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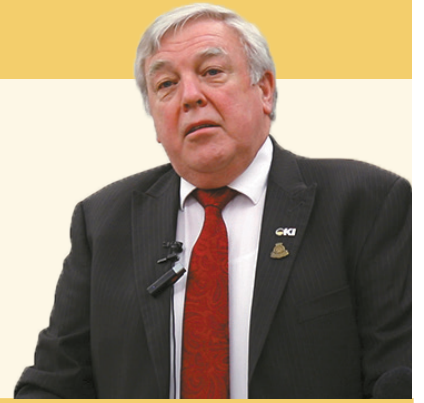


Lethbridge
Campus Media

QUOTE OF THE WEEK

“I’m pleased with many of the things that we’ve been able to accomplish as a council over my term as mayor.”

Read more about Mayor Spearman’s retirement Page 3



February 16, 2021 Vol. 53, Issue 03



endeavour



Creative food options

Restaurants in Lethbridge are adjusting to COVID-19 restrictions to limit to food waste.

By Alejandra Pulido Page 2



City-wide treasure hunt

A Lethbridge woman launches a city-wide treasure to bring some positivity to the community.

By Karsen Marczuk Page 5

Coping with COVID-19

People in Lethbridge are using outdoor activities in a way to cope with COVID-19

By Josiah Spyker Page 7



Polar vortex freezes southern Alberta



PHOTO BY GRACE LENGYEL

For the past week the polar vortex has been in full swing across the prairies with Lethbridge seeing temperatures around minus 30 degrees and wind chills around minus 40 degrees. Boiling water can freeze in a matter of minutes, this sphere was taken outside of the 30 Ave dorms at Lethbridge College on Feb. 11.

Agriculture industry feels impact of COVID-19

SYLVIA ADAM
@SylviaAdam2

COVID-19 has negatively impacted the agriculture industry in Alberta.

Over the past year, about 5,000 jobs have been lost in the agriculture sector.

During the first COVID-19 outbreak, some major food commodities, like flour and pasta, were in low supply. This is because farmers had a hard time meeting food supply demands due to COVID-19.

Farmers, ranchers and producers are having to modify their operations due to the pandemic. One way they do this is by wearing masks.

Many food processors had to slow down or stop food production because of backups in their food supply chain.

Another challenge that the pandemic presented to farmers was that the temporary foreign workers program got suspended. Many producers depend on foreign workers to harvest their crops and keep their operations going.

Northern Alberta had a difficult time harvesting their crops this year because of flooding in Fort McMurray.

The last couple of years have been difficult for farmers for many reasons, which include, having a bad harvest last year, the strike from the CN rail workers, the illegal blockades placed on many railroads and then COVID-19.

John Barlow, Member of Parliament for Foothills, says farmers are looking for support from the federal government.

“So, they’re asking the government to inject some funding for them to at least get through last spring and

they didn’t do that and that certainly would’ve helped put them on a better footing.”

MP Barlow believes that if farmers had access to the Canadian Emergency Business Account, that would have been helpful to them. Barlow claims the United Conservative Party is pushing for farmers to be included in that program.

“We’ve been pushing hard for that to be changed and the Liberal government has promised many times to make that change and I’m hopeful that they will get that resolved and from what I understand, they are in the process of getting that resolved.”

The border closure doesn’t have a major effect on the agriculture industry because it’s still open for commercial traffic. So, that means for the most part farmers are still able to export machinery equipment.

Trevor Lewington, the CEO of Economic Development Lethbridge, believes Lethbridge had a good harvest this year.

“We’ve been more fortunate in Lethbridge because crops this year were much better. We had a relatively good year from a production perspective and COVID certainly made it more complex, but southern Alberta has been relatively better off than some other parts of the province in that respect.”

According to Lewington, it is predicted that southern Alberta will continue to have good weather and good crops, which would prevent problems in our agriculture sector.

He also says that new projects are in the works in the agri-food sector. These projects are expected to span over a two-year period.

One of the projects is focused on reducing food waste through sustainable insect production.

Lethbridge restaurants adjust to COVID-19 restrictions

ALEJANDRA PULIDO
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Lethbridge residents still rely on restaurants to be able to escape their kitchens every once in a while. Some use delivery apps, but many residents prefer to pick up their food themselves.

Restaurant owners in Lethbridge have had to get creative to accommodate a new way of doing business. Only able to offer curbside pick-up and delivery, some changes were necessary to accomplish these tasks.

For Lighthouse Japanese restaurant owner, Ryan Squire, some of the adjustments required him to take a hard look at the menus.

“We had to change our menu a little bit. There were certain things that we just can’t do for take-out and since we didn’t have dine-in service, there was no point in having those,” said Squire.

One of the changes required steaks and most of their deserts to be taken off the menu, as the steaks couldn’t be served at top quality and the desserts don’t travel well.

But with the restrictions, there were also trade-offs, including being able to sell alcohol with delivery.

That also meant pubs were able to stay in business, which helped Hudsons Canada’s Pub stay afloat. But just like other establishments, Hudsons also had to adjust.

One of the changes it had to make was limiting the amount of fresh product kept on hand, which meant buying more frequently, spending more time going to grocery stores, as opposed to getting their large shipments of food.

Because of this, it had to change how



PHOTO BY ALEJANDRA PULIDO

Hudsons Canada’s Pub operating partner Jesse Dixon enters an order for curbside pickup as their new way of doing business.

much they prepared food, which is now done on a daily basis because they don’t go through things as quickly as before.

Operating partner, Jesse Dixon says it was a big learning curve when Hudsons changed to exclusively offering takeout and delivery, as it was only doing 20 per cent of the sales under normal circumstances.

“On top of our regular menu, which we kept the whole time trying to give op-

tions to people, we added like liquor kits that people could take home and do build at home liquor cocktails,” said Dixon.

It also has packaged products that are kits, like an all-inclusive kit for the NHL season, which has some swag, snack and food items, as well as some alcoholic drinks.

The good news is that the measures taken by these restaurants, may not have to stay in place much longer, as the pro-

vincial government will be easing some restrictions regarding dine-in service on Feb. 8.

As Alberta moves to ease restrictions for restaurants and pubs, it will still require a maximum of six people per table, from the same household or the two close contacts for people living alone.

For more information, visit the government of Alberta website.

New local non-profit strives to help homeless

MARIO CABRADILLA
@cantfindmario

The Mustard Seed, a not-for-profit organization, withdrew the rezoning proposal at the end of January for the Ramada Hotel for providing affordable housing and a resource center. According to the organization’s managing director, The Mustard Seed did not receive the funding from the Rapid Housing Initiative (RHI) from the federal government.

However, Byron Bradley remains positive.

“We’re disappointed, but we’re not defeated,” said Bradley, explaining The Mustard Seed is committed to its housing strategy. “We’re going to continue to try to find a solution for people that need a place that they could call home for the rest of their lives.”

“We know that it’s important to have safe and sustainable housing

to fight against poverty and homelessness and to provide rent for people that can’t afford market rent,” said Bradley.

The Mustard Seed, in addition to the rezoning proposal, was also working with a separate initiative at a different location. According to Bradley, the initiative is

a substance-free shelter to provide for people without a home that is not struggling with substance abuse.

“There’s a misconception that if someone’s homeless or experiencing poverty out in the streets, that they struggle with substance abuse,” said Bradley. However, the shelter will also be for people fighting for sobriety looking for a sober environment.

According to the 2018 Homeless Partnership Strategy Coordinate Point-in-Time (PIT) count by the Government of Canada, only 41% of the 233 individuals suffering homeless in Lethbridge lost their home as a result of substance abuse.

In addition to substance abuse and addiction, the most common reasons for the loss of housing according to the report were “job loss (15%), inability to pay rent or mortgage (11%), conflict with spouse/partner (13%), and unsafe housing conditions (10%).”

“We know that we’re new to Lethbridge,” said Bradley, explaining they have been reaching out to the community. “And it’s going to take time to build that trust and respect.”

For more information, The Mustard Seed can be reached at infolethbridge@theseed.ca or the organization’s Lethbridge website.

“There’s a misconception that if someone’s homeless or experiencing poverty out in the streets, that they struggle with substance abuse.”

BYRON BRADLEY



PHOTO BY MARIO CABRADILLA
Lethbridge Alberta homeless statistics as of 2018.

Mayor Chris Spearman not seeking re-election

ALEJANDRA PULIDO
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After almost eight years as the mayor of the City of Lethbridge, Chris Spearman has made the decision to not run for re-election in the fall. He recently announced his decision during a press conference to give possible candidates time to prepare for the Oct. 18 election.

Spearman believes that anybody running for city council in any capacity, should have a vision and an idea about how to deal with social issues in the city. They need to be willing to work together as a team, without trying to impose divisive philosophies on one another, in order to access the services, we desperately need from the provincial government regarding detox services and supported housing.

One of Spearman's regrets as mayor is not receiving anything of significance from any provincial government during his two terms in office.

But not everything has been negative, he has many accomplishments he is very proud of as well.

"I'm pleased with many of the things that we've been able to accomplish as a council over my term as mayor. The largest single private investment in the history of Lethbridge of \$430 million for Cavendish, a fantastic investment. The ATB centre, certainly that's the largest municipal facility that we've constructed in the history of Lethbridge, the most expensive one at \$155 million and recently getting the investment for Lethbridge Exhibition from the province," said Spearman during the press conference.

His decision to not run for re-election had members of city council reflecting on their time with him as well.



PHOTO BY ALEJANDRA PULIDO

Mayor Spearman announced his retirement from office on Jan. 7, 2021 during a press conference at City Hall

One member of city council, councillor Blaine Hyggen released a statement shortly after the announcement, which he later shared on his personal social media accounts.

On his statement he reflects on Spearman's accomplishments saying, "one thing is certain, when the dust settles and when the crisis is over, Mayor Spearman will have left his mark on Lethbridge. Together we worked to deliver on the Cavendish investment, ATB Centre, Exhibition Park and many other projects and outcomes

too numerous to mention."

"We still have many more months until the end of this term and I know that my fellow Councillors along with our city staff will continue to join Mayor Spearman in his commitment to serve the citizens of Lethbridge. I look forward to seeing him through the end of his term," Hyggen added.

There has been no mention of anyone running for office or city council yet, but the applications are open. The information can be found at www.lethbridge.ca

One month after Alberta Health Services EMS dispatch consolidation

ALEJANDRA PULIDO
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It has been almost a month since Alberta Health Services implemented the EMS dispatch consolidation in Lethbridge. The Southern Communications Centre in Calgary has been dispatching ambulances across southern Alberta ever since.

The controversial consolidation took place on Jan. 12, 2021 after a long battle between the provincial government and four Alberta mayors. One of them was Chris Spearman, Mayor of Lethbridge, who announced he will be retiring at the end of his term, a week prior to the AHS changes.

During his retirement announcement Spearman voiced his concerns one more time regarding the EMS consolidation.

"We need to make sure that the needs of the city of Lethbridge are effectively communicated. We really have a bit of a showdown coming next week on Tuesday with ambulance dispatch. If the province goes ahead, it will be a disaster and four previous health ministers have said centralization of dispatch does not make sense. It's going to result in lower service for cities like ours. This particular government and this particular minister are just ignoring that. I've worked with three other mayors to try and communicate that to the minister. I cannot see residents of the city of Lethbridge supporting this government if ambulance dispatch goes ahead," said Spearman.

Unfortunately, the efforts of Mayor Spearman along with the other three mayors from Alberta, had no effect on the decision from the provincial government.



PHOTO BY ALEJANDRA PULIDO

Picture Butte Emergency Services Lead, Justin Chronik, works away during the early stages of AHS consolidation changes on Jan. 19, 2021

By the end of January, the whole province began following the dispatch model that was already implemented for most of Alberta in 2009.

Now when someone calls 911 from Lethbridge or surrounding areas, their call is answered in Lethbridge where they need to answer some questions regarding their situation. If needed, at that point a fire truck will be dispatched, but upon

requesting an ambulance their call gets transferred to Calgary. Once transferred they will need to answer a more specific set of questions regarding their location and type of emergency.

For rural areas like Picture Butte, this process requires an extra step. Lethbridge dispatch has to contact the Picture Butte Fire Department to notify them of a call requiring the fire truck assistance. At that

point, the ambulance needs to be dispatched from Calgary and in some cases, a slight delay has been noticed.

But since the EMS personal is cross trained with fire as well, they all have fire pagers which keeps them informed regarding incoming calls, says EMS team lead Justin Chronik.

This is particularly important for them since firefighters at the fire department in Picture Butte Emergency Services are volunteers.

"We know when a fire call comes in that the ambulance call is coming, so we are on our way here anyway. So yeah, for us we were lucky in that way, as we have an option whereas other areas don't," added Chronik.

As for major obstacles, Picture Butte Fire Department Chief, Frank West said they have not experienced any as of last month. "Since we've transitioned our EMS dispatch from Lethbridge to Calgary, we haven't noticed any operational impacts yet and we are hopeful that the Calgary dispatch centre will provide us with the same service we got from Lethbridge," said West.

The transition seemed to be going smooth until recently, when the four mayors that have been opposed to the consolidation since the beginning wanted their voices heard once again. They mentioned that since the consolidation, their constituencies have experienced delays in service.

Recently the mayor of the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo announced that they will no longer be transferring their 911 calls to AHS Provincial Dispatch Centre and he implied that other municipalities may follow.



OPINION

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PHOTO BY: KARSEN MARCZUK

Mountains like this could be in jeopardy of mining if Alberta's UCP government proceeds with plans in the Crowsnest Pass.

Will coal be affecting our future?

Open-pit coal mining will affect more than just the creeks and rivers, it will affect drinking water, irrigation and wildlife. The Alberta Government needs to stop open-pit coal mines before they begin operation because once they start, there is no going back.

Just recently, the Alberta's United Conservative Party has been facing backlash from thousands of Albertans regarding the rescinding of the coal policy.

On Feb. 8, the UCP decided to once again reinstate the 1976 coal policy after hearing from Albertans, but what if this didn't occur and the Alberta government went ahead with open-pit coal mining?

The Grassy Mountain project is a good example of why the government shouldn't have rescinded the coal policy in the first place.

Grassy Mountain is located just north of Blairmore, Alta. and is expected to start operation in late 2021 or early 2022 covering over 1,500 hectares of land.

One of the major concerns stemming from the proposed operation is selenium, a natural chemical that will be released into the environments and southern Alberta's waterways with the removal of mountain tops to extract coal.

Open-pit coal mining is a surface mining technique that extracts minerals from an open pit in the ground. If selenium is released into the environment and ecosystem, people living in southern Alberta will see an impact. Farmers and ranchers living in southern Alberta rely on clean water to irrigate their crops and for livestock.

According to Agriculture in Alberta published by Alberta Water Portal Society, Alberta is one of the world's most productive agricultural economies and it is Canada's second largest agricultural producer.

Aside from agriculture, endangered species such as the west slope cut-throat trout will also be affected.

According to Riversdale Resources, the company operating the mine says they will be treating the water for any metals before releasing it into the creeks.

"Riversdale Resources is going to build a number of ponds around the periphery of the site and one of the key philosophes about water management on site is to keep clean water clean.

So, water that is not impacted by the mining process will be diverted to sedimentation ponds where the sediment will settle out.

But does this technology actually work?

According to Review of Available Technologies for the Removal of Selenium from Water by North American Metals Council says, "While these physical, chemical and biological treatment technologies have the potential to remove selenium, there are very few technologies that have successfully and/or consistently removed selenium in water to less than 5 ug/L at any scale.

To compare, drinking water in Alberta was scaled at 0.1 ug/L without open-pit coal mines in operation according to Guidelines for Canadian Drinking Water Quality published by authority of the Minister of Health.



Lethbridge woman starts city-wide treasure hunt

KARSEN MARCZUK
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It's not every day that you hear about buried treasure somewhere in Lethbridge, but for one local woman, she has started a city-wide treasure hunt to kick off the year.

Nicolette Dawn has been planning the treasure hunt for a few months for the whole community to enjoy. After being temporarily laid off as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, Dawn began brainstorming different ideas that include having fun while also staying safe.

"I saw the effects COVID-19 has had on the community and I wanted to get people more focused on something a little bit more positive. When [some people] have lost their jobs and stuff like that, I just wanted to give back to the community and spread some positivity," said Dawn.

The hunt for The Lost Treasure of Captain Nicolette Dawn began on Jan. 1, with a new clue being released every Friday on Facebook. The clues are written in a riddle form, so treasure seekers have to solve the riddles before setting sail to find the buried treasure. Dawn has also created bonus clues for treasure seekers to get ahead of their opponents.

"Only three people had access to the bonus clue which includes the bonus clue, the fourth clue and then a video introduction with a bunch of pictures I have taken from around the area where the treasure is buried."

The treasure is believed to be buried 30 centimetres underground, so people are advised to bring a small shovel to help



PHOTO BY KARSEN MARCZUK

Organizer of a city-wide treasure hunt, Nicolette Dawn is excited for people solve her riddles and to search around Lethbridge trying to find her hidden treasure.

uncover the treasure. Dawn encourages individuals and families to seek out the treasure, keeping COVID-19 safety precautions in mind and respecting nature as they search.

Krystal Eves and Shantal Eves-Wolskyj

have been looking for the treasure since the event started. Eves says it has been fun trying to decipher the clues while being able to enjoy the warm January weather.

"It's something to do with the kids, it

gets us outdoors and we've done one dig so far that wasn't successful because after that one there was another clue that kind of threw me off from where I was leaning, but we're still looking for more."

As for Blake and Jenna Briscoe, when asked if they hope another treasure hunt comes along, they say the hunt is fun and exciting, but they are more curious as to where the treasure may be hidden.

"Yes and no, mainly because we really want to find it, but we also don't care if we find it, we just really want to know where it was [buried]."

Dawn says the treasure hunt is affiliated with The Church of the Flying Spaghetti Monster, an organization that stands for the freedom of expression, individuality and religion. The organization is the first official registered church of its kind in Alberta.

"[The organization] did a small clothing drive in December and January, next month we are going to be doing a drive for the food bank," said Dawn. "The organization is also planning a coulee cleanup in the spring because I noticed how much garbage is down around Indian Battle Park and it's disgusting. I'm really big into respecting nature, so during this whole treasure hunt I've been asking people to be super respectful of nature and to not leave a whole bunch of garbage behind."

Dawn says if all goes well and if the treasure is found within the next couple months, she hopes to do another event next year. If you're interested in finding the treasure, you can read all the clues on The Church of the Flying Spaghetti Monster's Facebook page.

Global Game Jam goes on despite COVID-19 pandemic

NATHAN REITER
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Students from both the University of Lethbridge and Lethbridge College had the opportunity to compete in an international event, despite the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

The Global Game Jam event occurred from Jan. 27-31 this year and more than 585 sites from around the world participated. The event provides teams 48 hours to create a game from the ground up.

Allyson Cikor is the organizer for the Lethbridge area Global Game Jam event and an instructor at Lethbridge College. Cikor teaches in the Multimedia, Virtual and Augmented Reality as well as Architectural Animation Technology programs at Lethbridge College. Cikor says the Global Game Jam is meant for everyone regardless of previous game development experience.

"People tend to be nervous because they don't know what the expectations are. They expect they are going to be working with pros and if they don't keep up, they're going to let their team down. The truth is, game jam isn't like that. It's fun, it's non-competitive, it's meant to be really inclusive."

Hosting a jam in Lethbridge is a recent event accord-

ing to Cikor, as more and more people were traveling to Calgary to attend a Jam which inspired her to start a Jam event in Lethbridge.

"Year over year there was more and more of us who go travel to Calgary and even when we got there we still ran into people from Lethbridge."

Cikor adds she was very impressed by the initial turnout at the first event that was hosted in Lethbridge.

"We started it and the very first year we had 30 people, which rivaled Calgary, which surprised me."

Every year, several first-time developers participate in the Global Game Jam.

Katie Allard competed in her first ever Game Jam event this year. Allard, a second-year student in the Architectural Animation Technology program says she was very intimidated when she made the decision to participate.

"I was very, very intimidated going in. I've had some experience in gaming and nerd culture that weren't very welcoming."

Allard says the experience participating in the Game Jam was the opposite of what she expected going into the event. She says her teammates were very welcoming considering it was her first time.

"It was really fun, it was really intense. I don't think I



PHOTO BY GHOST CREATIVE STUDIO

Global Game Jam was held from Jan. 27-31 in Lethbridge this year.

realized how intense a weekend deadline could be until I was modeling everything. Everyone was so nice and so welcoming and really open to ideas."

Part of the reason Allard decided to attend the event was to uphold a personal pact. She says she is not letting fear be a factor as to why she won't try something.

"I made the decision to actually do it like 40 minutes before it started. I was like you got to do it, you can't make decisions out of fear. You got to go for it and I'm glad I did."

Music therapy provides positive impact

JAXON MCGINN
@thewonders132

Music therapists can meet someone's spiritual, psychological and aesthetic needs by producing sounds reminding us that beauty continues to exist in the world.

Music therapy is a discipline in which a Certified Music Therapist (MTAs) uses music purposefully within therapeutic relationships to support devilmment from health and well-being. Music therapists use music safely and ethically to address human needs with a cognitive, emotional, musical, physical, and social lens.

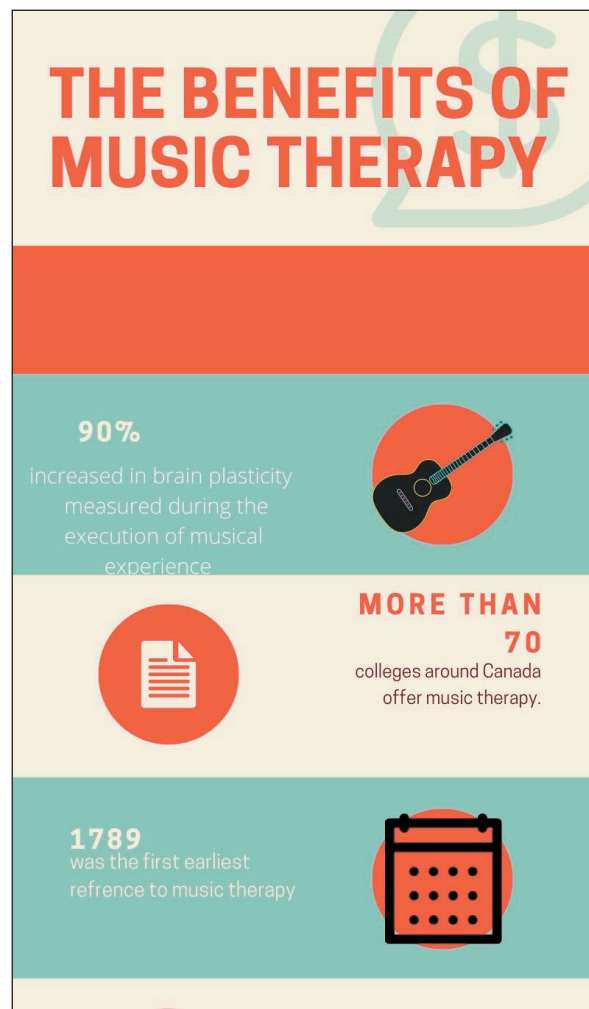
Another benefit of music therapy is the brain waves. Having a strong beat can stimulate the brainwaves to resonate in sync with the rhythm. This can help concentration positive thinking and a slower tempo promoting a calm and meditative state of mind.

Daniel Charlebois is a local musician and has undergone leg surgery from an infection that had come about over the years. After the surgery had gone successfully, he needed to start walking and getting back to his daily routine.

Charlebois had started going to music therapy based on him knowing how well the excellent technique helps him play his music.

Charlebois had tried classical music, which helped him along the way.

"I didn't know classical music would help based on my music therapize said that each individual has a differ-



ent type of experiences and memories and comes from diverse backgrounds and cultures,"

Lisa Nagtegaal is a Calgary therapist and has been in the music therapy business for four years now. Being a music therapist, Nagtegaal sets non-musical goals for her clients like improving speech and maintaining memory or improving social skills, and it's all focused on music.

"As a music therapist here in Calgary, I work with a wide variety of clients who are over 100 plus" said Nagtegaal.

According to musictherapy.org, the history of music therapy the history of music therapy has been around for centuries. Music therapy as a profession in North America originated in hospital settings as veterans returned from the first and second world wars.

Charlebois has never felt any better after he had gone through music therapy.

"You might not think music may help. Erase that off your brain, and I'm one person who has gone through and I'm feeling great".

If you're interested in music therapy as a treatment for yourself or someone you know. You can connect with the Music Therapy Association for Alberta (MTAA) to be referred to a music therapist across the province.

For additional information on music therapy, you can visit the Canadian Association for Music Therapists website at www.musictherapy.ca.

Lethbridge College provides initiatives to support financially struggling international students



Wellness services provides all students with supports in order to achieve their best possible academic success.

PHOTO BY MARIO CABRADILLA

MARIO CABRADILLA
@cantfindmario

Tarun Jassi, a Lethbridge College student, admits his mental health suffered for many months, as he has struggled as a direct result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

"I felt very unmotivated, very sluggish. I wasn't really happy with myself and procrastinated a lot," says Jassi, as if he were alone in the darkness, with a storm pouring over him, heavily affecting his work and education.

His grandfather's passing last year, followed by a breakup several months after, also led to depression. At the same time, isolation stemming from government-mandated pandemic restrictions only made his circumstances worse.

But, Jassi says he was able to overcome his challenges with the support of friends. The invitations to play games or hang out online made a big difference in his life.

To keep moving forward and to help motivate him, he also started working out.

"So, I hit the gym naturally, you know, I lost about 45 pounds now. I was pretty chunky back in the day," says

"If students are seeking different opportunities or if they're looking for different kinds of help to please reach out"

ASHLEY AMSON

Jassi with a laugh.

The college is also trying its best to help students amid the pandemic, offering programs and even mental health first aid training to allow students to support their classmates and friends.

Ashley Amson, the health promotion coordinator

of Wellness Services at the college, implores students to reach out.

"I can't even imagine what they're going through right now," says Amson. "If students are seeking different opportunities or if they're looking for different kinds of help, to please reach out."

Wellness Services, Accessibility Services, and the Lethbridge College Student Association have also created an initiative called a round table session, creating an online space through Zoom for students to connect and chat with each other.

In addition to this, there are a variety of professionals waiting to help students in any way they can.

"There are a number of individuals and wellness services like myself, like Emily Spencer, like Steve Johnson that are available to support students in any capacity that we can," said Amson.

For more information, additional details and contact information can be found at the Wellness Services

eSPORTS

Families use winter sports to escape

JOSIAH SPYKER
@JosiahSpyker

As the COVID-19 pandemic continues, there has been heightened interest in outdoor activities.

As the weather gets colder more people in Lethbridge are flocking to frozen lakes and ponds around the city.

With everything going on, people are looking for an escape from their typical day-to-day lives. Ice fishing has become one of these escapes as the weather gets colder.

Adam James was at Park Lake provincial park and says ice fishing has been a great way to get out and stay active, “You still get to go outside and enjoy the outdoors. You don’t feel so cooped up being stuck at home. It’s great, there’s been some nice weather for the winter.”

James brought his son along with him to fish and says they don’t get out very often, so it was nice to bring his kid outdoors and have a good time.

“We come out here quite a bit in the summer, it’s close to home and easy to take the kid. This is my second time out here ice fishing this winter.”

James says the fish weren’t going crazy, but they were still able to catch some.

“We caught a couple fish earlier in the day, but after that it’s been a few bites.”



PHOTO BY JOSIAH SPYKER

As the weather got colder, kids went down to Nicholas Sheran lake to play some hockey and kill the time. The outdoors have been a popular way for families to get out of the house and have good time during COVID-19.

Ice fishing can test your patience, but nothing beats the feeling of a fish on the hook, but some days the fish choose not to cooperate.

Codie Arola was also fishing at Park Lake and says the fish stopped biting when he showed up, but at least his friend was able to catch some fish.

“So far, we haven’t caught anything since I’ve been here, but they got a few earlier today, I think. So, it’s not too bad.”

Arola also hasn’t been out much, but now the weather’s colder, there’s more opportunities to head out to the lake.

“I’ve only been out here a couple of times and this is actually my second time, the first time was in the summer. So, we came out today to do some fishing.”

Arola says with everything cancelled and nothing to do, fishing is a fun way to kill the time.

“It’s really nice to kick back and get out of the house once in a while”

For those wanting to try ice fishing and aren’t sure about what regulations are in place, information can be found on Alberta Fishing Regulations’ website.

Ice fishing isn’t the only activity people are participating in, kids are coming down to the lake to play hockey and ringette.

The Boyle family was at Park Lake skating and they say, they don’t want people to know how fun it is on the ice, out of fear the lake will become too crowded.

The cold wind sure didn’t stop the Boyle kids, as they skated for hours.

The kids didn’t have much to say, but they did express how much fun they were having being outside.

Local kickboxer climbing his way to top

MARIO CABRIDILLA
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A local kickboxing athlete is training hard for a prestigious Muaythai belt in Mexico next month. Despite being only 24 years old, Cody Jerome is currently Canada’s World Boxing Council MuayThai super-welterweight champion.

However, Jerome wishes to achieve more in the future.

“I want to be a world champion,” says Jerome, explaining that while being Canada’s WBC MuayThai champion is a big accomplishment, he aims for an even bigger achievement. “I want to be known as one of the best to do it from this country.” Cody did not begin training with becoming a champion in mind. He chose kickboxing to get in shape but loved the challenge of the sport and found his passion.

Darcy Jerome, Cody’s father, recalls the moment Cody started training.

“When we went into the gym and he said, ‘Dad, I want to try fighting,’” said Darcy.

“You know, I thought that that’s great. Let’s do

it, get in there and do that. Did I think it was going to turn into what it is now? No, I didn’t. And I don’t think he did either.”

Cody’s looking forward to fight for the World MuayThai Council’s intercontinental title against Jose Ruelas in Mexico on March 13, 2020. However, the athlete is confident for a win.

“I haven’t been in the ring in eight months,” said Cody, excited for the opportunity to fight

for a title like the WFC get a chance to fight for a prestigious title like the WMC.

However, after everything has been said and done,

Cody hopes to leave a legacy of his own. “You know, when I’ve done this sport, I want people to remember my name. I want to leave a legacy, and I want to bring this sport to a new level here in North America, I don’t think kickboxing gets the audience it deserves.”

Cody will fight as a co-main event on Triumphant 10’s World Muay Thai Council title defense by Triumphant Combat Sports, a promotion based on the United States.



PHOTO SUBMITTED BY ROBERTA NIKKEL OF 2D STUDIO PHOTOGRAPHY
After being out of the ring for eight month’s Cody Jerome preps to become a world champion kickboxer.

Lethbridge Hurricanes adjust to life after COVID-19

JOSIAH SPYKER
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The Lethbridge Hurricanes are expecting to lose a lot of money this season with no ticket sales.

During the Hurricanes' annual general meeting the team announced they are looking at a \$1.3-million loss this season.

With a shortened season scheduled for the end of February, no fans and no ticket sales mean not enough money coming in.

Terry Huisman, the general manager of business for the Hurricanes, says the situation wasn't ideal, but they are looking at different ways to soften the blow.

"We have the league. We're lobbying with the governments of the province as well as the federal government and are trying to find options to hope-

fully secure some extra financing."

Huisman says this season will be tough, but they are hopeful finances will return to normal once fans are allowed back.

"We've had a lot of conversations with our corporate partners. They've all indicated to us they're in for the long haul, I think there will be some pains there, but I don't see a long-term turnaround as far as that's concerned."

Huisman is also confident the fans will be excited to come back once they can ensure the public's safety.

"As far as the fans are concerned, as soon as the comfort level is there for the casual fan or as the vaccines roll out, that'll be a big part that will play a factor for us. I think it'll come down to confidence and whatever restrictions are lifted to allow fans

back in public venues."

The Alberta Government has cleared the start of the WHL season for Feb. 26. The Lethbridge Hurricanes will face off in a central division consisting of only 24 games and a playoff format that has not been finalized. The teams in the Central Division consist of the Red Deer Rebels, Edmonton Oil Kings, Lethbridge Hurricanes, Medicine Hat Tigers and Calgary Hitmen.

During the Hurricanes' virtual annual generals meeting, Peter Anholt, the teams' general manager says the playoffs will probably look different this year.

"We're going to have a divisional playoff for sure, but as far as league goes and Memorial Cup, we're unsure and will wait to hear back from the league."

In a press release from



PHOTO BY JOSIAH SPYKER

When the 2019-20 WHL season was cut short, it left players hanging up their skates not knowing when they will be back playing hockey. The 2020-21 WHL season has been approved by the Alberta Government and will start on Feb. 26.

the WHL on Jan. 28, Ron Robinson, the WHL commissioner says they are very excited to finally get the season underway.

"The WHL appreciates the support we have

received from Alberta Health Services as we work towards a safe return to play in the province. With our extensive protocols and the necessary approvals now in place,

we are looking forward to play getting underway in Alberta and allowing our players to continue their development at the highest level in the Canadian system."

Alberta business owners are flexible due to new restrictions

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New COVID-19 restrictions and the constant change in message and have had many small business owners in limbo over the past 11 months.

As of Feb. 8, Alberta will roll into Step 1 on the government's "A Path Forward" plan. As part of the new restrictions, restaurants are able to open to in-person dining to a maximum of six per table from the same household, limited school sports, team sport activities and one-on-one indoor fitness training take place by appointment only.

Some gyms have had to change everything due to cycle opening and closing due to varying restrictions.

Travis Steinke is the owner of Fuel Performance and Lifestyle, a gym that relies on in-person cross fit classes.

Steinke says everything about the business has changed since the pandemic started.

"Everything about our business has changed. We did our best to continue to provide a service to people who went here. We lent out more than \$40,000 in equipment and offered at-home coaching through online platforms. It's really tough to replicate the things we can do here."

Steinke adds that the business model for Fuel will remain the same as pre-pandemic but will remain flexible for members in difficult situations.

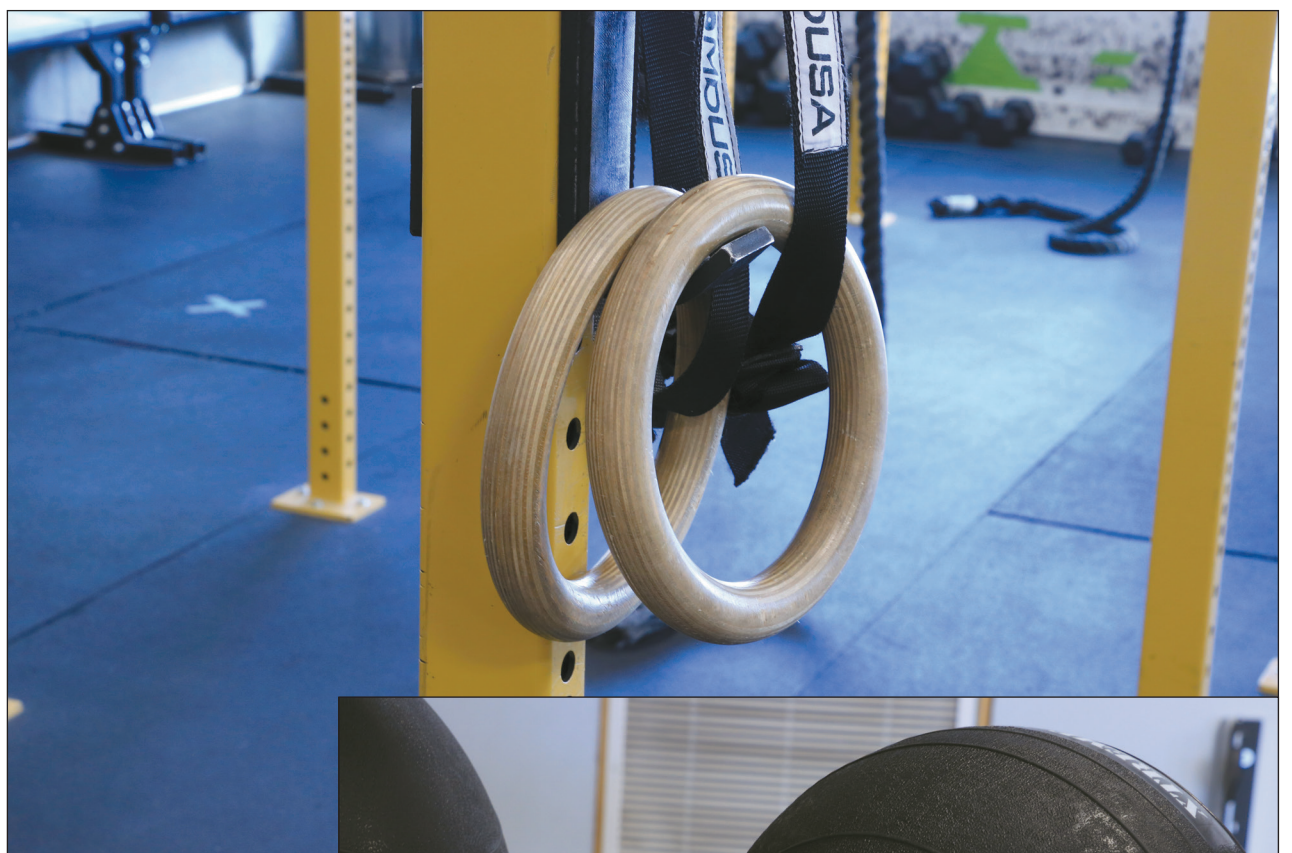
"Our business will never be an online business. The utility of playing a sport, you have to meet your team and your coaches, there's a dynamic you can not replicate online.

Once we are reopened, we will provide some remote services for people that are at-risk or work jobs in health care where they have a social responsibility. Our goal is an in-person community-based atmosphere."

Many people who frequent fitness centers are disappointed that only one-on-one personal training is allowed. Eli Mason says that it only allows a small portion of people to return to the gym.

"Pretty much everyone I know and everyone I lift with doesn't have a personal trainer or they can't afford it. It's only letting a very tiny amount of people return to the gym, I don't think it's a great compromise."

According to *Statistics Canada*, only 55 per cent of



PHOTOS BY NATHAN REITER

Business owners are happy that customers are able to begin working out again once new COVID-19 restrictions come into play on Feb. 8.

Canadians are likely to report good mental health. This is down from 68 per cent in 2019. Mason says that gyms are key to mental and physical health for many.

"Physical activity is proven to reduce stress and anxiety. It's a passion for a lot of people especially those in body building shows and power lifting meets. It's

extremely important for many, for their physical and mental well being."

Fuel Lifestyle and Performance is scheduled to start its sports team training programs with limited capacity on Feb. 10.

