



BULLYING HURTS

A sister publication to **The Free Press**, Morinville, Alberta

Alberta RCMP strengthening response to organized crime with \$2-million provincial investment

RCMP Release

The Alberta RCMP is enhancing its ability to combat organized crime and gang activity across the province, supported by a \$2 million investment from the Government of Alberta. This targeted

funding will equip the Alberta RCMP with modern investigative tools and specialized resources, including advanced surveillance technology, intelligence capabilities, and digital forensic equipment to tackle increasingly complex criminal

networks.

“This funding represents a significant investment in strengthening Alberta’s response to organized crime and gang activity,” said Deputy Commissioner Trevor

Continued on **page 2**



Photos courtesy of Melissa Kidd

Thorhild Minor Ball a swing and a hit!



By **Brandie Majeau**

Thorhild Minor Ball’s 2026 season is well underway, bringing with it a spirit of camaraderie, sportsmanship, and innovation to the local baseball scene. As the crack of the bat and the cheers of the crowd echo across the fields, parents and supporters rally behind its young athletes, many of whom are already making a name for themselves.

The Thorhild Thunder U13 team, which has shown remarkable form early in the season. In their most recent match-up against the Barrhead Royals, the Thunder played with determination and skill. To date, the U13 squad boasts an impressive record, tallying two wins and suffering just a single loss. The



game against Barrhead brought them a win of 22 to 16...

at least player Brinell



the game and evening. Brinell excitedly stated, “We won by 3! Or something like that!” Coaches and parents alike credit the team’s success this year to their own hard work, and the unity and supportive environment built by Thorhild Minor Ball.

This year, the association is introducing a fresh approach for its youngest players. For the first time, the U7 division is combining girls and boys for practices, though games remain separated. The experiment is off to a promising start,

Continued on **page 3**



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Bring a plant, take a plant, buy a plant



By **Brandie Majeau**

Thorhild Library's annual Spring Plant Exchange and Bake Sale once again blossomed into much anticipated spring event and brought with it gardening enthusiasts and locals who just like to browse and see what kind of horticultural treasures they can find. True to its motto "bring a plant, exchange a plant, buy a plant" always provides a perfect opportunity for residents to trade their surplus houseplants and perennials, while hunting for new botanicals to add to their homes and gardens.

Throughout the day, guests dropped off their gardening extras and browsed the tables of lush greenery, several people excitedly commandeering trays of tomatoes and one couple on the hunt for purple irises. Many attendees relished the chance to swap gardening tips, share stories and advice, and connect over a shared love of flowers and gardening. The event, as always, also

included a tempting bake sale offering sweet treats, making it easy to reward oneself after a day of yard work in the spring sun.

The steady stream of patrons accentuated the event's popularity, as people came and went, filling

the front lawn of the library grounds. The sense "spring is in the air" was palpable, with local volunteers playing a crucial role in organizing and keeping the event running smoothly. Their efforts became especially vital as the sky

grew ominous and dark clouds began to gather.

As the dark skies continued to move closer and build in its intensity, volunteers sprang into action, quickly gathering up the remaining plants and securing them inside the library just as a ferocious wind whipped out of nowhere and brought with it a cloud of dust obscuring the town and eventually brought with it hail and torrential rain. The event's abrupt end didn't dampen spirits, instead, it brought with it laughter and disbelief over the sudden storm and gratitude that the day was so well attended that most baking and plants had already been sold. For those who missed out, the library had made the left-over plants available for purchase in the following days.

As the storm passed and the library settled into a quiet evening, organizers reflected on another successful fundraiser. The proceeds of this annual event supports library initiatives and proves that Thorhild Library (and the love of plants) continues to grow.



Continued from **page 1**

Daroux, Commanding Officer of the Alberta RCMP. "It allows us, across agencies and jurisdictions, to respond in a more coordinated, modern, and effective way."

The Alberta RCMP has allocated part of the funding to establish its new Rural Organized Crime Team (ROCT), a mobile unit made of a core group of officers focused on gang activity and violence linked to drug and firearm offences. The team deploys to communities experiencing highest levels of crime, using data-driven intelligence to identify and target priority offenders causing the greatest harm. While this new unit has a specific mandate, it will not operate alone. This team will be reinforced by the RCMP's unique network of specialized units and resources to investigate, disrupt, and dismantle organized criminal activity. The Alberta RCMP will also continue working closely with municipal police partners, provincial agencies, and community stakeholders to strengthen enforcement efforts across jurisdictions.

"There is no place for organized crime in our communities, our province, or our country," said Deputy Commissioner Daroux. "The Alberta RCMP is committed to working collaboratively with our policing partners and provincial leaders to disrupt and dismantle crime networks wherever they operate. Together, we are making Alberta stronger and safer for everyone."

The Government of Alberta's investment is part of a broader, \$8 million public safety initiative to equip law enforcement agencies across the province with the tools and coordination needed to address organized crime effectively. In 2025, there were 490 shootings across Alberta with one third resulting in serious injury or death. The most prolific firearm-related offenders are organized crime groups.



PUBLIC NOTICE

Take notice that the following Development Permit has been approved on May 28, 2026 in accordance with **Land Use Bylaw No. 1272-14** of Smoky Lake County:

Permit Number: DP 014-26

Legal Land Description: PLAN 0120707, BLOCK 1, LOT 1

Area: WHITEFISH LAKE – HILLSIDE ACRES

Division: 1

Land Use District: MULTI-LOT COUNTRY RESIDENTIAL (R1) DISTRICT

Use Type: DISCRETIONARY USE

Proposed Development: SHIPPING CONTAINER (20'X8')

For information or to view this Development Permit, please contact Jordan Ruegg, Development Authority Officer & Planning and Development Manager at 780-656-3730 to arrange an appointment.

Persons wishing to appeal the above decision must do so by filing a written "NOTICE OF APPEAL" along with the \$250.00 appeal fee, to the Clerk of the Intermunicipal Subdivision and Development Appeal Board (ISDAB) 4612 McDougall Drive, Box 310, Smoky Lake, Alberta T0A 3C0, no later than **Friday, June 19th, 2026, at 4:00 p.m.** The appeal letter should indicate the Development Permit number, contact name, phone number, mailing address, and reason(s) for appeal.

Jordan Ruegg
Development Authority Officer/
Director of Community Services



Continued from page 1

with 24 eager youngsters, equally split between girls and boys, taking to the diamond together. According to coaches, the children have embraced the mixed practices wholeheartedly, focusing on teamwork and skill development. "Even though they are playing mixed teams, it doesn't faze them...so proud of them!" said one proud coach.

Thorhild Minor Ball continues to encourage community engagement by inviting baseball fans to

attend games and support the teams. Looking ahead, the association has announced plans to host a free drop-in event for aspiring players. The drop-in is to give newcomers a taste of the game and possibly inspire them to join the league next season.

With a season that promises excitement and so much opportunity for growth and personal development, Thorhild Minor Ball is proving itself to be an ongoing contender for youth sports in Thorhild County.

Uncertainty surrounds recent rains



By Brandie Majeau

Across Thorhild County, local farmers reported between two to five inches of rain in less than 48 hours during the week of June 1. As the rainfall persisted, producers monitored the skies with mixed emotions, while weather forecasts predicted intermittent showers likely to continue for another two to three days or longer. Although each farmer may have a unique perspective, conversations at local gathering places such as grocery stores, post offices, and restaurants reflected a common sentiment. A wet spring and delayed seeding, caused by slow-receding winter melt and late snowfalls, resulted in a hectic planting season. Farmers maneuvered around saturated areas to seed what they could, only to be met with another round of extended hours as the most recent forecast anticipated further rainfall.

In some regions, initial discussions suggested that additional rainfall would be welcome, as dry conditions and airborne dust were prevalent. "We needed moisture, there's no doubt about that," remarked one farmer. However, as others surveyed the standing or flowing water accumulating along their field edges, the conversation quickly shifted. The rapid

increase in rainfall raised concerns regarding field access and crop development. Timing is critical during the growing season, while rain is essential to agriculture, persistent precipitation presents challenges when equipment cannot access fields and delays begin to impact all aspects of farm operations.

With seeding already delayed, the recent saturation has now raised concerns about potential delays to spraying. While some areas have managed the heavy rainfall better than others, persistently wet fields pose risks beyond muddy conditions. Farmers are increasingly concerned about root health in already germinated crops, as well as the possibility of seed rot in recently planted fields. "Farming

teaches patience," noted one seasoned farmer. "We can't control the weather." As local producers closely monitor weather conditions, they are prepared to adjust their plans as needed. The period following these steady rainfalls is critical, yet weather patterns can shift rapidly. Some farmers have observed that conditions can swing from flood to drought within a matter of weeks. Successfully managing these challenges requires balancing gratitude for favourable years with preparation for those that are less ideal.

Despite the unpredictability of the season, many farmers remain resilient and resourceful, adapting to whatever challenges the weather brings. Their determination underscores the vital role that flexibility



and perseverance play in agriculture. As the everyone looks ahead, hope remains that the coming days will bring more favourable conditions, allowing crops to thrive and the hard work of planting will yet yield a successful harvest.



Photos courtesy of Melissa Kidd



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by PETER MARINACCI



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AP

UNRESERVED TIMED ONLINE AUCTIONS

Large Timed Online Auction for Trudeau Farms. NE of Boyle. Closes June 16th.
Semi-Retirement Timed Online Auction for Ron Zellweger PH (780) 645-2341
59313 RR 91 St.Paul, AB. Bids Start to Closes June 22nd.

Preview: June 19, 20 & 21, 1-7 pm
2011 Angler 220 Double Pontoon Boat c/w 115 Mercury motor, 130 hrs, orig. owner • 2006 Ford 450, approx 24' Class 3 Regency Grand Touring Motorhome, 39,968 Kms, • Approx. 1950 GMC 1-ton • Qty of Tools, Snap-On, Blue Point • Qty of Oils • Tool Boxes • Shop Compressor • Paint Guns • Fishing Rods • Tie down straps • Air tools • Torgue Wrenches • Elec. Tools • Testers • Tidy Tank • Cutting Torch • Loading Ramps • 3pt Backhoe Attach & More

Timed Online Auction for T.J. Farms. PH (780) 656-2341
Smoky Lake Area. Bids Closes June 24th. **Brief Listing**

Preview: June 20, 21, 22 & 23, 1-6 PM
J.D. 4440 • I.H. 966 • M.H. 30 • 2- M.M. Tractors • Heston 565A Rd Baler • N.H. 1441 Disc Bine • Mel-Cam 28 ft D. tillage • 2004 Open Road 5th Wheel Holiday TRAILER • 2000 Cancade Super B Grain TRAILERS • 2005 FALCON 24 ft G/N TRAILER • 2012 Falcon 36 ft Tilting Tandem AXLE G/N TRAILER, One Owner • 2002 Dodge Diesel, 271,521 Kms, nice condition • Weidman 5080T Loader c/w Ext. boom, as new • 12 HLA Snowblade • 2003 PACE American 24' V nose trailer • 2005 Cherokee 32' bumper pull holiday trailer • 1979 Ford Bronco, running • 2- GMC 3/4 Diesels • Plus 15 other Vehicles • 750-gal Tank & Trailer c/w Honda pump c/w forestry hoses • Steiner 52" Zero Turn Mower • 3- Tidy Tanks • JD Job Box • 5th Wheels • 1998 Yamaha Venture c/w Reverse, running • 1998 Polaris Ultra Touring, 991 kms, running • Plus 10 Older Collector Snowmobiles • 2- Crusher cones for fire pits • Water Tanks • Hyd. Rams • Plus Lots of Good Misc.

Large Antique Tractor, Vehicle & Equipment Online Consignment Auction, Redwater, AB. **Bids Close July 7th.**

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30
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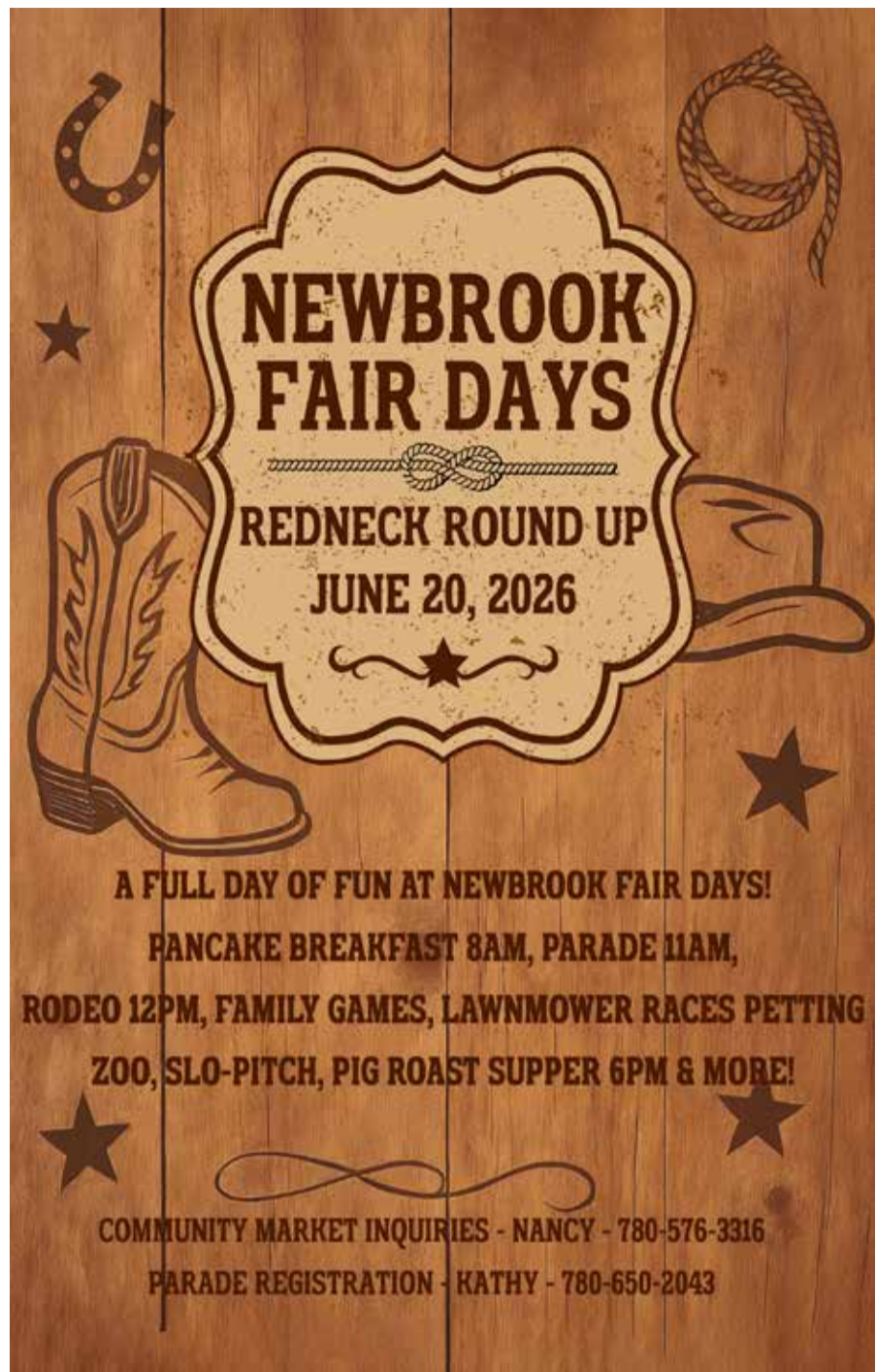


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FOR OTHER LISTING INFORMATION CALL MARILYN

Cheryl Paly

1951-2026

It is with great sadness that the family of Cheryl Mary Paly announces her sudden passing on May 29, 2026. Cheryl was born on March 1, 1951, to Joseph and Rose Weiss. She graduated from Thorhild High School, lived in Edmonton for several years, and married Clarence Paly on June 26, 1971. They returned to the Thorhild area, where they made their home on the family farm and raised their sons. Cheryl and Clarence operated the local bottle depot while also working many years with The Co-operators. She enjoyed reading, old movies, card games, gardening and was known for her perogies and cabbage rolls. Above all, she treasured time spent



with her family and friends. Left to cherish her memory are her loving husband, Clarence; her children, Clinton (Cristy) and Colin (Mandy); her grandchildren, Cole, Coy, Ryley, and Dyllynn; her brothers, Bob (Cathy) Weiss and Perry (Becky) Danylyshyn; as well as many nieces, nephews, relatives, and friends. A private family service will be held, with a Celebration of Life to be announced at a later date.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the Thorhild Community Association.



(780) 349-3474

PUBLIC NOTICE VILLAGE OF WASKATENAU

Take notice that the following Development Permit has been issued under Land Use Bylaw #686-2021 of the Village of Waskatenau:

Proposed	Legal Description	Street Address
Garage	Lot 2, Block 21, Plan 4696HW	5208 - 47 Street Waskatenau, Alberta

Any person claiming to be affected by the said development may appeal to the Intermunicipal Subdivision and Development Appeal Board (ISDAB) by serving written Notice of Appeal to the ISDAB Clerk of the Intermunicipal Subdivision and Development Appeal Board at Box 310, Smoky Lake, Alberta TOA 3C0 within fourteen (14) days.

Dated: June 3, 2026

Bernice Macyk
Development Authority, Village of Waskatenau
Box 99, Waskatenau, Alberta, TOA 3P0, Phone (780) 358-2208



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UPDATED BON ACCORD BUNGALOW WITH DOUBLE GARAGE



Pride of ownership shines in this FULLY UPDATED bungalow! This 5br3ba home offers 3 bedrooms upstairs, including a primary bedroom with a 2-piece ensuite, plus a 4-piece main bath featuring an AIR JET JACUZZI tub. The dine-in kitchen

includes CEILING HEIGHT CABINETS, while the east-facing living room welcomes bright morning light. The finished basement has a large family room, laundry and storage, 2 additional bedrooms, and an updated 3-piece bathroom. Enjoy HEATED FLOORS in both bathrooms, AIR CONDITIONING, and INSTANT HOT WATER. Outside, relax or entertain on the impressive 20'x18' COVERED DECK with BUILT-IN BBQ, roll-down sun screen, sunken hot tub, and a WALL FOUNTAIN! A detached double garage, large parking pad, and back lane access add extra space for vehicles and toys. Located across the street from a playground, this home is ideal for families and entertaining alike. Too many upgrades to list - come see what this home has to offer! **\$450,000. Call Glenn to view.**



74 ACRES OF LAND

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.**

3 ACRES TO BUILD ON NORTH OF BON ACCORD



This beautiful rolling 3 acres is perfect for building a house with a walkout basement. Two pretty lots each with separate title are being sold together. There is a nice row of mature planted trees down the middle of the two lots and a few patches of mature, native trees on each lot. Each lot has \$1700 prepaid with Coronado Gas Coop to go towards installation of natural gas. These two lots are at the end of the cul-de-sac so have lots of room for parking. They are bordered on the east by pasture land and on the north by park reserve land. Sellers have received permission in the past from the County to pasture horses on the 3 acre reserve land which would give you a total of 6 acres to use (New owners to confirm with County). Located in Brookhollow Estates, right on paved Lily Lake Road, less than 1/2 hour to Edmonton, near Bon Accord. Great for families wishing to live close to each other. You could each buy one lot and live side by side. **\$139,000. Call Heather for more info**



11.21 ACRES TO BUILD ON

Perfect spot to build your dream home and lay out your new yardsite. Cultivated land, seeded to oats, just waiting for you to develop to your. Great location, just 2 miles north and 1 mile east of the Hamlet of Thorhild, with only 1 mile of gravel road. Power runs along the south property line. There are natural mature windbreaks on both the northwest and east property lines and the land is open to the road on the south side. Good productive land so it won't take long to landscape to your liking. Enough land here for a few horses, cows, chickens or goats. Start your hobby farm, have a garden, greenhouse or store your toys. Good high land with only one small low spot in the northeast corner. **\$99,000 Call Heather to view.**

INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITY



This 119.23 acres is only minutes from Edmonton, SE of Spruce Grove. Great possibility of future acreage development. There is already an acreage subdivision on the north border of this property. Located on pavement. Currently being used as farmland with some treed areas and two dugouts. Build your dream home and develop the rest. Great holding property that you can rent out while you watch your investment grow. Currently zoned agricultural with low taxes. **Asking \$2,800,000. Call Glenn for more information.**



AFFORDABLE 3 BEDROOM HOME IN NEWBROOK

This double wide modular home had many renovations in the early 2000s including new kitchen cabinets, flooring, and bathroom renovations. Currently there is a large corner shower in the 3 pce bathroom but there is room to install a tub. Features include a large living room with formal dining room, good size storage area at back entrance where washer and dryer are. Lots of room in the back for a future garage if wanted. Complete with all appliances (washer, dryer and fridge are only a year or so old. No lot rental as you own the lot. **\$125,000. Call Heather to view.**

AUTO SHOP IN VILNA



Great opportunity to open your own automotive shop with a 45'x35' building all set up complete with all the tools you will need. Shop is heated with bathroom and laundry facilities. Several smaller storage sheds, seacan and 1 bdrm, 2 bathroom mobile home also included. Owner ran a very successful business here for many years but has now retired. **\$200,000 plus gst. 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.**



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Plein air sketching and watercolour painting at H.A.Kostash



Photos courtesy of H.A.Kostash



By Brandie Majeau

In recent years, plein air sketching and watercolour painting workshops have surged in popularity, offering artists and enthusiasts a chance to capture the beauty of the natural world directly on paper. "Plein air," a French term meaning "open air," describes the act of creating art outdoors, embracing the ever-changing light, color, and atmosphere of a landscape.

Unlike studio-based art, plein air sketching challenges artists to work quickly and attentively, responding to the environment around them. Participants typically begin with simple sketches, using pencils or pens to outline

scenes ranging from rolling hills to bustling city parks. These sketches form the foundation for watercolour paintings, where layers of transparent washes bring scenes to life with vibrant hues and delicate textures.

A group of students at H.A.Kostash were fortunate enough to be guided through essential techniques by local artist Lori Sokoluk. Lessons cover composition, perspective, and the unique challenges of painting outdoors, such as shifting weather and changing light conditions. Students are encouraged to observe their surroundings closely, teaching them to translate fleeting moments onto paper. The result is artwork imbued with a sense of immediacy and connection to

place.

The workshops were held under the beautiful sunshine, under the canopy of trees, enveloped in the sense of being intertwined with nature. The sessions often begin with a demonstration, allowing participants to see techniques in action

before trying them on their own. Sokoluk circulated to offer personalized feedback and guide each student artist in their skills.

Beyond technical instruction, plein air workshops bring the artists to a place where they can ground themselves and immerse

themselves in the landscape that inspires them. They share ideas, compare work, and draw inspiration from one another. Many find the experience of working outdoors to be meditative, allowing a moment to slow down and appreciate the outdoors while looking at

it in different perspectives. H.A.Kostash students were incredibly fortunate to have the opportunity to participate in these workshops, walking away with a new understanding and ability to bring themselves and all their senses into their artistry.



Members of Sturgeon Composite High School's Interact Club present donations of \$500 each to Jessie's House and Courageous Companions. The funds were raised through student-led community service initiatives. **Rotary Club of Morinville Sturgeon photo**

At 85, Frank Verbiski is still sharing Vilna's stories



By Shelley Winger

Inside Frank Verbiski's antique store, visitors are surrounded by reminders of the past.

Old cameras sit alongside vintage tools. Handcrafted wooden toys share shelf space with household treasures from another era. Around every corner is something that sparks a memory.

But it doesn't take long to realize the antiques are only part of the attraction.

At 85 years old, Verbiski seems to have a story for nearly everything in the shop.

"I enjoy coming in here," he said. "It's always a pleasure to meet people."

A former teacher, lifelong woodworker and resident of the area where his grandfather homesteaded in 1910, Verbiski now spends his weekends welcoming visitors into his store on Vilna's historic Main Street, sharing stories from a lifetime spent in northeastern Alberta.

Ask about an old camera and the conversation may turn to the years he spent videotaping weddings, graduations and anniversaries. Point to a household item and he might recall hauling water from a well as a child or attending a one-room country

school before schools were centralized.

His connection to the area stretches back generations.

"I grew up here," he said. "My grandfather homesteaded in 1910 and we're living on the old homestead."

Today, Verbiski still lives on that family homestead near the Stry area, a place that has anchored his family for more than a century.

As a child, he attended a one-room country school before eventually returning to education as a teacher. He spent 32 years in the classroom, beginning his teaching career in 1965 and retiring in 1997.

Even in retirement, education never seems to have left him.

Former students still stop by the store from time to time, and visitors often leave having learned something about local history, woodworking or life in rural Alberta.

Those experiences have given Verbiski a unique perspective on how much the region has changed over the decades.

He remembers a time when country schools dotted the landscape, when neighbours gathered to help one another and when everyday items now considered antiques were simply part of daily life.

"The way things change," he reflected.

While teaching was an important part of



Shawn McDonald / The Métis Man photos

his life, woodworking has remained a lifelong passion.

"I love my woodworking," he said. "I've done woodworking all my life."

Many of the birdhouses, toys and wooden creations displayed throughout the store were built in his own workshop. For Verbiski, they represent more than a hobby. They are a continuation of the craftsmanship and practical skills that shaped rural life for generations.

His dedication to preserving history extends beyond the walls of his store.

In 2000, Verbiski helped revitalize Vilna's historic downtown through the community's Main Street restoration project.

"We did the Main Street program," he

recalled. "I worked on most of the buildings in town here."

The project helped preserve the character of the community and contributed to the historic streetscape visitors see today.

Many of the stories and reflections shared in this article come from a recent interview conducted by Métis content creator Shawn McDonald of The Métis Man, who spent nearly 40 minutes speaking with Verbiski during a visit to the store.

During the conversation, Verbiski reflected on growing up in the area, his years as a teacher, his passion for woodworking and his involvement in preserving Vilna's history. The resulting video

introduced Verbiski and his store to a wider audience.

For those who stop in, the experience is about more than antiques.

Visitors often find themselves lingering longer than expected, listening to stories about local families, old schools and the people who helped build the community.

In the video's closing moments, visitors described Verbiski as "such a beautiful soul" and remarked, "We're so happy we stumbled across this."

The comments reflect what many discover when they walk through the door.

For Verbiski, preserving history isn't just about collecting old objects. It's about keeping

stories alive and sharing them with the next generation.

And after more than eight decades of living, working and teaching in the area, he still has plenty of stories left to tell.

Frank Verbiski displays a class photograph from the one-room country school he attended as a child. The 85-year-old Vilna resident shares local history and memories with visitors to his antique shop on Main Street.

Frank Verbiski's antique shop occupies a restored historic building on Vilna's Main Street, where the 85-year-old welcomes visitors and shares stories from the community's past.





NOTICE TO READERS

Please note that we will not be publishing our July 1st edition this year due to the Canada Day holiday. Our next regular edition will resume the following week.

— Management & Staff



Logan Giesbrecht

Congratulations Redwater School Graduates!



Larahya Gordey



Alexandra Grayson



Grace Hansen



Derek Harrison



Owen Larade



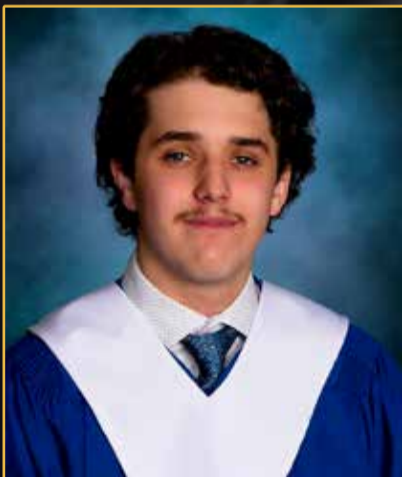
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Jayden Willerton



Brook Young

No photo available for Hana Hukarevic



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-  H.A. Kostash School
-  Thorhild Central School
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2026

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Enjoy your graduation celebrations, and please remember to celebrate responsibly.



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President

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Congratulations Class of 2026!




Pepper's Petro Canada

SCHOOL NEWS



Grade one students watch chick hatching process



H.A. Kostash School photos

By Valerie Winger

Grade one students at H.A. Kostash School followed the chick hatching process over a 21-day incubation period as part of a classroom learning activity.

Students observed the eggs from the beginning of incubation,

learning how they were kept warm and regularly turned to support development. Throughout the process, they made predictions, recorded changes, and learned about the stages in a chick's life cycle.

As hatch day approached, excitement

built in the classroom as students watched the chicks begin to pip, hatch, and take their first steps. The hands-on activity provided students with a closer look at growth and change in living things and added a practical component to their science learning.

PROUD OF YOUR

GRADUATE?

SAY IT IN PRINT!

Share your message, photo, and well wishes as they celebrate this important milestone.

We will be publishing Redwater School, H.A. Kostash School and Thorhild Central School 2026 graduates.

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Practical steps to support your financial well-being

(NC) Worrying about money is a top concern for many Canadians—42 per cent of us, according to the latest FP Canada Financial Stress Index. When you're feeling constant financial pressure, it can be difficult to know where to start or how to move forward. Taking practical steps and focusing on what you can control can make a meaningful difference. Here are some things to consider:

Set clear financial goals

Clear goals provide direction. They help you define what you want to achieve, when you want to achieve it and what resources you can commit. For example, saving for a home may require a shorter timeline and disciplined contributions towards a down payment, while saving for education or retirement may involve a longer-term investment approach. As you go through different life stages, your financial priorities will likely shift—review your

goals regularly to verify that your plan reflects your current needs and circumstances.

Save with intention, no matter the amount

Saving doesn't have to start with a large amount to make a difference. Building the habit of saving regularly can be more important than the dollar figure itself. Small, consistent contributions can help create momentum and support longer-term financial stability, especially when directed into savings and investment accounts such as a registered retirement savings plan (RRSP), tax-free savings account (TFSA) or first home savings account (FHSA). Over time, those contributions will grow by earning returns on both your original savings and past growth.

Build an emergency fund

An emergency fund can help you prepare for unexpected expenses or events. As a general rule, it's a good idea to have three to

six months' worth of expenses saved and easily accessible. This can provide a buffer during uncertain times and reduce the need to make rushed financial decisions, such as selling investments or taking on additional debt.

Seek professional financial advice

You don't have to navigate financial decisions on your own. Working with a financial advisor can help clarify your goals, understand your options and build a plan that reflects your personal situation and priorities. In addition to professional advice, Canadians can also access educational information through trusted public resources, such as those provided by the Government of Canada, to better understand key financial concepts and planning considerations.

Financial well-being is a journey, and small steps can make a meaningful difference. Find tools and resources to support your next steps at cooperators.ca.



High Q Greenhouses staff pose with plants donated for Sturgeon County's Seniors' Week Gardening Workshop Lunch and Learn. The May 30 event brought seniors together to learn gardening skills, connect with others and enjoy a hands-on experience. **Sturgeon County photo**

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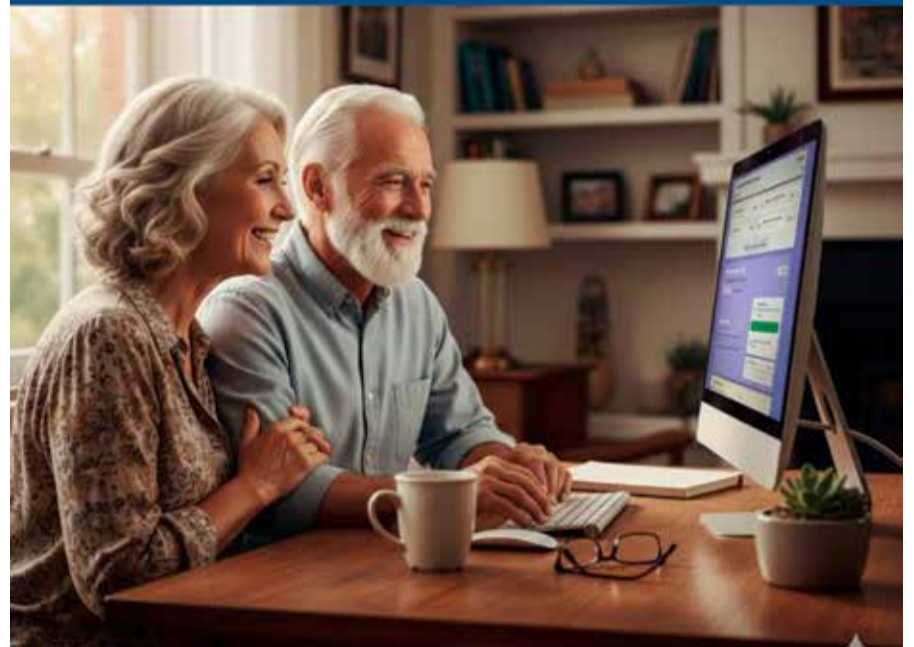
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Town of Redwater photos

Residents enjoy the Redwater Swimming Pool during a previous summer season. Swimming lessons, aquatic programs and youth training opportunities are among the many activities available as Redwater prepares for a busy summer of recreation and community events.

Redwater gears up for busy summer season



By Shelley Winger

From swimming lessons and community gardening to parades, youth programs and recreation opportunities, Redwater residents will have plenty of ways to stay active and connected this summer.

According to Community Services Manager Charity Melnick, the Town of Redwater is preparing for a busy season filled with programs, events and activities for residents of all ages.

“There is certainly a lot happening in Redwater this summer, and we are excited to offer residents a wide variety of programs, events, and activities right here in town,” said Melnick.

The town's Summer Program Guide is being released this week and includes activities throughout July and August. Along with swimming lessons at the recently opened Redwater Swimming Pool, youth can register for Bronze Medallion and Bronze Cross courses for those interested in pursuing lifeguarding opportunities.

Additional programs include First Aid, Babysitter Safety and Home Alone courses designed to help young people develop practical life skills.

The town is also recruiting participants for its Leaders in Training (LIT) and Guards in Training (GIT) programs. The initiatives provide youth with hands-on experience through shadowing summer staff members and learning workplace skills in a real-world setting.

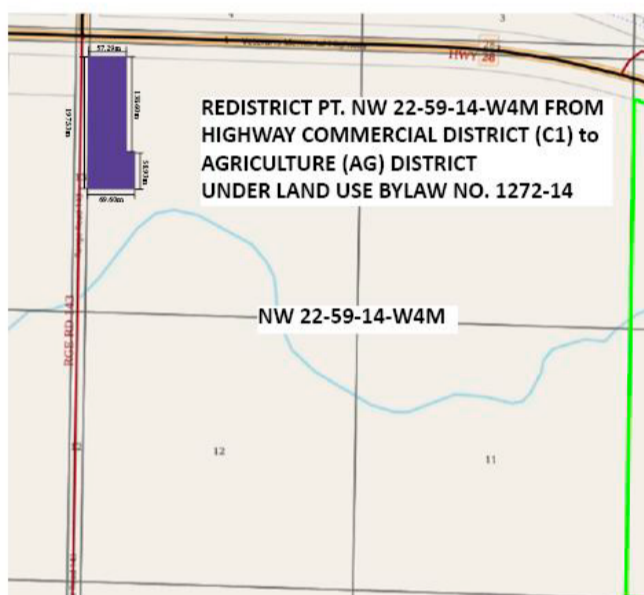
Outside of recreation programming, residents can look forward to a variety of community events throughout the summer months. Planning is underway for the Town of Redwater's annual Golf Tournament on Aug. 6, which raises funds for local scholarships, community initiatives and charitable organizations.

Continued on **page 14**

Smoky Lake County NOTICE – PUBLIC HEARING on Proposed Bylaw #1505-26



SCHEDULE “A” BYLAW NO. 1505-26



TAKE NOTICE THAT in accordance with sections 216.4, 606 & 692 of the *Municipal Government Act*, the Council of Smoky Lake County is giving consideration of Bylaw #1505-26:

- To redistrict portions of the lands legally described as Pt. NW 22-59-14-W4M, from HIGHWAY COMMERCIAL (C1) DISTRICT to AGRICULTURE (AG) DISTRICT, under the County's Land Use Bylaw #1272-14.

A Statutory Public Hearing will be held in relation to Bylaw 1505-26, both in-person and via videoconference on Thursday, June 25, 2026, 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/219324220> Meeting ID: 219324220 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 Meaghan Andreychuk 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 Meaghan Andreychuk 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 5-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 mandreychuk@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 Planning & Development Manager, Smoky Lake County at 780-650-5207 / jruegg@smokylakecounty.ab.ca



SMOKY LAKE FARMERS MARKET

June 13th 10 - Noon at the Nutrien Complex

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Smoky Lake Town wide Garage Sale

Farmers' Market

For more information phone 780-656-2463 & follow our Facebook page



JUNE 2026

GRAPEVINE

Scheduled Meetings

Visit our 'Agendas & Minutes' web page for Council meeting information and the 'Calendar' web page for the complete list of other scheduled meeting dates and community events.

Departmental Operations Meeting
June 10, 2026 at 9:00 AM

Regular County Council Meeting
June 25, 2026 at 9:00 AM
July 23, 2026 at 9:00 AM

A Public Q & A Period is held during each Council Meeting
11:30 AM to 12:00 PM

Smoky Lake County
Main and Public Works
Offices will be

CLOSED

July 1, 2026 for Canada Day

Council Highlights

Council Highlights provide a snapshot of Council decision making and the progress made on County programs and initiatives. For more details visit www.smokylakecounty.ab.ca/highlights

- Entered into lease agreements with the Kinette Club of Smoky Lake for the lands on which Bellis and Warspite baseball diamonds are located.
- Third and final reading to Bylaw 1506-26: Smoky Lake County Agricultural Services Fees & Charges Bylaw.
- Third and final reading to Bylaw 1498-26: Planning and Development Fees Bylaw.
- First reading given to Bylaw 1505-26 which proposes amendments to the Land Use Bylaw 1272-14 to redistrict part of the lands legally described as NW-22-59-14-W4M, from Highway Commercial (C1) District to Agriculture (AG) District. A Public Hearing will be held on Thursday, June 25, 2026 at 1:00 PM.
- Amended Policy 62-14: Weed Inspection and Weed Notice Policy.
- Amended Policy 62-28: Roadside Mowing Policy.
- Amended Policy HR-11: Substance Use Policy.
- Appointed Hannah Richards and Natalie Tychkowski as Weed & Pest Inspectors for Smoky Lake County.
- Appointed Kyle Schole as Clerk of the Intermunicipal Subdivision and Development Appeal Board.
- Appointed Evonne Zukiwski as the Privacy Officer for Smoky Lake County.

Donations

- \$500 donation to the Annual Federation of Alberta Gas Co-ops Annual Charity Golf Tournament in support of STARS Air Ambulance and HALO Air Ambulance.
- \$1,000 donation to Northern Trek, a fundraising initiative that raises funds and awareness for the Canadian Fallen Firefighters Foundation which honours and remembers fallen firefighters while supporting their families.
- Two tandem loads of gravel donated to the Smoky Lake Town and Country Golf Club.
- One tandem load of gravel donated to the Bonnie Lake Scout Camp.

Weed Inspections on Private Land

Smoky Lake County Agricultural Services will begin weed inspections of private land beginning **June 1st**. Weed Inspectors will carry valid ID and travel in a marked Smoky Lake County vehicle. Weed inspectors will be looking for noxious and prohibited noxious weeds as regulated under the *Alberta Weed Control Act*.

Spraying for brush and noxious weeds in County right-of-ways will also begin June 1st.

For more information on weed resources visit www.abinvasives.ca

For more information or questions contact the Agricultural Fieldman at 780-656-3730



CROP INSPECTOR

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June 11, 2026

10:00 AM to 2:00 PM

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5004 50 St Smoky Lake, AB

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View Smoky Lake County Councils Proclamations for the month of June

www.smokylakecounty.ab.ca/proclamations

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Public Works Shop
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5004-50 Street
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Toll Free 888-656-3730
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Continued from page 12

Preparations are also underway for the Sweet Treats Parade, which will kick off Discovery Days celebrations later this summer. This year's parade will feature a candy theme and invites participation from community groups, businesses and residents.

Community organizations are also preparing for

seasonal events, including the Summer Kickoff Community BBQ Fundraiser at Diamond Spring Lodge. The family-friendly event will feature a barbecue meal, live entertainment, a petting zoo and activities for attendees while raising funds for resident programming.

Community interest in gardening continues to grow, with nearly all plots in the

Community Garden at Pembina Place already spoken for. Residents will also have access to pickleball opportunities, the reopening of the fieldhouse in July and the return of the Yards of the Week program.

"Our goal is to continue expanding opportunities for residents so they can access quality programs and activities close to home

rather than having to travel elsewhere," said Melnick. "We also offer a subsidy program, pending approval, to help ensure financial barriers do not prevent participation."

Melnick said the town is looking forward to another busy and exciting summer and hopes residents will take advantage of everything Redwater has to offer.

Temporary emergency department service reductions announced in Smoky Lake



By Haylee Winger

Residents of Smoky Lake will experience temporary overnight changes to emergency department services at the George McDougall - Smoky Lake Healthcare Centre during several dates in June as healthcare officials continue to contend with physician staffing shortages.

Alberta Health Services (AHS) has advised that the emergency department will be without an onsite physician

from 5 p.m. to 8 a.m. during four overnight periods: June 4-5, June 11-12, June 18-19, and June 25-26.

According to AHS, the temporary service reductions are the result of a shortage of available clinical personnel and unsuccessful efforts to secure temporary physician coverage for the affected shifts.

Although an on-site physician will not be available during those times, nursing staff will remain in the emergency department to provide patient assessments, triage services, and referrals to alternate

healthcare facilities in neighbouring communities when required. Emergency Medical Services (EMS) will continue to operate as normal.

AHS also noted that its Virtual Emergency Physician program may be available during all or part of the affected periods, allowing local healthcare staff to consult remotely with an emergency physician for certain patient needs.

Residents facing a medical emergency are urged to call 911 immediately. Patients requiring emergency care may

be transported or re-directed to nearby facilities depending on the nature of their condition.

Health officials say they continue to work toward maintaining access to healthcare services for Smoky Lake-area residents while efforts to recruit and secure additional physician coverage remain ongoing.

The service changes are considered temporary and are intended to help ensure patient care and safety while available healthcare resources are managed across the region.

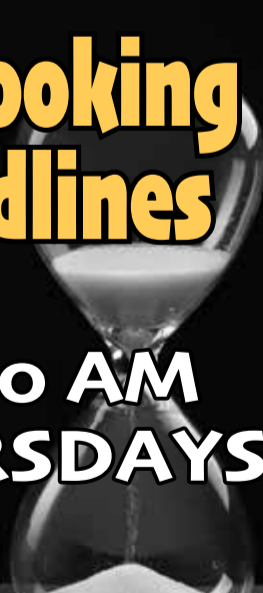
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Pictured are Redwater School students who successfully completed Dual Credit programming this year. Through the program, they earned both high school and post-secondary credits while still attending school. Congratulations on this outstanding achievement! **Redwater School photo**

Seniors enjoy afternoon of entertainment and community spirit



On Thursday, June 4, local seniors gathered for an afternoon of entertainment, good food, and community connection. The event featured bingo, a meal, door prizes, gift bags, and plenty of opportunities for guests to visit and enjoy each other's company. A highlight of the afternoon was a musical performance by Jaedyn, whose tribute show featuring the music of Buddy Holly and Johnny Cash had attendees singing along and enjoying classic hits. Students from Redwater School contributed hand-painted centerpiece pots that helped decorate the venue, while students from Ochre Park School designed placemats that added a personal and creative touch to the tables. Organizers expressed appreciation to TC Energy for its support of the event and to Tim Hortons for donating tea that was included in guests' gift bags. The gathering provided an opportunity for seniors to enjoy entertainment, connect with friends and neighbours, and celebrate the strong community spirit that helped make the day a success. **Town of Redwater photos**

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PUBLIC INFORMATION SESSION

HIGHWAY 28 – SELECT HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENTS

Alberta Transportation and Economic Corridors has retained Tetra Tech Canada Inc. to complete Selective Highway Improvements along Highway 28:08/:10 from West of Smoky Lake to Ashmont.



Proposed upgrades include climbing/passing lanes, safety rest areas, intersection improvements, service roads, horizontal curve radius improvements, intersection improvements, and access improvements.

You are invited to learn more about this project at a public information session on:

June 24, 2026
4 to 8 p.m.
Smoky Lake Agricultural Society
4612 54 Ave Smoky Lake AB

Alberta Transportation and Economic Corridors and Tetra Tech Canada Inc. representatives will be in attendance to answer any questions or concerns.

For more information, please contact George Trefanenکو, Construction Manager, Tetra Tech Canada Inc. by phone at (780) 499-4694, by fax at (780) 454-5688, or e-mail: george.trefanenکو@tetrattech.com

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