

MORINVILLE'S Monday Morning News



Looking for the Light

The École Georges P. Vanier School Choir performs *Looking for the Light* during the Morinville Community Christmas Celebration Dec. 16. See pages 8 and 9 for more photos from the evening. - Stephen Dafoe Photo

Budget passes first and second reading with provision

By Stephen Dafoe

The Towns' 2011 budget came before Morinville Town Council for a second chance at first reading Tuesday night and was once again defeated with a 4-3 vote. Councillors Lisa Holmes, Ben Van De Walle, Nicole Boutestein and Gordon Boddez voted against the budget as presented.

However, the same budget with a provision was brought back past council the same night and passed first and second reading.

The difference between the two versions was the second version carried a provision to hold back any commitment to hire seven of 14 proposed new positions until complete

information can be presented to council as to the long term effect on future budgets.

Although the provision, as suggested by Councillor Holmes, included consent to go ahead with the hiring of just a planning and development administration clerk and tax and utility clerk - positions council agreed were essential - a friendly amendment by Paul Krauskopf added the five positions administration say are needed for the Community Cultural Centre to properly open in the spring. Those positions include a full time technician, booking manager and three support/ maintenance staff.

Krauskopf's amendment passed with a 4-3 vote, Councillors Holmes, Boddez and

Pattison voting against the amendment. The budget with amended provision then passed first reading with a unanimous vote. Second reading was opposed by Councillors Boutestein and Van De Walle.

Borrowing a concern

While the hiring of positions for the Community Cultural Centre was an issue for some members of council, the hiring of all proposed positions caused concerns for Councillor Gordon Boddez in light of future debenture costs.

Continued on Page 3

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MORINVILLE'S Monday Morning Photo

Students get glimpse of local government



Morinville Mayor Lloyd Bertschi talks to Grade 1 students from Notre Dame Elementary School Dec. 15. The students were on an afternoon social studies field trip to visit the Musée Morinville Museum, Morinville Public Library and Council Chambers. The student's social studies curriculum has students learning about their community, its landmarks and the people who make decisions in the community. Bertschi spent 20 minutes talking to the students about what council does and answering their questions. - Stephen Dafoe Photo

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Budget - Continued from Page 1

Morinville passed a borrowing bylaw in the spring of 2009 that allows the Town to borrow up to \$3 million to finish paying for the new facility. Repayment of that debenture would be spread over a five-year period at a cost of approximately \$700,000 per year.

Additionally, the 2011 capital budget originally carried a \$3 million expenditure to upgrade and renovate the civic centre and public library. The project was deferred during budget discussions, although \$200,000 has been earmarked for architectural plans and some initial work on the 40-year-old building.

"I keep having that feeling about the sustainability," Boddez said Tuesday night, noting that when the \$3 million Morinville may need to borrow to complete the Community Cultural Centre is combined with the \$3 million that may be needed to eventually upgrade and renovate the civic centre and library, the Town is looking at a considerable amount of borrowing which could affect future budgets.

"That's \$6 million which translates back into finding that money," Boddez said. "Any debt is long-term debt."

Administration has agreed to provide council with debenture and other info prior to next week's council meeting when the budget is set to receive third reading Dec. 21.

Mayor Lloyd Bertschi said he was pleased to see the budget moving forward.

"I was really glad to see that Councillor Holmes came up with an alternate way of getting the budget passed because we couldn't go into the new year without a budget," the mayor said, adding he's made it clear in the past that he is not a fan of interim budgets. "I think it just hamstring your administration way too much going forward as far as moving initiatives. They have to be careful that they only spend money on staff, lighting, those types of things."

Councillor Holmes, who made the motion to pass the budget with a provision, said she was

also glad council was able to move forward.

"I wasn't comfortable with the budget as it was but I also wasn't comfortable with the idea of an interim budget," Holmes said. "I think one of the reasons some of the council is having issues with the long-term planning is because we don't have a strategic plan yet; we haven't finished the MSP [Municipal Sustainability Plan]. We have all of these projects that we're in the middle of working on. And if we delayed the budget and not passed it, we wouldn't be able to start the projects. That was a big concern for me, and I'm glad that we were able to come to some sort of consensus of moving forward on the budget."

The councillor said she is confident that Chief Financial Officer Andy Isbister will come back to council with the numbers and details needed for council to remove the provisional conditions passed Tuesday night.

The bulk of that information will consist of information on the Community Cultural Centre's possible debenture which would begin to be repaid in 2012 and a debenture that will be needed when the Town proceeds with the upgrade to the civic centre.

Mayor Bertschi said the figures are important to the long-term picture.

"Without having those two numbers put into the operating cost for the next couple of years, using up a lot of the existing free cash flow if you will surplus dollars, and using the majority of it for staff positions could impact on your tax rate increases in future years," Bertschi said, adding the potential impact of the two debentures, when combined with the increase in staffing proposed for 2011, was more than the majority of council was prepared to take. "I'm actually glad that they brought that forward."

If approved, ratepayers will see a 3.5 per cent increase to their taxes in 2011. Based on the average Morinville home being in the \$300,000 range, council believes the impact on the average household will be an \$80 tax increase.

Council meets again Dec. 21 at 7:30 p.m.

Monday Morning Challenge



What is that thing?

This week's challenge is a tough one. You might even say it's a prickly handful of a challenge. Give up? Turn to page 12 to see.

Joe Morinville's

TOP 10 TRAFFIC LOCATIONS FOR VEHICLE COLLISIONS

- 1) Cardiff Corner and Highway No. 2 (You are a risk taker every single time you turn left.)
- 2) Highway No. 44 and Secondary No. 633 at Villeneuve Corner
- 3) Corner of Highway No. 28 and No. 642, east from Morinville
- 4) Intersection of Highway No. 28 and Highway No. 37 at Namao
- 5) Legal Corner and Highway No. 2 (Turning left is only riskier if you do it at Cardiff Corner)
- 6) Highway No.2 off ramp onto High way No. 37 and turn east.
- 7) Coming around the curve at Highway No. 2 south bound to St. Albert (Climb the curve like Mario Andretti, hit black ice -your in the ditch)
- 8) Washboard on any of the range roads and township roads in the Country (they are gravelled and rough)
- 9) 100 Street and 100 Avenue Morinville. Watch for visitors that do not realize Morinville has street lights and blow through on a red light.
- 10) Finally, most accidents occur within 30 kilometres of a person's home. That means you should take the same care when you travel the same route every day as you would if you are 600 kilometres away from town.



Joe Morinville

MORINVILLE'S Monday Morning Editorial



A pair of geese see their reflection in the Fish and Game Club pond last spring. The New Year brings a time of reflection. Our next issue will be a look back at 2010.

Looking back on 2010 010S no hbad gnirkolJ

As I write this editorial there are exactly two weeks until New Year's Eve. Depending on when you read this, that time will have lessened. Like many of you, I wonder where the year has gone and accept that the rapidity of its passing has more to do with the fact that I'm getting older than any sudden and inexplicable rushing forward of the calendar.

Time does not change, but what we do with our time does change or can.

One of the interesting things about being in the news business is that you get a pretty intimate glimpse at what people do and do not do with their time. We see this in the interviews we conduct, the stories we write and the photographs we take.

We've seen the 70-year-old man who was lucky enough to be selected as a torch runner during the Winter Olympics and now has a wonderful story to share with his grandchildren. We've seen the man who cannot run who has decided to travel across the nation in his wheelchair to raise money for a cause. And we've seen countless volunteers who pooled their talents together to give the community a truly great summer festival.

But not all news stories are happy stories.

We've seen the look of sadness in the eyes of the business owner or employee who has to tell us that a lack of commerce or a change in corporate policy has resulted in the removal of

one more business from Main Street. We've seen the determination and passion in the eyes of the man looking to defend his and his neighbour's quality of life against a facility soon after the sod was turned. And we've seen the disappointment in the eyes of good people who sought public office but who did not get the votes required for the job.

Whether the story was a happy or sad, of deep importance or merely a feel good fluff piece; 2010 was a year of people doing something with their time in Morinville. And it is the myriad use of that time that makes a community.

It's customary at this time of year for community news publications to dispense with the normal weekly publishing cycle to take a week or two off from covering the news and publishing it. We won't be following that custom, but we will be bringing you a little different issue next week as we all wind and wend our way between Christmas and New Year's Day.

Our next edition of Monday Morning News will be a pictorial year in review, recapping photographically what Morinvillians did with their time in 2010.

On behalf of all of us at Monday Morning News and Art of Conversation Morinville, I offer you our season's greetings.

S.D.



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Town of Morinville
Vintage Petals Tea House
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Parents seeking secular education for their children

By Stephen Dafeo

When Donna Hunter's five-year-old daughter came home from her first day of kindergarten at Notre Dame Elementary School this fall, the mother of three was a little surprised to discover what her child had been taught that day.

"My daughter came home the very first day from school and said, 'Mom, God made the sky and God made the grass and God made the flowers - isn't it nice that God made the flowers,'" Mrs. Hunter recalled of that first experience with Morinville schools. "I said, 'Well, it's very nice that your teacher believes in something and when you grow up, you can decide what you want to believe in.' She said, 'No, mommy. My teacher told me so. Why don't you believe me?'"

It was that interaction with her child that led Hunter to begin researching Morinville's schools, the Greater St. Albert Catholic Regional Division (GSACRD) which operates the schools, and what she believes is her and her children's right to a secular education free of religious instruction in a public school system.

Although GSACRD operates with a Catholic mandate they

are the public school system in Morinville, operating two elementary schools, one middle school and one high school in the community.

But for Hunter and the delegation of parents and grandparents she brought before a GSACRD board meeting Monday evening, the current state in Morinville's schools is an unacceptable one. The group is seeking a fully secular and non faith-based education for their children in the schools the children attend.

"I would be satisfied if I had a school in town that was secular, that you walked in and it wasn't Catholic," Hunter said after her presentation to the board Monday night. "I want immediately one of the two elementary schools to be not Catholic, to be just a public school. And if parents choose to opt in to a fully permeated

Catholic program, like a Christian LOGOS program, then they should be able to opt into it. I shouldn't have to opt out of it in a public school. I want my kids to go to their public school. I don't want to bus them and drive them to Namao."

For Hunter and her group the request is not an unreasonable one as the parents feel they are guaranteed a secular public education under section 2(a) of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, which guarantees Canadians the right of "freedom of conscience and religion," and under section 4 of the Human Rights Act.

Dave Redman, who formed part of Hunter's delegation and who has five grandchildren attending schools in Morinville, agrees with the group's position.

"They are breaking the rights of the children under the Human Rights Act of Canada, and they are breaking the rights of the children under the Alberta School Act, where they have the right to a secular education from their public school system, Redman said. "This is a public school system. If they wish to be a separate school system, that's wonderful. I'm happy if they wish to teach Catholicism every day and in every way to the children that attend the school as a separate school."

Redman said he believed sooner or later someone has to take responsibility for the fact that GSACRD schools in Morinville are public schools, something he believes comes with certain responsibilities, whether or not the school division chooses to recognize or ignore those responsibilities.

Redman, Hunter and the delegation are not satisfied with a response they received from Barrhead-Morinville-Westlock MLA Ken Kowalski that indicated GSACRD's status within Morinville was an Albertan anomaly and that Education Minister Dave Hancock is working on a new School Act.

Continued on Page 14

"They are breaking the rights of the children under the Human Rights Act of Canada, and they are breaking the rights of the children under the Alberta School Act ..."

- Dave Redman



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Morinville Council approves \$8,700 in grant funding

By MMN Staff

Five community groups and organizations will benefit from \$8,700 in grant funding after Morinville Town Council unanimously approved five requests for Community Grant and Family and Community Support Services (FCSS) Grant funding Tuesday night.

Community Grant recipients

Three groups applied for fourth quarter grant funding under the Community Grant application program.

First Morinville Scouting will receive \$2,500 to help send two members of the Morinville Venture Company to Sweden next summer to attend the 22nd World Scout Jamboree.

The Morinville Lions Club will receive \$900 to help with the purchase of computer

equipment and software to assist with the service clubs administrative duties. Council heard the club is not able to use any fundraising money for administrative costs. The cost of equipment is approximately \$1,800 and the Lions club's membership will pick up the remaining \$900.

Additionally, the Georges H. Primeau Cheerleaders were granted \$2,500 to help pay for a trip to a provincial cheerleading competition. Council had granted the group \$2,500 in 2009 to attend a competition in British Columbia where the

cheerleading group took a first and third place award.

The \$5,900 in grant spending approved Tuesday night brings Morinville's 2010 Community Grant spending to \$24,025. A total of \$27,500 is budgeted for the program each year.

FCSS Grant recipients

Council received two applicants for the second intake of FCSS grant funding.

Heritage Lodge applied for and received \$800 to assist with their Meals on Wheels program, a weekly service provided to area

seniors who are unable to prepare their own meals. The \$800 in grant funding will be used to purchase carrying cases and disposable food containers.

Another \$2,000 was granted to Georges H. Primeau for their Heroes Program, a weekly program offered to junior high school students focusing on the belief that everyone has gifts, abilities and the desire to succeed. The Heroes Program is being supported by the Town of Morinville's FCSS department and the \$2,000 in grant funding will be used to purchase resource books which students keep at the end of the 12-week program.

The \$2,800 in FCSS grant funding approved Tuesday night brings Morinville's 2010 FCSS grant funding to \$9,400. Each year, Morinville allocates \$10,000 in funding through the FCSS grant program.



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**Community Gathers
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Morinville residents gathered together at St. Jean Baptiste Church Thursday night for the 32nd Annual Community Christmas Celebration. This year's gathering carried the theme *Share the Light*. A number of Morinville churches and school choirs participated in the evening's songs.



Clockwise from top left: The United Church Choir performs *Light One Candle*, Notre Dame Elementary performs *Miracle on Bethlehem Street*, the processional begins, a Morinville Christian Fellowship Choir guitarist lays down some licks during a performance of *Angels From the Realms of Glory*, The Bulger family perform *Feliz Navidad* as the congregation leaves the celebration.

- Stephen Dafoe Photos



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MORINVILLE'S Monday Morning Expert

Expert advice for job seekers

The World of "The Follow-Up": Show Them You're a Real Pro

By Kelsey Hynes, Career Employment & Counselling Services

So you are at a point where you have sweated through weeks of job searching and sending out resumes, trudging through the process of finding a job to finally secure an interview. The interview goes great! You have a good feeling about this job and that great things will be happening. You leave, you shake hands with the interviewer, and you go on your way. All that is left is panic, worry, and waiting anxiously by the phone for "the call". The interview is over, right? WRONG! For the average job applicant, the interview is over. For the Pro; however, you are just getting to the good part. Welcome to the world of "The Follow-Up".

"The Follow-Up" after an interview separates the Pros from the Amateurs, and it is becoming more and more a necessity in today's labour market. Businesses alike will look favorably on the applicants who show initiative and

commitment to the position, even throughout the job application process. How does one follow up, you ask? Pro applicants follow these three steps:

Step 1: Obtain the business card of the person who interviewed you.

(This is particularly helpful for the correct spelling of names, and direct contact information)

Step 2: Send a thank you e-mail or note for the interviewer directly following the interview.

(Keep your contact very brief, but be sure to thank the interviewer for their time, emphasize your skills and abilities related to the position, and your continued interest in the position. Remain positive and focused with what you are trying to get across.)

Step 3: If you have not heard from the interviewer, place a phone call to them about five days after the interview. If the interviewer is unavailable, leave a voice mail for them.

(Use the opportunity to show your continued interest in the position, but don't be pushy. You want to show the interviewer that you're interested in the job, not that you're desperate. Be polite and professional.)

Then... you wait... By completing "The Follow-Up" steps, you have set yourself above all other applicants and employers appreciate your initiative and dedication to their companies.

Amateur job applicants regularly experience a big misunderstanding regarding the follow-up approach. They think "I don't want to bother the interviewer, they must be so busy". WRONG! Some companies purposely wait one to three weeks to make job offers. They observe who follows up and how many times, and who does not. For a lot of jobs; this is the real interviewing portion of your job application. Remember "The Follow-Up" will show you are a professional, and it is yet another tool to help you secure that job that is right for you!

Merry Christmas



**To Our Readers
And Ad Clients
From All Of Us At**

MORINVILLE'S
Monday Morning News

THE **Art** OF
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MORINVILLE

Our Dec. 27 Issue Will Be A Pictorial Year In Review

Can you give these pets a home?

Monday Morning Pets To Adopt



Murphy is an 18-week-old male shepherd cross. He's Friendly, playful, neutered and has had all his shots.



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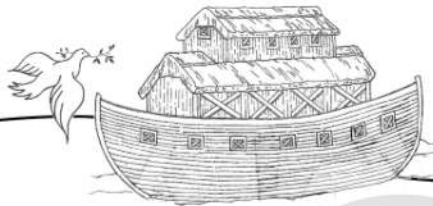
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Did you give up?

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THANK YOU!

The Morinville Mavericks FunTeam Hockey program would like to thank the Town of Morinville for the grant money to purchase new jerseys for our team.



The week at a glance in Morinville

MORINVILLE'S Monday Morning Calendar

Monday Dec. 20

Floor curling

The Morinville Senior's Rendez-Vous Centre holds floor curling Mondays and Fridays at 1 p.m.

Tuesday Dec. 21

Blood Donor Clinic

The Lions Club and Knights of Columbus will be holding a blood donor clinic at the Senior's Rendez-Vous Centre from 4:30 - 8 p.m.

Council meeting

Morinville Town Council meets tonight at 7:30 p.m. to give third reading to the 2011 budget.

Darts

Youth darts are held Thursday evenings at 7 p.m. at the Royal Canadian Legion

Wednesday Dec. 22

Rotary meets

Morinville Rotary Club meeting at 7 a.m. at Don's Bistro on 100 Avenue.

Thursday Dec. 23

Al-Anon

Al-Anon meets at the Morinville Baptist Church at 8 p.m. Call 780-433-1818 for more information

Friday Dec. 24

See our side bar for Christmas Eve services at local churches.

Saturday Dec. 25

Merry Christmas

See the sidebar for Church Services.

Attention Morinville Community Groups

If you would like your non-profit community group event included in our weekly calendar, send the info to editor@morinvillemnews.com.

Christmas Skating Schedule

Public Skating

Dec. 22, 23, 29, 31 1:15 - 2:15 p.m.

Adult Shinny

Dec. 31 12 - 1 p.m.

Youth Shinny

Dec. 21 & 22 2:30 - 4:15 p.m.
 Dec. 23 2:30 - 4 p.m.
 Dec. 28, 29, 31 2:30 - 4:15 p.m.
 Dec. 30 2:30 - 4 p.m.

Christmas Observances

St. Jean Baptiste Catholic Church
 10020-100 Ave.

December 24 Mass Times
 5 p.m. , 7:30 p.m., 10 p.m.

December 25 Mass Time
 10:00 a.m.

Morinville Baptist Church
 10017-99 Street Morinville

Christmas Eve Service
 7 p.m. Dec. 24

Morinville Alliance Church
 10017-99 Street

Christmas Celebration
 7p.m. Dec. 24

Morinville Christian Fellowship
 MCHS High School Gym

Christmas Eve Celebration
 6 p.m. Dec. 24

Morinville United Church
 9610 Morinville Drive

Christmas Eve Celebration
 8 p.m. Dec. 24

St. Andrews Anglican
 10701-100 Ave.

Christmas Eve Celebration
 7:30 p.m. Dec. 24

Secular education - Continued from Page 5

Proposed updates to the School Act would grant the Minister of Education the powers to change the designation of a school division from public to separate and from separate to public. A letter to Minister Hancock remained unanswered after 30 days, prompting Hunter to write directly to Premier Stelmach seeking a solution on behalf of her group.

"There is a short-term solution," Redman said. "Yes, it's complicated. It's complicated because nobody wants to act. It's very simple. You tell the school board, as their employer, under the law, to deliver what they are obligated to deliver under the law."

Redman said other options include turning to the Sturgeon School Division to run a public school out of one of Morinville's existing schools.

"There are many options available," Redman said. It's not her [Hunter's] job to figure out what those options are for her child; it's the minister's as the employer of the schools."

Board's response

GSACRD Superintendent of Schools David Keohane said the board will now assess the information presented in Hunter's presentation and are committed to respond to the group's concerns within a month.

"Even in the face of this presentation, choice does remain an important principal on how our education system is built," Keohane said Monday evening. "When it comes to selecting a school, parents and students have a wide range of options. They can select from public schools, separate schools, Francophone schools. In this whole conversation there's the opportunity for private schools and charter schools is a very important

consideration, too."

Keohane said he was not prepared to talk specifically about the options available to parents because the board needs to deliberate on those options, but intimated that when the response is given there could be as many as seven options that could be presented through the existing legal framework that GSACRD operates within.

"It'll be up to the board to examine the myriad of those choices, the range of them, and provide some advice," Keohane said.

The superintendent of schools said Monday night's delegation was the first of its kind for the division. "We don't have any reason to believe that other community members are like minded at this time. Our satisfaction surveys right across the

board in the community of Morinville would indicate we provide an outstanding educational programming for students, and our existing mandate can make that meaningful, and actually has a strong correlation to what those learning outcomes are all about."

Defence of Catholic education

Superintendent Keohane said he believes Morinville students and parents find value in the education and religious studies being offered in Morinville schools.

Citing Statistics Canada's 2001 census (the most recent census that tracks religion) Keohane said Morinville's Catholic population is recorded as 46 per cent, significantly

higher than the provincial average of 26 per cent. The superintendent said lower percentages of identified Catholics exist in Morinville schools, largely because 30 per cent of people do not have children attending school.

"That's an interesting number because it enables us to see the key link to the historic reality of the community of Morinville - that it established 148 years ago a public Catholic system," Keohane said. "The demographic shows that there's no surprise for the continued support, based on that demographic."

The GSACRD superintendent said on average 30 per cent of

Morinville students identify themselves as Catholic on registration forms, a number higher than provincial averages. On average, religious study enrolment is higher than the Catholic student population.

Morinville GSACRD students are given the option of taking religious studies or a health and wellness program available to students who wish to opt out of religious studies.

"Right across the board, except at MCHS, we see an addition of 20 to 30 per cent of a non-Catholic population participating in religious studies as well," Keohane said. "So it brings us into about overall the 60 to 70 per cent range of students who are taking religious studies."

GSACRD numbers show the two strongest examples are Notre Dame Elementary School and École Georges P. Vanier School. Notre Dame has an identified Catholic student population of 28 per cent with 48 per cent of students

enrolled in religious studies. Those numbers are higher at École Georges P. Vanier School, where 30 per cent of students are identified as Catholic and 60 per cent of the students are taking religious studies.

The numbers drop in Morinville's middle and high school. Georges H. Primeau School has a 31 per cent Catholic student population with 47 per cent taking religious studies. Morinville Community High School's recorded Catholic student population is 29 per cent with 13 per cent opting to take the religion program.

Keohane said the overall numbers indicate the value of the division's religious studies program.

"To us that gives a message that for non-Catholics there's something about our religious studies programming that is attractive to parents, even when they're given choice," Keohane said. "It's attractive to more than just Catholic parents, and we believe it's the values and social teachings of our faith in terms of how we treat others from the perspective of justice and charity and compassion that makes those programs attractive to kids."

Parents prepared to carry the argument further

Hunter said her group's argument is not about theology but about the definition of a public school.

"For me, personally, this isn't about religion - this is about what a public school is," she said. "That's my issue. That's what I wrote to the minister [of education]. That's what I wrote to [MLA] Ken Kowalski."


She said she will await the board's response but is prepared to take the matter further if she and her group do not receive satisfaction in their request for secular education in Morinville's public school system.

MORINVILLE'S Monday Morning Sports

Morinville Hockey Team Standings

 **Capital Junior Hockey League**

Morinville Jets
12-10-4 record
5th spot in West Division
8th spot in league overall
As of Dec. 16

 **Noralta Junior Hockey League**

Morinville Titans
12-3-3 record
4th place in league overall
As of Dec. 17

KAMHL
Northern Alberta Midget Hockey League

Morinville Warriors
1-15-0 record
7th spot in West Blue
Tied for 2nd last place overall
As of Dec. 16

The Morinville Jets, Titans and Warriors have no games this week

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Spotlight on our businesses

Monday Morning Business Profile

A life-long love of pets leads to new business

Running a pet and pet supply store is a dream job for Noah's Ark Pets and Supplies owner Tammy Frieze. The store opened in the former Bright Side Hobbies location on 100 Avenue Dec. 1 and is a continuation of Frieze's life-long love of animals of all kinds.

"As a child my uncle always had tanks and animals, and I was never allowed animals," Frieze said. "So I used to take a great interest in helping him and learning as a very young child. As I grew up, not having a place to have animals, I'd take care of other people's animals."

But while Noah's Ark is a new business in Morinville, it is not Frieze's first pet and pet supply store. The local businesswoman ran a similar shop in Yorkton, Saskatchewan for six years before selling the business to move to the area with her daughter.

After three-and-a-half years away

from the business she loves, Frieze felt it was time to open another shop. "I'm liking working for myself as opposed to other people. I looked around and Morinville was in need of one because one had just finished closing down."

Although smaller than her original shop, Frieze has packed her shop with a wide range of pets and pet supplies, carrying a number of major brands, including Nutrience pet food and Morinville-manufactured Arcana and Orijen pet foods.

"We're a full line pet and pet supply store," she said. "I have all the live animals. If I don't have it in, I can get it in. I have all the live food to feed your snakes, your larger reptiles. Your crickets, your mealworms, your pinkies,

hoppers, fuzzies even live mice."

Additionally, Noah's Ark Pets and Supplies carry a full line of aquatic fish, including cold water and tropical fish.

Frieze said she would like to eventually get into pet grooming because she is a certified groomer, and plans to offer pet babysitting services for smaller animals, including birds, hamsters and the like.

"We don't have anybody that babysits birds out here," Frieze said, adding she'll be babysitting a parrot over the holidays. "It's stuff like that I'd eventually like to see."

But whatever service areas Noah's Ark expands into, Frieze said service will be the key.

While pets are the focus of her business, it's the people that have drawn her back into the profession.

"It's the people," she said. "I find people with pets have a very gentle spirit, kind hearts. They seem to care like I care. I've had little kids come in where their little hamster of three years finally passed away. You feel for what that kid is feeling. You cry with them because you feel it. You've been there. I think pet stores succeed because you have the heart. You care because you feel what your customers feel. And I think it's very important."

Noah's Ark Pets and Supplies is open Monday to Saturday from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Frieze said she is looking at introducing later hours on Thursday nights in the new year.



Noah's Ark Pets and Supplies owner Tammy Frieze holds a Senegal parrot, one of many pets available at her store.

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