

## Annual Christmas Market returns to Radway

By **Brandie Majeau**

The Radway Agricultural Society, along with the Lions Club of Radway, made this

year's holiday season truly magical with their highly anticipated annual Christmas market on November 28. Local vendors displayed a

wide array of hand-made crafts, seasonal gifts, and delicious treats, while exciting

Continued on **page 4**



Thorhild Central School Grad students were an amazing help as honorary holiday elves, helping with the children's crafts and activities at the Radway Christmas Market. **Photos courtesy of Lions Club of Radway**



## Thorhild Lite Up brings on the festive fun

By **Brandie Majeau**

The annual Thorhild Light Up event sparkled to life this weekend, filling the arena with the sights and sounds that mark the beginning of the holiday season. As twinkling lights illuminated the arena, the

soft sound of the scrape of skates on ice signified the fun that lay ahead. Families gathered to slip and glide, toddlers carefully learning to balance on ice with the help of patient hands, or skilled children racing across the smooth surface. That is when

they weren't too busy creating their crafts or visiting with Santa.

Approximately 70 children participated in the festivities, with many more community members coming and going, building an

Continued on **page 8**




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## MOUNTIE MINUTE Smoky Lake RCMP Detachment



- RCMP received a call for a well-being check on a male in the Village of Waskatenau, members attended no concerns.
- Received a call about a potential breach of order, investigation revealed no breach at this time.
- Reported male was wandering around HWY 859 and undressed for the weather. Members located and determined there were no warrants, health, or public safety concerns.
- A member attended a residence for a family dispute, situation was de-escalated.
- RCMP attended an assault call in the Town of Smoky Lake.
- Telus reports a B/E and Theft.
- Stolen Vehicle in the Village of Vilna a 1993 Dodge D150.
- Members conducted a Wellbeing check, all was ok.
- RCMP were dispatched to an assault.
- RCMP received a call of a disturbance at a local business, and a member located a suspect.
- Received a call from a resident of Village of Vilna about a dog issue, no safety concerns.
- RCMP responded to an assault call between family members at a rural location.
- Male walking on HWY 28 towards Edmonton.
- Received a call of theft of phone, family issue
- Chrysler 300 driving erratically south bound on HWY 855. A member attended and located the vehicle. Traffic stop attempted. The vehicle failed to stop and fled towards HWY 28. Member didn't pursue.
- RCMP received a call of a male hunting from the Highway, members attended, and investigation was taken over by Fish & Wildlife.
- Heavy Smoke reported between RR 130 and RR 123, burn permit in place, caution smoke signs in place.
- RCMP received a call of a wellbeing check.
- Shop lifting at liquor store.
- Abandoned Utility Trailer on Highway 28.

**IF YOU HAVE ANY INFORMATION ON A CRIME CONTACT  
THE SMOKY LAKE RCMP AT 780-656-3550 or CRIMESTOPPERS  
1-800-222-TIPS(8477)**

## Alberta government proposes mandatory screenings

By Brandie Majeau

At a rural media roundtable event on November 26, Minister of Education and Childcare, Demetrios Nicolaides, discussed Bill 6 and its goal to strengthen numeracy and literacy and improve student academic performance. Minister Nicolaides emphasized that there needs to be a broader conversation about what needs to be done to address the state of reading and math in the province. The priority is also to bring parents into this conversation and make them aware of the screenings and available interventions.

The Alberta government has introduced a new piece of legislation aimed at boosting early education. Bill 6, titled the "Education (Prioritizing Literacy and Numeracy) Amendment Act, 2025," proposes mandatory reading and math screenings for all students in Kindergarten through Grade 3 across public, separate, francophone, charter, and independent schools.

Key aspects of Bill 6 include the requirement for mandatory screenings, data reporting responsibilities for schools, and a commitment to standardize assessments rather than merely suggesting they be utilized as policy. The intent is to identify students struggling with foundational literacy and numeracy skills as early as possible. This initiative would apply not only to various school types but also to independent early childhood service operators.

However, the bill has faced criticism, particularly from the Alberta Teachers' Association, which has expressed concerns that the time dedicated to testing may detract from instructional time. The association believes that the focus should be on equipping educators with resources to support students rather than imposing new testing obligations.

The legislative requirements, if enacted, are expected to take effect in the fall of 2026, with further regulations on the timing and frequency of screenings

to be established later. To facilitate the implementation of these requirements, the provincial government has allocated \$11 million in funding. As the proposal moves through the legislative process, its potential impact on Alberta's education system has become a topic of significant discussion among parents, educators, and policymakers alike.

Minister Demetrios Nicolaides explained that this is becoming a human rights issue if the education system is failing its children. The importance of these screenings lies in their ability to identify potential learning disabilities early and in raising awareness that a student needs support. In school, Minister Nicolaides stated, is "the shift goes from learning to read to reading to learn." Early mandatory screening may help prevent an educational crash in upper elementary and junior high. Learning disabilities may also affect a student's confidence and mental health.

## Budget 2026 invests in roads and community safety while keeping taxes low

### Sturgeon County press release

Sturgeon County Council has approved Budget 2026, which supports resident priorities and Council's strategic plan. The budget focuses on maintaining competitive tax rates, delivering quality municipal infrastructure and services, and ensuring long-term financial sustainability.

### Municipal tax rate

The approved budget includes an estimated increase in the County's property tax rate of 0.73% for residential and farm properties, and a 3.57% increase for non-residential properties. This means that for a residential property valued at \$500,000, the increase will be about \$1 per month. For a business valued at \$1,000,000, the increase will work out to about \$33 per month.

The differential increase to non-residential properties is directly proportionate to the risk associated with non-residential appeals. The County's non-residential tax rate remains highly competitive. The 0.73% increase applied to residential properties is amongst the lowest increase for regional and provincial municipalities and reflects Council's continued focus on low taxes and cost-effective service delivery.

Following a comprehensive organizational efficiency review, the County generated material savings that offered the potential to hold tax rates even lower; however, due to a significant assessment appeal that threatens millions in the County's revenue, these savings were prudently set aside as contingency funding.

"We've had an excellent track record of keeping taxes low in the County, and I'm pleased that this will

continue particularly in the face of a significant assessment appeal," said Mayor Alanna Hnatiw. "This budget reflects prudent planning and financial sustainability measures, enhances services for residents, and delivers generational investments in roads and other infrastructure that residents expect and rely on."

### Key investments

The budget allocates funds for several key investments that will benefit residents across the County. This includes:

### Economic growth and infrastructure

- A \$16.6 million provincially funded process water intake project to unlock new growth in Sturgeon County's Industrial Heartland.

- Major road and infrastructure improvements, including:

- \$6.5 million for paving Range Road 10 from Highway 37 to Pine Sands Subdivision and a \$4.7 million bridge replacement.

- \$3.4 million for the replacement of the Victoria Trail Bridge.

- \$3.1 million for road rehabilitation of Bristol Oakes and Lower Viscount Roads.

- Intersection upgrade for the intersection of Range Road 274 and Highway 633.

- Multiple other initiatives to maintain and improve infrastructure across Sturgeon County.

### Community safety

- Enhanced emergency response capacity, to ensure the County remains a leader in attending to emergency situations.

- Planning and preparation for a new fire hall in the County, pending confirmation of location.

- Improved bylaw enforcement coverage, ensuring the County meets its

legislative obligations in addition to resident expectations.

- Streamlined 'one-window' enforcement service delivery for residents, to improve response time and coordination.

"This budget balances affordability with the need to invest in critical infrastructure and community safety," said Mayor Alanna Hnatiw. "Our Council is proud to support these important services, which will benefit both current and future generations of County residents."

### Utility service fee increases to come

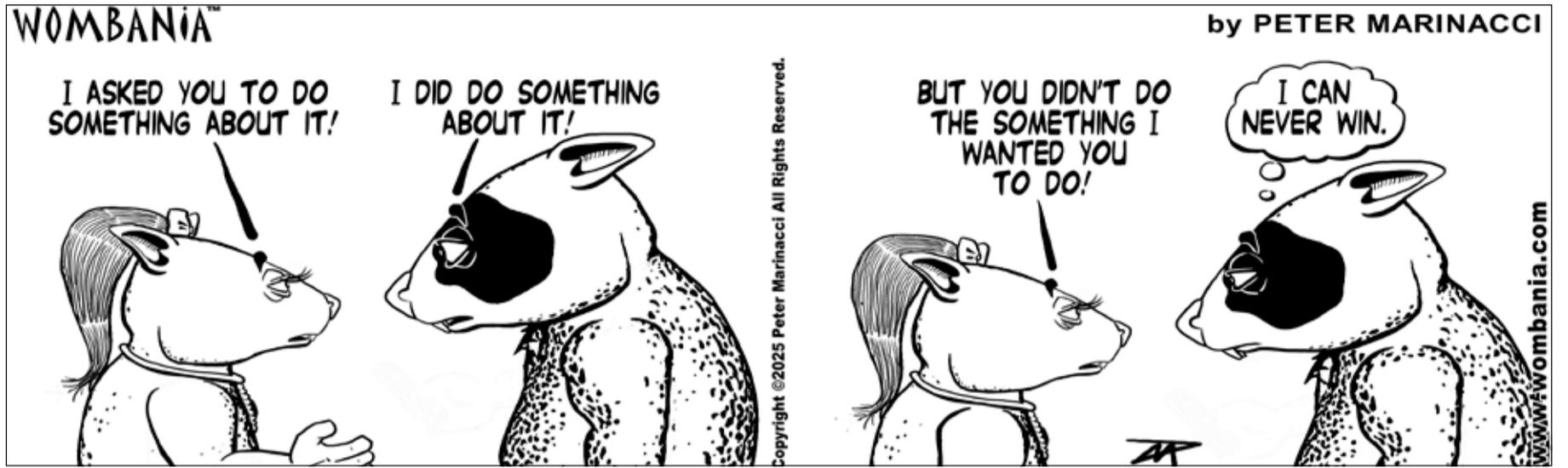
In 2026, County residents will see an increase in utility fees due to increased costs from service providers such as EPCOR (water) and Arrow Utilities (wastewater treatment). While the County's portion of utility rates will see marginal change, there will be a 5% increase in EPCOR's water costs, as well as a 34% increase in Arrow Utilities' wastewater treatment costs.

For the average resident using these utility providers, this will translate into a monthly increase of about \$16 (based on 22 cubic meters of water consumption). Utility rates are set to be finalized on December 9.

Additional information will be shared with ratepayers in upcoming utility bill mailouts.

### Education taxes

The County collects education taxes on behalf of the Government of Alberta. Those rates make up approximately 40% of the property taxes residents pay. Education taxes are set by the Government of Alberta and collected on their behalf by municipalities. Final rates will be announced by the province closer to the 2026 provincial budget.



# Alberta RCMP encourages safe driving this December

While December brings holiday celebrations for community members across the province, it's important to practice safe driving and to never drive impaired due to drugs or alcohol. We can all do our part to uphold traffic safety so that everyone can arrive home safely.

As part of the Canada Safety Council's National Safe Driving Week, the Alberta RCMP is also encouraging drivers to never drive distracted. This includes any activity that might impair your ability to

operate a vehicle safely.

On December 6, the Alberta RCMP will be participating with other enforcement partners in National Impaired Driving Enforcement Day. Officers will be conducting traffic enforcement initiatives and check stops to remove impaired drivers from the roads.

Stay safe when driving by following the below reminders:

- Driving while impaired due to drugs or alcohol is never okay. Impaired driving is criminal and dangerous.

- Mandatory Alcohol Screening is used by the Alberta RCMP to deter and detect impaired drivers. If you are pulled over or at a check stop, you can expect to provide a breath sample.
- Impaired driving is always preventable and can always be avoided. Call a taxi or rideshare service, use a designated driver or stay the night.
- Party hosts are still accountable. If your guests have been drinking or using drugs, ensure they have a safe place to stay

or a sober ride home.

- Individuals with a Graduated Driver's Licence must abide by the zero-tolerance law.
  - Call 911 immediately if you witness or suspect impaired driving.
- "The Alberta RCMP will be busy this month with enforcement initiatives aimed at removing impaired drivers from the roads,"

says Sgt. Darrin Turnbull, Alberta RCMP Traffic. "Look out for one another. If you suspect an impaired driver, call 911 immediately. You never know whose life you could be saving."

For more traffic safety information, follow us on Facebook @RCMPinAlberta and X @RCMPAlberta.

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This 2008 built bi-level offers a beautiful open floor plan and is located at the end of a cul-de-sac in a family friendly hilltop neighborhood. The large kitchen has new quartz countertops, large pantry, tiled backsplash and plenty of cabinets and counterspace. The adjacent dining area is extra large. The kitchen and dining area are open to and overlook the huge 15'x12' living room. The primary bedroom offers a walk-in closet and has its own 3 piece ensuite. There is a full 4 piece bathroom and 2 more bedrooms on the main level as well. On the lower level, there is a massive 24'x12' partially finished family room, laundry/utility room, 2 framed future bedrooms, and a large closed-in storage area. All the flooring (except bathrooms) has been replaced with durable laminate flooring, no carpet at all, and the fridge, stove and dishwasher are only 1 year old. This home has a fenced back yard and a convenient 14'x12' covered back deck, accessible from the kitchen or back yard. There is back alley access, this home is close to the hospital and schools and Centennial Park. Great option if you're looking for a more affordable newer home.

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**GALA DINNER**  
**7 PM** features bannock bruschetta, roasted turkey, maple-glazed carrots, and more.

Adults \$55  
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Stay the night from \$243/couple with breakfast included.

 **Advance tickets required**  events@metiscrossing.com  metiscrossing.com/nye2026



Participants from the District 2 8-Ball Singles tournament gather for a photo on November 22 at the Kingsway Legion, including Jim from Redwater, who placed third and will represent the Redwater Legion in the upcoming Command tournament. **Redwater Legion photo**

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Continued from page 1

raffles kept everyone on their toes. The tantalizing concession offered a variety of snacks, from warm cocoa to freshly made fare, so that visitors could indulge in the flavours of the season. And the helping hands of volunteers made it all seem effortless.

Among all the wonderful activities of the evening was the fellowship of the Radway Lions members, who hosted their annual stocking campaign, an opportunity that spreads holiday cheer and also raises funds to fill a stocking for local seniors. The Radway Agri-Centre echoed with laughter and joy, as children dashed around the hall, eagerly participating in all the activities and creating their own holiday crafts. Little faces beamed with delight, especially when the man of the hour made his arrival.

Adding to the enchantment, Santa Claus himself made a special appearance, taking precious time out of his busy



Photo courtesy of Lions Club of Radway

schedule to greet each child. With a warm smile and a twinkle in his eye, he listened to the Christmas wishes shared by his little guests, reminding everyone of the spirit of the season. As Santa chatted away, it was a

small reminder that he truly cherishes these moments, taking time away from the North Pole to spend an afternoon or evening embracing the warmth and joy of the holidays before the excitement of his big night ahead.



## UNITED CHURCH SERVICES DECEMBER 2025

**Minister Earle Sharam**  
 December 14 and 21  
 Smoky Lake 10 am  
 Waskatenau 11:30 am

**December 24**  
**Christmas Eve**  
 Smoky Lake 5 pm  
 Waskatenau 7:30 pm

Everyone welcome

## Clarke, John Sheldon

John Sheldon "Jack" Clarke, 88, of Thorhild, Alberta, passed away peacefully on December 1, 2025. Born in Glace Bay, Nova Scotia, to John and Annie Clarke, he later made Alberta his home. He is survived by his loving wife of 59 years, Kathleen Ann Clarke, his daughter, Kristiana Clarke, and his four grandchildren: Jarell, Ariana, Brady, and Lucas. John is also survived by his sister, Marion Glasgow. He was prede-



ceased by his son, James Clarke.

A celebration of life will be held at a later date.

For service updates and online condolences, please visit [westlockfuneralhome.com](http://westlockfuneralhome.com).

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 & Crematorium est. 1923  
[www.westlockfuneralhome.com](http://www.westlockfuneralhome.com)

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Neil Halun  
Phone: 780-938-6345  
neil.halun@thorhildcounty.com

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Deputy Reeve Angela Zilinski  
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**Division 4**  
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**Division 5**  
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Phone: 780-656-8165  
trevor.dafoe@thorhildcounty.com

## COUNCIL MEETING HIGHLIGHTS November 25, 2025

Below is a brief summary of decisions made at the November 25, 2025, Regular Council meeting:

**Unfinished Business - Supply of Portable Bridge Structure(s)**  
Council moved to refer the Supply of Portable Bridge Structure(s) to the 2026 budget deliberations on December 2, 2025.

**Unfinished Business - Appointment of Agricultural Service Board Members at Large**  
Council appointed Kenleigh Pasay and Nick Kuzyk as Agricultural Service Board members-at-large for a two (2) year term beginning November 25, 2025, and ending October 31, 2027.

**Delegation - Sgt. Dehaan, Redwater RCMP**  
Council accepted the presentation from Sgt. Dehaan, Redwater RCMP for information.

**Application for Strategic Transportation Infrastructure Program Funding**  
Council approved and authorized Administration to proceed in the submission of STIP (Strategic Transportation Infrastructure Program) funding applications to Alberta Transportation and Economic Corridors on or before November 30, 2025, for bridge files 07437-1, 09132-1, 13879-1, and 70788-1.

**Long Lake DLO - Reeve Dafoe**  
Council directed Administration to draft and send a letter to the Ministry of Forestry and Parks requesting for a free and clear title to the lands that encompass the Long Lake Ski Hill.

**Municipal Development Plan Project Costs**  
Council directed Administration to pay the overage costs of \$7,571.35 for additional consultation by Beirsto and Associates from the original tendered cost of \$44,752.50 for the Municipal Development Plan.

**Coffee with Council**  
Council directed Administration to schedule a Coffee with Council on February 4, 2026, in the Hamlet of Thorhild, for the scheduled time of 7:00 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.

**Tender Policy**  
Council directed Administration to bring back Policy 306 Purchasing for review to the December 16, 2025, Regular Council Meeting.

**Financial Report**  
Council accepted the Financial Report as of November 25, 2025, for information.

**Correspondence for Action - Lions Club of Radway**  
Council accepted for information the letter from the Lions Club of Radway, RE: Letter of Support in Principle, received November 12, 2025.

## RCMP ALBERTA UPDATES



Stay updated on RCMP advisories and information by following the Royal Canadian Mounted Police in Alberta Facebook page.

Visit the Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/RCMPinAlberta](http://www.facebook.com/RCMPinAlberta).

## PROPERTY ASSESSMENT INSPECTIONS UNDERWAY



Assessors from Municipal Assessment Services Group Inc. (MASG) are conducting property assessment inspections.

MASG conducts a cyclical inspection of properties to ensure property assessment data is accurate.

Assessors will be on-site walking the properties involved and collecting exterior pictures. New subdivisions, new construction or renovations, and new issued development & building permits are some of the components that will be inspected.

Inspections are conducted to ensure accurate and reliable property information. These inspections are authorized by the Municipal Government Act (MGA) (Section 294).

Assessors will be in marked vehicles with the Municipal Assessment Services Group Inc. logo on doors and wearing photo ID under the same name. All inspections will be conducted during normal business hours |Monday through Friday, from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

If property owners have any questions, they are encouraged to call the MASG Assessors office at 1-780-939-3310.



Phone: 780-398-3741 | [www.thorhildcounty.com](http://www.thorhildcounty.com) | 801 - 1st Street, Box 10, Thorhild AB ToA 3J0



## DECEMBER 2025 HOLIDAY SCHEDULE

### ADMINISTRATION & PUBLIC WORKS OFFICE HOURS

Wednesday, December 24, 2025 - ALL Offices are closed  
Thursday, December 25, 2025 - ALL Offices are closed  
Friday, December 26, 2025 - ALL Offices are closed  
Tuesday, December 30, 2025 - Open & Regular Hours  
Wednesday, December 31, 2025 - Open & Regular Hours  
Thursday, January 1, 2026 - ALL Offices are closed

### THORHILD TRANSFER STATION

Saturday, December 20, 2025 - Open  
Wednesday, December 24, 2025 - Closed  
Saturday, December 27, 2025 - Open  
Wednesday, December 31, 2025 - Open

### LONG LAKE TRANSFER STATION

Sunday, December 20, 2025 - Open  
Sunday, December 27, 2025 - Open

### HAMLET WASTE & BLUE BAG PICK UP

Friday, December 26, 2025 - Normal Waste and Recycling pickup

Thank you for the generous donations; we've collected enough winter outdoor wear to distribute.

## Coat distribution has started by appointment

Appointments can be made by calling  
Kelly at 780-398-3741 ext 2820  
or by email to [kelly.patry@thorhildcounty.com](mailto:kelly.patry@thorhildcounty.com)



## Bus EXCURSIONS



**December 11**  
Shopping trip to Westlock  
Pickup Newbrook Hall 9:00am | Thorhild Lodge 9:30am  
Leave Westlock at 3:00pm

**December 16**  
Kingsway Mall/Yellowhead Casino  
Pickup Newbrook Hall 9:00am | Thorhild Lodge 9:30am |  
Egmont Hall 9:45am  
Leave Edmonton at 3:30pm

ALL ADULTS OVER 18 WELCOME!  
\$20 + GST for County Residents  
\$30 + GST for Non County Residents

For the shopping and casino trips, pre-registration is required no later than the day before the excursion date. To register, please contact Kelly at 780-307-4436 or [kelly.patry@thorhildcounty.com](mailto:kelly.patry@thorhildcounty.com)



## HAMLET SIDEWALK CLEARING

Help keep our hamlets safe for pedestrians by clearing snow and ice from sidewalks bordering your property, including in front of your driveway. Please avoid placing snow and ice onto the roadway or adjacent properties.

Remember, it is required by Thorhild County's Community Standards Bylaw that snow and ice is removed from any sidewalk within 48 hours after snow and ice has been deposited.

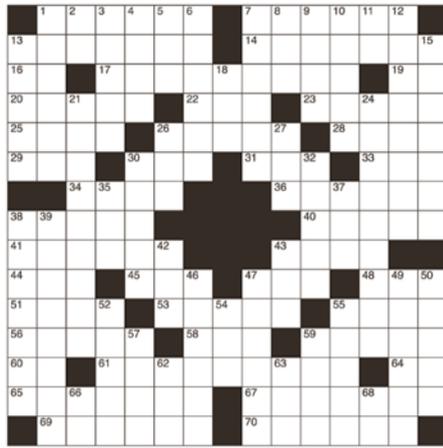
Let's work together to keep people walking and moving around the community on safe sidewalks!

SEE SOLUTIONS PAGE 11

# 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!



**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. Spiritual leaders
- 7. A type of solution
- 13. Fortified wine
- 14. Edible mollusk
- 16. They precede C
- 17. A way to compare
- 19. Government lawyer
- 20. "Game of Thrones" actor Ciaran
- 22. The eighth month (abbr.)
- 23. Very willing
- 25. \_\_\_ ex Machina
- 26. Makes happy
- 28. Type of berry
- 29. A doctrine
- 30. Popular Dodge truck model
- 31. Dekagram
- 33. Naturally occurring solid
- 34. Company officer
- 36. Villains
- 38. Cricket frogs
- 40. Influential German psychologist
- 41. Endured
- 43. A female domestic
- 44. You can get stuck in one
- 45. Cigarette (slang)
- 47. Fiber optics network
- 48. Group of blood disorders (abbr.)
- 51. Employee stock

- ownership plan
- 53. Belonging to the bottom layer
- 55. Sound
- 56. MLB legend Hank
- 58. Very attractive person
- 59. Late beloved sportscaster Craig
- 60. South Dakota
- 61. Mocking
- 64. Symbol for gold
- 65. Longtime Braves pitcher Julio
- 67. Humor
- 69. Shawl
- 70. Preliminary patient assessment

**CLUES DOWN**

- 1. Animal disease
- 2. Commercial
- 3. Necklace material
- 4. Containers
- 5. A way to save for your future
- 6. Colorado Heisman winner Rashaan
- 7. Dipped down
- 8. Head injury (abbr.)
- 9. Lay about
- 10. Intestinal
- 11. Opposite of yes
- 12. Caused to be loved
- 13. Spiritual leader of Islam
- 15. Businesslike
- 18. Not in
- 21. Number above the line in a fraction
- 24. An animal with its own day
- 26. Pouch
- 27. Swedish krona
- 30. Start over
- 32. Field flowers
- 35. Fourteen
- 37. A visual way to interact with a computer
- 38. Up-to-date
- 39. Campaigns
- 42. Touch lightly
- 43. "Boardwalk Empire" actress Gretchen
- 46. Violent seizure of property
- 47. Supporter of the Pope
- 49. Anxiety
- 50. Body fluid
- 52. One who's faking it
- 54. Title of respect
- 55. Chilean city
- 57. City in central Japan
- 59. Silk garment
- 62. A form of dance
- 63. Automobile
- 66. The man
- 68. Justice Dept. head honcho

## Young innovators at Holy Family Catholic School build creative transportation systems



Students from Grades 7 to 9 at Holy Family Catholic School took part in the province-wide Skills Canada event on December 2. Participants were challenged to design and build alternative transportation systems. Pictured are eighth graders Waylan Shwetz, Skylar Baldwin-Ralston, and Luke Schryver collaborating on their project, using sheet metal and popsicle sticks.



Nicholas Marshall and Barrett Bentley assemble and test the electrical components to their creation.



Grade seven girls Autumn Hills, Jazzell Whitford and Callie Wyness add the finishing touches on their project.



Jayden Rosa and Tanner Macyk work on creating an electric car as their alternative form of transportation.

## ON THE PROWL WORD SEARCH

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

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

- WORDS**
- ABYSSINIAN
  - CALICO
  - CLOWDER
  - DOMESTICATION
  - FERAL
  - HAIRBALL
  - HISS
  - KITTEN
  - LITTER BOX
  - MEOW
  - PADS
  - PERSIAN
  - POST
  - PURRING
  - QUEEN
  - SCRATCH
  - SIAMESE
  - TABBY
  - TOMCAT
  - TORTOISE SHELL
  - WHISKERS

# Redwater Citizens on Patrol shares holiday safety tips as December begins

By Shelley Winger

With November wrapped up and the holiday season now in full swing, Redwater Citizens on Patrol (COP) is reminding residents to take extra precautions during what is traditionally one of the busiest times of the year. Increased shopping, gatherings, travel, and household activity often bring a rise in preventable incidents, and COP says a few simple habits can make a big difference.

The group encourages residents to keep their vehicles secure while out shopping. Purchases should be stored in the trunk or kept out of sight in trucks and SUVs. COP notes that thieves are often looking for quick opportunities, and even a blanket or tinted windows can help

reduce the temptation.

When it comes to banking, COP recommends being discreet at ATMs, especially in busier locations during the holidays. They suggest using front pants pockets or cross-body bags that stay close to the body. Purses with zipper pouches facing inward are safest, and residents should avoid hanging bags on the back of chairs in restaurants or public places.

Travel tends to increase during December, and COP advises people to plan their routes ahead of time to avoid fatigue or getting caught in bad weather. They recommend carrying emergency supplies and letting someone know your route, departure time, and the vehicle you're driving, along with any delays you

encounter on the way.

Holiday decorations also come with risks. COP reminds the community to keep trees, gifts, and lights at least three feet away from heat sources. Live trees should be watered daily to keep them fresh and reduce the chance of them drying out. Before setting up displays, indoor and outdoor lights should be checked for frayed or damaged wiring. Lighting, candles, and decorations should always be turned off when leaving the house or going to bed.

Food safety is another point COP highlights as families begin cooking more frequently. They encourage residents to ensure food is properly cooked, leftovers are stored promptly, and stoves and appliances are turned off after

Continued on page 10



## Alberta RCMP provides tips to secure property and help avoid mail theft

RCMP release

The holidays are coming, and this means an influx of deliveries and mail to residents across the province. As a result, there are more occurrences of mail theft. The Alberta RCMP is urging residents to secure their mail and homes this holiday season.

If ordering online or sending gifts through the mail, follow the below tips:

- Whenever possible, opt for a "signature required" delivery, or provide instructions for the delivery person to leave your items out of sight.
- Track your shipments to ensure you know when to expect your items. This way, you or a trusted neighbour can grab your items before someone else does.
- If possible, arrange for deliveries to be scheduled when you're at home.

- Have packages shipped to a delivery service pickup location. This is a free service and a great option for large or valuable items.
- Installing a doorbell camera and motion sensor lights can be great deterrents for opportunistic thieves.
- Never send cash or other forms of payment through the mail.
- If you see suspicious activity at yours or someone else's mailbox, report it immediately to your local police.

- For those traveling this December, follow the below tips to help keep your mail and property safe:
- Ensure there is no mail left on your doorstep or in your mailbox as this can indicate that you're not around.
- Ask a neighbour to shovel and collect your mail while you're away to give

the impression that someone is present in the home.

- Ensure that all doors and windows are locked. Consider motion sensor lights for the exterior, and timers for indoor lighting.

For more information on mail theft and keeping your property safe, follow us on Facebook (@RCMPinAlberta), X (@RCMPAlberta) and YouTube (RCMP-GRC Alberta).

The Alberta RCMP encourages the public to report any criminal or suspicious activity to police. Reports tell us where to look, who to look for, and where to patrol in the future. If you see a crime in progress, dial 911. If you wish to remain anonymous, contact Crime Stoppers at 1-800-222-8477 (TIPS), online at [www.P3Tips.com](http://www.P3Tips.com) or by using the "P3 Tips" app available through the Apple App or Google Play Store.

## Temporary lack of on-site physicians expected at Smoky Lake Emergency Department

By Haylee Winger

The George McDougall-Smoky Lake Healthcare Centre will operate without an on-site physician during several overnight periods this month due to physician vacancies and difficulty securing locum coverage.

The emergency department will be without an on-site physician from 4 p.m. on Thursday, Dec. 11 to 8 a.m. on Friday, Dec. 12, and again from 4 p.m. on Thursday, Dec. 18 to 8 a.m. on Friday, Dec. 19. These upcoming gaps may still be avoided if last-minute physician coverage becomes available.

The emergency department will remain open, with nursing

staff on site throughout. Nurses will continue providing triage, assessments, and referrals to alternate emergency departments in surrounding communities. Nearby facilities include the Redwater Health Centre (56 km), St. Therese-St. Paul Healthcare Centre (93 km), and the William J. Cadzow-Lac La Biche Healthcare Centre (101 km).

Emergency Medical Services will remain available in the community under standard procedures and will coordinate with the local healthcare centre to ensure residents continue to have access to emergency services.

For non-emergency health concerns, residents are encouraged

to call Health Link at 811, which operates 24/7.

The service interruptions are temporary as work continues to improve staffing levels. Current recruitment initiatives include northern incentive programs, collaboration with local practitioners and community partners, and ongoing efforts under the Alberta Rural Health Professions Action Plan to strengthen rural healthcare services and attract new talent.

Updates on the temporary lack of physician coverage — including notice if coverage is secured — can be found on the AHS Facilities Temporary Bed / Space Reductions webpage.



The Honey Combe Drive Inn, remembered before it turned into Burger Baron. Redwater Museum photo



Continued from **page 1**

uplifting atmosphere throughout the afternoon. The scent of hot chocolate and coffee wafted through the air, adding to the cozy ambiance, while volunteers served up delicious hot dogs with cheerful smiles. For those adventurous enough to brave the crisp outdoor air, members of the Thorhild Emergency Services were on hand, toasting marshmallows

for gooey s'mores that satisfied the sweet tooth of both kids and adults alike.

As the day wore on, some of the little ones succumbed to the day's excitement and fell gently asleep in their chairs, their eyes heavy and their heads dipping slightly while their peers continued enjoying the festivities around them. The community's supportive energy shone through, particularly through the dedication of volunteers who guided guests through various crafts and activities. Their commitment to ensuring the event runs smoothly is always admirable, especially for those who freeze their fingers and brave the cold temperatures for the grand finale of fireworks.

A heartfelt thank you goes out to all those who lent a hand in making the afternoon magical, including Shell and North Corridor Co-op for their generous sponsorship and support. Events like these evoke a profound sense of warmth and community that embody the small-town charm of the holiday season.



**Smoky Lake County**  
**NOTICE – PUBLIC HEARING**  
**on Proposed Bylaw #1489-25**



**TAKE NOTICE THAT** in accordance with the *Municipal Government Act*, the Council of Smoky Lake County is giving consideration of Bylaw #1489-25: A Bylaw to close and dispose of portions of Government Road Allowance.

**A Statutory Public Hearing will be held in relation to Bylaw 1489-25, both in-person *and* via videoconference on Thursday, December 18, 2025, at 1:00 p.m. (or as soon as practical thereafter) at:** Smoky Lake County Council Chambers, 4612 McDougall Drive, Smoky Lake, AB T0A 3C0 or online:  
<https://video.businessconnect.telus.com/join/168288331> Meeting ID: 168288331 or via phone: 1-844-511-2074

**In-person Speakers:**

If you intend on participating in person, you are encouraged to pre-register for the Public Hearing by contacting Chyenne Shaw at 780-656-3730.

**Speakers participating through Telus Business Connect videoconference:**

If you wish to speak at the Public Hearing via videoconference, you are asked to register **24 hours prior** to the opening of the Public Hearing by contacting Chyenne Shaw at 780-656-3730. This is to ensure that virtual participants receive instructions to access the videoconference.

**Requirements for all Speakers:**

All speakers will be given a 10-minute time limit and are encouraged to provide a written copy of their submission in advance of the Public Hearing.

**Written Submissions:**

All interested parties are encouraged to express their views by providing a written submission to Legislative Services by email at [cshaw@smokylakecounty.ab.ca](mailto:cshaw@smokylakecounty.ab.ca).

Persons wishing to view the Bylaw and/or the Public Hearing are invited to attend in person or view the Meeting at the County website at <http://www.smokylakecounty.ab.ca> or view the Bylaw <https://www.smokylakecounty.ab.ca/notices>

**Questions? Contact:**

Jordan Ruegg Director of Planning and Community Services,  
Smoky Lake County at 780-650-5207 /  
[jruegg@smokylakecounty.ab.ca](mailto:jruegg@smokylakecounty.ab.ca)

Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act: By submitting comments on this bylaw, either orally or in writing, the personal information you provide may be recorded in the minutes of the Public Hearing, or otherwise made public. This information is collected in line with section 33(c) of the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act. If you have any questions, please contact the Smoky Lake County Access and Privacy Officer at 4612 McDougall Drive Box 310, Smoky Lake, AB T0A 3C0, 780-656-3730, or [county@smokylakecounty.ab.ca](mailto:county@smokylakecounty.ab.ca).



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**Smoky Lake County Community Learning Council is 50 and Holding**

On **November 17, 1975** a group of local individuals interested in adult education gathered to initiate the idea of a "Smoky Lake Further Education Council". Mrs. Martha Bielish was selected as the first Chairperson of the newly formed Board.

Fifty years later, on **November 17, 2025** the current members of the "Smoky Lake County Community Learning Council" celebrated 50 years of adult learning during our last meeting of 2025.

This year Council formed an 'Anniversary Planning Committee' comprised of the Chairperson, Melody Kaban along with Vice-Chairperson Mary Lou Doshewmek and Secretary-Treasurer Lydia Cielin making thank you visits to local councils, boards and community groups that have supported our efforts throughout the years. Starting with our legal host, **Smoky Lake County**, we thanked each organization for all the help and guidance through the years. Our organization is 100% funded by the Government of Alberta grants; and our legal host Smoky Lake County provides us with financial and payroll assistance, office space and insurance coverage.

Local governments, Town of Smoky Lake, Village of Vilna and Village of Waskatenau Council's all support our efforts and were also a joy to visit. We brought treats and a card of thanks recognizing each organization.

Even though we had a bit of a snag getting our Fall brochure out this year, we are enjoying community involvement. Thanks to everyone who signed up or voiced an interest in our courses, current, past and future. Check us out on-line at [www.slcountyclc.ca](http://www.slcountyclc.ca), follow us on Facebook at "Smoky Lake County Community Learning Council" and watch for our brochures.

Watch for more learning opportunities in the next 50 years!

**Respectfully submitted by Melody Kaban, Chairperson**

**Christmas Open House**

**WITH MICHAEL COOPER, MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT FOR ST. ALBERT-STURGEON RIVER**

**DATE: DECEMBER 18, 2025**  
**TIME: 4:30 PM TO 6:30 PM**  
**LOCATION: ST. ALBERT LEGION, 6 TACHE STREET, ST. ALBERT, AB**

RSVP to [michael.cooper.c1a@parl.gc.ca](mailto:michael.cooper.c1a@parl.gc.ca)  
 Light refreshments are provided

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**COMMERCIAL LOT IN THORHILD**

1.24 acres of open land ready to develop into your commercial endeavor. High level land on the outskirts of the Hamlet of Thorhild. Paved road in front, gravel road on one side. Utilities are nearby. Thorhild is a small hamlet with lots of potential for growth and new business. Located approximately an hour NE of Edmonton. **\$59,900. Call Heather for more info.**

**YOUR DREAM BUILD AWAITS!**

1.52 Acres of sloped land in the Hillsborough subdivision! Great opportunity to build a beautiful walk out home, with mature trees at the back of the property offering privacy from the neighbors. ON PAVEMENT all the way to Hwy 28, 10 mins from Gibbons and 30 mins from Edmonton. **\$180,000. Call Glenn for more info.**

**NEUTRAL FARMS**

74 Acres of land bordered by the Hamlet of Radway and Highway 28, less than an hour to Edmonton. Approx 25 acres of this land is high while the rest is wetland. May be able to have it rezoned to agricultural or country residential and use as pasture land or get a few acres of grain land with the possibility of building a house on the high land at south end. Creek runs through the property. Was pasture land at one time but old fence is in poor condition. Possibly use as a weekend getaway and go fishing at the Radway Fish Pond next door. Seller had trees cleared on some of it a few years ago but some have started to grow back. **\$120,000. Call Heather to view.**

**80 ACRES OF GRAIN/BUSH LAND IN THORHILD**

Perfect for farmers, hunters or build your dream home. Ideal location just a few minutes from Abee, about an hour north of Edmonton. 80.61 acres of partially treed land at the end of a dead end road just a couple miles off Highway 63. Great place for hunting with lots of moose and deer. Use it as a weekend getaway, build your future hobby farm or add to your current farming operations. About 25 or 30 acres are cultivated and has good crop land. Much of the rest of the land could be cleared for more crop land if wanted. Power runs on the road right past the property. Another 10 acres could likely be subdivided out of this parcel. **\$225,000. Call Heather for more information.**

**AFFORDABLE FAMILY HOME IN REDWATER**

Great opportunity to own this 3 bedroom 2 bathroom home with a double attached garage and just under 1500 sq ft of living space. The entire upper floor can be a spacious primary suite with 4 pce bath or fantastic play area for the kids- flexible to suit your lifestyle. The main floor features an open kitchen/living room, 2 bedrooms, 4 pce bath plus a handy space for home office right off the the living area. Step outside to enjoy the private, treed backyard with a deck and hottub- perfect for relaxing or entertaining. Upgrades include some windows, high efficient furnace and 2 jetted tubs. This home offers comfort, great value, and room for your family to grow, all in a quiet Redwater neighborhood, close to schools and parks. **\$249,900. Call Janine to view.**

**VACANT LOT IN STURGEON COUNTY**

This 3.09 acre lot in Pinewood Subdivision is just a few minutes north of Gibbons, less than a half hour to north Edmonton. This lot is mostly open grass land with 3 rows of trees planted all along the north and west sides. The trees have a great start and in a few years will give you lots of privacy on this lot. This is a quiet subdivision with many newer homes. There is a small community area with a playground, ball diamond, outdoor skating rink, fire pit and small clubhouse with gas bbq right in this subdivision. The adjoining 3 acre lot may also be available for sale. **\$89,900. Call Heather to view.**

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*Review***Agricultural**

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How about the Knights of Columbus Airdrie Dream Vacation Raffle. BUY YOUR TICKET TODAY! at airdriedreamvacation.ca"

**Auctions**

**MEIER GUN AUCTION,** Saturday, December 20 - 10am Wetaskiwin - Selling Rifles, Shot Guns, Antique Firearms, Gun Safes, Ammunition, Scopes, Sportsman Equipment. Consign now! Free Pick-Up. Call 780-440-1860; www.meierauction.

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month includes utilities, wifi and cable. Damage deposit \$1550 Available January 1, 2026 Contact Ashleigh 780-271-1985.

**FOR SALE**

**Rare opportunity!** 5 acres in NE Edmonton, Horsehill area. Close to schools, shopping, Manning Drive/Anthony Henday. Unserviced, flat, open lot. Call 780 887 3686.

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Continued from **page 7**

use. Little ones are especially curious this time of year, so keeping hot food and household hazards out of reach is important.

In addition to their

regular patrols, COP volunteers say community awareness plays a key role in crime prevention. They encourage residents to report suspicious activity, keep porch lights on during darker winter

evenings, and check in on neighbours who may be away for the holidays. Small actions, they note, can help create a safer environment for everyone, especially during a season when many

people are travelling or receiving more deliveries than usual.

Alongside sharing safety reminders, Redwater Citizens on Patrol continues its volunteer work in the community. In November, volunteers patrolled

117.8 kilometres over 11.3 hours. They also completed four hours at community events such as Coffee with a Cop, and spent an additional 15 hours on reporting and administrative duties for ACOPA. COP members

say their goal is simple: to support safety and awareness in Redwater year-round. As the community heads into the holiday season, they encourage residents to stay mindful and enjoy the festivities safely.

## VILLAGE OF WASKATENAU Sidewalk Snow Removal Services – 50th (Main) Street, Waskatenau

The Village of Waskatenau is seeking proposals from contractors or individuals to provide timely and reliable snow-removal services for the public sidewalk running along **50th Street** within village limits. The purpose of this contract is to ensure that pedestrian pathways remain safe and accessible throughout the winter season.

**The Person will be responsible for:**

- Snow removal from the sidewalk along 50th Street, including:
- Clearing snow down to a safe, walkable surface.

**Service expectations:**

- Snow must be cleared within 24 hours after the cessation of a snowfall. Additional clearing may be required during heavy or continuous snowfall.
- Has the necessary equipment to clear sidewalks safely and efficiently.
- Can provide reliable service within the required response times.

**Pricing**

- Seasonal flat rate or per-event cost structure.
- Any additional fees (e.g., ice management, call-out rates).

Interested persons can contact the Village of Waskatenau at:  
Box 99, 5008 – 51 Street, Waskatenau, Alberta T0A 3P0  
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## REDWATER AREA LANDOWNERS

**SURFACE RIGHTS GROUP**

Meeting will be held at the Redwater DQ on Monday Dec 15<sup>th</sup> 2025 from 7 to 8 PM.  
Learn more about your surface rights!





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Smoky Lake's H.A. Kostash Kindergarten students rolled up their tiny sleeves and dove into the Foods class, laughing and learning as they mixed, shaped, and baked their very own bannock!  
**H.A. Kostash School photo**

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