Community of faith answers the challenge of staying connected

WHILE RESPECTING PANDEMIC PROTOCOL

Moore Memorial United Church in Redwater continues to serve its congregation members in Redwater and the Thorhild, Abee and Radway areas even though the church building is closed to the public because of COVID-19.

“You might say that our congregation is learning what it means to be a community of faith without a building as we try to connect with one another through e-mail and phone and text,” said Reverend Wendy Galloway.

Weekday mornings she sends out an e-mail with a prayer and a blessing, so people may begin their day knowing that God is with them and that they are missed.

“The feedback that I have received has been favorable, so my plan is to continue this practice,” said Galloway.

On weekends, the worship bulletin and a reflection is sent out through e-mail so people might have church in their homes. Every part of the service is included including The Happy Box which encourages people to be grateful for how they are blessed.

“People can also look into hand delivering the Sunday bulletins and some prayers to those who cannot receive them through e-mail.”

In some cases, the e-mails are sent to a family member who passes them along.

Galloway is presently familiarizing herself with Zoom in the hope that congregation members can gather in small groups and have the choice of logging in or phoning in to calls.

“This is ongoing work,” she said. “Hopefully, at some point, we can have a Coffee Check-in kind of group or bible study. It is so important in this time of self-isolation to remain connected to our loved ones and to our community. It is our ‘ministry of presence’ that assures us that we are not alone, and so we phone and check in with one another.”

She added that during this stressful time it is also important to develop a spiritual practice. This could be as simple as keeping a gratitude journal in which to list your blessings. It could also be meditation, listening to music or going out for an early morning walk.

“Setting some quiet time aside to spend in prayer and with the Holy Bible helps us to center ourselves for the day, knowing that we are not alone,” said Galloway. “We walk with God and with one another.”

Galloway serves as a half time minister with Moore Memorial and continues with those duties despite the COVID-19 pandemic.

She began experiencing many of COVID-19 symptoms on March 21, but was not formally diagnosed. She has remained at home since that day because she still has symptoms.

“There is no question of visiting or meeting even in small groups, so we need to stay connected through other means,” said Galloway. “Even if I was healthy, I wouldn’t take the chance that I might expose someone to a flu bug or something worse.”

PANDEMIC PROTOCOL

Moore Memorial United Church in Redwater sits peacefully while the congregation remains at home to fight the pandemic.

No town lay-offs but fewer seasonal staff being hired

The Town of Redwater is hiring fewer seasonal summer staff than usual, but has not laid off any permanent employees due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

“For this year we will not be hiring seasonal Public Works staff,” said town manager Larry Davidson. “We plan to hire three seasonal staff for the parks department as we need assistance to maintain green spaces and all the flower pots.” Normally the town hires one Parks seasonal staff member plus four.

Davison said plans for the outdoor pool are being developed because an opening date for it is not known. “We plan to get the pool as close to operational as possible so that we could realistically open within a few days, should the opportunity arise,” he said. “We still need to determine how/when pool attendants fit into this ever changing puzzle.”

Administration office staff were divided into two teams for the town’s Business Continuity Plan. They alternate working in the office Monday, Wednesday Friday and Monday, Wednesday Tuesday on alternating weeks and work from home the other days.

“This will ensure minimal disruption to the office should one staff member get sick, which would require the other staff to self-isolate as well,” said Davidson. “Staff are required to submit regular work plans to managers prior to working from home. Each morning we connect for a conference call using Zoom to discuss issues and work assignments.”

Neil Kolacz

Neil Kolacz, formerly of Thorhild and Grande Prairie, died suddenly at the age of 61 in Voesnova, on March 24, 2020. Survived by his loving family and friends, he will be sadly missed and fondly remembered as a very creative man with a giving heart who was passionate about life and learning.

May God grant him eternal peace.
Food bank was very busy in March

Anthony Price in his Thorhild Bulldogs jacket in a photo from an event before the pandemic.

The Redwater Fellowship of Churches Food Bank experienced a 50 percent increase in demand during March because of the COVID-19 pandemic. More volunteers are needed, plus donations of the usual staples and a few special items relating to the pandemic.

Last year in March the food bank gave out 43 hampers. This year volunteers filled 41 regular hampers and 22 hampers going out to people who were affected by COVID-19 for a total of 63 hampers, about 48 per month. In 2018 the total was 560 (47/month).

“Last year, due to schools being closed, we also may need some to deliver hampers somewhere else,” said President Mcheldt Bremen. She speculated that the need for hampers may be reduced this year as government supports through program grants distribute to people, but even so, expects the food bank to serve a record number of clients.

To meet that need a number of items are required. If donations of fresh fruit are collect-ed in the donation bin at Redwater IGA, the food bank will not need to purchase oranges and apples for hampers. As well, the food bank requires toilet paper, feminine hygiene products, pasta sauce and peanut butter.

“All staples are always welcome,” said Bremen. “Now we are looking for empty syrup bottles and bleach. Volunteers will mix up dish-infectant spray to give with the hampers. I think our clients can really use that,” Bremen said.

The food bank is looking for more volunteers. The work load is increasing and some current volunteers have had to step back or cut back on volunteering.

“We need people who are healthy and we also may need some to deliver hampers sometime in the future,” said Bremen.

Statistics for the hampers required because of COVID-19 are as follows: 13 because of job loss, eight from reduced hours/low wages, and one for a parent staying home because of schools being closed.

In 2019 the food bank gave out a total of 581 hampers, about 48 per month. In 2018 the total was 560 (47/month).

The Redwater Fellowship of Churches Food Bank serves Redwater and area of Thorhild County.
Dust Abatement
Applications for dust abatement will be accepted until June 1 for the 2020 season. The cost is $225/100 m³. Applications can be found at www.redwater.ca or email redwater@redwater.ca.

Organic Waste
Pickup of organic waste bins begins Friday, May 1, 2020. Organic bins should be placed at curbside with garage bins. Please leave 1 m between the bins. For a list of what can be placed in the organic bins, contact the Town Office or visit redwater.ca.

Volunteer Week is April 19-25
Thank You!
The Town of Redwater Mayor, Council and staff would like to recognize the organizations, clubs, community groups and individuals for sharing the gift of time this past year. Thank you for making Redwater a great place to live, work, and play!

Pitch-in Week April 19-26
Let’s all do some outdoor spring cleaning and beautify our town! Let’s individually pitch in to spruce up our town after a long winter.

Contact Us
Phone: (780) 942-3519
Town Office
4924 - 47 Street
P.O. Box 397
Redwater, AB T0A 2W0
redwater@redwater.ca

New to Redwater? Stop by the Town Office for a “Welcome Bag.”

Information Bulletin
April 2020

COVID 19
We recognize the impact the COVID-19 pandemic may be having on our residents and businesses. The Town of Redwater’s top priority is the health and safety of our residents and staff. We have been following the Alberta Health and Provincial Operations Centre recommendations closely, implementing recommendations as quickly as possible. As the situation is continually evolving, I want to assure everyone that we have been reviewing our business continuity plans and implementing safety measures to ensure service delivery is provided with no interruptions. Our staff are second to none, showing dedication to service delivery while potentially being exposed to COVID-19.
I would like to remind everyone that restrictions are in place for mass gatherings. Albertans are prohibited from attending gatherings of more than 15 people, and they must continue to observe two metres (6 ft.) of physical distancing. This includes events both indoors and outdoors, such as family gatherings, weddings and funerals. Further details are available at https://www.alberta.ca/restrictions-on-gatherings-and-businesses.aspx.
Businesses should also be aware of the new Essential Services Measures List, which identifies broad categories of business who can continue operation. These businesses must implement measures to maintain social distancing. A full list of restrictions is available online at www.alberta.ca/essential-services.aspx.

We have also discouraged use of our playgrounds at this time. As it is impossible to prevent someone from using a facility, we encourage anyone using the equipment to use hand sanitizer or wash with soap and water for at least 20 seconds before and after use.
We must maintain vigilance both at home and within the workplace. We are in unprecedented times, and we need to be more mindful than ever before, to reach out to those we love around us. Whether that’s by phone, Facetime, or whatever technology is available.

2019 Surplus
There is a projected change in accumulated surplus of $303,265 before budgeted reserve transfers in 2019.
Contributors to this included savings within wages due to staff turnover, lower insurance premiums and increased revenue for interest and fines.

Budgeted Additions:
- Fire: $25,273 – capital equipment (per policy)
- Cemetery: perpetual care $200 (per bylaw)
- General utility reserve: $60,783 (per bylaw – capital service charge on each utility)
- Special Projects: $1,138 to Program Subsidy

Other Additions:
- Pembina Place – add $25,000 for emergency wiring for Pembina Place
- Special Projects – add $16,500 for required repairs for the Derrick

Utility Payments
The Government is committed to ensuring Albertans have access to utilities during the COVID-19 outbreak and has directed utility companies that they cannot cut consumers off from these vital services.
This provincial program came into effect on March 18, 2020 and will run through June 18, 2020. However, the Town has extended this program until June 30, 2020.
During this time, no utility services will be disconnected and utility penalties will not be applied until July 1, 2020.
Residents are encouraged to continue payments if they can. Arrears letter will continue to be sent at the beginning of each month, however, disconnection notices will not be delivered until July.
Payments by credit card will also be allowed until June 30, 2020. Giving customers more options for payment during this time period.
Those residents on pre-authorized payments need to contact the office if they wish to be temporarily removed from this program for utilities. If you have any questions please call 780 942 3519.

2020 Property Taxes
Council has moved the 2020 tax payment deadline from June 30 to August 31 to assist residents during this time. Tax notices will still be mailed in May and residents are encouraged to pay if they can. Monthly payments will continue for those enrolled on the pre-authorized payment plan, unless the Town is notified to be removed from the program. If removed all 2020 taxes would be due by August 31 without penalty.
Tax penalty will not be applied until September 1, 2020 based on the revised due date of the notice.

Income Tax Help
Due to COVID-19, the deadline for filing personal income tax and benefit returns that were due on April 30, 2020 has been extended to June 1, 2020. Volunteer Tax appointments are presently cancelled with the closure of Pembina Place, please call the Community Services Office at 780-942-4101 for further information.

Council Meetings
To provide for physical distancing measures we have changed the process for attending our upcoming council meetings.
We have arranged for the public to call to listen to meetings live. Please check our website or Facebook page for call-in information for each meeting.
- Regular Council Meeting Tuesday, April 21 @ 6:30pm
- Committee of the whole Meeting Tuesday, April 28 @ 6:00pm

www.redwater.ca
Thorhild County switches to shift work to try to keep half staff intact in worst case scenario if virus hits

Thorhild County staff are working in shifts to ensure staff will be available even if some employees need to stay home and self-isolate to help prevent the spread of COVID-19. Residents who need assistance such as having food delivered or who are having problems coping with isolation are urged to call the county office for support.

CAO Paul Hanlan said many things changed during the past couple of weeks. One person was laid off because that individual felt better personal supports could be accessed that way.

"Currently the plan is no significant or widespread layoffs," said Hanlan.

Seasonal summer staff have been recruited.

The two mower operators for roadside mowing will start as usual in mid June, pending weather and regulations from the provincial and federal governments.

Seasonal staff for the county summer programs, the Thorhild swimming pool and the Half Moon Lake campground have also been lined up; however, they do not have a start date for employment. Those workers generally start at the end of April or in early May. Hanlan said they have a tentative start date of June 1, but that depends on the province allowing those programs to go ahead.

Permanent county employees are divided into teams that do not work at the same time. Beginning April 6 administration staff work every second week in the office. During off weeks they work from home. About half the staff have enough work to put in full time work at home, others work part time and use vacation time or accrued overtime.

Public Works has other arrangements. The mechanical staff are split into two shifts, with one working 6:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. and the other shift 3:00 to 11:00 p.m. The teams do not share tools or equipment.

“We’re just trying to ensure that if, God forbid, something happens, we’re just taking half the staff out for 14 days," explained Hanlan. “We’ll like to reiterate that despite the lack of public access to the buildings, it is business as usual. As usual business can be in COVID-19.”

County staff are preparing for possible spring flooding. Residents should call 1-825-845-2020 to report flooding. The bridge on Twp 590 east of Half Moon Lake that was damaged in the spring floods of 2018 is being replaced this year. Tenders go out this month and the work should be completed by fall. To assist with that time line the county has already ordered the bridge girders.
Preparing for the Spring Melt

The sun is out and the snow is starting to melt! Sturgeon County Transportation Services takes a proactive approach to drainage. Crews start to clear problem areas early in the year before spring thaw arrives. To reduce the chance of any potential drainage issues on your property, here are some tips:

- Check your culverts and clear snow to help open up any blockages
- Keep stormwater drains clear of debris and ice
- Clear debris out of eavestroughs and direct downspouts away from your home
- Make sure your sump pump and weeping tile is working properly

If you have concerns, please Report a Road Concern at sturgeoncounty.ca

Fluctuating Temperatures Create Thin Ice

With last week’s warm temperatures, ice is thinning out and is not safe to walk on. Sturgeon County DOES NOT permit or regulate recreational use of storm ponds. Please be safe and stay off frozen bodies of water as they can be unpredictable.

Mayor’s Golf Tournament Cancelled

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and concern for everyone’s health, we have decided to cancel the Mayor’s Annual Golf Tournament. We appreciate the early offers of sponsorship to help raise funds for West Sturgeon Aging in Place Foundation (West Country Hearth) and the Jessica Martel Memorial Foundation (Jessie’s House).

While the times are challenging, if you have the means, we encourage your continued support of these two organizations providing valuable resources to the most vulnerable people of Sturgeon County and the surrounding region.

Increased Risk of Family Violence

Help is still available even if you are infected or in isolation

If you or someone you know is experiencing abuse of power in a family or other trusting relationship where people rely on each other and violence or well-being is being threatened, it is important to know where you can turn during this pandemic.

Call 911 if there is immediate danger. Police and RCMP will respond even if you have COVID-19 or are in self-isolation or quarantine and experiencing symptoms. Additional resources are available:

- Living Well Counselling: (780) 722-1479 Sturgeon County Community Social Worker;
- Stop Abuse in Families: (780) 460-2195;
- Jessica Martel Foundation: (780) 939-5289;
- Child abuse: 1-800-387-KIDS (5437);
- Elder abuse: 310-1818 (Family Violence Info Line)

To learn more visit alberta.ca/EndFamilyViolence

Weekly FYI is digital at sturgeoncounty.ca


 Meetings are now electronic in accordance with section 199 of the Municipal Government Act (MGA). Council Chambers is closed to the public, watch the live stream at sturgeoncounty.ca

Stay Informed with COVID-19 Updates

Work Zone Safety

Sturgeon County is committed to maintaining essential services during this unprecedented time, which includes protecting the health and safety of our workers so they are available to provide those services.

In the event you require onsite services from any of our team members, we ask that you:

- respect designated work zones/restrictions and signage;
- maintain a minimum distance of 2 metres away from all workers/people at the location;
- refrain from shaking hands, wave or smile instead; and
- refrain from passing goods of any kind to our workers, (ie documents)

Workers will be wearing necessary protective equipment, these measures protect our workers, you, and your communities.

Local Libraries Offer Temporary Cards for Free

While libraries are closed to the public in all of the towns, each are providing a range of outreach or virtual services. Please check your local library’s website as programs and services are changing frequently.

The Northern Lights Library System (NLLS) has extended a free/temporary library card to any Sturgeon Resident to access e-books and other electronic services. More information is available at https://www.nlls.ab.ca/resources

Alexander First Nation Road Closure

A State of Emergency declaration was issued by Alexander First Nation (AFN) Council on April 3rd. To limit the pandemic risk. Please note outside visitors are not permitted to enter AFN. Access to affected roads is being monitored and all travelers will be detained unless they are AFN residents. This may impact Sturgeon County residents in their regular travel patterns.

Dust Suppression Early Bird Deadline is April 15

A $100 late fee is added to orders placed between Apr. 16 - May 17. Application forms will not be accepted after May 17, 2020.

Go to AlbertaHealthServices.ca for the latest COVID-19 information, guidance and resources from the province.
**4H show and sale will go ahead -- but may look different this year**

The Newbrook Beef club met recently via Zoom. With all activities being cancelled, the Newbrook 4H Beef members still plan on having their show. Although the show might look a little different for 2020, one idea is that they use video at home and tatham into the 4H, but it is still unsure. The members will have to lead their animal and prove that they have worked with their project. The members are still required to have the animals ready to show, and complete record books.

Currently all 4-H meetings and events have been cancelled until May 31, but online meetings are taken place across the province.

The Newbrook Beef club will be selling nine steers and four hogs. The difficult part is that the members will potentially have to find buyers, especially since there may be no auction.

The members will still be selling their beef — either an individual sale or even boxed meat.

**Redwater, Thorhild Ag Societies welcome early release of grant funds by province**

Alberta Agricultural Societies will receive their annual provincial grant early this year. “It will be a good thing because a lot of Ag Societies have events that are potentially cancelled,” said Redwater & District Agricultural Society president, Travis Reed.

In an April 9 joint press release Alberta Association of Agricultural Societies (AAAS) president, John McCarthy and CEO Tim Carson said Alberta Agriculture and Forestry will expedite grant funding and have it out to local agricultural societies as early as May. The members of the Redwater Ag Society have made decisions on whether or not the local Farmers’ Market will open as usual in June and have not discussed the possibility of cancelling the Discovery Days fair in August.

The annual provincial grant is based on a variety of factors, including facilities operated and the number of events held. Redwater generally receives $15,000 to $16,000.

“This is great news as we are still receiving year end operating bills, and due to COVID-19 we had to close the building three weeks earlier than expected,” said Thorhild & District Agricultural Society president, Troy Vetch. “As a result of closing the (arena) earlier, we have received less income than projected for March. Getting this grant earlier helps with our cash flow position now and keeps it in a positive value. Due to COVID-19, we all have challenges going forward. It is very reassuring that the government has Ag Societies’ best interests at heart. Spending money in early summer, the Ag Societies will generally receive $15,000 to $16,000. “It will be a good thing because a lot of Ag Societies have events that are potentially cancelled,” said Redwater & District Agricultural Society president, Travis Reed. “In an April 9 joint press release Alberta Association of Agricultural Societies (AAAS) president, John McCarthy and CEO Tim Carson said Alberta Agriculture and Forestry will expedite grant funding and have it out to local agricultural societies as early as May.” The members of the Redwater Ag Society have made decisions on whether or not the local Farmers’ Market will open as usual in June and have not discussed the possibility of cancelling the Discovery Days fair in August. The annual provincial grant is based on a variety of factors, including facilities operated and the number of events held. Redwater generally receives $15,000 to $16,000.

“As a result of closing the (arena) earlier, we have received less income than projected for March. Getting this grant earlier helps with our cash flow position now and keeps it in a positive value. Due to COVID-19, we all have challenges going forward. It is very reassuring that the government has Ag Societies’ best interests at heart. “We appreciate the immediate action of Alberta Agriculture and Forestry of our request to advance the grant processing for our Ag Societies. Instead of receiving the grant monies in early summer, the Ag Societies will receive their funding as early as May now. This advancement of funding can primarily assist in expenses to maintain facilities in this time of shutdown. We will continue to work with the Alberta Agriculture and Forestry to further alleviate any additional situations that may arise during this time of crisis.”
THORHILD COUNTY SERVICES

Thorhild County is taking COVID-19 Pandemic very seriously. We will continue to follow all recommendation made by Alberta Health Services, in order to mitigate the impact of this virus on our community.

Services are continuing and staff are available to assist you. If you do not have access to the Internet, there are resources available by phone.

County payments can be made by: Online banking, telephone banking, mail in payments and a drop box (at Thorhild County administrative office) is available. We now have available Option Pay, to pay utility bills and taxes by credit card.

Check www.thorhildcounty.com

PAY YOUR UTILITY BILLS OR TAXES ONLINE

Is now available to pay utilities and taxes by credit card. You will be responsible for the fee charged by Option Pay.

Look for the Option Pay logo on the Thorhild County Home Page http://www.thorhildcounty.com/

COMMUNITY VOLUNTEER INCOME TAX PROGRAM

New deadline to file taxes is June 1, 2020

Federal benefits you are currently receiving will not be interrupted

All tax clinics have been cancelled.

For Thorhild County residents that have low income and very basic tax returns.

Income Limits for the 2019 tax year are as follows:

- Singles up to $35,000
- Couples combined income up to $45,000
- Families with a combined income up to $52,500

For more information or to make arrangements to drop off your information to get taxes done please call Carolyn at 780-398-2810 or 780-656-6260

COMMUNITY SERVICES DEPARTMENT

Though programs and activities have been cancelled, staff are available by phone to help you during these uncertain times.

Please call to speak to one of our staff

Manager of Community Services, Carolyn Sledowski
780-398-2810 or 780-656-6260

Family Resource Coordinator, Tammy Kuelfer 780-656-6016

Family School Liaison Worker, Corrine Arsenault
780-398-2813 or 780-206-0018

Redwater Food bank is still available to help you during this time please call and leave a message and they will get back to you with information 780-942-2061. Live in Thorhild County and unable to pick up your hamper then please call Carolyn to see if arrangements can be made.

Phone: 780-398-3741   www.thorhildcounty.com

ENFORCEMENT SERVICES

During the COVID-19 pandemic Enforcement Services is continuing to serve our residents by increasing rural and hamlet patrols. Enforcement Services is still be accepting complaints, questions, or concerns from residents and there are no changes to Enforcement Services response to critical and emergency matters.

Measures of little to no physical contact relating to reports, complaints, providing statements and any communication with Enforcement Services are being taken to ensure the safety of rate payers, visitors and officers.

PLEASE CALL
1-825-845-2020 for all Enforcement Services issues and 911 in emergency situations.

As always, if you are feeling unwell or are experiencing any of the symptoms consistent with COVID-19, please stay at home. Public safety is our top priority.
**Redwater moves property tax deadline to end of August**

Redwater residents and businesses have and extra two months to pay their municipal property taxes this year.

During its April 8 meeting council changed the property tax due date from June 30 to Aug. 31 for 2020. Council will consider amending the Tax Penalty Bylaw to defer the July 1 penalty on unpaid taxes to Sept. 1 at a future meeting. Corporate Services manager Diane Pyssmeny advised that while the tax payment due date is not recorded in any bylaw or policy, tax penalty dates are set by bylaw.

Staff will research the implications of the provincial deferral of the nonresidential education property tax when the provincial government is preparing for municipalities related to property tax and COVID-19.

Currently the province has stated Education property tax rates will be the same as last year. Collection of non-residential education property tax for businesses will be deferred for six months, so municipalities are expected to set education property tax rates as usual but defer collection. Redwater’s non-residential education property tax total is estimated at $326,400.

Deemed amounts will be repaid in future tax years.

**COVID-19 reported in Sturgeon region, but Thorhild, Smoky Lake remain at zero**

The Sturgeon region is the only one in The Review and The Free Press circulation areas with reported cases of COVID-19.

As of April 8, the Sturgeon County region had nine reported cases of COVID-19 of which five of the people had already recovered. Four were active cases and zero deaths were reported.

Both the Thorhild and Smoky Lake county regions had zero reported cases.

For reporting purposes, each county includes the urban communities within it. The above data was taken from the Government of Alberta website April 9.
Aspen View Public Schools offers hampers to families in need

During this unprecedented time, Aspen View Public Schools understands that many families face unique challenges and the need for food could be greater than ever. Aspen View Public Schools is reallocating the Alberta Schools Nutrition Grant funds to create food hampers for school families who may be in need.

The Alberta Schools Nutrition Grant was provided to every school division for the 2019-20 school year. The purpose of the grant is to create a daily snack or meal available at no cost to any school families that may require assistance during these challenging times.

Aspen View Public Schools has reallocated the funds remaining from Alberta Schools Nutrition Grant to create food hampers for school families who may be in need.

Hampers will be available in each of the communities served by Aspen View. Pick-up procedures in each community will be shared at the school level once details have been finalized. The first round of hampers were expected to be available in each Aspen View community by April 14 with a second round of hampers planned to be available during the week of April 20-24.

The number of hampers available in each round will be limited, based on product availability and grant funds remaining. “It is very important that we continue to support our local community businesses at this time,” Aspen View Public Schools Superintendent Neil O’Shea said. “All schools have been directed to work with local grocery stores to access the products for the hampers locally, as much as possible.”

In this region Aspen View operates schools in Thorhild, Smoky Lake and Vilna.

County approves emergency partnership funding plan to enable agility in initial response

Through support of an amendment to the Sturgeon Regional Emergency Management Partnership Agreement (SREMP), Sturgeon County Council put up to $100,000 into the hands of the Director or Deputy Director of Emergency Management at “the onset of any emergency or state of local emergency.”

The amendment to the SREMP Agreement was made during the March 31 Council meeting. The designated staff “are approved to spend up to $100,000 in order to commence and support initial operations of the partnering municipalities. Initial response costs will be the responsibility of the affected municipality,” said Scott MacDougall, Chief Operations Officer/Director of Emergency Management (DEM).

“A DEM will be required to obtain further spending approvals from the affected Council. While provincial disaster assistance and recovery programs may provide financial aid after a municipal disaster, funds to create food hampers, available at no cost to any school families who may be in need. Hamps will be available in each of the communities served by Aspen View. Pick-up procedures in each community will be shared at the school level once details have been finalized. The first round of hampers expected to be available in each Aspen View community by April 14 with a second round of hampers planned to be available during the week of April 20-24.

The number of hampers available in each round will be limited, based on product availability and grant funds remaining. “It is very important that we continue to support our local community businesses at this time,” Aspen View Public Schools Superintendent Neil O’Shea said. “All schools have been directed to work with local grocery stores to access the products for the hampers locally, as much as possible.”

In this region Aspen View operates schools in Thorhild, Smoky Lake and Vilna.
Evan and Aiden Pointer stand with a Social project decorating the front window of their home in Redwater April 9. Schools throughout Alberta are closed due to the COVID-19 pandemic, with all grades doing school work at home.

Smoky Lake County continues to provide all services with its full complement of staff during the COVID-19 pandemic.

With the exception of closing central and shop offices to public foot-traffic, we have not reduced any services, so we have not laid off any staff,” advised CAO Cory Ollikka April 7. “Our operations are unaffected, and all work in all departments is continuing with little interruption.”

Specific measures were taken in each department to maximize social distancing. Office staff are doing work at the offices and from home on a rotational basis to maximize social distancing in the office buildings.

At this time the county has no plans to change its usual summer staffing because all of it is solitary work such as grass cutting that lends itself well to the physical distancing requirements currently required by the COVID-19 pandemic.

At this time county campgrounds are scheduled to open in May.

“Things like playgrounds are likely to remain closed, but so far there is no restriction on the camp sites. New information from the province comes out every day, and we are watching what will happen with provincial and other camp areas.”

It’s time to applaud this country’s volunteers” is the theme in Sturgeon County Council proclaimed April 19–25 National Volunteer Week 2020 at the Council meeting on March 31.

The week is an opportunity to “celebrate the power of volunteerism while ensuring compliance with all Alberta Health Services requirements,” noted Manager of Family & Community Support Services Scott Rodda. “Our annual celebration of community excellence was to be hosted on April 21 but due to the current circumstances of COVID-19 it has been postponed at this time.”

He added, “We will find alternative means of acknowledging our volunteers.”

“Amid the COVID-19 pandemic a number of community members have given of their time and therefore this is a unique and opportune time to also recognize those efforts,” he concluded.

Mayor Alanna Hnatiw in making the proclamation noted volunteers “mentor our children, feed our hungry, comfort our most vulnerable, beautify our green spaces and fundraise for our charitable organizations.”

“Volunteers come from all walks of life, are of all ages and help in many different ways,” she said. “The collective result of the work done by our County’s volunteers is a more desirable place to live.”

Hnatiw concluded “during this pandemic volunteers can informally support people who may be vulnerable, however they need to prioritize their safety and the safety of the community members by complying with all Alberta Health Services requirements.”
Effective MARCH 5, 2020 at 8:00 AM the following road restrictions are in place:

Gravel Roads

Assigned Designated Routes according to Conditions; Prior to any type of hauling, Public Works must be contacted as several gravel roads may be closed from any type of hauling. ** Public Works may accommodate heavy hauling during early morning periods when the frost is still in the ground. **

Posted Oil Based and Paved Roads

75 % Axle Weight

Any and all proposed hauling activity must be reported by contacting: Bob Novoswinky, Public Works Foreman 780-651-5100 or Doug Ponich, Public Works Manager 780-651-5101

Smoky Lake County appreciates your help in keeping the roads in great shape over the spring thaw.

BUILDING SUPPLIES
BLANKET the PRACHE with a classified ad. Only $269 (based on 25 words or less). Reach 97,000 readers. Call NOW for details. 1-800-282-9603 Ext 201; www.awna.com

BULL SALES

BULLS FOR SALE - Excellent quality black and red Angus registered yearly bulls. Moderate birth weight performance. Select now for spring possession. Clevegy Angus Ranch, #2 Vellineuve. 780-418-6338 evenings 13-25

BULLS ON OFFER
ROADWAY RECREATIONAL Studio Space for Hire - Perfect for group class activities such as Dance, Yoga, Karate and Fitness - Large open space with vaulted mirrors - Daytime - Evening & Weekend Rentals - Available Hourly One-Time or Reoccurring Monthly - Email info@towerdancesudio.com for more information

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COMING EVENTS
FIREARMS WANTED FOR June 13th, 2020 Live & Online auction: Rifles, Shotguns, Handguns, Militia, Auction or Purchase: vehicles, furniture, antiques, estates, Individual items. Contact Paul, 780-654-9069 or pswitzer@switzersauction.com or www.switzer-saucion.com

EMPLOYMENT
JOURNALISTS, GRAPHIC ARTISTS, Marketing and more. Alberta's weekly newspapers are looking for people like you. Visit our website and apply. www.cowleynewspapers.com/resumes/add

FARMLAND WANTED
FARMLAND WANTED in Thorhild County, Westlock & Wetaskiwin. Cultivated or hayland. 780-689-7655 12-13

FEED
WANTED - CANOLA, peas, wheat, barley & oats. Albertfed@FeedGrain.com 1-888-433-8879

HEATED CANOLA buying Green, Hard, #3 Spring and #3 Dried Canola. Buying canola, wheat & peas for feed. Buying damaged or off-grade grain on "Farm Rush" Western Feed & Grain, 1-877-250-5252

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FLEEY DISTRIBUTION Economic, reliable - no shrinkage from carrier non-delivery, no duplications or holes in your coverage. Large chains have their experts evaluate our system and have found our service to be cost effective. Contact us - great service, Cover the territory, a single community. 780-942-2023 or email redwater@shaw.ca

FOR SALE

HALF FOR SALE
ALF/TMR/CW MIX - Shaded small square bales $17.00. Round bales $60.00. Minimal rain. Phone late evenings 780-942-4107 10-22

FEEDING CROCK CO (IN SMOKY LAKES)
CURRENTLY BUYING
DRIED WHEAT, BARLEY & PEAS
Call Willi 780-676-0052

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REAL ESTATE
HOUSE for rent, triplex 1 unit, 2 brms, basement, fresh paint, 2 baths, fenced yard, garage. $1,175/month plus utilities. No dogs. Call Doug at 780-716-2961 for further details.

RENTALS
BRUDERHOF - 2 bdrm townhouse available immediately. $405/month + $450. Call 780-914-9179

RENTALS
REDWATER BUNGALOW - well kept 3 bdrm, 3 bths, clean home clean, $599/month includes all utilities. Double garage available, only 1 dog, no smoking, 20 mins to Redwater. For additional info Call 780-651-5100

RENTALS
RADWAY RECREATIONAL Studio Space for Hire - Perfect for group class activities such as Dance, Yoga, Karate and Fitness - Large open space with vaulted mirrors - Daytime - Evening & Weekend Rentals - Available Hourly One-Time or Reoccurring Monthly - Email info@towerdancesudio.com for more information

SERVICES
COVID-19 coverage. Check the digital newspaper The Heartland extra for additional coverage through extensive releases from government and health officials regarding the virus crisis. www.cowleynewspapers.com as well as current editions of The Free Press and The Red Deer News. 780-606-2590

SERVICES
CRIMINAL RECORD? Why suffer embarrassment, losing your future job? Business relationships? Be proactive and get it fixed. This is a life-time solution. 780-347-2544 www.accesslegal.com

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Vehicles
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Will be Clothed
In memory of

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AGRO CENTRE

Pre burn before Canola for tough Cleaver issues.

Pre burn before Barley, Canola and Oats. Very good for killing Dandelions and broadleaf weeds.

Pre burn before Canola and peas. Gets tough weeds and Volunteer Roundup ready canola.

Pre Burn before Canola for tough Cleaver issues.

Many other options available for pre-seed burns.