am, school buses were promptly cancelled, with Northern Gateway also cancelling them in Mayerthorpe and Sangudo. Even the residential recycling pickup was cancelled until the following Monday. As the morning went on, reports came in of accidents on Highway 43, including a jackknifed transport at the base of Chickadee Hill. A firetruck sat across both westbound lanes at the Eagle River Casino, letting motorists turn around and head back to Whitecourt. The lanes remained closed for hours. A similar incident also occurred near Rochfort Bridge, where two transports spun out; one jackknifed in the roadway and struck a portion of the guardrail, while the other managed to avoid the first, driving straight into the median and, thankfully, remaining upright. There were also numerous other incidents along Highway 43 involving large and small vehicles in the ditch.



Photo by Tammy Charko



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## NOTICE OF SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING

Woodlands County Council will be holding a Special Council Meeting Thursday, November 27 at 9:30am in the Municipal Office in Whitecourt. This meeting will cover operating and capital budget matters.

JOIN US! Meetings are open to the public and are live streamed on the Woodlands County YouTube Channel: [www.youtube.com/Woodlands County](http://www.youtube.com/Woodlands County)

Access meeting schedules, agenda packages, minutes, and more through our CivicWeb Portal: [woodlands.civicweb.net/Portal/](http://woodlands.civicweb.net/Portal/)



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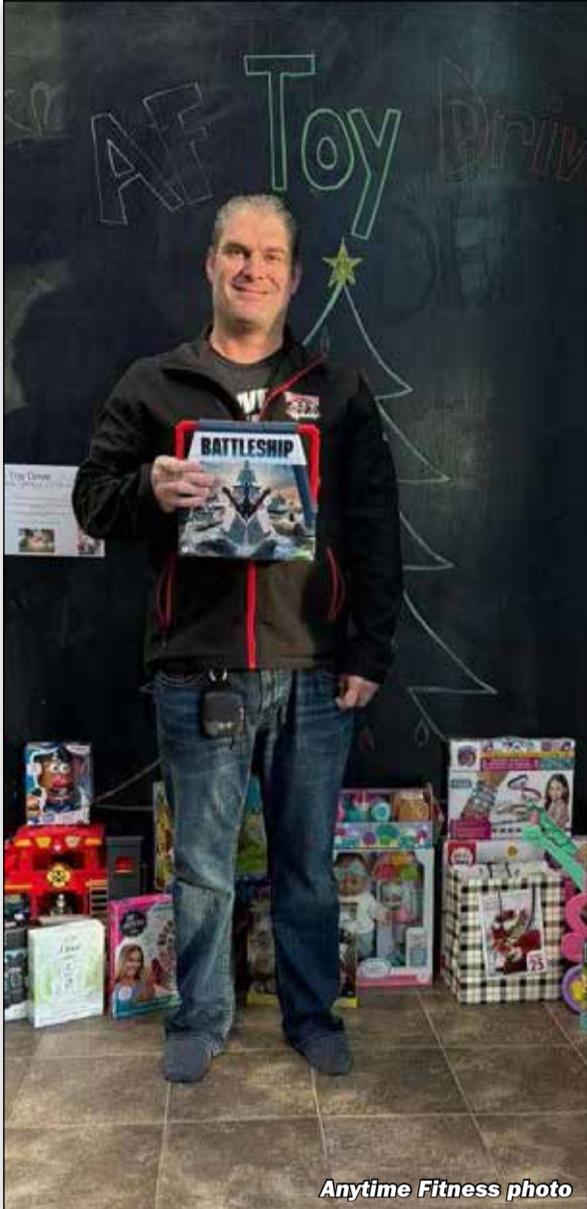


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Anytime Fitness photo

John contributes a new toy to the Anytime Fitness Whitecourt holiday toy drive, helping the gym kick off another season of giving. Donations of new, unwrapped toys are being accepted until Dec. 5, with all items going to local families in need. Gym staff say community support has already been incredible, and they hope to fill the wall with toys before the deadline.



Image - Town of Whitecourt

# Anonymous gifts

Last week, a special someone, whom we choose to describe as one of Santa's elves straight out of the North Pole, received a shout-out on the Town of Whitecourt's social media for another bounty of handmade knitted items that they recently delivered to the Whitecourt Food Bank. The image showed three overflowing bins of hats and other warm creations that this mysterious resident elf had lovingly made throughout the year to gift them to those in need. This year isn't the first time this elf has delivered such a bounty. Since they are anonymous, hopefully they see one of their shout-outs, online or here, and know how appreciated their love-filled act of kindness is, especially for those who will be kept warm because of it. Merry Christmas to you!



Spruceview Lodge photo

Jenna-Mae plays piano for residents at Spruceview Lodge. The young musician visits several times a year to volunteer and perform, and her music is always a highlight for the seniors.

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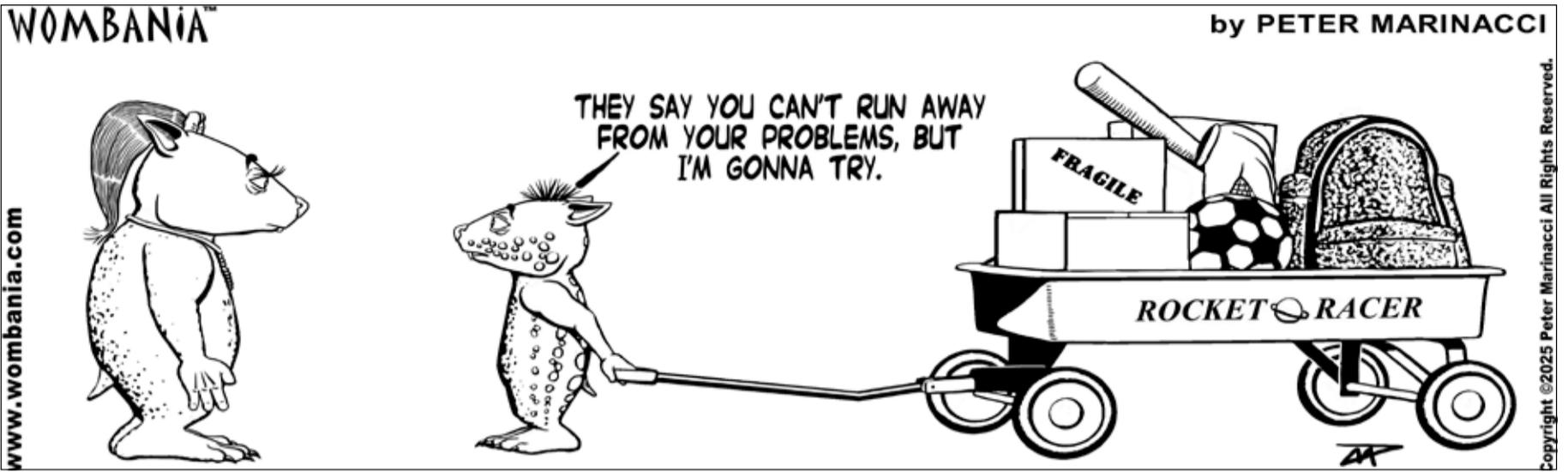
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## Submitted by the Whitecourt Legion

Thank you for your contributions to our Poppy Fund! Your generosity enables us to provide essential assistance to Veterans, from meeting their basic needs to advancing research on their mental and physical health. We continuously seek innovative approaches, both simple and complex, to help them lead fulfilling post-service

lives.

Your donations have been instrumental in our ongoing support for Veterans, and your continued backing is very much appreciated. In our community and area, there are many veterans, although you may not know them when a need arises. They are your neighbours, sons, daughters,

mothers and fathers. They are in the audience at the Remembrance Day services, not standing out, but just there to pay respect to those lost in conflicts, but also to pray that history does not repeat itself. Because of the veterans we have the freedom to stand on the street corner to say what we want to say, to stay open during Re-

membrance Day, to do our normal activities as we would any other day or spend a few minutes to say "Thank You".

Thank you for taking the time to come to the Remembrance Day service, come to the Legion to visit even though it was a work day the next day. We hope you enjoyed the activities and lunch. We presented some

Bursaries to students going on to secondary schools.

We also look forward to entries for the Poster and Literacy contest from younger students later this week. For more information about the contest, call Ian McDermid, Poppy Chair, 780-778-2711.

The Legion in Whitecourt has been in your neighbourhood for almost 99 years (In April of 2026) helping those who return home with

anything they may need, and those families of veterans who also need support. The families and Veterans can make contact to our President and Service Officer (in confidence), Ralph Schutte at 780-779-8543 or Ian McDermid at 780-778-2711 (can leave a message).



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**Whitecourt Alcoholics Anonymous Group**



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

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# Whitecourt RCMP deploy bait vehicle, arrest two in property crime investigation



**| By Haylee Winger**

A targeted RCMP operation aimed at addressing an increase in local vehicle thefts has resulted in the arrest of two individuals after police intercepted a bait vehicle that had been placed earlier this fall.

The bait vehicle was deployed in October 2025 in response to what officers described as a growing number of stolen vehicles in the Whitecourt area. On Nov. 5, RCMP received an alert that the vehicle had been moved. Officers located it shortly afterward,

prevented an attempted escape, and arrested the two occupants.

During the arrest, police seized a small amount of methamphetamine and bear spray.

Both individuals were charged with possession of stolen property, possession of a controlled substance, possession of break-and-enter tools, and possession of a weapon for a dangerous purpose.

One of the individuals faces additional charges, including theft of a motor vehicle, flight from police,

mischief under \$5,000, and two Traffic Safety Act violations.

The accused were brought before a justice of the peace and released on conditions. They are scheduled to appear in Alberta Court of Justice in Whitecourt on Nov. 25, 2025.

RCMP stated the operation reflects ongoing efforts to address community concerns surrounding property crime by using investigative tools, public information, and crime analysis to proactively deter theft in the region.

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