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INSIDE FOR HOW TO  
HAVE A GREAT TIME  
THIS SUMMER!**



**Page 3**

# Plain & Valley

July 2025 • Volume 18 Number 7

Covering Southeast Saskatchewan and Southwest Manitoba

## Living Skies Fireworks this August Long at Moosomin Lake

**BY ASHLEY BOCHEK**  
The Living Skies Come Alive Fireworks Competition is firing up again this August Long with Alberta and Saskatchewan competing with fireworks shows Saturday and Sunday.

Kyle Jeannot, Chair of Entertainment on the Moosomin Regional Park committee, says the weekend is about bringing families and people together at the lake.

"It is about getting people together and putting on a very good event. It is a great spot for family and friends to meet up, there are lots of family reunions that happen, and it is a huge fundraiser for the park and community with a lot of people coming and buying their booze, groceries, and gas in town."

### **Tickets on early bird sale!**

Jeannot says ticket sales have been steady the past few weeks on early bird sale.

"Ticket sales have been going pretty good so far. We have never started selling this early. We usually wait until middle of July and we started in mid June with an early bird sale. I already know the first day that we had the tickets in our office for sale we had three people getting tickets and people from Manitoba calling to book and get tickets so it is really good. It is good to see that it's starting off strong."

"All of our power sites were all booked at the end of March, but we have a ton of overflow sites available and if they want to come we are going to find a spot for them."

Jeannot explains the event is affordable for families to enjoy the lake and fireworks for the



Kim Poole photo

Photo from a previous Living Skies Come Alive Fireworks Competition at Moosomin Regional Park. The fireworks competition is back this August Long between Saskatchewan and Alberta at Moosomin Regional Park.

long weekend.

"It is a great opportunity for families and anybody who wants to see some fireworks. It is pretty cheap entertainment when you think about it. I know the tickets are \$20 on early bird price, but cheaper than a concert, and you can't take your family of five for \$100 to an event with an added cost of camping, you aren't going to get that anywhere in the city or around the city. You get to be at the lake and your kids get to play games all day for free. You get to watch live entertainment and get to see one of the best fireworks shows in Southern Saskatchewan for \$20 a person."

### **Need more volunteers**

Jeannot says the committee is looking to community groups to help volunteer for the weekend.

"Right now we are getting everything organized. We are working on finishing getting our lotto license for 50/50. We are going to be doing a progressive 50/50 and then the next thing is making sure everything is set. We are still looking for a few more people for parking and some people for selling 50/50. There are a few groups we still need to reach out to for that."

"We are going to do a two to three hour shift for those jobs. That is why it takes an army to run this thing. There are a few of us that get stuck from eight in the morning to one in the morning, but there is only a handful of us who do that. For everybody else, if we could get a couple hours of help that's great and it relieves some stress on everybody else."

*Continued on page 11* ES

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## Kennedy Moose Mountain Pro Rodeo coming up this weekend

BY RYAN KIEDROWSKI

## LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

The 92nd annual Kennedy Moose Mountain Pro Rodeo is set for this weekend from July 19-20, and is one of the only pro rodeos in Saskatchewan.

"We always say that the village of Kennedy quadruples in size overnight," said Jill Lowe, president of the Moose Mountain Rodeo Association. "There's more people in the rodeo grounds camping than there is people living in town!"

An average year will draw 1,500 people to the village of 232, all coming to see the only Pro Rodeo in Saskatchewan other than the Maple Leaf Finals that run during Agribition in Regina.

This year will note some changes to the traditional lineup of activities.

"There's no demolition derby this year, so we are moving our parade to 3 pm on the Saturday, followed by happy hour from 4-5 pm," says Lowe. "Our rodeo doesn't start this year until 6 pm, so our bull riding will be under the lights. That's new, and should be something different."

One big draw that is returning to Kennedy this year are the Truco Trick Riders, as well as the wild ponies and sheep scramble. DJ services will be provided by Dale Osted from the Moosehead Inn

"Then we're going to be doing a hole in one golf contest, and then a frisbee toss," Lowe said. "So that will be happening before the rodeo, there will be a time set aside. We don't have that finalized yet, and we don't know what the prize is yet for the golf, but we're in the process of trying to find a sponsor for that."

Sunday morning features a pancake breakfast at 9 am, followed by Cowboy Church at 11 am, then the rodeo event continue at 2 pm.

Established in 1932, the Kennedy Moose Mountain Pro Rodeo has been a mainstay event—creeping ever closer to that century mark.

"I still wish I could have been a mouse in the corner when they first started making the plans for the very first one," said Lowe, whose great-grandfather was one of those people around the table during those initial meetings.

Part of the Maple Leaf Circuit affiliated with the Canadian Rodeo Association, the prize money may be a bit less than other rodeos, but timing is everything. The Kennedy Moose Mountain Pro Rodeo is smack dab in the middle of the busiest rodeo season—commonly known as Cowboy Christmas—where the greatest opportunity to climb the standings can be found.





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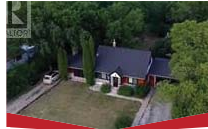
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# Elkhorn welcomes local hockey talent at Sportsman's Dinner this July

**Guest speakers Travis Sanheim, Sheldon Kennedy, Jessica Campbell, and Brandon Crowe in Elkhorn July 24**

BY ASHLEY BOCHER

The Elkhorn District Community Centre is hosting a Sportsman's Dinner Thursday, July 24.

The event is to help fundraise for repairs and updates for the community's rink.

Hockey stars of Elkhorn, Travis Sanheim and Sheldon Kennedy will be speaking at the event, as well as NHL coach Jessica Campbell of Rocanville, and Hockey Canada's Brandon Crowe.

Melissa Pateman of the Elkhorn District Community Centre (EDCC) committee says they originally planned to host a smaller community event.

"This is our first Sportsman Dinner we've put on. We had the vision of a smaller event, but we have Travis who we knew would come and speak for it and he came up with a lot of big names to bring with him. Jessica Campbell is coming and so is Sheldon Kennedy, another Elkhorn native, and then we have Brandon Crowe so it has just kind of spiraled into something really big."

She says local NHL player, Travis Sanheim, helped organize the talented speakers for the event.

"All of this came from Travis. We were just hoping that he would have a day for us in the summer to come out, tell us his stories, bring his Four Nations gold medal, so we asked, and then he thought of getting the others to come as well to have a big supper and a big event for the town, and we all thought it was great."

## Fundraiser for repairs at Elkhorn rink

Pateman explains the upgrades and repairs that the rink needed this past year.

"We had our ice plant go down at the tail-end of not last season, but the season before, so we had a bunch of capital expenses throughout the year—we had to replace the Zamboni. The Zamboni that we purchased in the winter and had to take a loan for a cost of about \$55,000 so we are really hoping to cover that off. We have put a lot of money into the ice plant—there is just a ton of repairs that need to be done around the rink—those small town rink issues. So, we thought there was a better way than adding to everyone's already busy hockey schedule so we wanted to do an event that we could raise a good amount of money to keep the rink going and do the fixes it needs."



## Local talent

Pateman says the supper is a great way to highlight the local talent in our area.

"It is a big nod to our local talent who have gone on to do very amazing things in the hockey world. Everybody that is coming is local—Jessica Campbell of Rocanville, not far from Elkhorn, both Sheldon and Travis are Elkhorn boys, they have their signs up in the town."

"It is about highlighting what kids in hockey can do from small towns and it shows, in general, what small towns can do, what we are capable of, and how important these small rinks are for the kids and the community because that is where they all got their start in hockey—in small rinks that are maybe struggling to pay bills since costs have gone up."

"It is also the idea that you don't need to necessarily go far to have a place to play, and we want to make sure that we have that place for years to come."

## Community gathering place

Pateman says the rink is a vital part of the community.



Left, Jessica Campbell of Rocanville, Assistant Coach of the NHL's Seattle Kraken. Above, Travis Sanheim of Elkhorn, plays for the Philadelphia Flyers in the NHL. Campbell and Sanheim are among the four guest speakers at the Elkhorn District Community Centre Sportsman's Dinner this July.

"Definitely hockey and the rink are ingrained in Elkhorn. It is where everyone meets and visits throughout the hockey season. I think it is neat to see—we have a nine-year-old and there are a few parents that would have grown up in the rink the same as we want our kids to grow up in the rink, but the generation before my nine-year-old son is all die-hard hockey people who spent every minute at the rink they could, and their parents did so much for the rink in making it what it is today, and we would like to get that culture back."

Pateman says the rink still hosts the WHL's Brandon Wheat Kings for lunch on road trips out west through the hockey season.

"A big part of the rink as well, is we still host the Brandon Wheat Kings for meals at the rink. Kim Mitchell still preps and cooks for the team whenever they are stopping through, and that has been a big part of our rink for many years. It has been like that forever."

*Continued on Page 6*

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# Elkhorn welcomes local hockey talent at Sportsman's Dinner this July

Guest speakers Travis Sanheim, Sheldon Kennedy, Jessica Campbell, and Branden Crowe in Elkhorn July 24

Continued from Page 5

## What to expect at Sportsman's Dinner

Pateman explains the details of the supper happening at the rink this July.

"We are going to have a hot stove style question-and-answer with Jessica and Travis. Branden Crowe will be doing the interviewing and asking the questions. Branden Crowe spent a lot of time doing game commentary for the Brandon Wheat Kings and now he is with Hockey Canada. Sheldon will have a formal speech as well.

"We have Cork and Bone in Moosomin catering the event, so between them and some prep done by our volunteers we are going to have a great supper so people can expect really good food. Supper will start at 6 and our speakers will be at 7:30.

"There will be a bar and a dance after supper as well for anyone who wants to stay a bit longer to socialize and have fun. The DJ will be there until midnight."

Pateman says the committee is still looking for silent auction items.

"We are also having a silent auction during the supper and into the evening. We are still looking for some more silent auction items. We have 10 items so far and we are thinking we would like to have around 15-20 items.

"So far we have everything from season tickets to the Virden Oil Capitals, a box at the Wheat Kings, some equipment rentals like 10-hours on an excavator, we have some swag from the Geekie family (Morgan Geekie of Strathclair plays for the Boston Bruins and younger brother, Conor Geekie, plays for the Tampa Bay Lightning of the NHL) as well as Branden Crowe. It is very open-ended if anyone would like to donate an item.

"I believe Travis will have his Four Nations medal to the supper as well."

## Ticket sales

Pateman says they have sold out their sponsorship tables and are looking to sell more single tickets for the event.

"We really pushed our sponsorship tables and that was great. We gathered 42 round tables between the Elks and what we could rent from a local guy in Virden, so all of those are sold. We are really happy with that because the \$50,000 that we were really hoping to bring in for the event is covered we just have to pull the whole thing off now.

"Single tickets have been slow, but we are sure it will come. We just wanted to make sure we had the single ticket option for community people. It is great to have all of the folks from town come and experience it as well.

"We are planning for 500 people. So far, with the tables all sold we have about 350 people attending right now. It didn't take long to sell the tables at all."



Sheldon Kennedy of Elkhorn, former NHL hockey player for the Detroit Red Wings, Boston Bruins, and Calgary Flames.

## Player Development program

Pateman says the minor hockey association is bringing in Flo Hockey training in the upcoming season as player development for hockey players in Elkhorn.

"The other thing that we are doing in addition to our regular minor hockey program is that we are going to bring in Flo Hockey that will be coming in and giving additional support to the kids and the coaches. It will be periodically through minor hockey season so about once a month. We are calling it player development."

## Connections to Elkhorn

Pateman explains each speaker's connection to Elkhorn and the surrounding area.

"Travis Sanheim grew up on a farm by Manson and went to school and played hockey in Elkhorn. Sheldon Kennedy grew up on a farm outside of town and same thing, grew up and started hockey in Elkhorn. Branden Crowe has a connection with Devrin Stonehouse, a local guy, and he had contacted him to come out and he was thrilled.

"Everything came through Travis. Taylor, Travis's

brother, at our meeting a few months ago, texted Travis asking when worked best for him to come, so he replied and sent Taylor some dates.

"We had the thought that it would be nice to ask Sheldon to come so in the end I think Travis also asked him, as well as Jessica. We were flabbergasted to say the least, that all these amazing local idols were able to make it one night out to Elkhorn to speak and raise funds for the rink.

"We are just so excited and thankful to the speakers for coming, and the support so far from the community. We are very excited and it will be a really great thing for the rink and the community as a whole. It is nice to have big events like this for such a good reason, to help our rink."

## Travis Sanheim

### donating to Elkhorn rink

Pateman says Travis Sanheim has been a huge contributor to helping the local kids get started in hockey in Elkhorn.

"I know Travis has said he is very committed to our rink and helping in any way he can. One of the biggest things is the equipment program. We had different sizes, but mostly geared toward kids starting hockey, so if you are on the fence and not sure if your son or daughter wants to play hockey and don't want to have that investment in equipment, we have an entire locker in the basement of the rink full of equipment donated by Travis.

"It started about five years ago and it has just been such a good thing for the rink and for the young kids in the community starting in hockey."

If you are interested in attending the Sportsman's Dinner in Elkhorn, check out their Facebook page.

"We have a Facebook page and on the Facebook events site there is the information on where to e-transfer and get on the list for tickets or if you want a physical ticket Samantha's Boutique in Elkhorn has them available," Pateman said.

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# New Parkland Female Hockey Program

## Program to help support future female hockey players in rural Saskatchewan and Parkland Region

BY ASHLEY BOCHEK

Hockey Associations in the region have come together to form the Parkland Female Hockey Program (PFHP) for the upcoming hockey season.

The PFHP will help support girls' hockey teams among the participating hockey associations.

The PFHP has also announced a rebrand of three AA female hockey teams as the Parkland Phoenix out of Yorkton for this upcoming season.

Nicole Korpusik of the Parkland Female Hockey Committee, is a representative for U13 girls' hockey on the new board and explains the new PFHP.

"We have created a female hockey program that is all encompassing for the communities that wanted to participate in the Parkland area.

"Different Hockey Associations around the area like Moosomin, Esterhazy, Canora, Churchbridge, Fort Qu'Appelle, Indian Head, Kamsack, Langenburg, Norquay, Preeceville, Rocanville, Whitecourt, and Yorkton have agreed to come together to form the PFHP. We had reached out to the associations—the PFHP is an umbrella association for female hockey players to be able to move within the system. There are some different rules when it comes to girls playing hockey where they can play on a co-ed team with boys or they can play on a girls' team, but when you need affiliate players, younger players, to help your roster you can only do an affiliate if you are within the same association. Otherwise our girls would have to actually register with us rather than just being an affiliate or a call-up. I used to coach co-ed hockey in Preeceville and then I also coached an all girls team, but in a different association. So, if I needed an affiliate the girls from Preeceville would have to actually register with us rather than just being a call-up."

### Purpose of new hockey program

Korpusik explains the significance the program will bring to rural Saskatchewan female hockey teams.

"This whole thing is to allow more opportunity for girls to play on different teams within the rules of Sask Hockey.

"It is also our greatest hope and vision for this, to be a collaboration, so working together with all of these communities because we are pretty spread apart and not all very familiar with each other, but we want to ensure that girls in our area have a place to play hockey if they want to, and have the opportunity to build all-female teams whether they are full-time in the Sask Female Hockey League or if they are carded tournament teams, so the girls have a chance to play all over, but this wasn't really happening when we aren't all communicating and on the same page so the formation of Parkland Female Hockey Program (PFHP) is to enable all of that to happen. We can all work together and pool resources to have all-female hockey camps—to get us all working together."

She explains the new PFHP board is made up of representatives of the different hockey associations.

"The hockey associations were asked if they could put forward names of people in their community, so we could have a representative and be part of our board. It is really exciting and has caused some questions because it's different and people are apprehensive because they have done a lot of work building their female hockey programs—Moosomin has an incredible and growing female hockey program. They have done an incredible job growing female hockey in your area and it is awesome and we understand people don't want to lose ownership of that and that is not what this is about—it is about collabora-



The new Parkland Phoenix logo for the U13, U15, and U18 AA Female Hockey teams for the upcoming 2025-26 season.

The Parkland Phoenix is a rebrand of the AA Parkland Fire based out of Melville, and will be part of the new Parkland Female Hockey Program (PFHP) along with many other hockey associations in the Parkland area.

rating, pooling resources, and all working together. We are hoping the people from Moosomin can shed some light on how they have done that and share the things they know so other communities can do the same."

### About Parkland Phoenix

Korpusik says the committee has announced the Parkland Female Hockey Program as well as a rebrand for three AA female hockey teams in our area.

"There are two different parts to this program. The Parkland Female Hockey Program is simply a space for us to connect the area. We also rebranded the U13, U15, and U18 AA teams originally based

but still their own entity."

### Opportunities with PFHP

Korpusik lists the exciting opportunities for hockey associations that are part of the new Parkland Female Hockey Program.

"It is just a space—if we become one big association—think of it like Moosomin Hockey where you have a bunch of different teams under the Moosomin Hockey Association—this is like a sub-association that the female teams would belong to that then allows Moosomin to possibly affiliate a player from Esterhazy or from Churchbridge if needed.

"The hope is that we all work together to support all female hockey initiatives in the area, and get as many girls involved as possible. It is all just working together. It is not us creating teams besides those three AA teams, those were already created, but now just rebranded and based out of Yorkton—besides that it is about us all of us working together and making sure girls have a place to play. It is being a resource to help girls find where to play and wherever is needed. We are all on the same page."

### Strengthening female hockey in Southeast Saskatchewan

Korpusik says some hockey associations in the Parkland region were apprehensive about agreeing to be part of this program.

"Not all associations were onboard with this because it can be scary, and it can feel like you are giving up your autonomy over

your teams—but that is not what it is. It took a lot of explaining and understanding of this agreement that we are all just here together to collaborate. We are not taking anything away from any teams, we are just here as a resource and have a representative from your community who people can go to and ask questions and can get answers and possibly direct them toward the next closest centre that would have a place for them to play.

"Melville is still considering signing on, but haven't yet and so far Balcarres didn't feel it was something they wanted to be part of. It is totally the associations' prerogative and I get that Melville may be on the fence because Melville had control before and we have now divided their control amongst everybody in the area to make it more fair and welcoming. So I can see why they might be on the fence and I hope they do see in the next year or so that it is something that has been created to help strengthen girls' hockey in our area, not to benefit one community, it is for everybody."

Continued on page 42

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The Peace Gardens today, above, and historic photos from the dedication in 1932 below. There were 50,000 people who gathered for the dedication.



## Peace Garden celebrates Summer Floral Celebration with Handshake Across the Border

In 1928, Dr. Henry J. Moore of Islington, Ontario had a big, wild idea. A horticulturist and a teacher, he envisioned a 'place of peace' in the form of a beautiful garden on the border of the United States and Canada to celebrate friendship. This dreamer worked with the National Association of Gardeners and in 1932, his grand concept—a garden spanning the border of two countries and two governments—opened to the public. On July 14, 1932, over 50,000 people gathered for the dedication of the calm that stands at the Garden's gateway on the border between the two countries.

This summer, we celebrate the peace and collaboration of our two countries with a Handshake Across the Border

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Enjoy the Garden in peak bloom at the height of its summer color and beauty! In addition to the Handshake Across the Border, we're celebrating with a full day of events 9 AM - 6 PM with garden tours, Cruise In car show, (10 AM - 2 PM), floral design demonstrations, scavenger hunts,

and other kids' activities. Vendors will be on hand with handmade jewelry, arts and crafts, baked goods, specialty drinks, and more.

Visit [peacegarden.com/events](https://peacegarden.com/events) to learn more

*Nestled in the Turtle Mountains is a garden. A celebration of peace, a living monument to the ideals of friendship and cooperation among nations. Acres of uninterrupted prairie, forest and radiant floral gardens defined by nature, not borders. The International Peace Garden is a non-profit organization committed to advocating for peace.*

## Summer Floral Celebration: August 9 Handshake Across the Border at 11:00 AM CT



Imagine hundreds if not thousands of Americans and Canadians shaking hands across the 49th parallel between our terraces and the Peace Chapel.

Enjoy the Garden in peak bloom at the height of its summer color and beauty! In addition to the Handshake Across the Border, we're celebrating with a full day of events 9:00 AM - 6:00 PM:

- Garden Tours • Cruise In Car Show 10:00 AM - 2:00 PM • Floral Design Demonstrations
- Scavenger Hunts and other Kids' Activities • Vendors will be on hand with handmade jewelry, arts and crafts, baked goods, specialty drinks, and more

Learn more at [peacegarden.com/events](https://peacegarden.com/events)



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Above, Morgan Robertson recording her album. Photo by Teya Photography.  
At right, Morgan after performing at Blue Jay Sessions in Calgary.

## Local singer Morgan Robertson highlighted on Amazon Music Canada

BY ASHLEY BOCHEK

Morgan Robertson, a local singer from Carlyle, was chosen by Amazon Music Canada to highlight among three other rural Canadian artists.

Robertson began singing at a young age and has performed all across the province.

"I grew up in Carlyle," said Robertson. "I started playing the fiddle when I was six and I did that for 10 years. I started teaching myself guitar when I was about 12 years old and then started writing music. I travelled to Saskatoon when I was done high school and did some performing there and then I moved back home and I'm living in Redvers now."

"I recorded my first album last year and it was released in November. I worked as an electrician for three years, and I am taking a break from that right now."

### Love for singing

Robertson says she enjoyed singing in choir from a young age.

"I've always really liked singing. I remember from a really young age that I loved singing in choir. It is really hard to sing and play the fiddle at the same time so I

thought guitar would be a good option and my mom had one in the house because she tried to play and I remember the first song I tried teaching myself was 'Can't Help Falling in Love' by Elvis Presley."

"She says writing music helps her feel heard and helps her connect with others. 'I really like writing as well. It has always been something that I turn to if I struggle with anything. I always turned to writing whenever I was going through challenges or a friend was—it's something that helps me work through whatever is going on in my life. Sharing it through songs made me not feel so alone and I hoped it helped other people feel heard. It is a way for people to connect to each other in a way that is easier, almost. If it is hard to talk about, in music it makes it a little easier.'"

Robertson explains she is casually performing and seeing where her music takes her.

Continued on Page 21 <sup>EST</sup>

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## FIREWORKS COMPETITION Saskatchewan vs Alberta



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AUGUST 2:  
Saskatchewan Fireworks**  
**SUNDAY, AUGUST 3:  
Alberta  
Fireworks**

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# Living Skies Come Alive

**Saturday, August 2**  
Saskatchewan Fireworks

**Sunday, August 3**  
Alberta Fireworks

## Living Skies Fireworks this August Long at Moosomin Lake

☞ *Continued from front*

### Kids activities

Jeannot says there will be many activities for kids and families to enjoy at the lake.

"There is going to be lots of activities. Usually everything is going to start kicking off around 11 am or noon. Food trucks open at 10 am. There will be vendors open at 10 as well and go until 3 pm. Then, kids games each day that start around 12:30 pm so people can get their kids fed. There will be sandcastles, beach volleyball, road hockey, kayak races, just a variety of activities for the kids."

Jeannot says the committee asked cottage owners for input on activities.

"August Long was a no brainer because a lot of people missed it. Then, we started going through what people like to do at the lake and asking seasonal cabin owners what summer activities to do. We looked at other regional parks as well to see what they do to pull people in."

"This last weekend we had a golf cart parade for Canada Day and we had 22 golf carts and expected five so it was awesome. We probably had a good crowd of 100 people watching as well and we threw it together about a week and a half ago. Then, we had a road hockey tournament and had a lot of kids out. It was great."



### Community excited for August Long

Jeannot says the committee has heard positive comments about bringing the fireworks to the lake again this summer.

"I think a lot of people are excited for the August Long fireworks. Everybody has their questions of campsites and making sure they get their tickets in time at the discounted pricing. I have heard a lot of people say they are looking forward to it so I think it should be good."

"I'd love to see 5,000 people. My plan is we are going to get 3,500 a night. Looking back that is usually the sweet spot of 3,500 to 4,000 people. The only time they

had the 7,000 was when they had China here for the fireworks weekend and drew in a much bigger crowd as an International competition. Maybe one day we will get back to that, but for now we are just baby stepping our way back into this one since it has been gone for a few years. If we get 3,500 people, that is going to be amazing as well."

### Gathering place for the summer

Jeannot says the weekend is about bringing people together.

"I think it is just getting people together to hangout for the summer. It is about getting people out to socialize and visit. To see the park busy is another thing because you are going to get a few people out who have never been to the lake through family connections and they might think 'maybe I'll come back for a couple weeks next year and put my kid in swimming lessons at the park or come camping for a month.' In the long run that is what we are hoping—to show people what we have at the lake. It is kind of a hidden gem and there are lots of people travelling through that don't even know it is there. We want to make an impression so they make sure when they come back through to stop and stop another time again. That is all we can hope for."



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## Join Me for the Living Skies Come Alive Fireworks This August Long!

This August Long Weekend, I'm excited to be part of the *Living Skies Come Alive Fireworks Competition* at Moosomin Regional Park! Saskatchewan and Alberta will light up the skies with incredible fireworks shows, plus family-friendly activities like sandcastle building, volleyball and kayak races. Whether you're going with family or friends, let's celebrate our great community under the stunning skies of our great province. I look forward to seeing you at this amazing event for a full weekend of fun!



**Kevin Weedmark, MLA for Moosomin-Montmartre**

(306) 435-4005  
[office@kevinweedmark.ca](mailto:office@kevinweedmark.ca)



# Living Skies Come Alive

**Saturday, August 2**  
Saskatchewan Fireworks  
**Sunday, August 3**  
Alberta Fireworks



There's nothing like the Living Skies Come Alive Firework Competition. The fireworks are shot off on the far side of Moosomin Lake, reflecting on the water while people watch on the beach on the other side of the lake. These are some of the stunning images captured by Romel Bermudo and Kim Poole during previous Living Skies fireworks competitions.

Enjoy  
**Moosomin Regional Park**  
*Living Skies Fireworks Competition*  
this August long!

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# Living Skies Come Alive

**Saturday, August 2**  
Saskatchewan Fireworks

**Sunday, August 3**  
Alberta Fireworks



From bands to kids activities to food trucks to vendors on site, there's a lot to do during the Living Skies weekend at Moosomin Regional Park. This year Route 605 will perform on the Saturday night and the Sean Taylor Band will perform on the Sunday night. Past Living Skies weekends have drawn thousands of people to the park, making it one of the largest events in Saskatchewan.



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Weekend for the  
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**4:30 PM TO 10:30 PM -**

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**& FOOD TRUCKS**

**7 PM - MODIFIED TRUCK**  
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### SATURDAY, AUGUST 9

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**11 AM - PARADE: MAIN STREET**

**NOON TO 10:30 PM - CONCESSION BOOTH**  
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**1 PM TO 5:30 PM - TOUR THE PITS AND MEET DRIVERS**

**7 PM - MODIFIED TRUCK & TRACTOR PULLS**

# Spy Hill Sports Days

## August 9 & 10, 2025

### Saturday, August 9

8:00 am - 10:00 am

Spy Hill Fire Department Pancake Breakfast  
at the Sports Grounds

9:00 am-12 Noon Kids Rodeo

12 Noon Mutton Busting and Dog Exhibition

1:00 pm-3:00 pm Chore Horse Competition

2:30 pm-4:30 pm Tractor Pulls.  
Celebrating Caterpillar's 100 Years Anniversary

3:00 pm-5:00 pm Roping

5:30 pm Chucks and Chariots

Slowpitch all day

Beer Gardens and Bouncy Castles Saturday & Sunday

### Admission

Adults: \$12/Day • \$20/Weekend

Kids 15 & Under: \$6/Day • \$10 Weekend

5 & Under: FREE

**STARS** will be in attendance on Sunday

### Sunday, August 10

10:00 am

Interdenominational Church Service  
at Sports Grounds

11:00 am-1:00 pm Roping

1:00 pm -3:00 pm Chore Horse Competitions

11:00 am-3:00 pm Car Show

2:00 pm-4:00 pm Tractor Pull.  
Celebrating Caterpillar's 100 Years Anniversary

4:00 pm Chicken Dinner

4:30 pm Chucks, Chariots and Dash for Cash

### Contact Information

Kids' Rodeo: Pee Wee 11 and under,  
Junior Gymkana: Kim Buchburger 306-496-8081

Car Show: Bill Perrin 306-740-8682

Slow Pitch: Corbin Barker 306-743-7456

Tractor Pulls: Cameron Duncan 306-745-7428

Roping: Brent Clark 306-743-7987

General Information: Jeff Odgers, 306-740-8025





# Interior designer sets up shop in Esterhazy

BY RYAN KIEDROWSKI  
LOCAL JOURNALISM  
INITIATIVE REPORTER

Interior design has been something Sarah Feltz has been drawn to for some time. With a diploma of Interior Design in hand, plus years of renovation experience, she has recently opened the doors of Handpicked Interiors, a tile and flooring store, on the southeast end of Esterhazy.

"I started Handpicked Interiors in the fall of 2021, so it's been about three-and-a-half years that I've been doing interior design," Feltz said. "I focus mainly on renovations and helping homeowners with kitchen and bathrooms from start to finish. Through that, I got a little bit more familiar with what people are looking for in terms of tile and flooring and what's all available here. I noticed there was a little bit of a gap in this general area for the things that I was always looking for, so my husband and I bought this building in December, renovated it completely, and decided to make it into a tile and flooring store."

That building was formerly JJ's Steak House, now completely different in appearance from its former restaurant days.

"It's had a few lives," Feltz said of the building. "It's been a restaurant for like 60, 70 years, so it's had a long life that building!"

For homeowners who want to update their nest, but need a little inspiration, Feltz says stepping into Handpicked Interiors might just inspire them.

"Our store itself is a full retail showroom, so we have a bunch of different tiles on display—floor tiles and wall tiles," Feltz explained. "Whether you're looking for your entryway flooring or your shower wall, we have a bunch of different options. We



Sarah Feltz opened Handpicked Interiors at 1 Kennedy Drive in Esterhazy on June 7.

also have every type of flooring—luxury, vinyl, plank and tile, hardwood, solid and engineered carpets—everything. We can help you find what matches your situation in terms of the budget you have and where it's going, and what you use your space for."

Handpicked Interiors also does installation of what they sell.

"The thing we usually get asked the most is if we have an installer or not," Feltz said. "We have an installer for everything as well."

Whether your project is a complete home design, room specific, renovation preparation, or even just a consultation session, Feltz

is able to custom-tailor the right fit for people's needs.

"We can definitely help you with figuring out what would be the best option—we have multiple options for every type, so we can go through the pros and cons of each one and help you figure out which one makes the most sense," she said. "If you're looking for just flooring or tiles, you can just stop by the showroom and we'll help you on the spot to figure out what will work, or what might be your best options."

If you're looking for design services, then I usually start with an hour consultation where I'll come to you and then we can discuss whatever it is that are the

main issues you're having or the main things you're wanting help with. After that, if there's more services that you'd require, I price it out project by project, and we go from there."

Unlike the home renovation shows on TV, proper interior design isn't something that can be magically brought together in under 30 minutes. Great results do take a little time, but that investment is definitely worth it in the long run says Feltz.

"I usually like to say you want to leave a good two to three months for the design part," Feltz advises. "Sometimes, work will start while we're just finishing up the design, but usually if you

give yourself a good two months before you expect things to actually start happening, then you'll have a comfortable time frame to figure out what you want and make sure you can get it in time."

Since opening the storefront, Feltz has noticed business increase, growing every day.

"It's starting to pick up a little bit more now," she said. "We've had more people hearing that we're open and they are learning a little bit more about what we have. We've had a few weeks of people coming in and out."

As with many local businesses, shopping local is important to the team at Handpicked Interiors.

"We tried to do as much as we could when we were renovating the store itself," Feltz said. "There's been a lot of different local businesses that we reached out to first for everything before we went anywhere else, so it's certainly something that we try and promote whenever we can. Even if there's something we don't have, if we know that somebody else does have it, we certainly let you know."

Feltz added that Handpicked Interiors has many one of a kind styles unique to her collection.

"We have a lot of options that you won't find elsewhere in terms of brands for both flooring and especially in our tile selection," she said. "We have a really unique tile selection for this area. There's a lot more handmade and patterns that you won't typically find even in Yorkton."

Feltz says Handpicked Interiors is the answer for those who favour something beyond the ordinary.

"It's for anybody who's looking for something that might be a little bit different than the standard stuff you'll get at a hardware store," described Feltz.



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# Provincial Government announces construction for Grenfell Nursing Home to begin this July

BY ASHLEY BOCHEK

The Government of Saskatchewan announced on June 13 that a contract has been signed for construction of a new 33-bed nursing home in Grenfell.

The community has been consistently working on the project for the last few years and is excited to finally see it going ahead.

PCL Construction Management Inc. has been selected through a two-stage procurement process as the successful team to deliver the new 33-bed Grenfell Long-Term Care (LTC) Home.

Construction is scheduled to begin in July 2025 with substantial completion by Spring 2027.

## Positive impact

The Mayor of Grenfell, Mike Steininger, says he sees the nursing home having a positive long-term impact on the community of Grenfell.

"It has been a long time coming. It means great things for the community. It is going to bring in more people, hopefully some younger families—I don't see a negative at all. Young families mean the school gets more people, means stores, the grocery stores, gas station, everything is going to flourish from this. I think it is wonderful.

"I bet everyone in town already is excited and the word will be around town later today (the day of the announcement) just with the paper and CTV news being here. Everyone is just so excited and have been waiting for the news."

## Welcoming news

Trevor Burnham, the Chair of the Grenfell District Health Care Foundation, says this project has taken many years to accomplish. "We have been at this for such a long time, there has been highs and lows, so to finally get an announcement from the government to say, 'Yes, we are going to move forward!' And hopefully see action at the site this summer is going to be huge for the community and very exciting. It is going to be a huge step forward. Everybody is excited to see it even just get started and see progress."

Larry Parrot, member of the Grenfell District Health Care Foundation adds, "For so many of the seniors who are part of our community and currently in other locations around the province, it's good to get this up and running so our grandparents and loved ones have the opportunity to come back to Grenfell. It's going to be huge because for a lot of the families that you talk to, it is very difficult to provide support to family members when they are in communities a long way from home, so we are looking forward to it.

"I think there will be a tremendous satisfaction in the community with all the ef-

forts that have been put into this project. It is finally here and it is going to meet the needs that we are looking for. It has been a long time coming and we are all very excited to see it."

## Community excited

Tyler Thomlinson, pharmacist and owner of PharmaChoice in Grenfell, says the project going ahead is a relief for many community members.

"It is a super exciting day. It is an exciting day for the community of Grenfell, it is an exciting day for people in the surrounding communities. It has been a long time coming and something people have been skeptical about at times over the last 30 years, but it is also something we have really pushed for. It has been a culmination of a lot of hard work by a lot of people, so it is a big day for a lot of people.

"It has been a long time of working on this project both in community and in government so it has been a joint effort, but definitely a long one. It is very exciting and a great day for the community."

## MLA visits Grenfell for announcement

Kevin Weedmark, MLA of Moosomin-Montmartre, says he is happy to see this development go forward in his constituency.

"A contract has been signed for construction of the nursing home. It will be a 33-bed nursing home. There has been a lot of work getting to this point, but now a contract has been signed and this project is moving forward. Construction will start this July and substantial completion should be in early 2027. So this project is moving ahead and we are going to have that new 33-bed nursing home in the community of Grenfell which is going to make such a difference in so many lives."

He says the government has had this project on the agenda for the last few months.

"In the six months since I have been MLA, I have worked very hard and there has been a lot of work behind the scenes to make this project go forward. I do know that the community has made it a priority, the Town of Grenfell has made it a priority, the local foundation has made it a priority, I made it a priority and have been working with the Minister of Health and Minister of Rural and Remote Health. I know they have had this at the top of their agenda and we have worked hard and we are now moving forward with this project."

MLA Weedmark says he is proud to see the community involvement in this long time project.

"I just want to say a thank you to the people of Grenfell with their patience getting to this point, I want to say thank you



Ashley Bocek photo

The Mayor of Grenfell, Mike Steininger, being interviewed by Wayne Mantyka of CTV News at the Town Office in Grenfell after the nursing home was announced.

to the Grenfell Town Council, and the local health care foundation for their work and keeping this project top of mind. The local foundation will be a partner in funding this project and it is absolutely wonderful to see that local contribution and buy-in.

"This is going to be such a step forward for the community of Grenfell and I am glad to see the local involvement."

## Future of Grenfell

MLA Weedmark explains the positive impact the nursing home will have on the future of the community.

"I travel a lot across the province now in my role as Legislative Secretary to the ministers of health and I visit nursing homes and other health care facilities right across the province and I always hear the stories of what a difference it makes in people's lives when you have got that care close to home.

"For the last few years there has not been a nursing home in Grenfell and what that means is people at the most vulnerable point in their lives have to move to a different community for that nursing care—sometimes away from family or from their loved one. With this facility, you are going to have more people get that long-term care close to home and that

is very important at that stage in life. It is vitally important to provide that care close to home so I am so happy to see this project going forward. I know that is going to make a difference for the families, but also for the community of Grenfell."

He says the provincial government is motivated to invest in communities like Grenfell.

"This is a vote of confidence from the Government of Saskatchewan in the community of Grenfell for the future of the community. In southeast Saskatchewan we have so many vibrant communities and Grenfell is one of them that has a bright future."

"Having this new facility built and having these jobs and having the additional service of the long term care home, that is going to spur growth and development in the community."

"I am so excited to see how the community of Grenfell is going to leverage this vote of confidence. Grenfell is a forward-thinking community. Right now on main street there is a new pharmacy under construction—this is a community with a bright future and it is wonderful that the provincial government has stepped up and given this vote of confidence in the future of Grenfell. It will be so great to see what all develops from this."

*Continued on page 19*



At left, Tyler Thomlinson, owner of PharmaChoice in Grenfell being interviewed by Ashley Bocek of the World-Spectator and Wayne Mantyka of CTV outside the Grenfell Town Office the day that the nursing home was announced.

At right, MLA of Moosomin-Montmartre Kevin Weedmark being interviewed by CTV in Grenfell the day of the announcement.





# Grenfell nursing home moving ahead

Continued from page 18

## Investing in rural Saskatchewan

The MLA of Moosomin-Montmartre says the government is committed to see rural Saskatchewan continue to develop for the future of our province.

"There is a future for rural Saskatchewan. There are so many stories of success in rural Saskatchewan. There is so much potential in so many communities and for the people who live in rural Saskatchewan.

"Every dollar invested in rural Saskatchewan pays great dividends back to the government and the province, and it is wonderful to see this investment in our region."

## Vital investment

"The Grenfell Long-Term Care Home is a vital investment in the infrastructure that supports our residents," SaskBuilds and Procurement Minister David Marit said. "Selecting a general contractor is the first step in providing a modern, accessible long-term care home for Saskatchewan residents in Grenfell and surrounding areas."

"We are very pleased to have a team in place for the Grenfell Long-Term Care project and construction can soon begin," Rural and Remote Health Minister Lori Carr said. "Thank you to the foundation and the community for your continued support and commitment to bringing this



Ashley Bochek interviews Grenfell Mayor Mark Steininger.

important facility to life."

The new LTC home will include two spa tub rooms, a commercial kitchen, common living and dining spaces, and administrative areas.

"We are incredibly proud to have been awarded the Grenfell Long-Term Care project," PCL Construction District Manager Mike Zurowski said. "This facility will be a cornerstone for the community, providing essential care and comfort for years to come."

Owned and operated by the Saskatchewan Health Authority (SHA), the new long-term care home will be built on a vacant parcel of land at the corner of Alberta Avenue and Qu'Appelle Street in the northeast corner of Grenfell.

# Sask coal plants see life extended



A dragline mining coal south of Estevan.

relatively affordable for the people of province. That's why we reconsidered the future role of coal. You could build windmills, you could build solar panels, but the part that's so important with coal is that we own it. We have large quantities and we have hundreds of years of coal. Just the certainty of it, it's such an important part of our electrical generation."

BY RYAN KIEDROWSKI

LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

Coal will continue to help power the province, according to a letter from the provincial Minister Responsible for SaskPower Jeremy Harrison. In a letter to SaskPower Employees dated June 18, Harrison reassured that coal would continue to be part of Saskatchewan's energy profile.

"The Government of Saskatchewan has made the decision that SaskPower's coal-generating power assets will be life-extended as we bridge to nuclear baseload power generation," noted Harrison.

With power demand projected to increase substantially over the next 20 years, Harrison says the province needs all the energy resources possible to meet those needs.

"We have added hundreds of megawatts of new renewable power generation, new natural gas plants, and biomass," Harrison said in the letter. "This is in addition to our already existing hydro and other assets."

Currently, coal makes up around 35 per cent of total power generation in Saskatchewan, with natural gas being the largest source (approximately 50 per cent).

"It has a lot more to do with the availability of our coal," explained MLA Sean Wilson, the legislative secretary to the Minister of Crown Investments Corporation. "Our coal units, the average run of them is between 78 and 87 per cent usage. In comparison with renewable generation, our

assets typically only produce energy to their full potential at the highest level 31 per cent of the time, but the average is between 19 to 31 per cent. Obviously, renewables play an important role in the grid, but they're no substitute for the base load generation that coal provides us."

Even with the strong stance on coal, Harrison noted that the province is committed to achieving the goal of a net zero grid by 2050.

"But this must be done responsibly and be based on the deployment of nuclear generating assets fuelled by uranium mined in our province," he said.

Harrison also noted work to restore the Boundary Dam 4 to service will begin this year so it can be re-certified.

"In the years to come, all coal units at Boundary Dam, Poplar River, and Shand will receive the work necessary to extend the life of those units," he said.

Upgrading coal power plants is not a new concept, as Harrison pointed to China, where around 70 GW of new coal capacity was added in 2024. SaskPower will be life extending approximately 1,500 MW of coal assets while looking into the viability of added carbon capture and storage.

Drawing from a variety of energy sources also ensures the lights will continue to turn on.

"This is to make sure that our residents have affordable, reliable energy security," Wilson said. "Our direction is obviously energy security and being able to be reliable and



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## Advertising options

Plain and Valley reaches households across southeast Saskatchewan and southwest Manitoba. We also offer classified and display advertising in the weekly World-Spectator, career and classified advertising across Saskatchewan, and blanket classified advertising across Canada.

## Printing services

From business cards and brochures to hockey programs and event programs, to vinyl banners, coroplast signs and ACM signs, we can print it all!

## Deadlines

Deadline for the Plain and Valley is 5 p.m. Wednesday for the following week's issue.

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4:00 PM & 7:00 PM

**Sunday, August 3**  
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# Local singer Morgan Robertson highlighted on Amazon Music Canada

Continued from Page 9

"When I was younger I thought I'd give it a try and see where music and my songwriting takes me and I did give it a try—I guess I am still trying, but at the same time—three summers ago I overbooked myself and was doing way too much, and it made me not want to do it anymore because it is so forced, so I took a break. It made me realize it is not something I want to force because then it takes the love away from it, so I am just doing what I can and see where it takes me. I've always enjoyed singing and songwriting and I have always wanted to keep doing it, so right now I am just writing songs here and there and seeing what happens and which ones I would produce."

"Right now, writing has been a bit slower, but it kind of comes in waves. One month I may write a bunch of songs, but then I may not write anything for awhile or in a few weeks, it just comes with inspiration."

## Inspiration for songwriting

Robertson says inspiration sparks from anything in her day-to-day life.

"Coming into adulthood there is a lot of personal challenges you go through with relationships and growing up there are a lot of responsibilities to take on and figuring out who you are going to be, what you want to do with your life, there are a lot of emotions that come with it—people go through so much and you never really talk about it and I think writing has been my escape and way of talking about all these changes, and the way I process things too and clear my mind on things."

"Funny things that happen too inspire me like my 'Another Beer' song I think is funny. I was on a two-week bender and I thought it would be funny to write a song about it, so honestly inspiration comes from anything."

She says her music has been spread to new listeners by social media and locals in her small town.

"Social media is a huge thing right now. I need to be more active on it, but I think it is the biggest platform right now to help get my music out there and to more people. I think word-of-mouth is also a really big thing around here. In small towns people talk a lot and everyone knows everyone so it is definitely a huge thing as well, but social media even more. So I am trying to keep up with posting on Instagram, Facebook, and TikTok, but that is how I am trying to reach people."

## Newest single

Robertson says her newest single represents the livelihood of friends and family close to home.

"My newest single, 'Crude' is about the oilfield industry. Obviously, the southeast corner of Saskatchewan is really big in the oilfield and I grew up in it and a lot of my friends' parents were working in the oilfield when I was growing up. It is about how much is put into the work, and how much sacrifice, but also about the people sacrificing their time and working hard to provide for their families. It is an appreciation song to that and a little bit into the life of a working blue-collar industry. I recorded a video of me playing it on my deck last summer and it did pretty well on social media and I was recording my album at the time and it wasn't going to be on it, but then it did so well that I thought I would record it anyways."

"So once it was released on my album then there was a program that Amazon Music Canada was looking for participants across the country so I applied with that song and I was chosen as one of the participants so we went out to the Grasslands National Park in October and recorded a live version of it. It was so cold out when we videoed it, I was freezing. So the live version is released now from that day with a video. There will be four different videos with four different people across the country in rural Canada as part of this Amazon Music Canada program. It is to highlight rural artists so there will be two more coming out in the next coming weeks. It is a really cool program."

## One of four artists chosen in Canada

Robertson says she was shocked when she heard she was chosen by Amazon Music Canada to produce and highlight her newest single.

"I couldn't believe it when I was chosen. I was very surprised. I've applied a lot for festivals and I got a



Morgan performing at Country Thunder in Craven as part of their songwriters showcase last summer.

lot of shows around Saskatoon, but it is such a big world and there is so much talent out there so when I got the email saying I was chosen as one of the four across Canada by Amazon Music I couldn't believe it at all. When we were recording at the Grasslands that day and talking to the Amazon Music producers they said they had over 500 applications and chose four, so I was pretty blown away. It is really exciting to have my song out there and on a bigger platform for everyone to listen to. I am very grateful they chose me for that. It was very very cool. I definitely think it reaches a new fan base and more people so I am very grateful for it. It was a really cool experience."

## Performances across the province

Robertson has performed all across the province at bars and festivals in small towns and the city.

"I've played a lot around Saskatoon after moving out after high school for two years. I have played at the Jack Pine Music Festival at Ness Creek and it was like a Folkfest, they only did it for the one year. I played at Country Thun-

der in Craven last year. That was a lot of fun. They did a songwriters showcase, it was very cool. Then, I played a show in Arcola at the Mac Murray Theatre and that was really fun. I played at The Happy Nun in high school. It was a little venue in Forget. It was so good, it actually burned down sadly, but it was such a great venue and it was great to perform there because everyone was always so attentive. It was such a good environment. I played in Calgary at the Blue Jay Sessions as well where they bring songwriters in so I played with four other musicians there and we went around in a circle and took turns sharing songs we had written and again it was a great room because everyone was super quiet and just listening to the music."

## Personal favourite song

Robertson explains her personal favourite songs. "I really like 'Crude'. I have so many that aren't released too—I probably have another two albums worth of songs that I need to record, but out of the ones that I have recorded 'Crude' is probably my favourite. I really like 'Stages' as well. My music is country with some funk to it, not super mainstream country, but country with some folk. I think Americana would be what I use to describe my music."

She plans to continue her music career one step at a time.

"I want to keep enjoying it and have other people enjoy my music as well. I want to just keep loving it. I love performing and performing with a band, but at the end of the day I just want to keep doing it at my own pace and not taking it too far, that it is more of a chore rather than something I love doing."



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CCA Rodeo - 7pm  
Intermission - Human Chuck Wagon Races  
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Slack - Following Main Performance

**SATURDAY**

CCA Rodeo - 7pm  
Intermission - Muttin' Bustin'  
Beer Gardens & DJ Music by CRT Sound  
5:30pm to 2am  
\*\*Full Canteen both Nights\*\*



**25<sup>th</sup>**  
Anniversary

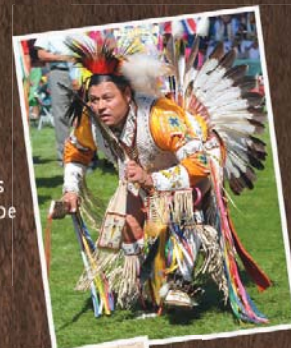
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Approx 10pm  
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Located on the Service Road east of Whitewood along the Trans-Canada Highway





Kevin Weedmark and Kara Kinna photos



## Kahkewistahaw Powwow 2025

The Kahekwistahaw Powwow took place from June 20-22 at the Bernard Bob Memorial Powwow Grounds. These photos were taken Saturday, June 21, which was National Indigenous Day.

**Above left and centre:** Dancers at the powwow, including one of the children who danced.

**Above right:** Lealy George, at left, and Tayjah Ajecoutay, at right, outside the powwow grounds.

**Left:** An aerial view of the powwow grounds during the powwow.



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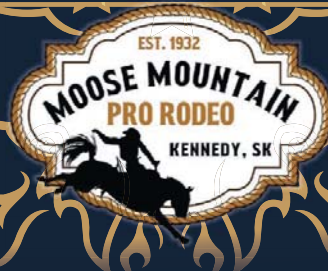
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## SATURDAY

- 3<sup>pm</sup> Parade (note the time change)
- 4<sup>pm</sup> to 5<sup>pm</sup> Happy Hour in Rodeo Beer Gardens
- 6<sup>pm</sup> Rodeo with Bull riding under the lights
- Sheep Scramble during intermission
- The Truco Trick riders and wild ponies following rodeo performance
- 9<sup>pm</sup> Saturday night - DJ Dale from Moosehead in the Beer Gardens

## SUNDAY

- 9<sup>am</sup> Pancake Breakfast at Kennedy Friendship Centre
- 11<sup>am</sup> Cowboy Church Service at the Rodeo Grounds
- 2<sup>pm</sup> Rodeo
- Sheep Scramble during intermission
- The Truco Trick riders and wild ponies following rodeo performance

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## New books share stories of Kahkewistahâw elders

### Volumes 3 and 4 launched during annual powwow

BY RYAN KIEDROWSKI  
LOCAL JOURNALISM  
INITIATIVE REPORTER

The latest volumes sharing the history and lived experiences of elders on Kahkewistahâw First Nation were launched during a special gathering on June 20. One of many celebrations during Kahkewistahâw's annual powwow weekend, community members gathered at the Elder's Centre for the launch and to obtain copies of their own.

"A lot of times, people judge us because they don't know what happened a long time ago," said Wendy Alexson during the launch. "So I hope after reading the stories, you'll know what they went through."

Alexson was featured in Okéhté Ayima Chief Kahkewistahâw's Elders Volume Four, and she described what it was like to see her truth in print for the first time.

"I have my story in one, and I got to read it yesterday," she said. "The feelings that came out, the story that I wrote, it hit me. It hit me hard. But you know, that's healing—we tell our story, they hear our stories, so it's a healing for us."

Alexson is often found at the Elder's Centre, opening the doors and welcoming people inside for fellowship. Her hope is that more people can learn about what the elders have written in the books.



Members of Kahkewistahâw Chief and Council gather with publisher Ted Whitecalf and elders featured in the latest history books.

"We have so many books that have come out, and I hope we can all get to read them," she said. "Then we'll know what that person went through."

Previously, two volumes of wisdom from the elders was published, Nitohtamwak and Pasikohk, along with Courageous Warriors of Kahkewistahâw First Nation, which shared the experience of veterans from the community. As Chief Evan Taypotat explained, adding more voices to the library was something Council believed was important.

"Now your story is forever, and that's what we wanted," he said. "Many of our elders have just lived strong lives and had horrible things happen to them. And today, you see the fruits of your labor. We really wanted to make sure that we honoured you all as you are in your golden years, we want you to rest assured that your story is going to be told forever."

#### Preserving history

Trusted with gaining those valuable stories and creating the books is the team at Sweetgrass Studios of Saskatoon. Through all five history books, Ted Whitecalf had the great honour of hearing the wisdom of the elders and transcribing those interviews for the publications.

Continued on page 27



Copies of the third and fourth volumes of Kahkewistahâw Elder's stories sit with Chief Even Taypotat's headdress.



Wendy Alexson views her story in the fourth volume of Kahkewistahâw elder's stories.



Ted Whitecalf of Sweetgrass Studios spoke during the book launch at Kahkewistahâw First Nation on June 20. He spoke with the elders featured in all five history books.

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# New books share stories of Kahkewistahâw elders

Continued from page 25

"It all goes back to Chief Louis Taypotat when he was chief here," Whitecalf explained. "He had asked me to collect stories for their elders here on Kahkewistahâw. Traditionally, people used to go and ask an elder, 'tell me about this, I want to know this', but those kind of things are gone way past. Technology has taken over our kids with the games, and the iPhone, and television."

The books brought back to Kahkewistahâw allow the voices of the elders to continue for generations to come.

"The main reason is to have the continuation of knowledge, the languages, the spoken word by the elders, traditions that we have lived with in the past," Whitecalf said. "The traditional life, the good life that the Creator put on this earth."

The audience is not limited to those living in Kahkewistahâw, but has connected those further from home with their roots.

"They have a lot of elders that reside in Vancouver, Calgary—not on reserve," Whitecalf said. "They said they don't want to leave their elders out, they are so important to them here as well. They belong here. They live here. They're from here. Let's go and talk to them. They got something to offer, and certainly that they do—there's some really wonderful stories."

The personal accounts have also been referenced at the university level over the past couple of years.

"People use that in schools, and not only here—there's other places that people are using these books," Whitecalf said.

Preserving the stories of the elders is a calling of great importance for Whitecalf, who says it's especially timely to hear the stories before the people are gone.

"People are going to be reading it in the future, it's an education for them," he said of the history books. "It's a good teaching tool to remind them, the grandkids, the great grandkids, are going to be reading, 'oh, I didn't know my kokum or mushum had to go through this.' If our elders take their knowledge to the grave,

those are our libraries. These are our people, our professors. That's why they're doing this—to capture those stories now. Everybody's useful whereas other societies, they put their elders to pasture. Our elders are used in so many different ways."

Dedication to accuracy was very important to the final product as Chief Taypotat told those gathered at the book launch.

"Ted did the translating of the recordings and said, 'I didn't change a word from what the elders said,' so when your family is reading your story, they'll hear you, because it's going to sound like you," he said. "That was important to not edit it, to change it. It was important just to translate it the way that you told the story."

Even the placement of the new Elder's Centre reflects that importance—between the school and band office—so all ages can be close to the important resource of the elders.

Sweetgrass Studios has produced around 30 such history books around the province with each one weaving to form a collective bond.

"Everybody puts in little pieces together, piece of this puzzle," Whitecalf said. "Here we have a whole story about Kahkewistahâw elders of the time. It's more so for young people, too, we try to get the lineage in there to say, 'I didn't know I was related to that family.' Everybody's related, elders talk about related to somebody out in different parts of Saskatchewan, different parts of the country. So everybody's connected in one way or the other."

As for his thoughts on being the guy that gets to visit elders and document their stories, Whitecalf humbly replied, "I'm the luckiest guy on this planet. I get to do what I love doing."

"It's just an incredible journey for me," he said. "I'm so happy and honoured to be entrusted with the elders."

Even communicating with the elders in Cree has proven to be a powerful experience.

"A lot of times I'll be talking in Cree, the elders have cried, 'let me hear you talk Cree, because I lost my language when I was growing



Councillor Cory Alexson (left) and Chief Evan Taypotat present Ted Whitecalf of Sweetgrass Studios with a starblanket in appreciation of his work creating the history books.

up because of the school system, the thing that was taken away from us," Whitecalf explained. "I relate to a lot of the elders. In talking to them, they remind me of a lot of these things while I was growing up on Sweetgrass First Nation."

He also noted that Kahkewistahâw has a positive model to follow in how their people are treated.

"Kahkewistahâw people are so amazing in what they're trying to do," Whitecalf said. "They're leading in so many areas—education, the leadership that is fantastic here. It's a supportive First Nation here. A lot of bands that are out there, they look up to Kahkewistahâw because of their leadership and how they're doing things. They care for their people."

## Medicine of laughter

Much of that good medicine found on Kahkewistahâw comes from traditional teachings of having respect and love for all people. Visitors to the community are joyfully welcomed, often to the resounding sound of hearty laughter.

"It's just good to see the first thing you walk into is that medicine of laughter," said Councillor Cory Alexson, speaking with the World-Spectator moments before the book launch. "That's one of the main things we talk about and

day, sâkhitowin—to love one another—that important piece, that spirit of love. Again, we're all related, we're all interconnected."

Alexson took on the task of updating the history books in 2023 as Chief and Council recognized the need to record more elder voices.

"It was highlighted and obviously recognized how important that along with our culture, our language, it's the stories from our old people," he said. "Prioritizing and getting their support to move forward into getting out there along with Ted Whitecalf, our producer, our publisher, we were able to initiate these stories. It's a process in itself, and obviously something you don't want to rush right? It's of true importance in regards to who we are as people."

The ability to have access to the elder's stories is also a reminder to slow down a frantic pace—to connect with people.

"Especially now with how fast the world itself is moving," Councillor Alexson said. "We have to realize and take the time to put on the brakes. But in respect to our old people, as far back as we can go to truly find out who we are and, of course, wâhkôhtowin—the relationships to the land—to who we are as Kahkewistahâw people. That was one of the main things that kept coming up

when we're hearing from our old people, the importance of togetherness and the family kinship in itself, and finding out who we are, dating back to Chief Kahkewistahâw himself, how we're all related, and how all our stories are connected. We're all interconnected in one way or another, from Chief Kahkewistahâw."

When asked about a future history book, a Volume Five in the series, Councillor Alexson said with a laugh, "we're on it!"

"That does make my heart happy, because we have in our membership those premushums and kokums that are going to be turning age 60 as we have it identified within our nation," he said. "Carrying it forward and not losing an opportunity to collect every story moving forward that we can from our membership. That transition into that age, into that body of eldership and sharing, their story, their experience, because that only builds us stronger."

Glancing into the Elder's Centre from the outdoor deck where Councillor Alexson and I are chatting, he begins to smile.

"You look in there, they're embracing and they're holding these books close to them," he said of the elders. "You can tell how important and how happy we are to be celebrated this way."



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# New USask infrastructure to bolster agricultural research

The University of Saskatchewan (USask) has received \$11.8 million in funding for two new facilities that will provide critical workspace for crop and soil science research and teaching.

Located on the USask Saskatoon campus, the Harrington Plant Growth Facility and the Soil Science Field Facility will provide capacity to expand research programs and enhance training opportunities for students in the College of Agriculture and Bioresources and the Crop Development Centre (CDC) at USask.

The project will also include a renovation to a portion of the Crop Science Field Lab at USask to provide additional workspace for the CDC. Construction is underway and is expected to be completed in July 2026.

"We are grateful to all of our partners and government supporters who have contributed to this important infrastructure project," said USask President and Vice-Chancellor Peter Stoiicheff. "These new facilities will be instrumental in advancing critical agricultural research and will set the stage for addressing global challenges as we aim to be the university the world needs."

Named after USask alumnus Dr. James Bishop Harrington (PhD), a mem-

ber of USask's Class of 1920 (BSA), in recognition of his significant contributions to the field of plant breeding, the Harrington Plant Growth Facility will provide much-needed indoor growth room capacity for breeding programs. With a limited growing season in Saskatchewan, growth rooms are essential for researchers, allowing for multiple cropping cycles in a year.

The project will include an expansion in workspace capacity devoted to seed processing and storage as well as enhanced lab spaces for analyzing field samples. Providing increased capacity to meet the needs of the CDC's renowned plant breeding programs, the new infrastructure will improve efficiency and support research for many of the crop types essential to western Canadian producers.

The Soil Science Field Facility will better equip USask soil scientists as they address agricultural issues related to soil health and sustainability, soil fertility and plant production, Indigenous agriculture, and environmental issues such

as mitigation of climate change and its impact on agriculture.

The facility will offer a modernized, central location to consolidate soil science field research activities, featuring spaces for soil and plant drying, soil and plant processing for analytical analyses, and storage of soil and plant material from research trials.

Funding for the project includes \$7 million from Western Grains Research Foundation (WGRF), \$2.3 million from the Saskatchewan Wheat Development Commission, \$1 million from the Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture through the Sustainable Canadian Agriculture Partnership (Sustainable CAP), \$850,000 from the Saskatchewan Barley Development Commission, and \$400,000 from the Saskatchewan Oilseeds Development Commission.

Continued on page 34



David Stobbe photo

Above, from left: Angela Bedard-Haughn, Dean, College of Agriculture and Bioresources, Tracy Broughton, Executive Director, Saskatchewan Oilseeds Development Commission, Honourable Daryl Harrison, Minister of Agriculture, Honourable Ken Cheveldayoff, Minister of Advanced Education, Wayne Thompson, Executive Director, Western Grains Research Foundation, Blair Goldade, Executive Director, Saskatchewan Wheat Development Commission, Peter Stoiicheff, President, USask, Jill McDonald, Executive Director, Saskatchewan Barley Development Commission.

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# Governments invest \$3.4 million for USask's integrated Genomics for Sustainable Animal Agriculture and Environmental Stewardship Project

Canada's Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Heather MacDonald, and Saskatchewan Agriculture Minister Daryl Harrison have announced \$3.4 million over four years to support the development of two new facilities at the University of Saskatchewan (USask).

This includes the Omics Resource Centre at the Western College of Veterinary Medicine (WCV) and Beef Reprotech facilities at the Livestock and Forage Centre of Excellence (LFCE).

The investment will be delivered through the Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership (Sustainable CAP) as part of the governments' commitment to support partnerships with strategic agricultural research organizations.

The new initiative, called IntegrOmics (Integrated Genomics for Sustainable Animal Agriculture and Environmental Stewardship), will advance beef genetics by matching genomic markers with desirable traits and evaluate reproductive efficiencies. This integrated approach will enable producers to make more precise and data-driven breeding decisions that improve livestock productivity in Saskatchewan.

"Innovation—like what



Christina Weese photo

Cattle at the Livestock and Forage Centre of Excellence's Beef Cattle Research and Teaching Unit

we are seeing through genomics research—is vital to the continued success of Canada's agriculture sector," MacDonald said. "This shared investment with Saskatchewan will support the expanded efforts of these facilities and ensure a vibrant future for Saskatchewan's livestock sector."

"Saskatchewan producers already bring generations of expertise and innovation to our livestock

sector, and this investment builds on that legacy—helping ensure Saskatchewan's ranchers remain global leaders at what they do best," Harrison said. "The work of USask is recognized globally, and we are proud to support this initiative and the livestock sector it serves."

The IntegrOmics project will address issues of beef cattle production and reproductive efficiency, animal health and the envi-

ronment through the adoption of genomic tools. Saskatchewan producers will benefit from having access to these tools to stay competitive in the domestic and international market.

"Genomic research is advancing rapidly, and USask is leading the way in this evolving field," University of Saskatchewan Research Vice-President Baljit Singh said. "Our researchers are applying cutting-edge methods to advance our understanding of beef genetics, which couldn't be

possible without the support of this joint funding from the provincial and federal governments. We thank them for their continued support as we aspire to be the university the world needs."

USask, the WCV and the LFCE are world-class research, teaching and knowledge-transfer facilities that connect innovation across the livestock production chain. USask's work in feedlot and cow-calf management, veterinary science and forage

systems plays a vital role in driving improvements in productivity and sustainability in the sector.

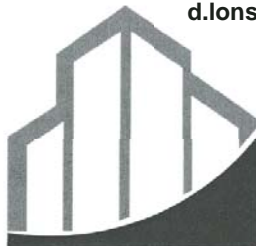
This investment builds on the long-standing support for agricultural research by the governments of Canada and Saskatchewan. Through shared priorities under Sustainable CAP, over the past five years nearly \$170 million has been committed in Saskatchewan toward research to improve productivity, expand markets and ensure our agri-food products remain globally competitive.

With this announcement, USask's LFCE and the WCV continue to strengthen Saskatchewan's reputation as a global leader in high-quality, safe and sustainable food production.

Sustainable CAP is a five-year, \$3.5 billion investment by federal, provincial and territorial governments to strengthen competitiveness, innovation and resiliency of Canada's agriculture, agri-food and agri-based products sector. This includes \$1 billion in federal programs and activities and a \$2.5 billion commitment that is cost-shared 60 per cent federally and 40 per cent provincially/territorially for programs that are designed and delivered by provinces and territories.

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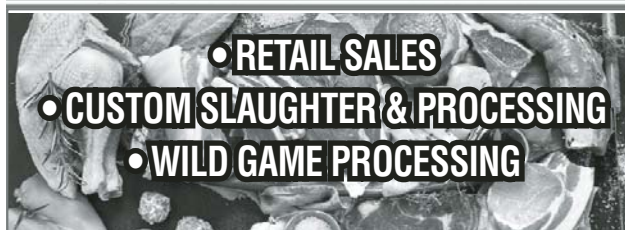
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# USask researchers discover genes that protect wheat from disease

By ERIN MATTHEWS

Bacteria, viruses and fungi are masters at evolving new strategies to infiltrate plants and cause disease that harm crops. To get ahead of these pathogens, University of Saskatchewan (USask) researchers like Dr. Valentyna Klymiuk (PhD) and Dr. Curtis Pozniak (PhD) are studying wild wheat varieties that carry resistance to these harmful pathogens. This led them to discover something they've never encountered before — a unique pair of genes that work together to protect against disease.

To support its variety development program, USask's Crop Development Centre (CDC) has been diving back into the gene pool of wheat and screening its wild relatives for useful traits that can be effectively deployed in new wheat cultivars. Wild wheat has not been domesticated, so it cannot be used directly in breeding, but it contains useful diversity to respond to environmental threats. This makes it ideal for learning new methods of crop resistance.

Research at the CDC focuses on improving crop varieties. By integrating basic research into crop breeding, the CDC translates scientific discoveries into new high yielding varieties that can be used by growers.

"Part of our research is keeping one step ahead of pathogens by identifying new resistance genes which ideally could be stacked, like Lego blocks, so the pathogen can't easily overcome the resistance," said Klymiuk.

Looking deeper into a wild strain of wheat, Klymiuk and Pozniak found that it demonstrated significant resistance to stripe rust, a type of fungal infection that is one of the top five diseases of concern for producers. Klymiuk and Pozniak soon realized that the resistance they identified in this wild strain was behaving differ-



Above left: Dr. Valentyna Klymiuk (PhD), a research officer at USask's Crop Development Centre (CDC), is studying wild wheat varieties that carry resistance to these harmful pathogens. Above right: As director of the CDC, Dr. Curtis Pozniak (PhD) leads the variety development program. By integrating basic research into crop breeding, the CDC translates scientific discoveries into new high yielding varieties that can be used by growers.

ently than expected. Their findings were recently published in *Nature Genetics*.

"Once we started assessing the resistance, we could see that it was different to others that we have studied before. The resistance was acting in an atypical way, which signalled a very different plant response," said Pozniak, professor and director of the CDC at USask. "We were quite intrigued about what was really going on."

Klymiuk, a research officer in Pozniak's program, said that typically one gene is responsible for the expression of a stripe rust, but in the case of this wild wheat, they determined that two genes working

together as a pair were required for full resistance. One gene is responsible for sensing the invading pathogen while the other activates the immune response of the plant to stop the pathogen in its tracks.

To confirm which genes were responsible for resistance, Klymiuk's experiments turned each of the genes "off" like flipping the breaker to see which room of the house goes dark. When the gene is switched "off" the plant can no longer protect itself and becomes susceptible to the pathogen. However, this unique gene pair proved to be a bit of an anomaly, which caused a hiccup in the researcher's results.

"Initially, we thought only a single gene was responsible. Most of our results made sense but there were a few plants that didn't give us the expected results. This was a head scratcher, so we went back to rethink our experiments and to test if two genes were actually involved. Once we retested, the results became clear," said Klymiuk.

The team dug deeper and found that the two outlier genes interact at a protein level, physically coming together to initiate the resistance response.

"A lot of the time when things don't line up the temptation is to move forward, but we really dug into the weeds to figure out what was going on and that's when we realized that the genes were communicating and working together and that's what's really new," said Pozniak. "If we had given up after the first set of experiments, we never would have concluded that two genes coming together was needed for resistance. It's a great science story."

Identifying complex gene interactions that offer greater resistance, like the ones published in this most recent paper, are crucial in the continued battle against crop disease. Because of the genes' odd behaviour, Klymiuk developed a DNA test to ensure the pair of genes are present in new plants. With this DNA test, these genes can be used routinely in the breeding program.

These discoveries allow the CDC to add robust tools to their genetic tool kit, helping to produce stronger and more resilient varieties of wheat for many years to come.

"The interconnectivity of research and breeding lets us keep the eye on the prize and develop the most productive varieties for farmers. This project also really helps us understand and appreciate the complexity of plant biology. Plants really need to adapt, and they do it in cool and interesting ways," said Pozniak.

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# New pool opens at Kemoca Regional Park

BY RYAN KIEDROWSKI  
LOCAL JOURNALISM  
INITIATIVE REPORTER

It was a day many who enjoy Kemoca Regional Park near Montmartre were looking forward to for a long time. On June 28, the new pool at the park officially opened its doors after many months of construction.

"Spending time outdoors, whether it's camping, throwing a football around, taking in the unique attractions at regional parks, is a vital part of the overall wellbeing and quality of life in rural Saskatchewan," said Moosomin-Montmartre MLA Kevin Weedmark. "This new and improved facility is an incredible addition to Kemoca Regional Park. Infrastructure improvements in our province play a significant part in our regional approach to building a stronger Saskatchewan and stronger communities. The province is happy to have played a part in helping to bring this project to life."

Both the provincial and federal governments contributed to the project through a Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program grant, with \$1,366,240 from the Government of Canada and \$1,138,420 from the Prov-



Cutting the ribbon on the new pool at Kemoca Regional Park.

ince of Saskatchewan. In addition, \$910,941 in recipient funding combined to total over \$2.5 million toward the new pool. The cost of the entire project is an estimated \$4 mil-

lion, and support from the Town and RM of Montmartre, plus generous donations like the \$10,000

contribution last winter from Cornerstone Credit Union have helped. Kemoca Regional park

does see a lot of activity through the season from not only local and area folks, hailing from Fill-

more, Sedley, Odessa, and Vibank, but also travellers from White City and Pilot Butte coming to enjoy the 52-site campground.

## From lifeguard to designing new pool

Emma Brenner from CCR Construction was the project co-ordinator for the new pool project—fitting, as she used to work as a lifeguard at the old pool that was constructed in 1971. Brenner first began as a junior guard while in Grade 10, then advanced to a senior guard in her third year at the pool. Drawing from this experience was helpful in designing what aspects of the new facility will look like with keeping a keen eye on functionality.

"I knew how the typical day-to-day lifeguards worked, and I incorporated whatever I could of the stuff that was required into the new design," she explained. "Just being in that old building, the way it functioned, I knew from working in it what was good and what wasn't, so that was a way that I could incorporate that into the new design, too."

Continued on page 46



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With Ralph Goodale, Canada's High Commissioner to the UK, at Canada House in London



Canada House in London



With Ranissah Samah, the Agent-General for Saskatchewan in the UK. I visited with her at Canada House in London.



Above, a work by Saskatchewan sculptor Joe Fafard, who grew up near Rocanville, is on display at Canada House in London. Left, with the Eiffel Towers in Paris and in Montmartre, Saskatchewan.

## From London and Paris to Welwyn and Whitewood

I have been on the road a little bit lately, from London and Paris to Welwyn and Whitewood.

### London and Paris

Kara and I took a bit of a break in Europe. In Paris I had to get a photo with the Eiffel tower to match a photo with the Eiffel tower in Montmartre.

In London I visited with Ranissah Samah, the Agent-General for Saskatchewan in the UK at Canada House in London Tuesday!

It was interesting to hear about her work attracting investment to Saskatchewan and promoting Saskatchewan products in the UK and Europe! She says she loves to tell people in Paris that there is a replica Eiffel Tower in Montmartre, Saskatchewan!

I told her about some of the businesses and industries in Moosomin-Montmartre and we had a good discussion about her role in representing the province.

I also met with Canada's High Commissioner, Ralph Goodale at Canada House in London.

He spoke about his role, representing Canada in the UK, and spoke of how he is influenced by his Saskatchewan roots.

It was great to get away to Paris and London for a trip, but when I woke up in my own bed Thursday morning, went for a walk around Moosomin and heard the birds singing, and the morning silence, I realized once again that we live in one of the most amazing and beautiful parts of the world. While travel always puts local issues and concerns into perspective, there's nothing like the feeling of being home again. I love my home, I love my community, I love my province, so while heading out on a trip is always exciting, there is nothing like the feeling of coming back home, especially when home is in the amazing, beautiful and friendly corner of the world that I happen to call home.

### Welwyn and Whitewood

On Thursday we were back in Canada and I visited both Welwyn and Whitewood.

I dropped by Welwyn Regional Park Thursday morning where the annual swimming lessons were under way at Welwyn Lake.

Swimming lessons at Welwyn Lake are an annual tradition for many people in our area, and it was great to be at the lake and chat with a few folks.

Then I headed to Whitewood.

It was a real honour to represent our government in celebrating a remarkable milestone—the 45th anniversary of the Whitewood Museum!

What an incredible achievement. For 45 years, this mu-



seum has been the heart and soul of Whitewood's story—preserving our past, celebrating our roots, and reminding us of just how rich and vibrant our local history truly is.

You don't have to spend long inside the Whitewood Museum to understand just how special it is. Each room, each artifact, each photo and display tells a story—a story of pioneers and dreamers, of builders and farmers, of families and friendships that helped shape not just Whitewood, but all of Southeast Saskatchewan.

This museum brings history to life. It reminds us of where we came from, and in doing so, it helps us better understand who we are today.

But a museum like this doesn't just happen. It takes passion. It takes dedication. It takes years of hard work by volunteers, board members, donors, and supporters who love their community and want to make sure its story is never forgotten.

Thank you to the founders who had the vision to create this museum 45 years ago. Thank you to the volunteers who have spent countless hours gathering and preserving our history. Thank you to everyone who has walked through these doors to learn, to teach, and to connect with the stories of those who came before us.

And most importantly, thank you to the Whitewood Museum for reminding us that history isn't just something in a textbook—it's alive, it's local, and it belongs to all of us.

### Record CT scans

I am proud to share the positive progress in our health care system. In 2024-25, Saskatchewan reached a new record by completing over 250,000 Computed Tomography (CT) and Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) scans. That's the highest number ever performed in a single year.

A recent report from the Canadian Institute for Health Information shows that Saskatchewan had the shortest CT scan wait time and the third lowest MRI wait time

in Canada. Our recent investments in this critical service area are resulting in faster diagnoses and improved patient care.

To build on this progress, our government is providing more than \$10 million this year for the replacement of medical imaging equipment. Planned upgrades include replacing MRI and CT scanners at Regina General Hospital; replacing a CT scanner and retrofitting an MRI scanner at Royal University Hospital in Saskatoon; and upgrading medical imaging equipment in several rural health facilities.

### Financial support for students

Turning to education, our government remains committed to providing financial support for students wanting to build rewarding lives and careers here at home. The 2025-26 Saskatchewan Student Aid applications are now available for students pursuing post-secondary education this fall.

Students interested can fill out an online application and apply for other student aid programs including scholarships, bursaries, grants and student loan forgiveness. This fund will help students from their first year of post-secondary education through to joining Saskatchewan's workforce. You can find more information at [www.saskatchewan.ca/student-aid](http://www.saskatchewan.ca/student-aid).

### Recovery from wildfires

Our government remains committed and is doing everything we can to support communities affected by Saskatchewan wildfires. We want to ensure people feel safe, supported and have access to the recovery resources they need. To lead this work, the Saskatchewan Public Safety Agency's (SPSA) Recovery Task Team (RTT) is working with communities as they prepare to rebuild.

This team was created to identify areas of need and ensure devastated communities receive assistance and post-disaster supports. The RTT includes representatives from the SPSA and other provincial ministries such as Environment, Social Services, Government Relations and others as needed. Currently, the team is focused on helping with debris management, living accommodations and mental health services.

### Reach out

If you ever need help, have questions or want to share your ideas, my constituency office is always here for you. You can contact my constituency office at 306-435-4005 or [office@kevinweedmark.ca](mailto:office@kevinweedmark.ca), or drop in at 622 Main Street, Moosomin.

We look forward to hearing from you.

# New USask infrastructure to bolster agricultural research

*Continued from page 29*

Additional funding has also been provided by BASF Canada, the Saskatchewan Cattle Association, SeCan, Bob and Norma McKercher, the Saskatchewan Alfalfa Seed Producers Development Commission, the Saskatchewan Forage Seed Development Commission, and SaskOats.

"The WGRF investment into these two new facilities will provide new opportunities for expanded research at the University of Saskatchewan," said Laura Reiter, WGRF board chair. "The research that takes place at the University of Saskatchewan has made a significant contribution to the success of western Canadian farmers and the new facilities will build upon that success."

This infrastructure project was made possible through the WGRF Phase 2 Capacity Initiative which supports the development of infrastructure necessary to accelerate crop research for the benefit of field crop farmers in Western Canada.

"This funding announcement is excellent and exciting news, and we're very proud to add our support to the group of industry partners who have come together to fund this initiative at the University of Saskatchewan and the College of Agriculture and Bioresources," said Minister of Agriculture Daryl Harrison of the Government of Saskatchewan. "We appreciate the importance of innovative ideas and getting them where they need to be—into the hands of our producers and value-added businesses to help them stay positioned as global leaders in the industry."

Sustainable CAP is a five-year, \$3.5 billion investment by Canada's federal, provincial and territorial governments that supports Canada's agri-food and agri-product sectors. This includes \$1 billion in federal programs and activities and a \$2.5 billion commitment that is cost-shared 60 per cent federally and 40 per cent provincially/territorially for programs that are designed and delivered

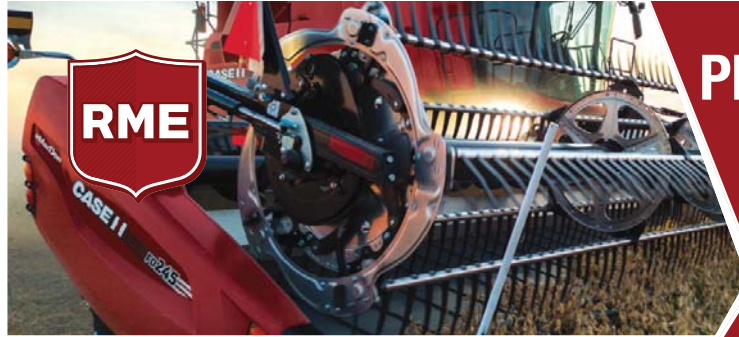
by provinces and territories.

"USask researchers are driving the discovery and innovation needed to feed the world," said Dr. Angela Bedard-Haughn (PhD), dean of the College of Agriculture and Bioresources.

"We are extremely grateful for this significant investment that will strengthen our research and teaching, and elevate our capacity to deliver the resilient crop varieties and soil research that are critical for a sustainable future."



Cereal and flax pathology technician Ashely Smith works in a growth chamber in the Controlled Environment Facility in the College of Agriculture and Bioresources. The new Harrington Plant Growth Facility will provide expanded indoor growth room capacity for USask researchers.



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Members of the Kliever family enjoying lunch at the vintage fire engine display at Elkhorn Auto Museum.



Miniature ponies in the parade with a Red River cart.



The Elkhorn Auto Museum barrel train in the parade was busy all afternoon giving children rides at the museum grounds.



Volunteers pitching grain sheaves into the museum's antique threshing machine. The power of the machines comes from a canvass pulley belt turned by the fly wheel on a nearby tractor.



A demonstration of bush saw mill making planks from large trees. The display and owner of the saw is Lyn Tutthill of Elkhorn.

## Another great Canada Day in Elkhorn!

BY ED JAMES

The weather was great for the many events offered all day long in the village and at the museum grounds for Elkhorn's Canada Day celebrations. The day started with a pancake breakfast at the seniors centre that brought out a large crowd and newly elected MP Grant Jackson to help out. Throughout the village many homes had flags on display with the bright red maple leaf glowing in the sun. At the ag grounds, museum volunteers organized the many different vehicles for the parade.

At noon the parade started along the main street, with Kevin Tutthill doing the color commentary from the steps of the former Bank of Commerce building, which over the past few years has been converted to an apartment and office suites. This year saw a wide variety of new and old entries. Thanks to some busy auto museum volunteers, they were able to put more of the classic museum cars in the parade.

Along with the parade entries, there were almost as many children waiting along the parade route looking for free treats and prepared with shopping bags! Along the parade there was a slight detour as many of the smaller vehicles passed by the senior homes with the residents and their sun hats excited to see the cars of yesteryear and their youth!

At the museum grounds there was a line up at the entry gate to get in. Two of the special items this year were a unique and interactive make and take children's craft and game area.

Throughout the museum buildings there have been some minor and major changes brought about by a busy summer staff and management. One of the major projects was the restoration of the 100-plus-year-old church. The major work on this project was carried out under the leadership of museum director, Lillian Jackson and volunteers. The final touch was the recent return of the church's origi-

nal Baptismal font that now sits at back of the church. Visitors now will find it a simple and quiet place for thought and reflection.

At the old one room school house a volunteer was on hand to explain how school was over 100 years ago and what some of the items on display were for. Back at the pole barn, there was live entertainment, a lunch and a busy beer garden. Later in the afternoon the beer garden would become a very lively bingo parlor.

Soon from the museum's outdoor display area you could hear the toot and steam whistle of the big steam engine getting ready to do a demonstration of log cutting with a round blade that's at least six feet across. The canvas pulley belt is attached to the fly wheel of the saw and the logs are turned into planks and square posts as the steam engine chugs along providing the power to the long belt. When they are finished all you have left is a pile of fresh smelling sawdust and a big pile of rough board lumber!

Across the way three hay racks were brought out of winter storage and were sitting next to the museum's antique threshing. The machine has had its long pulley belt hooked up to the fly of the tractor and there is no shortage of waiting volunteers to climb up onto the hay rack to throw sheaves into the rattling threshing machine. As the sheaves went in, from out the back gold colored straw formed a big soft hill for anyone who wanted to jump in! From another pipe, out came golden heads of grain that will be turned into flower for cake, buns, cookies or perogies!

At 5:30 pm, Kliever Katering had a cold plate buffet supper laid out with many of the dinner tickets pre-sold. As always the meal was excellent with a home made feel and taste about it.

After dinner the museum summer manager Barry Lambkin brought out the ticket drum to make a 50/50 draw with funds going toward repair of the museum roof. I was at this event with two other former Fort la Bosse employ-

ees—Kel Smith and Tom Clubb. While we were sitting there, Kel noticed a lost wallet on the ground, so he took it up to Kevin Tutthill who was about to pick out the 50/50 number. Kevin looked after it and proceeded to pull the draw number. To Kevin's shock, the winner of the 50/50 draw was Kel Smith!

Smith, a long-time retired teacher and army cadet officer and current Red Cross Emergency co-ordinator, accepted the prize and then donated half his prize money back to the museum for their roof repair project. I guess that old saying "Honesty is its own reward," must be true!

The bar went on into the evening to bring an end to a perfect local Canada Day celebrations.

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A cowbird perched on the back of a bison. This age-old relationship reflects a delicate balance of the prairie ecosystem. As the bison move through the field, they stir up insects creating opportunities for the cowbirds to feed.



Robert Johnson in one of his forage fields grown in co-ordination with the Resilient Agricultural Landscapes Program.

## Fairlight bison ranch thrives with focus on regenerative grazing practices

BY ANGELA ULRICH

Robert Johnson, together with his family, operates a thriving bison farm near the community of Fairlight, where they are deeply committed to sustainability and land stewardship. Their approach focuses on the natural prairie ecosystem as much as possible, allowing the land and the animals to thrive as they did centuries ago.

By raising bison, a species native to the region, they support regenerative grazing practices that improve soil health, encouraging native plant growth, in turn promoting a natural biodiversity that is becoming more uncommon in today's conventional farming environment.

When touring the ranch, it is apparent that the Johnsons are committed to working in harmony with the land and the animals that grow on it, ensuring both the environment and their bison herd are cared for with respect and balance.

With plans to expand the herd, the Johnsons purchased five quarters of land in 2022. They proceeded to do the opposite of the trend and converted every acre of conventional farmland into hay. Robert utilized the Resilient Agricultural Landscapes Program (RALP)

through the provincial and federal funded Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership. RALP provides funding to producers to increase the environmental resiliency of agricultural land. The program helps producers achieve outcomes related to water quality, soil health and biodiversity through the adoption of beneficial management practices.

With assistance from a nutritionist, agronomist and a seed company, Robert seeded a hay blend consisting of brome grass, orchard grass, tall fescue, and legumes. Birds foot trefoil has thrived in his pastures and native landscapes. In areas with lower topography, he used varieties that work in saline wet areas including salt tolerant alfalfa, sainfoin, timothy, intermediate wheatgrass and creeping meadow foxtail.

After converting the conventional land to hay/forage production, the improvements of water retention were quickly apparent. Forages and legumes have the capacity to hold onto water with a strong root system even during dry conditions, contributing to improved soil structure and reduced erosion.

*Continued on page 45*



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# Enhanced FCC Transition Loan terms aim to better support ag and food entrepreneurs



Agriculture and agri-food business owners transferring farm or business assets to new owners now have a new option to consider, given recent changes to Farm Credit Canada's (FCC) Transition Loan. The loan's new terms come at a very important time. Canada's agriculture and food system is sitting on more than \$50 billion in farm assets expected to be transferred in the next 10 years.

"Transferring the family farm or business can be a stressful thing to manage, but the support of the FCC Transition Loan can help address the financial barriers folks experience," said The Honourable Heath MacDonald, federal minister of agriculture and agri-food. "It also creates opportunities for people looking to start or expand their operations, making it a real investment in the future of our agricultural sector."

The enhanced FCC Transition Loan is specifically designed to facilitate the transfer of assets, making it easier for both buyers and sellers. The new terms allow disbursements to the seller over a period that extends to 10 years. The loan is available for farms, agri-business or food businesses going through changes in ownership, be it within or outside the family.

"One of the most consistent challenges faced by Canadian producers is transitioning

their operations to either family or an outside qualified buyer. It is complex, nuanced, and emotional," said Justine Hendricks, FCC president and CEO. "For our part, we've been working hard to build a loan product that makes transition and sale easier for both buyers and sellers. Whether the buyers are new to the sector or not, this product is focused on delivering peace of mind and flexibility to Canadian agriculture and agri-food producers. It's designed specifically with affordability and success in mind."

#### Benefits for the seller:

- Guaranteed full payment of the sale proceeds by FCC
- Customized payment schedule for up to 10 years, and
- Opportunity to support a next generation entrepreneur

#### Benefits for the buyer:

- No need for upfront capital for a down payment
- Flexibility to choose between improving cash flow or building equity (potential to reduce interest expense and pay off loan sooner), and
- FCC's AgExpert software is included

"The FCC Transition Loan has been a game changer for our farm," said Aaron and Amber

Hoffus, grain, oilseed and cow-calf producers in Bjorkdale, Sask. "It has helped us to secure land and equipment, with flexible terms and saving interest helped us to continue growing. We've had the opportunity to grow and build our family farm for our kids, and hopefully generations to come, and would recom-

mend the FCC Transition Loan to anyone looking to do the same. The enhancements to this particular FCC loan come at a critical time and can help other entrepreneurs like us better manage the realities that come with the transfer of assets."

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As a cornerstone of the region, Southeast College transforms lives through the power of education. By fostering strong communities and driving economic growth in an ever-evolving world, the College plays a vital role in shaping a prosperous future.

The College is governed by a dedicated seven-person Board of Governors. With three vacancies arising due to upcoming retirements, the Board is seeking expressions of interest from individuals eager to contribute as Board members. Candidates will be assessed with preference given to those who meet the following criteria:

#### Geographic representation

Based on Southeast College's operational footprint:

- 1 representative for 'rural west communities'
- 1 representative for 'rural north communities'
- 1 representative from Weyburn or immediately adjacent communities

#### Skills/experience

Ideal candidates will have expertise in at least one of the following (not in order of importance): Government, Education systems, Indigenous relations, Legal, Leadership experience, Southeast College's operating environment, Energy, Health, Trades, Small Business & Labor Relations, Management, Finance, Risk Management, Communications, and Marketing

#### Diversity

Southeast College embraces diversity and inclusivity, actively encouraging

- Inclusion of individuals with disabilities
- Equal gender representation
- Representation of visible minorities
- Participation of women in non-traditional roles

#### Submission

Southeast College Board of Governors invites interested parties to apply, in writing or email, before 1st August 2025 to:

CJ Johns, Board Liaison  
Southeast College  
Box 1565, Weyburn, SK S4H 0T1  
Email: [CJohns@southeastcollege.org](mailto:CJohns@southeastcollege.org)

Please include a resume with your professional background, previous board experience, if any, and describe your interest/aims in serving on the Board of Southeast College. All submissions will be treated with the utmost confidentiality. The board will review applications before making a recommendation to the Ministry of Advanced Education for Ministerial approval.

For further information contact CJ at [cjohns@southeastcollege.org](mailto:cjohns@southeastcollege.org) or (306) 861-5751

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# New Parkland Female Hockey Program

Program to help support future female hockey players in rural Saskatchewan and Parkland Region

Continued from page 7

"It will take some time and lots of questions because it is so new and can be confusing so we are just hoping to make it more clear."

## Umbrella association

Korpusik explains the idea behind the PFHP.

"It is an umbrella that all these associations are part of. We don't have any control over the associations, but we are here as a support and a way for teams to navigate Hockey Sask rules and female hockey."

She says Western Saskatchewan has had a program similar to the PFHP for many years.

"We have actually mimicked—they have done this exact thing on the west side of the province. They are called Western Prairie around Kindersley, Unity, and that area. They've done this years ago now so we are simply following in their footsteps because it did work really great. Actually north of us I think they have done something similar or are looking into it—in the Melfort-Tisdale area."

"I think a lot of places are doing it because it is so much easier when we all work together."

"The opportunities are endless when we all come together to help one another. It is nice to bring in other perspectives and viewpoints to grow the girls game whether it is for tournaments or camps," said Korpusik.

## Connecting Sask Female Hockey

Korpusik says the PFHP will help bring hockey associations together and bridge gaps in the Sask Female Hockey league. "It is about making the female hockey league smaller and more close-knit. With the Sask Female Hockey League there are a few things that hinder us as far as growth in female hockey. For example, our goalies, you can't have a team if you don't have a goalie so that is one thing that we are really going to have to focus on as a group—encouraging girls to play the positions, but also giving them the skills and training so they are confident in that role. The other thing is travel. In U15 AA, there are four divisions and we are part of the southeast division, there is a southwest division which is like half of Regina, Swift Current, Moose Jaw, then there is the northeast and northwest. Then, U18 it goes to two divisions of north and south. There is a ton of travel."

## Rural Saskatchewan Hockey

Korpusik says she hopes to see the new program help hockey teams all over rural Southeast Saskatchewan.

"I am hoping it will inspire some more collaboration across the board as far as hockey goes in our area, not just female, but for now with female hockey they are still a minority when it comes to playing hockey so I would love to see this program take off and help develop female hockey."

"I would also love to see it take off in places where maybe hockey isn't super consistent in every age group and where communities start collaborating and creating these umbrella associations that allow for more movement within the Sask Hockey rules."

She says the PFHP will help build female hockey provincial teams. "Creating provincial teams is another big bonus. If everybody registers under one association then you can make one provincial team."

"Hockey is hard at a rural level when numbers are inconsistent depending on the year so I would love to see as many communities as possible come together to make these umbrella associations to help them continue to have hockey in all communities, not just the bigger centres."

Korpusik says the PFHP will hopefully help develop all female hockey programs.

"I hope this program will grow the game so we have enough to support the A and AA program and for them to be competitive as well. It is the hope to give the girls as many options as we can. The more girls we get out playing the better because then there will be more opportunity at every level."

## Rebranding to Parkland Phoenix

Korpusik explains the rebranding in further detail.

"Since Melville decided they didn't want to sign off on this agreement, they couldn't be the registering centre anymore so we are rebranding the AA programs of U13, U15, and U18 out of Yorkton as the Parkland Phoenix."

"Melville still wants to have their own A teams of U13, U15, and U18, and they are going to keep those jerseys that say Parkland Fire so they don't have to get a bunch of new jerseys and this allows them to continue to have that Parkland Fire name in Melville."

"We just rebranded the three AA teams and had to move the registry centre. Yorkton will just look after the registering process, but the hope is that the practices and games are going to be spread out through the area and region of Parkland Phoenix and PFHP. That is the misleading part that it's happening out of Yorkton, but it isn't, necessarily. Parkland is the home, Yorkton is just going to do all the work to register. We are just spreading these teams around the area so it not just based out of Melville."

"We weren't going to rebrand and the Parkland Fire was going to stay the Parkland Fire if Melville was interested, everything was going to stay essentially the same, other than we would have a board that is getting representation from all the communities in the PFHP."

"It is just the three AA teams that will be the Phoenix and everyone else who is part of the new PFHP will maintain their team names they have. The program is about involving more people, making it more fair, accommodating, and more welcoming in the Southeast Saskatchewan and Parkland area."

## Upcoming tryouts

Korpusik says tryouts for the three AA Parkland Phoenix teams will be in September.

"Tryouts are in early September. The AA U15 and U18 teams are September 10 til 20th and U13 AA tryouts are the following week from September 17 to the 27th. U13 AA is a new team coming this year because Hockey Sask has told us that we needed to have a U13 AA team in the area. Nothing is changing as far as the leagues go, so last year it was the Parkland Fire, the AA U15 and U18 teams, and now it is just called the Parkland Phoenix. It is the same teams and league just a rebrand and start of a new beginning."

## Future hopes for PFHP

Korpusik says she hopes to see the program develop over the next few years and to eventually sustain a AAA female hockey team again.

"AAA would be a hope eventually that once we grow the girls numbers enough that we could potentially have a AAA female team back here again, like the Prairie Fire years ago, which would be amazing, but we have a lot of work to do as far as numbers go to be able to support a AAA team, then AA teams, and A teams as well for everybody to play, but that would eventually be great because the closest centre for AAA women's hockey is Weyburn and Regina, but it is the beginning and we will see how it goes."



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# It doesn't get much better than this

On a beautiful spring evening, as the sun begins to set I head out on the SXS, camera in hand, hoping for that one amazing shot. Just half an hour earlier I had fed the guys in the field amidst about 12 drops of rain but now, with the clouds scattered sporadically across the skies and little wind to speak of, I am simply enjoying the beauty that surrounds me. The trees, long brown and bare are now fully green and the fields of recently-sown wheat boast row upon row of two-inch high plants (at the time).

My camera and I make several stops along my pre-determined route – right back to the field I had been at before. The only difference is my mode of transportation. And my gloves. I am ultimately on a mission, one to pick twine and bits of scrap I had noticed earlier. Methinks hubby has turned up a few goodies in his pass along the edge of the field. Who knew it was some sort of dumping ground many years before.

My stop at the designated 'spot' nets me a five-gallon pail full of twine and junk and as I turn around to lift the pail into the back of the SXS, I see the most amazing, ground-to-ground rainbow across the sky. And yes, I captured it on my camera. And ok, it wasn't a breathtaking photo even though my breath was taken away with the unexpected sight. But in that moment, surrounded by the green leafy trees, the freshly turned-over black soil, the sun setting to the west and the rainbow and deep coloured clouds off to the east, I thought, "It doesn't get much better than this."

The next day, on that same field, the last seeding day in what seemed like a looonnnnnn season, hubby says to me as I delivered lunch to the guys: "Found you a rake, dear." I immediately respond with, "In your tire?" Yup he says, pointing to the four-wheel-drive tractor. And so, with the end literally in sight, we were once again reminded that some days bring more frustration and challenges than others. And still, it doesn't get much better than this – out in the country beneath the incredible and ever-changing 'living skies' where the view goes on forever – and oh how I love it.

And speaking of frustrations, I can't begin to share those of the men in my world who worked so hard every single day from very early in the morning until it was time to roll into bed at night. My frustrations were on a different level. You know ... aren't the potatoes cooked yet? Where is that bottle of barbecue sauce I just bought? I am sure there are hamburger buns in this freezer somewhere! How can I be out of bottled water already? Is the grocery store still open? You know how it goes.

One day, the first start up after a rainy week, I actually had no idea the guys were rolling again. I went out to the farm at 5:00 p.m. but the twins didn't know where any of the guys were and I headed back to our home in town (where we stay on rainy days). A 5:30 text makes me aware that they are seeding and my plan for soup and toast when hubby got home suddenly went south. At 5:32 I threw some sausage into the air fryer and started a pot of boiling water. At 5:52 I was packed with water and plates of food (such as it was) and on my way down the highway. By 6:50 I had fed all three and headed back down the field. It was entirely possible that I might even make a 7:00 meeting by perhaps 7:04.

I didn't really pay much attention to the circle in the middle of the field that hubby had obviously worked a bit earlier, other than to slow right down because I hate bouncing my truck over the ridges. That's when I realized I was bogging down in a mud puddle (no, not a slough, just let me clarify). So much for slowing right down – I was stuck! Not even 4x4 did me any good. Frustrated and ripped right off, I turned the truck off, got out (in my flip-flops no less) and thought, "I'm walking home!" Well, at least to the farmyard some 3 or 4 miles away. And no way was I going to make the meeting that I thought I wouldn't, then thought I would make.

Hubby's laughing a few minutes later as he came to rescue me (I had walked all of 25 yards) didn't exactly sit well with me. I mean, really, what was so funny about it? No one had thought to tell me they were seeding despite a number of phones in the field. Just saying. And after being so careful about the "ridges," here I was having to pull my truck out of the mud. Easy peasy, according to hubby as he unhooked the rope and laughed some more. I personally didn't find the whole thing particularly hilarious but it seems everyone hubby told had a good laugh.

Hubby seldom saw home during our month of seeding as we had settled once again into our RV at the farm. Same spot. Same view. Dog house. Chicken house (no chickens). Old shop. Campfire out back of the camper where the kids and their mom and I spent at least a few minutes around nearly every night. It's where we unwind after the long, busy days, interspersed with a quick walk to feed the 4-H steers (them, not me). Or a SXS trip to check cows (again them, not me). A quick trip to the field to take/bring back a man or two. A chance to sit back, procrastinate doing the dishes that are piled up in the RV but also a chance to hear about the kids' day.

When the twins (14) get home from school, one is immediately off to till some patch of land; the other gets a few swings of golf in before starting the mower up. My days of cutting grass at the farm are dwindling though the boys still will ask me to do the ditch at the highway. I am honoured. By next year, I suspect I won't even need to do that. Their weed whacker and their chain saw keeps busy as they cut fallen tree branches, cut wood for the fire and trim up the yard, especially prior to a 4-H meet at their farm. "Maybe you wanna bring your weed trimmer out one day, Grandma," one says. No more words than that but perhaps it was his way of saying the 'camper yard' could be trimmed up.

Gone are the days of the twins' little 4-foot-square patch of dirt they so faithfully tilled up with the hand tiller, carefully seeding it to wheat and canola, surrounded by chicken wire to keep animals out. This year is a bigger patch, maybe an acre, seeded with the air drill in a little corner by the corrals. This is "their" patch. One of the boys carefully tilled along the edge of the dug-out as well and seeded a row of corn only to be reseeded shall we say, by the air drill when their dad rolled by seeding oats and grass seed. Their dad wondered why there was a neat little tilled row along the edge. Obviously, he didn't wonder hard enough. Oh well, this is life on the farm.

The other end of this little oats/grass patch was where the boys had planned to plant evergreen trees. With some help from our oldest grandson, I started the process while the twins were in school one day. Rope? Check. Sticks? Check. Bright colored tape? Check. The twins added more trees to the row later, sort of following the contour of the field just as I had done. Fortunately their grandfather hasn't exactly seen the row yet. It wouldn't meet "straight" standards by any means but the boys were happy with the end result so we will all be happy with it! And hopefully "Eagle Eyes Wayne" won't notice until the trees are super well-established.

When the boys' dad brought a water tank on wheels over from Great Grandma's, they were pumped! Dutifully each day they water that row of evergreens, pulling the tank along behind the garden tractor. One boy is on the tractor, the other (and the dog) riding along in the SXS, getting off every now and then to inspect the job. The dog digs holes.

The Lighter Side of  
Life...  
DOWN ON THE FARM  
by donna beutler  
FREELANCE PHOTOJOURNALIST  
dl\_beutler@yahoo.ca



Too bad he wasn't digging holes for the trees I planted.

When seeding was over (oh, glorious day!), Wayne had to be in Brandon for an appointment, one that would result in him having to have some surgical procedure in his gums. Yeah, gives me the shivers, too. Within a week, we had made three trips to the city, the last one a bit unexpected due to some complications. As we approached home on the last appointment, hubby, who had been driving the old fuel truck back and forth to town, says to me, "I am sure I locked the old fuel truck up." A few minutes later, he says, "I hope it isn't raining at home. I think I left the windows on the old truck open." Okay, so now we are both laughing. And sure enough, the truck is sitting in front of the house, all locked up, windows open. When he goes to close the windows, he can't find the keys. Yep, you guessed it. Left the keys in, windows open and manually locked the truck doors. I am pretty sure all those needles

into his gums on repeated days may have fogged a few brain cells, something I too can relate to, especially during what has been a busy time of year.

On top of the stresses of farm life during seeding, our son and his family and the families of their partners of their fishing camp up north (near Flin Flon) have endured the stress of the unknown. Is the lodge still standing was the question we had every single day. We followed weather forecasts for Denare Beach (near where the camp is) and NASA 'heat' maps for days on end, believing one minute the camp didn't survive, only to hope the next day's 'heat' map showed there was hope. In the end, some firefighting by water bomber pilots and guys on the ground on several different days has, miraculously (so far), resulted in all dozen or so buildings still standing.

As I write this (June 13, 2025), our camping days at the farm have come to an end for now and our heads and hearts are turned towards a very exciting moment – our oldest granddaughter's high school graduation. Formal grad photos are done (and are beautiful I might add, knowing I am a little biased). Now it's time for that diploma, a backyard barbecue and some finals and ta-da! Of course, this grandma is already at times weepy, just thinking about it. My mind floods with memories of the wee little girl, who by the time she could first form a sentence, would say every time we would attempt to help her with something: "I can do it mine own self!" And that has proven to be true, time and time again.

At the same time as we cheer on our graduate, I also had to say goodbye to a very good friend of mine, someone who welcomed me to town some 11 years ago. I was a little lost those first few weeks and every morning I would sit on my patio swing (which was sitting on clay out front of my house). I bemoaned the loss of the job I had just left; I didn't like not having a green grassy yard; I had a lot of clay to wheelbarrow to spots. Lost is the best way to describe that period of time.

As it was, there I was, drinking orange juice (likely it was Pepsi) early each morning, swinging on the patio swing as my neighbour walked by on her way for coffee downtown. "Come for coffee," said 'the other Donna' to me. "Oh no, I don't do coffee," I said. "Oh, come anyhow," she insisted and off I went. That began a tradition for a few years and the start of a friendship that just really helped me adapt to life in town. It felt like such a loss when her eventual dementia meant a move to be nearer her kids. Her passing is another reminder of the fragility of life and how important it is to enjoy time with family and friends even when life is busy and challenging.

And with those closing thoughts, I best utilize the words: "the end." To our farmer friends and all our readers, enjoy each and every day and we'll chat again next month!!

## LAND FOR SALE BY TENDER

Sealed, written tenders for the property described below will be received by:

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- Interested parties must rely on their own inspection and knowledge of the property and not on the above or any other representations made by the Vendors.
- Tenders must be received at or before noon on **September 5, 2025**.
- Each tender must be accompanied by a \$1,000.00 deposit cheque payable to Meighen Haddad LLP. Deposits accompanying unacceptable bids will be refunded.
- Highest or any tender not necessarily accepted.

### TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF SALE:

- The bidder whose tender is accepted will be required to complete an agreement covering terms and conditions of sale.
- Sale shall be subject to the approval of the Prairie to Pine Region for United Churches in Manitoba and Northwestern Ontario.
- In addition to the deposit, the balance of the accepted tender must be paid within thirty (30) days from the date of notification of tender acceptance, or evidence provided that the purchase funds will be available under conditions acceptable to the Vendor. If the balance of the accepted tender is not paid within the set time limit the deposit paid may be forfeited as liquidated damages and not as a penalty.
- Possession is not authorized until acceptable arrangements for full payment are made following acceptance of tender.
- All mines and minerals will be reserved from any transfer.
- Successful bidders will be responsible to pay G.S.T. or to provide a Declaration and Undertaking to self-assess if registered for G.S.T.
- Each of the vendor and purchaser will be responsible for their own legal fees and disbursements relating to the sale.
- Successful bidders will be responsible for real property taxes commencing January 1, 2025.

For further information or appointment to view contact Karen Barrows at 204-725-6712 or Joanne Eastman at 204-741-0701.

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# Fairlight bison ranch thrives with focus on regenerative grazing practices

Continued from page 40

For marginal acres, Robert also seeded a pollinator blend with assistance from DUC's marginal areas program. The Ducks Unlimited Canada program is an alternative management strategy to address saline, weedy and hard to access areas. Some of these areas were seeded with the use of his drone.

"Not only is high quality pastures, winter feed and water important to the herd, a proper mineral balance is vital," says Robert. "A bison hair coat is two to three inches thick in the winter which requires additional minerals such as copper, zinc and selenium. This part of the province lacks selenium, and by working with nutritionists and mineral companies, we've developed mineral blends to maximize efficiency."

"The thick haircoat adds challenges such as deworming. The hair is so thick, the traditional pour on treatments do not work as it cannot penetrate the hide; injectable treatments are sometimes not viable due to handling constraints of such a massive animal. By working with nutritionists and veterinarians we have found that adding a dewormer to the feed pellets helps establish a more effective and non-invasive treatment plan. We have seen that using this type of treatment does not kill the dung beetle population, and in turn the whole ecosystem benefits."

When looking at simply the massive size of the bison, it is surprising to learn that they are generally a low input, forage efficient animal.

"Calving trouble is rare," says Robert. "Out of 400, I may lose one per year due to a birthing difficulty. Bison have survived thousands of years travelling over the great northern plains surviving droughts, cold and mar-



Bison calves are born a rusty/cinnamon color like this one-month-old above. When they are three months old, they start to grow a darker brown coat that will get thicker in preparation for winter.

ginal feed sources. They have evolved under a low input system with little or no help. It is a survival of the fittest mentality that has enabled them to adapt and thrive.

"We try and mimic this behavior through frequent rotational grazing, leaving behind parasites in the manure and not grazing pastures down to the roots. Bison prefers different plants at different times of the year. For example, lush flowering alfalfa is too rich for them, and they will leave it until it's more mature to graze. They are selective grazers that require high fiber, so the addition of straw and long-stemmed grasses are utilized to improve rumen health. There is also no risk of bloat due to the fact

they are selectively grazing out on pasture."

## Market and consumer demand

"The major market continues to be the United States, but we are seeing a growth in Canada partly due to rising beef prices," says Robert. "Consumers are starting to look for an alternative and seeing this in domestic bison."

"It is a more cost friendly option with a favorable amino acid profile, high in iron, higher in protein with an excellent flavor."

"Consumers are increasingly prioritizing transparency and accountability in the food they purchase. They want to know exactly where their food comes from—how it was fed and the practices used to bring

it from farm to table. That is why we have worked with IMI Global to create a bison verified natural program. We were the first source-verified audited farm in North America under this program. The focus is on a high standard of

ethical care, environmental stewardship and ensuring supply chain traceability."

Robert actively promotes the bison industry through his role as Vice-President of the Canadian Bison Association. He is also the Chair of the Strategic Ad-

visory Board at the University of Saskatchewan Livestock and Forage Centre of Excellence. Through his advocacy, Robert continues to support responsible practices and advances the growth of a resilient, forward-thinking industry.

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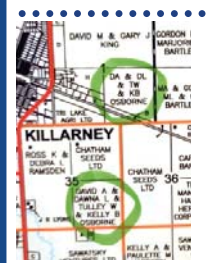


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# New pool opens at Kemoca Regional Park

Continued from Page 32

Also having worked with Sharon May back in Brenner's life-guard days allowed her some insight into what May might favour in a new design as well.

"It definitely is a unique experience being able to be a part of something in my own hometown," Brenner said. "Seeing all the faces there, too. I know lots of people from Montmartre because I grew up here, and them being able to come over and congratulate me, it felt really good! The whole project being done, too, after being part of it since last May when we first submitted the bid and everything, it's been a long time coming, but it's really cool to see the final product."

Since Brenner had such a strong connection to Montmartre, she was eager to draft a Request for Proposal after noticing the tender for the project all those months ago. After a few days of conceptual design—including the floor plan, exterior elevations, and building layout—Brenner was ready to share the design with the Kemoca Regional Park Authority.

"For the most part, they didn't want to change anything about the design," Brenner said about the park board. "They liked it to a tee! There were a few odd little things, but for the majority, we kept it exactly how I had submitted it for the actual tender."

The new design would mean an increased footprint for the building overall, growing from 2,500 square feet to over 4,000



Project Co-ordinator Emma Brenner chatting with Moosomin-Montmartre MLA Kevin Weedmark during a tour of the new pool facility.

square feet and some welcome changes over the previous building.

"Initially they had only 300 square feet for the mechanical room, or it might have even been smaller to begin with, but then after discussing with the pool contractor that was awarded,

we had to make that mechanical room quite a bit bigger because the pool is now the size of a junior Olympic pool—the volume is equivalent to that," Brenner explained. "So with being able to run and maintain that size of a pool, we did need to make the mechanical room quite a bit bigger,

and then we also extended the storage room a little bit on the other side of the building, so that would have been towards the south to accommodate some orientations that had to be altered in the change rooms just for accessibility. So I had to make sure that there was enough ac-

cessible stalls, enough accessible toilets in every single washroom and change room, so we had to add a little bit more square footage there, and then also ensuring that there was enough privacy walking through, that there was some blind spots so that you weren't changing out right in the open, and the areas were a little bit more secluded rather than just being a massive open change room."

It takes a team to make a dream like the new pool come true, as Brenner noted.

"On this project, my role was the PC, so the project co-ordinator," she said. "I worked with my boss, Cody Hopson (Project Manager), for the initial bid on this project. When we submitted our budget, our RFP, our conceptual plan, I did the drawings for that. I did the RFP, he reviewed, and then he did the budget. And we worked as a team with our estimator and other people in our office. But then, once we got awarded the project, I was the project co-ordinator for it—pretty much the middle person between our site super who is Kevin Sandercock on the project, between our PM, so Cody Hopson, myself, and then all the trades and all the other parties involved. So pretty much just making sure the project goes as planned. I'm contacting everyone, making sure everyone's on the same page, mitigating any risks or any issues that come up. Just so the project flows smoothly, that's pretty much my job!"

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### Acadia Construction makes \$5,000 donation to Kahkewistahaw powwow

Acadia Construction presented Chief and Council at Kahkewistahaw First Nation with a donation of \$5,000 during recent powwow festivities.

"We always like to invest in communities that we work in, and as part of that, we wanted to help invest and donate to the powwow where Chief and Council decide that it's best served," said Derek Trischuk, Senior Project Manager with Acadia. The company has been working on the Kahkewistahaw Landing project in Saskatoon. Seen here are (from left) Chief Evan Taypotat, Project Manager Chris Koroluk with Acadia, Trischuk, and Councillor Cory Alexson.



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