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SUNSHINE OVER ST. JAMES

Artists Jen Mosenko (in black, above) and Elan Beveridge work on finishing their mural on the west wall of 1854 Portage Ave. Thursday morning. Mosenko had painted the 'Welcome to St. James Village' ox carts mural (right) as her first project in 1999. She says everything in the new mural represents 'positivity, wholeness, prosperity and a sense of well-being' with Hello Sunshine greeting people in sunny St. James.



Cineplex reopens all Winnipeg cinemas

RANDALL KING

COMING to a cinema near you: patrons!

Following the path of Cineplex theatres at Polo Park and St. Vital which reopened for business July 24, the remainder of the company's Winnipeg movie houses — Northgate, McGillivray VIP and Kildonan Place — will be back in business Friday.

The local moves are part of a country-wide reopening for Cineplex's 164 theatres and 1,687 screens amid the novel coronavirus pandemic.

All cinemas will be observing physical-distancing mandates that will diminish the number of people allowed inside to about one-third of their usual capacities. Cineplex says it will maintain enhanced cleaning practices of surface areas and washrooms, while encouraging no-cash debit and credit card payments for ticket and food purchases.

Of the local movie theatres, only the Towne Cinemas downtown remain closed as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, which initially shuttered the industry in mid-March.

In May, the Northgate Cinema City's future looked to be in jeopardy when the Northgate mall's property managers, Marwest Management Canada, had changed the locks at the McPhillips Street multiplex and posted a notice terminating Cineplex Entertainment Corp.'s sublease for the property.

Cineplex sought an injunction that would bar the landlord, a numbered company, from occupying the property and ordering the landlord to honour the sublease, which Cineplex says is not set to expire until 2022.

The court subsequently granted an injunction in favour of Cineplex to continue operating under the lease and requiring the landlord to suspend its eviction proceedings pending the outcome at trial, said Cineplex vice-president Sarah Van Lange.

The reopened cinemas will accommodate the Friday release of local director Sean Garrity's romantic comedy *I Propose We Never See Each Other Again After Tonight* at the Northgate and McGillivray.

A couple of big Hollywood studio films will also be opening next week, including director Christopher Nolan's anticipated blockbuster *Tenet*, which will be opening at all cinemas Aug. 26, and *The New Mutants*, the long-delayed *X-Men* spin-off opening Aug. 28.

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Hookah spot fined for health order breach

RYAN THORPE

ANOTHER Winnipeg café and hookah lounge has been fined by the provincial government for breaching public health orders implemented during the COVID-19 pandemic.

In total, five local hookah spots have been fined for violating public health orders since late May.

Layla's Café and Hookah Lounge, located on Scurfield Boulevard, was fined \$486 last Friday for failing to "comply with the special measures prescribed... by (the) chief public health officer," according to the province's latest Health Protection Report.

"Layla's Café and Hookah Lounge was serving hookah... Guidance on compliance was provided. The public health orders prohibit the operation of hookah lounges," a provincial spokeswoman said in a written statement.

Layla's Café did not respond to a *Free Press* request for comment Thursday.

A hookah is an instrument traditionally used to smoke shisha, a mixture of tobacco and molasses sugar or fruit. Under normal circumstances, some Winnipeg restaurants operate as hookah lounges by offering customers the ability to smoke tobacco-free herbal shisha.

Layla's Café is the latest local hookah lounge to be hit with a fine.

On Aug. 11, Siraj Café and Lounge on Corydon Avenue received four tickets totalling \$10,168 for violating current public health orders. And it wasn't the first time; the owner was fined \$2,542 on July 20 for another health violation.

Other hookah lounges cited for violations include 7 Arabian Dreams on Corydon Avenue (Aug. 1, \$2,542); Ramallah Café After Hours on Pembina Highway (May 28, \$486); and Arabesque Hookah Café and Lounge on Corydon Avenue (May 27, \$5,542).

A provincial spokeswoman did not respond to requests for information on those fines.

Free Press requests for comment were ignored by all but Ramallah Café After Hours, who said the fine issued May 28 was for violating physical-distancing guidelines, not for allowing people to smoke hookahs.

He said the restaurant was initially confused about the rules but has since complied with public health orders.

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IN BRIEF

COLLISION WITH CN TRAIN KILLS ONE

A Bagot man is dead, after his vehicle collided with a CN train Thursday afternoon.

Just past noon, a 71-year-old man was driving southbound on Road 52 West, around 20 kilometres west of Portage la Prairie, when his SUV was struck by an eastbound train, police said.

The driver of the SUV was pronounced dead at the scene.

Portage la Prairie RCMP, along with CN police and an RCMP forensic collision reconstructionist continue to investigate.

INMATE CHARGED IN PRISON GUARD ATTACK

A Stony Mountain Institution inmate has been charged with attempted murder, after an attack on a prison guard, police say.

On April 15, the correctional officer was airlifted to hospital, after being slashed on the throat with a handmade weapon.

RCMP announced Thursday they have charged 27-year-old Mahad Mohammed Diblawe with attempted murder, aggravated assault and assault with a weapon.

HEALING LODGE ESCAPEE FOUND DEAD

A federal inmate on the lam after walking away from Eagle Women's Lodge has been found dead.

Nikki Alfonso, 31, walked away from the women's healing lodge on Ellice Avenue Aug. 2; her escape was announced to the public the next day.

The Correctional Service of Canada said Wednesday Alfonso died while at large. She was serving a 4½-year sentence for eight criminal charges, including material benefit from sexual services and two counts of

assault with a weapon.

No further details were released on the cause of death.

PAIR ARRESTED AFTER CORYDON ROBBERY

A man and woman are facing charges, after two women were robbed at knifepoint on Corydon Avenue.

At 10:45 p.m. Wednesday, Winnipeg police responded to the 600 block of Corydon for a report of a robbery.

Officers found two female victims who said they were getting into their vehicle when they were threatened by a male and female armed with a knife. No one was injured.

Nathaniel Sean Capay, 21, of Winnipeg, has been charged with two counts of robbery and with possessing a weapon. Ashley Margaret Hoard, 32, of Winnipeg, has been charged with two counts of robbery.



Inmate Nikki Alfonso was found dead.

Court pauses flood channel road construction

DYLAN ROBERTSON

OTTAWA — Premier Brian Pallister's legacy flood channel project has hit yet another roadblock, with a court pausing the construction of an access road due to concerns about consultation with First Nations.

"It's a good day for Indigenous people," said Lake Manitoba Chief Cornell McLean, reacting Thursday to a ruling the same day in the Court of Queen's Bench.

The Interlake Reserves Tribal Council has long complained about how the Lake St. Martin-Lake Manitoba flood channel outlets are being planned. The chiefs say the province isn't adequately hearing out their concerns.

The \$540-million project is meant to prevent catastrophic floods by diverting water between those bodies and Lake Winnipeg. Ottawa has agreed to pay almost half the cost,

recognizing the channels as critical infrastructure to adapt to a changing climate.

Local reserves claim they were blindsided in March 2019 by the clearing of a 23-kilometre route, with a 25-metre right-of-way. The province said it had obtained all required approvals for the road, which it says it required to survey the site for engineering reviews, and wants to use this coming winter.

IRTC had previously tried unsuccessfully to get a provincial regulator to stop the building of the road, alleging the province hasn't meaningfully examined their concerns over

the environment and treaty rights.

In April, the six First Nations filed a court injunction, which was granted Thursday.

The interlocutory injunction means the court wants to prevent further construction of the road, until it has enough evidence to weigh the concerns of IRTC chiefs.

The province is thus forbidden from clearing Crown land, unless a flooding emergency occurs and an existing, temporary channel needs to be reactivated.

The injunction will be in place until the court rules on whether the province has adequately heard out local concerns and tried to mitigate them, such as through a work plan, or if the project clears all existing regulatory reviews.

"When it comes to First Nations, we're Manitobans as well," McLean said. "The premier needs to treat us as such."



Lake Manitoba Chief Cornell McLean

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