

Winnipeg Free Press

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FLYER IN TODAY'S PAPER

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City CDs really rock

Check out the latest discs from Winnipeg's bustling music scene

the **TAB**

Junior squad named today

Team Canada head coach Brent Sutter to trim world junior roster **C1**



The Weather / B16



Sunny skies
Wind N 30 km/h
High -4 — Low -19

**GARBAGE DAY 3
SCHOOL DAY 5**

Inside



Nutcracker sweet

The magical holiday tradition of *The Nutcracker* ballet returns for three evening performances and three matinees, beginning tomorrow night at the Centennial Concert Hall **D1**

Crocus lawsuit?

A city lawyer has met with shareholders of the Crocus Investment Fund, which suspended trading last week, to look into a possible class-action suit **A3**

Floodway warning

Some federal officials want to renege on an agreement to accept results of a coming provincial review of Winnipeg's floodway expansion, Premier Gary Doer has warned **B1**

Inbusiness

Distinguished career

Ted Foreman, senior investment adviser at Investors Group, will retire on Jan. 12 — his 71st birthday — as the company's ninth-largest producer in its history **B4**

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Shelter board 'bullied'

Osborne House directors resign, accuse province of underfunding

By Leah Janzen

THE volunteer board of directors of Winnipeg's largest women's shelter resigned as a group yesterday, saying the province "bullied, abused and threatened" them and provided insufficient funding.

"This is as a result of a complete breakdown in our relationship with government," said Ellen Liebl, chairwoman of the Osborne House board. "We feel we can no longer be effective as directors. We can't do what we feel is in the best interests of the facility."

The mass exodus of most of the board — a couple of staff representatives will

stay on — raises questions about the Department of Family Services, which has been hit by several recent scandals.

The facility remains open and programs for abused women and their children will continue, said Margaret Marin, executive director of Osborne House. There are about 43 women at the facility, which holds a maximum of 45.

Marlene Bertrand, director of the family violence prevention program for the province, said the group resignation comes on the heels of an internal audit of the facility that uncovered "serious" management problems at the shelter.

Continued
Please see **OSBORNE HOUSE A2**

In Winnipeg, reindeer really do know how to fly!



PHOTOS BY PHIL HOSSACK / WINNIPEG FREE PRESS

A pair of tiny antlers pokes over the top of a jet seat as kids from William Whyte school made like reindeer yesterday to get a Santa's-eye view of Winnipeg's twinkling Christmas lights.

North Pole Express takes flight

By Avery Wolaniuk

THE skies over Winnipeg were filled with reindeer last night — and it's not even Christmas.

A jet full of children donned antlers and red noses for a wide-eyed view of Winnipeg's twinkling Christmas lights from 20,000 feet.

The 128 children from the city's core area got first-class treatment yesterday aboard the annual North Pole Express. For most, it was their first time in a plane.

"I'm overwhelmed with the generosity," said William Whyte Community School principal

Kim Midford, who was in tears. "It's such a gift."

The sky-high adventure began yesterday afternoon when the young students from William Whyte arrived at the airport by bus and were met by two real reindeer from the Kinsmen Discovery Centre.

Stopping to touch the docile creatures, the students appeared thrilled.

"They're going to be pulling the plane," predicted one child.

Continued
Please see **FLIGHT A4**



First Nation sues Ottawa in fight for better housing

By Leah Janzen

A Manitoba First Nation has launched an unprecedented constitutional challenge to force the federal government to improve housing for aboriginals and poor Canadians.

If successful, the ground-breaking motion being made by the Red Sucker Lake First Nation could cost Ottawa tens of millions of dollars to upgrade substandard housing on reserves and in other poverty-stricken areas of Canada.

Norman Boudreau, lawyer for Red Sucker Lake First Nation, argues Section 36.1 of Canada's Constitution makes

it clear that Ottawa is responsible for maintaining an adequate level of housing for all Canadians.

The section in question says Parliament is "committed to promoting equal opportunities for the well-being of Canadians; furthering economic development to reduce disparity in opportunities and providing essential public services of reasonable quality to all Canadians."

Boudreau has launched a suit against the federal government based on this section, claiming those public services include housing.

Continued
Please see **CONSTITUTION A4**

Feds would kill city jobs to safeguard drug supply

By Mia Rabson

FEDERAL Health Minister Ujjal Dosanjh says it may be worth losing 2,000 Internet pharmacy jobs in Manitoba if it means Canadian patients and Canada's drug supply are protected.

In an interview with the *Free Press* yesterday, Dosanjh said he wouldn't like to see the loss of 2,000 jobs — the estimated number of Manitobans directly employed by Internet pharmacies — but added that jobs can't be the first concern of a health minister.

"This is not an issue of some minister in Ottawa not liking what happens in

Winnipeg," Dosanjh said. He said nobody likes losing jobs, but ethical standards and protecting the pricing regime for Canada's drug supply are "ultimately more important than any one province."

His comments come two days after a summit called by the Manitoba government in which the provincial regulatory body, the Manitoba Pharmaceutical Association, agreed to help the Net pharmacists try to stay open. An official said there may be a way to expand or amend pharmaceutical association regulations to include Internet pharmacies.

Continued
Please see **DRUG SUPPLY A4**



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