

# Plain & Valley

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 Covering Southeast Saskatchewan and Southwest Manitoba

## Memorial event August 28 in Spy Hill: Barrel racing event in honor of Jacey Lee

BY KARA KINNA  
 March 4, 2021 was a tragic day for the family and friends of Jacey Lee. The seemingly healthy 25-year-old went to bed at her home in Spy Hill on March 3 but didn't wake up the next morning.

Her mother, Michelle Fredbjornson, says the doctors think Jacey passed away from an adult version of SIDS (Sudden Infant Death Syndrome) known as Sudden Adult Death Syndrome (SADS) or Sudden Unexplained Nocturnal Death Syndrome (SUNDS) when it happens in adults while they sleep.

While the death left a sudden, unexpected and gaping hole in the lives of those who knew Jacey, Fredbjornson says Jacey's spirit and love of life was so strong that something needed to be done to commemorate her. The 25-year-old was deeply passionate about many things—music, family, friends, hunting, wood-working—but her love of barrel racing, horse riding, rodeo, and rounding up cattle were so strong that she lived and breathed the cowgirl life.

For that reason, the Jacey Lee Memorial Race will be held in Spy Hill on Saturday, August 28 in memory of Jacey.

Organized by Fredbjornson with lots of help and donations from family, friends and acquaintances—people who knew and loved Jacey—the event will consist of Open 5D, Youth 3D, and PeeWee barrel racing with prizes up for grabs in each category.

"The barrel racing is an event where family, friends and competitors can come and enjoy a sporting event that Jacey loved to compete in. This is a day to honour her, share some memories, have some laughs and watch people have fun barrel racing," says Fredbjornson.

"Jacey was my greatest fan. She made me step out of my comfort zone and believed in me, and now I love competing in barrel racing."

Fredbjornson says her daughter was one of those rare people who was good at almost anything she tried.

"She was 25 and she was very talented in anything she did. She enjoyed working with cattle, she enjoyed riding her horses, she'd build wooden tables, she loved to hunt—she was a trophy hunter. She was passionate about music and loved to sing.

"She grew up at Virden and Spy Hill community pastures, that is where she spent most of her childhood and adult life riding horses, checking cows.

"In Grade 5 she started in the Manitoba High School Rodeo Association and competed there along with the Manitoba Rodeo Association. She was always riding, checking



Jacey Lee loved horses, barrel racing and hunting, among many other things.



cows, she enjoyed fall roundup, bringing cows home, practicing in the arena all the time, going on trail rides. She was very active.

"Her celebration of life was held at our ranch and we put out her saddle and her deer horns that she had. We had pictures of everything and it was very well done.

"She loved watching her niece learn to ride. Anything a boy could do she could do, that is always what she said. She just had a gift for everything she did, and she loved to do it."

Fredbjornson says the Jacey Lee Memorial Race was her idea after Jacey passed away.

"It was my idea to honour her passion for doing barrels and for all of her friends and family to get together in a way of honoring her and giving back to all her friends and competitors in prizes and donations," she says.

"She was a very fun person and she really liked to get people going and doing things, and she started me barrel racing a few years ago. She pushed me out of my comfort zone many times."

Since announcing the event Fredbjornson says there has been an overwhelming amount of support for the event, and people from all over Saskatchewan and Manitoba signing up to participate in it. She says that's because Jacey was so well known in the rodeo world, and because it's a close-

knit group.  
 "It's a family," she says. "People support each other in that world, it's close. She knew tons of people all over Manitoba and Saskatchewan. Her dad has rodeoed his whole life. Rodeo families have a special bond. There have been so many people contact us to enter that I don't even know. "She was young so she had lots of rodeo acquaintances from all over, she was a likable person, she had friends everywhere."

Fredbjornson says the event on August 28 is meant to be a fun day.

"This Race is for all levels of competitors," she says. "It will be a 5D, top five in each D come back to the short go. The winner of the saddles will be the top two that run closest to their first run.

Continued on page 5

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**Strip mall planned for 414 Main Street in Moosomin**

Jay and Carmen Hamilton of South Prairie Residential Design are planning a strip mall for the west side of the 400 block Main Street in Moosomin. Work could start next spring on the project.

# New strip mall planned for Moosomin

**BY KEVIN WEEDMARK**  
A new strip mall is in the works for 414 Main Street in Moosomin, on the west side of the block of Main Street between Park Avenue and Lake Avenue, near the Trans-Canada Highway.

The development is being planned by Jay and Carmen Hamilton of South Prairie Residential Design.

Construction could start on the 6,200 square foot development in spring of 2022, but the developers want to have at least one lease signed before proceeding with the development.

Following are questions and answers with Jay Hamilton:

**How did the idea for the strip mall develop?**

After going through the process of developing our own commercial office space in town, we realized there was a gap in the commercial market for newer mid sized leasable spaces. When we had the opportunity to purchase the vacant lots located at 414 Main Street, that would suit this kind of development, it was a perfect fit.

We were aware of the previous success of Dan Davidson's strip mall located across the street and thought this would be the most efficient way to fill the niche in the market.

We felt it was important to have an option like this available to continue attracting small businesses to town and continue the community's economic growth.

**How long has this idea been in development?**

We knew there was an opportunity for something like this for the past couple of years, but the specific development at 414 Main was set in motion once we closed the deal on the property six months ago.

We started working on the building design shortly

after.

**Why do you think this is a good time for a development like this in Moosomin?**

There is nothing like this currently available on the market and the local economy has been strong, making a perfect combination for continued growth!

**Do you have some potential tenants lined up or is the development contingent on signing some leases?**

We have been in talks with a few potential tenants, but we would really like to sign one tenant before construction begins to help reduce risk.

**What is the total square footage of the development?**

The building is roughly 6,200 square feet and is

proposed to be divided into three suites ranging from 1,800 to 2,300 square feet.

The nice thing about developing this project from scratch is that we would be able to revise the design to suit any tenant's needs.

**Are you hoping to attract a certain type of tenant? Retail? Restaurant? Professional services? Any and all?**

We would like to see a mixture of retail, restaurant, and professional services! We believe there are opportunities for all of these types of businesses to grow and succeed in Moosomin.

**What kind of timeline are you looking at to develop the strip mall, or is it contingent on signing leases?**

We would prefer to have

one tenant signed before starting construction.

We are hoping we can accomplish this through the winter and have construction drawings ready for a spring 2022 start.

**Do you think this development will fill the need for commercial space in Moosomin or do you believe there is potential for further commercial development?**

We strongly believe in positive economic growth in Moosomin, so I am sure our development will help

fill the need of commercial lease space temporarily, but there will always be

potential for growth and new spaces as the town continues to grow.

**Steven Bonk, MLA**  
for Moosomin Constituency

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All Together Now set for November 14 and 15:

# Creative Vision planning a show for this fall

BY KEVIN WEEDMARK

Moosomin's Creative Vision Productions will be returning to the stage in November, but the production will be a little different than what audiences are used to.

Rather than a musical production, Creative Vision will be joining with theatre companies around the world in "All Together Now," featuring 15 songs from popular musicals.

Because so many companies had to cancel productions because of Covid-19 restrictions, Music Theatre International created a royalty-free musical theatre revue.

The revue features 15 slots for musical performances with multiple song options per slot, so companies have flexibility with how they present the show.

MTI has waived royalties on the show to help theatre companies make money to recoup what they lost due to Covid, and helping theatre companies get back into the business of entertaining people.

"MTI is a company that we have ordered Broadway shows from, and they decided to help people slowly get back into performing by providing songs that we can license for free," explains Sandra Poole.

"Within a certain time period, companies globally can perform these for free," says Sherrie Meredith.

"The last I looked, there were 2,800-plus companies doing this and 24 countries involved," says Sandra.

"There is a list of songs available, and there are two or three options you can choose from for each spot. We get to pick but we have to do them in order and the vocal scores and piano and the band scores are all free for us. They have background scenes for every show, or every piece that they're going to give us for free."

"It's not a play but it's a concert with all the bells and whistles," adds Sherrie. "We'll still have costuming and choreography and obviously the music and the band."

"We're going to start off with some Beauty and the Beast and then with some Hairspray. It'll be a great way to try a variety of shows that we might not have the demographic to ever put on the full show for."

The set list includes:

- Be our Guest from Beauty and the Beast.
- Matchmaker from Fiddler on the Roof.
- Middle of a Moment from James and the Giant Peach.
- This is a Moment, a male solo from Jekyll and Hyde.
- Life is so Peculiar from Five Guys Named Moe.
- Tomorrow from Annie.
- The Human Heart from Once Upon This Island.
- She Used to Be Mine from Waitress.
- Seize the Day from Newsies.
- When I Grow Up from Matilda.



Creative Vision's last performance, The Sound of Music in 2019.

- Take A Chance On Me from Mama Mia.
- Wouldn't It Be Lovely from My Fair Lady.
- Sit Down You're Rocking the Boat from Guys and Dolls.
- Seasons of Love from Rent.
- You Can't Stop the Beat from Hairspray.

Auditions for the show are coming up August 11 and 12. "Once we do the auditions we might tweak the list too, once we see who comes out," says Sherrie.

"There will be some numbers we can rehearse as individuals or small groups and then the big company numbers can involve almost everyone in the company. The nice thing is, it can spread out the rehearsals for different people. We are still in a post-pandemic world where we've been rehearsing online this entire time through Zoom and we've only just recently had a couple of in-person gatherings. This might be a nice way just to ease our way back in."

Sandra Poole says the hope is to make the numbers feel like they are being performed in a musical, with costumes, choreography and backdrops.

"It's going to be song and dance numbers. It's not just going to be a concert, we're going to be choreographing. We're not just going to have the choir standing in and doing their thing. It will have the feel of going to a musical."

"We plan to find a way to blend it so it flows naturally from one piece to the next," says Sherrie.

"We haven't seen the musical scores yet but I'm hoping there will be some lead in to each piece with the characters themselves. There are also going to be some Broadway people on the big screen saying things and we can have our mayor say something or we could say something to explain what this is all about, that it's really a welcome back to musical theatre."

## Auditions coming up soon

Auditions for All Together Now are set for August 11 and 12 at Bethel United Church in Moosomin.

"We're hoping anyone who is interested comes out to the auditions," says Sherrie. "The more the merrier is the way I feel about it. You don't have to have a whole bunch of experience behind you to have talent. We can foster anyone who wants to join us."

"We've worked with lots of people who turned into amazing singers and some of them started that way and some of them didn't, and in that case we train them as we go," says Sandra.

"There's a place for everyone," says Sherrie. "We'll be accommodating if people can't come at the times we've set, we will come up with something. If people are out of province we'll Zoom audition them if they want to."

Continued on page 9

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**Memorial event August 28 in Spy Hill:**

**Barrel racing event in honor of Jacey Lee**

Continued from front

"We are so very thankful for all the donations and sponsorship that has been coming in to make this day a success.

"There are buckles for the winner in each D in the open and youth. Then there will be pick a prize and a cash payout.

"Peewees have a buckle for fastest run along with some great prizes for everyone.

"So there will be lots of different unique prizes. There's short go for the saddles and in the short go the winner of the saddle has to run closest to their original time. So it doesn't mean you have to be the fastest time, it just means the most consistent run wins the saddle, and there are two saddles that have been donated.

"We want to give back to everyone. There will be prizes for people that are just coming to watch. We want to make it reach out to everyone and we're so thankful for the support from everyone that's come in to honor her.

"We will have opening ceremonies and we will do them in honour of Jacey.

"I did her eulogy so I will probably read what I wrote at her eulogy. We have a flag that has been made and my granddaughter will probably carry the flag. And there will be the Cowboy Prayer and O Canada.

"And she was a prankster too, so we have a lot of good little fun things. For example, the first 20 knocked barrels will each get a bottle of wine—just different things like that.

"So there will be lots of fun prizes, lots of Jacey prizes. Anything she loved she was very passionate about and there's so much gratitude in my heart for all the donations and volunteers and everything that people are doing to make this day a great success.

"A lot of friends and family are all pitching in and the Spy Hill Sports Committee has been amazing and they're working with us and they will have the canteen and beer gardens on site.

"Friends from the town are just willing to volunteer and help in any way they can."

Fredbjornson says her daughter would be pleased to see the event take place.

"She would be so honoured. She wasn't shy, but she didn't like to be put on the spot, so now she's on the spot and she's shining and she'd be pretty honoured that the support is coming from places all over."

While nothing can replace the loss of a daughter, Fredbjornson says holding something like this in Jacey's memory does provide some comfort.

"I feel like I'm keeping her spirit alive by having this to just really honor her, what she liked and what she did. And it gives me a purpose.

"I started thinking about this after she passed—what can I do to honor her? And I can't give her her wedding day, but I can give her barrel racing."

Fredbjornson says the Jacey Lee Memorial Race will likely become an annual event.

**Maryfield winners bring home \$500K windfall**

A few days after their 35th anniversary, Randy O'Greysik was able to give his wife an unforgettable gift—they were about to be \$500,000 richer!

"I said 'how's that for an anniversary gift?' " the Maryfield resident laughed as he recalled sitting his wife down and asking her to double check what he had discovered—that the Lotto Max ticket he bought for the June 15 draw was worth a half-million dollars.

"It's a feeling you get in your heart and your stomach. It's something I've never experienced before," O'Greysik said, recalling how it felt to find out he was a winner.

O'Greysik picked up his ticket the morning of the draw from the Maryfield Corner Store at 131 Main St. His ticket and another in Ontario matched the winning numbers—1, 2, 7, 20, 21, 33, 44—to take

home half of one of the draw's Maxmilions prizes.

O'Greysik said he and his family are now trying to determine what they'll do with the windfall.

"I think in the short term we're not going to change much of anything," he said. "We're going to continue to work, but in the longer term we've got some decisions to make.

"Retirement, I think, is the biggest thing. We've never travelled—everyone around us has but we never have—so that might be something we do," he noted.

Saskatchewan Lotteries is the main fundraiser for more than 12,000 sport, culture and recreation groups in communities across Saskatchewan.

Right: Randy O'Greysik



**Progress being made on long-term care/assisted living facility:**

**Investment options in Moosomin's Pipestone House**

BY KEVIN WEEDMARK

Work continues on putting together the plans and the investment for Pipestone House, a long-term care/assisted living facility planned for Moosomin.

The facility is being planned by Bridge Road Developments, Kohr Capital is raising the investment, and Care by Design will organize the operational side of Pipestone House.

The 42-unit facility will be built next to Pipestone Villas on Wright Road in Moosomin.

Pipestone House's 42 units will be a combination of long-term care rooms and assisted living suites.

The facility is expected to provide 15 full-time equivalent positions.

Services provided for residents of Pipestone House, such as meals and personal care, can also be provided to residents in



Pipestone House will be developed on Wright Road in Moosomin, next to Pipestone Villas.

the 48 units at Pipestone Villas.

Kohr Capital representatives were in Moosomin August 3 for meetings with potential investors, and ended up being

in the community for three days because of the number of potential investors who expressed interest.

"We scheduled the sessions fairly close

to cater primarily to the farmers' schedules before they're busy with harvest," said Larry Scammell of Kohr Capital.

"We're on the campaign now to get the balance of the equity in, and we don't stop until we get there. This is where we roll up our sleeves and get to work and cross all the t's and dot all the i's. We've completed the first closing."

Investors have the option of investing directly in the Moosomin project or, through a mutual fund trust, in this project and similar projects undertaken by Bridge Road Developments. Investments through the Mutual Fund Trust can be made in registered accounts such as RRSPs and TFSA's.

People can contact shayne@kohrcapital.com with questions about the project, or if they are interested in finding out more or investing.

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# Sask History and Folklore Society holding historic walk through southeast Saskatchewan

BY SPENCER KEMP  
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

Saskatchewan history buffs will be given an opportunity to learn about southeast Saskatchewan with an upcoming walk held courtesy of the Saskatchewan History and Folklore Society.

The walk will begin on August 10 and run until August 20 following the historic Fort Ellice to Fort Qu'Appelle trail.

Organizer and president of the Saskatchewan History and Folklore Society Hugh Henry says that it will be an educational walks over 10 days.

"It's actually one of the programs that the Saskatchewan History and Folklore Society have been doing for a few years and it's actually the fourth one that I've organized along a historic trail in Saskatchewan, so it's just a different part of the province with each of those and we've been doing them every second year. With our programming, we try to capture some of the history of the province, the stories, and one aspect is getting out to different parts of the province and engaging with local communities, and getting a sense of their history and how things have changed over the years. It's also an opportunity for people to get out of their regular routines and spend some time, meet some new people, and see different parts of the province and meet some of the people who live there," said Henry.

He says that the Saskatchewan History and Folklore Society has been doing these walks for the past few years to educate those interested in the historical relevance of each trail.

"The first one we did in 2015 was actually in southwestern Saskatchewan around Fort Walsh and it followed an old Métis trail that came up from Winnipeg to Cypress Hills in the 1870s and so on and that trail was well known and later used by the Northwest Mounted Police as a patrol trail in the southwest part of the province. In 2017 we did a walk-in west-central from Swift Current to Battleford and that followed a trail that was used in the early days



The Saskatchewan History and Folklore Society will be holding a historic walk from August 10 to August 20 starting at Fort Ellice and ending at Fort Qu'Appelle.

of Métis trading and later in 1885 troops came from Eastern Canada to Swift Current and they went overland on the trail up to the Battleford area and then later homesteaders and so on that came from across the world used it as a way to just kind of get around to their homesteads. Then two years ago we did what's called The Old Humboldt Site which is just west of Humboldt, there was a telegraph station set up and we went from there to Fort Carlton and that was known as the Carlton Trail. It was sort

of Métis trading and later in 1885 troops came from Eastern Canada to Swift Current and they went overland on the trail up to the Battleford area and then later homesteaders and so on that came from across the world used it as a way to just kind of get around to their homesteads. Then two years ago we did what's called The Old Humboldt Site which is just west of Humboldt, there was a telegraph station set up and we went from there to Fort Carlton and that was known as the Carlton Trail. It was sort

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of the Number One highway of its day in terms of goods and services being transported. Then this one here is just another one from Fort Ellice to Fort Qu'Appelle this year. Fort Ellice was a hub for goods coming from Fort Garry and then it would branch off to various parts of Saskatchewan. I'm researching the historical maps and so on and I know roughly where the trails used to go and we try to stay as close as possible when we're walking the back roads," said Henry.

The walk also provides

an opportunity to engage with various communities and individuals.

"We've engaged with local communities in the past and have talked with them along the way and I talk about the local history and sometimes we organize an evening meeting in a town hall. We invite local folks to come out and we talk about the history and then we welcome them to share some of their stories too. It's a bit of a back-and-forth to get a sense of pride and some history of the part of the province they're living in," said Henry.

"This year there won't be too much of the gatherings in town halls, but we have a few other programs going. We'll be stopping at Camp McKay on Round Lake and we've invited an elder from Ochapowace to come to talk to us and that'll be an opportunity to see what's going on in their world and reconciliation and those topics. Then once we get up to Katepwa Lake we'll have some Métis ladies talking about growing up along the lake and that sort of thing. Then in other towns like Broadview and so on we'll be spending the night and visiting the local museum, the same thing in Rocanville, so we can get a chance to see some of the local history and engage with the people there."

Henry says the walk is free and any and all are welcome to attend with the walk starting on August 10 at Fort Ellice. The first day will see the group walk from Fort Ellice to the Saskatchewan-Manitoba border, approximately nine miles.

He says that support vehicles will be there as well to carry any bags and food for walkers.

"It's come and go, so there's no need to sign up," said Henry.

"Each night walkers are welcome to tent, sleep in vehicles, or book a room in a hotel or motel."

"Most people will be tenting but there are other options like motels or vans. It's a real combination and it's whatever you're comfortable with."

The walk will begin on August 10 at Fort Ellice and walkers will travel approximately 11 miles each day before arriving at Fort Qu'Appelle on August 20.

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**Saskatchewan  
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# Redvers welcomes new nurse practitioner



Vicki Irwin graduated in April 2020 and began work in Kipling before beginning to work in both Kipling and Redvers in July 2021.

BY SPENCER KEMP  
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER  
The Town of Redvers is welcoming a new nurse practitioner to the Redvers Medical Clinic.

Vicki Irwin joined the team in mid-July and has been working at the town's only nurse practitioner since.

Irwin says that her role provides additional services to Redvers and the sur-

rounding community. "Nurse practitioners can be quite similar to physicians. They can diagnose and treat illnesses, they can order and interpret testing, prescribe medications, do some minor medical procedures, things like that. Usually, the focus is on primary care, so prevention of illness and disease and things like that," said Irwin.

According to research done by the Ca-

nadian Nurses Association, 3 million Canadians are receiving primary care from Nurse practitioner's and nurse practitioner's help decrease appointment wait times by offering same-day appointments for urgent patients or within three days.

To become a nurse practitioner, Irwin says she had to receive a baccalaureate degree in nursing followed by her Registered Nurse License, then receive additional nurse practitioner education to receive her nurse practitioner License.

She says that she alternates her weeks between Kipling and Redvers and assists Carnduff when needed.

"I graduated last year in April 2020 and I got my first nurse practitioner position in Kipling in December of that year so I'm half-time in Kipling, half-time in Redvers, and a bit in Carnduff as well," said Irwin.

"Traditionally the area in Carnduff and Redvers has had trouble with having enough primary care physicians and

nurse practitioner's to service the community and surrounding area so I think having the extra provider in the clinic has been a great resource."

While the position is a year-term and will expire at the end of June, 2022, Irwin says she is hopeful to continue to serve Redvers beyond the term as it is close to home for her.

"I actually live close to the community and I've been in contact with the health foundation for a number of years now just letting them know where I was at with my programming and seeing if there would ever be the possibility of a position close to home. They worked hard and lobbied for it and now it's kind of come to light with the position here. It's a termed position so we'll have to see how the community feels and go from there."

Irwin says that she has kept busy in Redvers and looks forward to what the year will bring.

## Daryl Harrison

Member of the Legislative Assembly  
Cannington Constituency



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# Saskatchewan Highways fixes up welcome sign site

BY KEVIN WEEDMARK

Saskatchewan Highways has cleaned up the Welcome to Saskatchewan sign site on the Trans-Canada Highway at the Manitoba border.

Last summer, concerns were raised about the state of the site, at which point the provincial government said maintenance at the site had fallen through the cracks because various departments thought another department was responsible for the site.

It was determined that Saskatchewan Highways is responsible for the site, and the site was cleaned up last summer.

This year, Trevor Green, who had raised concerns about the site last year, contacted the World-Spectator and Plain & Valley again this year about the state of the site.

Through the summer, until last week, there were tall weeds, garbage strewn across the site, partially dead trees, and one completely dead tree that had fallen over near the sign.

The World-Spectator ran two articles about the site, Moosomin MLA Steven Bonk spoke with Highways Minister Fred Bradshaw, and Moosomin Mayor Larry Tomlinson sent a letter to MLA Steven Bonk and then called Highways Minister Fred Bradshaw about the site.

"I am writing this after looking at the border from Manitoba coming into Saskatchewan," Tomlinson wrote to Bonk on July 12.

"Can we not put some pressure on somebody in the Department of Highways to do something with this disgrace where people enter into our province?"

"It reflects on all of us in this province and is an awful way to start to see our province. I hope you can do something for us or let me know who I can contact to put a fire under somebody to help."

"Thank you in advance."  
By the end of the day on July 13, the site was cleaned up. Grass was cut on the site and in the ditches up the highway, weeds were cut, trees were trimmed, the dead tree was hauled away, and a garbage bin was installed at the site for the first time since the province closed the visitor reception centre at the site in 2017. "The minister told me it will be taken care of," Mayor Tomlinson told the World-Spectator after speaking with Bradshaw.

"I told him our concerns and he said it will be fixed. I'm glad he listened."

"I'm glad it's been taken care of, and I appreciate that it was brought to my attention," Bonk said Tuesday afternoon. He also forwarded photos of the cleaned up site to the World-Spectator as soon as the work was done.

"I haven't travelled to Manitoba for quite a while, so I hadn't been aware of what that sign area looked like, but as soon as I found out that it wasn't being maintained, I started working to get it properly maintained, and I'm glad we have it looking better now."

In an interview with the World-Spectator, Highways Minister Fred Bradshaw said that in response to the complaints, Highways is improving the maintenance of the site.

"This area's been maintained by the Ministry at this level (since it was determined last year that Highways is responsible for the site), but due to the poor conditions of the site we decided to increase the level of service and that's why hired a contractor, actually a local contractor right from the area there, to



After concerns were raised by tourists and locals, the Ministry of Highways cleaned up the Welcome to Saskatchewan site and placed a garbage bin to help reduce littering.

go out and mow and really clean up that site."

He said he was approached by Moosomin MLA Steven Bonk and Moosomin Mayor Larry Tomlinson about cleaning up the site.

"Steven Bonk called us up and I give him credit for calling us up and letting us know the condition that site was in, and then the mayor called. I called the mayor back and talked to him and it just went on from there. That's how come we went and got everything cleaned up around there."

"We have a contractor now who's going to take care of it for the rest of the season and then we're going to take a look and evaluate the options. We've cleaned it up and we do have a garbage can back there now."

"We want to have something looking good for people coming into the province, and that's why we've also put up new signs. The old signs were starting to get a little weather beaten."

Mayor Tomlinson had suggested to the highways minister that picnic tables could also be added at the site since there are already concrete pads for picnic tables at the site.

"We're not going to add picnic tables, but if the Town of Moosomin wanted to kind of make it a little bit of a touristy spot as they come in, we can work with them," said Bradshaw.

"I think we have it looking good now. We've got the new signs on the entrance of the province, on the highways coming into the province. I should mention too these signs were produced by an indigenous business in Saskatoon."

"We want to make it look good when people come in to the province because we all know Saskatchewan's the best province in Canada."

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# Creative Vision planning a show for this fall

Continued from Page 4  
**Easing back in**

Why did Creative Vision decide to do this revue instead of a full musical this fall.

"For several reasons," says Sherrie.

"We have to ease our way back into things. We have had a year off where we have been practicing online and not having that togetherness. In order to do a full fledged show we would have had to start our audition process in April or May which is what we usually do and we didn't know what the world was doing at that time.

"Then this opportunity came up with these free royalties and it was almost too good to be true and so we can have almost the best of everything, songs from lots of different shows, with little financial risk because we're not paying the royalties for the right to perform the songs."

"And if things do change again, they have said if it has to go virtual, we're allowed to do that as well," adds Sandra.

How exciting is this for the women behind Creative Vision to be back getting to planning a show?

"There were about 15 or 20 of us that got back together for Ian Adair's memorial service and we masked and sang in the church the whole time. It was amazing how we had missed it, missed being with each other and singing together. So many people have missed it and we were so

happy to be together singing again."

"It felt like home," adds Sandra.

The producers aren't sure how different preparing for this show will be than for a typical musical.

"It'll be different because it's not as important to get everyone together, with all the pieces being independent," says Sandra. "We're going to start three days a week just like we normally do but we might not have to go straight from 6 until 10 every night. It'll be interesting."

"We might be just as busy but the participants themselves we might be able to tier," says Sherrie. "We will have this group on one day and another group on another. I think it might be more challenging for the costumers because they have 15 shows to research and figure out. If there are multiple people that are in more than one number, how you go from this costume to the next."

The women say there are a few numbers they are looking forward to.

"Seize the Day is young men and as Sherrie has said, some of the young men that were in Les Mis are now going to be student teachers in the area. I think that's going to be a great, fun one for young men and in the middle of it there's these holy nuns singing their thing so that will be fun too," says Sandra.

"There are lots of ones that are lesser well known but I have a feeling they'll grow on us and maybe become our favorites," adds Sherrie.

Picking the songs was tough, the women say.

"There are a couple of shows we've done before and you almost lean towards it because it's nostalgic to revisit them, but we decided no, let's try something new," says Sherrie.

The women are hoping for a good response from the audience.

"I hope they're glad to see us back," says Sherrie. I know probably they're looking for a show but I think that they might be surprised. This might be just the next best thing."

"We had been kind of thinking along this line, thinking show tunes," says Sandra. "Sherrie and I had talked about show tunes and I was just about to look online to see what show tunes we could get with a band and then it kind of fell in our lap with All together Now."

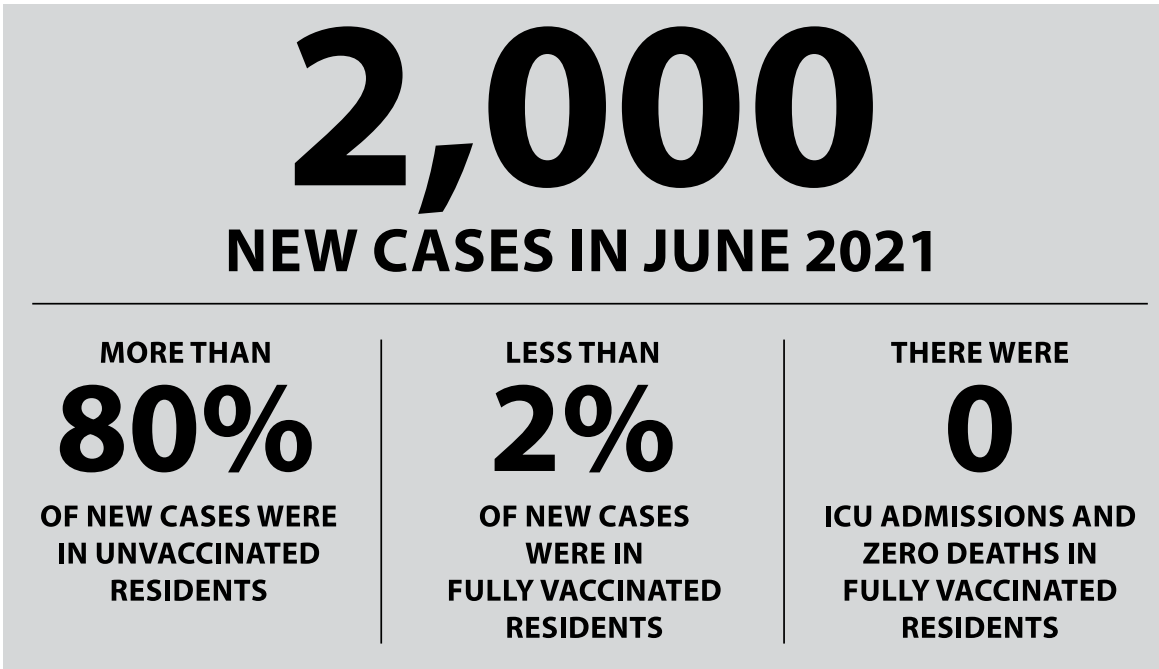
"We sent out an email to the cast of Sound of Music and also our regular choir and everyone is very excited."

Sherrie says she is excited to see the show come together.

"I can't wait to see something to its end because last year with the last show that I put together with the high school, we struck it to the side and that's where it stayed, like the show never happened, that's a terrible, awful feeling. Same with the kid's musical festival numbers that they did last year, not this spring but the one before, they were all done and never performed."

"It's exciting to be back with something hopefully start to finish."

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# Maguire furious with government's attempt to delay Bill C-208

BY SPENCER KEMP  
LOCAL JOURNALISM  
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Brandon-Souris MP Larry Maguire is furious that the federal government attempted to delay the implementation of Bill C-208, his Private Members Bill that has amended the Income Tax Act to stop it from penalizing families transferring shares of small businesses or family farms to their children. The government has now backed off the attempt and conceded that the amendment is in effect.

The Bill passed the House of Commons and the Senate, and was granted Royal Assent on June 29. Bills without a specified implementation date within the legislation become law the day they receive Royal Assent, but in a press release the Finance Ministry attempted to delay the bill, saying it would not take effect until January 1, 2022.

"The Department of Finance put out a statement on June 30 right after the Bill became law, receiving Royal Assent on the night of the 29th. The government didn't like this Bill for some reason even though every small

business has given accolades for it and 19 of their own Liberal members voted for it and the Senate passed it. We had to call an emergency meeting to deal with the government's misinformation, they tried to make people believe that this Bill was going to take effect on January 1, 2022, because it didn't have an implementation date in the Bill. Bills that don't have an implementation date are done that way on purpose as this one was because the minute they get Royal Assent they become law that way," said Maguire.

"The government was misleading in its statement and they backed down from the meeting that was called by the chair of the Finance Committee, Wayne Easter, who is a Liberal himself. We were able to determine through the witnesses, being the department of finance people, that it was actually the Minister who made the choice, but they didn't specify if it was Minister Freeland or the Prime Minister. They wouldn't say which one it was in follow-up questions but they did say the directive to put that release out to mislead people came



Brandon Souris MP  
Larry Maguire

from the Minister's office."

Maguire says he doesn't understand the federal government's attempt to delay the legislation.

"The Bill was law as of the night of June 27 when it got Royal Assent, therefore it was law. It was the Liberal government trying to mislead people, and make no mistake, there is a thought out there that they would go back and change it if they were to

form a majority government this fall. The way to prevent that is to make sure they don't. This Bill is only leveling the playing field, it doesn't give anybody a big advantage over another, it doesn't disrupt the tax system. This Bill is for smaller businesses, small family businesses. As many small business farms that we have in Canada and fishers on the coast, they represent about 3-4 per cent of all small businesses in Canada. The government tried to get a motion through the Senate to go ahead with fishers and farmers but take out all other small businesses in Canada.

"The government really did a flip-flop on this one and decided that there were too many small businesses out there in every one of their ridings that would be impacted if there was an election going on. It's disheartening to think they had to go out and not support this in the first place."

On July 19 the federal government conceded that the Bill became law upon receiving Royal Assent, and retracted the previous statement claiming it would not be implemented until 2022.

"After fighting the Bill for 527

days in the House and another 20 in July the government finally came out at 5 pm the day before while I was on my way to the emergency meeting they were holding the next day that they suddenly had this great love for small business and that they were going to implement it, that it was law and that they weren't going to go back and retroactively tax people who have done this already, even though they do still have the right if they form a government this fall to retroactively tax people who were to sell their small businesses to their children in the meantime.

"They have said they won't, so we take them at their word," said Maguire.

"It was quite a fiasco to have the government go out and mislead Canadians by putting out a release that says the Bill doesn't have an implementation date so we'll make one up, when they knew full well that the witnesses who came forward were the former speaker of the house and the former Liberal House Leader that indicated that the government was wrong and the Bill, once it got Royal Assent, was law."

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Above, the elevators and a street scene from Fleming, and below a photo of the former United Church.

## August 5-7, 2022 set for reunion Fleming planning reunion for 2022

BY KEVIN WEEDMARK

The community of Fleming is starting to prepare for a massive reunion in the summer of 2022.

The reunion is open to anyone to attend, and will be held August 5-7, 2022.

The reunion will bring old friends together to share their stories and visit, and the weekend will include entertainment, beer gardens, supper and a dance, activities for kids, a ball game or two, a parade, a church service, a pancake breakfast and more.

The organizers believe that this is a good time to be planning a reunion.

"I think it's important for older people to get together and share their stories, and for younger people whose parents lived in Fleming, and for the people who did live in the town who want to come back and see the town and their old friends again," said Chelsea Hattum, a member of the organizing committee. "Sometimes people need an excuse or a reason, they don't just think 'let's go to Fleming and see what it's all about.' This is a reason for them to come back and to talk to all the people that used to live there, all the people that heard stories about there and maybe meet some of the people they've heard stories about. Kids, grandparents, this is for everyone.

"I want to help put this on for people it matters to, because I live there and I love Fleming and I'll do whatever I can to help."

"When Phil (Hamm) first told me about this reunion, he mentioned it and I said that's nice," said Ted Frape. "On the way home my wife mentioned, you know, Phillip wouldn't have said anything if he wasn't looking for a little assistance. My wife said, if your mother and dad were still here, they'd be in there helping, so I'm here doing what I can to do to help, I guess I was talked into it!

"It's always great to have everyone together. I know we had a lot of people back in Fleming in the Jubilee year, 1955, and we had a big parade, and we want to do a big parade for this one.

"It'll just be nice for everyone together, and for some of the older folks this might be the chance to see everyone one more time."

"It's important to me just because it's my home town and I love the place, I love the people," says Phil Hamm. "Well most of them, there's a couple of them that I don't," he adds with a laugh.

"A lot of people who have moved away have a lot of good memories and I'd like to see those folks again.

"I'm really looking forward to sitting down with some of these people and reminiscing and having fun. You can be here today and gone tomorrow and it doesn't matter what age you are. So if you're going to have it, why wait for something and then say, oh shoot we could have had this one and that one and maybe a couple of them could have been there, but we waited and now it's too late for them.

"I'm looking forward to it, I think it's going to be good. Really, really good. It's the people and the visiting. We're going to have the parade and we're going to have a ball game or two and we're going to have all this stuff, but the important thing is the visiting and talking to people you maybe haven't talked to for a while.

"I'm looking forward to this. That's what it's all about and this is why this time around, last time I have a couple regrets, I didn't take the time, I was too busy with running things. I didn't take the time to enjoy it. This time I'm going to make sure I enjoy it, too."

The reunion won't be a fundraiser, but organizers hope to break even.

"We just want to cover our costs," says Hamm. "We're not looking to make money off of it or anything like that. We just want to have a good time, show people a good time."

People can pre-register for the reunion so that organizers have an idea of how many people to plan for.

People can pre-register by checking out the Fleming Community page on Facebook, which has the reunion as an event. To register, find out more, or enter the parade, people can contact Chelsea Hattum at 306-434-



6833 or Phil Hamm at 306-435-4140.

"That is something really key, for people to let us know if they're planning to come," said Hattum.

"It'd be a big help to us if people pre-register, that's really important.

"In the event you can click 'going' or 'interested.' I know not everybody has Facebook or one person might be going and they have two kids and a husband or wife. So I will take that number and estimate the total so we can give the caterers the range we're expect-

ing."

There will also be a costume contest on the Saturday of the reunion, for which people are asked to dress for a particular decade from the 1920s to the 1970s, and parade entries can be in that theme as well.

### Old photos of Fleming wanted

The committee is also looking for old photos of Fleming, both for a calendar, and to have on display at Fleming's community coffee hall.

"We've got more pictures than we've got room to put on the walls of the coffee shop," says Hamm.

"There are a lot of pictures of the elevator and different buildings in town, and organizations and people, but we thought we'd do the walls of the community hall. They can be pictures of sports teams and pictures of businesses and whatever. We'd like to also get this put together, electronically saved somehow so people have access to it, and do up a calendar, too."

"I have a photo section on the Fleming Community page," adds Hattum. "People can bring me pictures and I'll scan them and put them up. Or they can email them or put them on there themselves."

*Continued on page 25*

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**Beer Gardens**  
*4:30 p.m. to 2 a.m.*  
*DJ - Cordell Ginnis - Music following main performance*

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Farmers looking at poor yields, Ranchers thinning herds:

# Sask Chamber says poor harvest will affect all

BY SPENCER KEMP  
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

Producers across Saskatchewan are facing hardships brought on by the dry growing season.

Because of this, some producers are concerned about post-harvest bills and lack of revenue due to the dry weather.

The Saskatchewan Chamber of Commerce says that when producers struggle financially, it affects all of Saskatchewan.

Chamber CEO Steve McLellan says that low-yield during harvest will not only impact Saskatchewan's economy, but also provincial funds.

"I think the situation in agriculture is going to impact the economy in many ways at many levels, the first of course and the biggest would be the direct impact that the lack of revenue in some areas of the province from the ag producers.

"The crops are not going to produce at the level we thought they were going to in the spring and what everybody hoped for, so that means less money in local communities, fewer equipment purchases in fall, those sorts of things are significant," said McLellan.

"The other thing that's also going to be impacted is the provincial coffers. When you consider the impact on the crop insurance organizations, the impact on tax revenues being decreased, all of those have a long-term impact but the one that is going to be the most visible across the province is the change of attitude.

"We were looking for a real strong ag economy this year to get our attitude up to act as a stimulus to get the economy going. If that doesn't happen, as ag goes in Saskatchewan so does our attitude, so does our revenues. It's going to be a challenging fall, but our farmers, like our people, are persistent and I am very confident that we'll get through this as we have in years gone by."

McLellan explained that producers play a huge role in Saskatchewan's economy and a poor harvest will impact every community in the province.

"They're huge in our economy, there's no question. Every community in our province relies on farmers for everything from gasoline to groceries, from farm machinery to supplies.

"They rely on those communities to produce goods to sell to the world and that money comes back in many ways to the businesses in every community in this province, big and small. Whether they're working in office towers in Saskatoon or restaurants in small towns and villages, everybody has a stake in the success of our ag community. When our ag producers are down, everybody's feeling the pain.

"Farm machinery folks will be feeling the pinch this fall. There are already challenges there with supply chains being impacted, but we're going to see fewer purchases and that's a challenge because those are big businesses. It's going to impact everybody from the grocery store to the car dealers to the hardware stores. It's a significant impact on Saskatchewan, but our ag producers and communities are resilient and we will get through the harder days and we'll find success again."

McLellan encourages everybody to do their part in helping farmers, whether it is businesses cooperating to extend loans, or drivers just taking time to give producers the right of way on roads.

"We need to be respectful of every business person and ag producers are huge businesses in Saskatchewan. There are lots we can do, our financial sector is doing all they can to be patient in terms of loan repayments, in terms of

cash flow, that sort of thing. But individuals can do things as well.

"If you see ag producers going down the road in a combine, or with a trailer, or with a load of bales, give them room to pass.

"Allow them some capacity to take control of the road and stay out of their way. When you do all those things as a courtesy, that makes the farmer feel a little better and he may be having a lousy day, it's important to make sure we do all we can. Even if we're not loaning money or equipment to them, we can certainly show them a bit of a better day."

Even with more hot, dry weather expected, McLellan remains positive and says it's not time to give up.

"There's still time in this year to see what the final tally is, what the crops come off at, so we're not throwing in the towel just yet," said McLellan.



Saskatchewan Chamber of Commerce  
CEO Steve McLellan

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# Grasshopper: Thresholds and scouting tips

Grasshoppers are often worse in hot, dry conditions. One big reason is because insects, as cold-blooded creatures, eat more and grow faster in hot weather. The other reason is that hot, dry weather limits fungal infection, one of the main threats to grasshopper eggs. In dry weather, a larger proportion of eggs hatch.



Grasshoppers eating canola.

## Thresholds

The nominal threshold for canola is seven to 12 per square metre. This threshold comes from entomology experience from across the Prairies, including from Dan Johnson with the University of Lethbridge.

The higher end of that range may be more appropriate in average or above average growing conditions where grasshoppers have ample food. Given a choice, most grasshopper species prefer grass and cereals to canola. The low end is for dry conditions. Dan Johnson says that well-designed grasshopper research indicated that under certain situations (specifically hot and dry), the grasshopper threshold for canola could be lower than seven to 12 per square metre, perhaps as low as five.

If canola is the only green material nearby, grasshoppers can cause significant damage as they move in from drying pasture, cut hay or a nearby crop that is becoming unpalatable. Damage is typically focused on the field margins, so control can be focused on these areas. A bran bait,

EcoBran, is particularly effective on younger grasshoppers and field margins. Consult the label for use rates. Placing a couple pounds per acre of this product gives another line of defense to work against grasshoppers that can aggressively feed under hot dry conditions.

## How to count

The challenge with the nominal threshold is counting the grasshoppers. As soon as you walk into an area, grasshoppers take off and do not cooperate with your attempts to count them. So entomologists have come up with more practical scouting techniques.

### Technique one:

1. Walk across the field. If grasshoppers jump around with every step you take, and seem to be general throughout the field, numbers are probably at the threshold.

2. Look for feeding. If there is less crop than there was the last time you checked, and the problem appears to be grasshopper feeding, spraying may be warranted.

3. Control grasshoppers when they're 1/2" long, or so. At this stage, they're hopping but not flying, and much easier to control. (Note: Synthetic pyrethroids are not particularly effective against winged grasshoppers.)

Technique two was featured in the Prairie Pest Monitoring Network blog:

1. Measure off a distance of 50m on the level road surface and mark both starting and finishing points using markers or specific posts on the field margin.

2. Starting at one end, either in the field or the roadside, walk toward the other end of the 50m making some disturbance with your feet to encourage any grasshoppers to jump.

Angela Brackenreed photo  
3. Grasshoppers that jump/fly through the field of view within a one metre

width in front of the observer are counted. (A metre stick can be carried as a visual tool to give perspective for a one metre width. However, after a few stops one can often visualize the necessary width and a metre stick may not be required. Also, a hand-held counter can be useful in counting while the observer counts off the required distance.)

4. At the end point the total number of grasshoppers is divided by 50 to give an average per square metre.

5. Compare counts to the following damage levels associated with pest species of grasshoppers:

- 0-2 per m<sup>2</sup> – None to very light damage
- 2-4 per m<sup>2</sup> – Very light damage
- 4-8 per m<sup>2</sup> – Light damage
- 8-12 per m<sup>2</sup> – Action threshold in cereals and canola
- 12-24 per m<sup>2</sup> – Severe damage
- >24 per m<sup>2</sup> – Very severe damage

**Avoid spraying on hot, hot days.** At temperatures above 25°C, grasshoppers can metabolize insecticide more quickly, and it can be less effective. Warm, not hot, days result in slower metabolism and better control.

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# Bear sightings on the rise in SE Sask

BY SPENCER KEMP  
LOCAL JOURNALISM  
INITIATIVE REPORTER

Bear sightings are on the rise in Southeast Saskatchewan and some have reported seeing more wildlife this year when compared to past years.

Katherine Conkin, a wildlife biologist with the Saskatchewan Ministry of Environment, says some areas are seeing an increase in wildlife populations.

Bear reports tracked by the ministry range from concerned hikers reporting sick bears to simple bear sightings that are called in to the Ministry of Environment.

"The current population of black bears in Saskatchewan is about 43,000 and that is determined based on a habitat-based population model," she said.

"Populations do fluctuate and there are reports of localized population increases in some areas of the province."



Above and right, recent bear photos taken by Alvin Nixon in the Wapella-Rocanville area and in the Qu'Appelle Valley. At far right, a photo of a bear at Moosomin Regional Park in 2020.

## Moose numbers down

Moose numbers are down, meanwhile. "Moose populations vary across the various habitat types across the province. The boreal forest moose numbers are down and we are going to have a bulls-only season to promote recovery of these populations in the coming hunting season. In the forest fringe they appear to be stable, there are some localized areas in the parkland and

grassland where numbers have declined but hunter success has remained high in those areas. It's just a mixed bag."

## Bear sightings up

Conkin said bear sightings are up.

"We have had an increase in call volume to the Ministry in regards to bears. Those calls can range from people asking questions about bears all the way to having an encounter with one. We have been making a concerted effort in the past

year to increase education awareness on bears in the province and provide advice on what to do if an individual encounters one."

Part of the reason for the increase in bear sightings may be black bears seeking food and other environmental factors at play.

"Poor weather conditions, localized food shortages, and especially decreases in berry crop can create situations where black bears need to travel further in search of food," Conkin said.

"It's not easy to tell, but theoretically the drought may have an impact on the

berry population. Berries come out in waves, Saskatoon berries are out now, blueberries will be out in a bit, and so forth. It may have an impact on those, but it's difficult to say."

When encountering a bear, Conkin says that it is best to keep your distance.

"If you encounter a bear keep your distance, don't try to scare the animal away or deal with it yourself."

"Most often animals will move without any intervention. They're more scared of you than you are of them typically. A lot of bear encounters happen when there

is a food source with humans and one of the biggest things that we tell people is that they're intelligent animals and they're ruled by their stomachs so if there isn't food then they will leave an area. Just be aware of your waste, with your cabins and campers keep your food properly secured. That will limit encounters." She says the same method should be used when encountering moose as well.

"Keep your distance if you encounter one. Just mind your own business and they're more likely to leave you alone if you're not

in their space."

If keeping distance is not enough, Conkin says it is best to make oneself appear as large as possible and make noise to scare the black bear away.


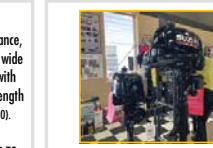

She says encounters are not uncommon in Saskatchewan, noting that it is something everyone needs to be aware of.

"Saskatchewan is bear country and black bears are a natural part of our landscape and it's important for people to just take the necessary precautions to avoid bear encounters," said Conkin.



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# New Research Chair at USask will help maximize environmental, economic benefits of forage crops

A new Beef Industry Integrated Forage Management and Utilization Chair will be established at the University of Saskatchewan (USask) to connect the study of soils, plants, animals, economics and ecosystems to tap into forage crops' full range of benefits.

"The Chair will help to address concerns raised for a number of years by producers searching for expanded forage management information," said Matt Bowman, chair of the Beef Cattle Research Council (BCRC) and a producer from Thornloe, Ontario. "We need the science in order to better manage complex forage systems, implement effective utilization strategies, and understand the associated environmental benefits created through the dynamic soil-plant-animal interface."

Funding for the research chair will be provided from a variety of sources. Industry contributions include \$2.5 million from the Beef Cattle Research Council (BCRC) and \$1 million from the Saskatchewan Cattlemen's Association (SCA). The governments of Canada and Saskatchewan will provide \$750,000 through the Canadian Agricultural Partnership. The Global Institute for Food Security (GIFS) at USask will contribute \$320,000.

"The role of rangeland and forages in our ecosystem cannot be taken for granted," said Marie-Claude Bibeau, federal minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food. "Rangeland plants increase the resilience of the ecosystem and create natural benefits such as carbon sequestration and soil stabilization, as well as for pollinators. This new research chair position will help further our understanding in these areas."

"This research chair will work with partners across the province to develop practical tools for producers," Saskatchewan Agriculture Minister David Marit said. "This investment will help grow the live-

stock sector and bring us closer to achieving the goals outlined in Saskatchewan's Plan for Growth, including our target to increase livestock cash receipts to \$3 billion."

A 2012 assessment concluded lack of research and development investment in the Canadian forage industry meant advances in forage had not kept pace with developments in other crops. The beef and cattle industry is increasingly seeing forages as a high-value feed source.

"Saskatchewan is looking to increase crop production and livestock cash receipts as a means of economic growth. This new chair will create momentum to meet this objective, and support the agricultural industry worldwide," said USask Vice-President Research Baljit Singh. "Strengthening this sector and bolstering food security is a focus of USask as we provide research the world needs."

There's growing recognition that forage crops play a critical role in nutrient cycling, carbon sequestration, promoting biodiversity, and protecting wildlife habitat. The livestock industry believes the value of these environmental and ecological benefits complement forages' economic impact.

"Forage production and utilization is the foundation of beef cattle productivity and competitiveness," said Saskatchewan Cattlemen's Association Chair Arnold Balicki. "After years of advocacy it is gratifying to see this position created via partnership between producers, government, USask and GIFS."

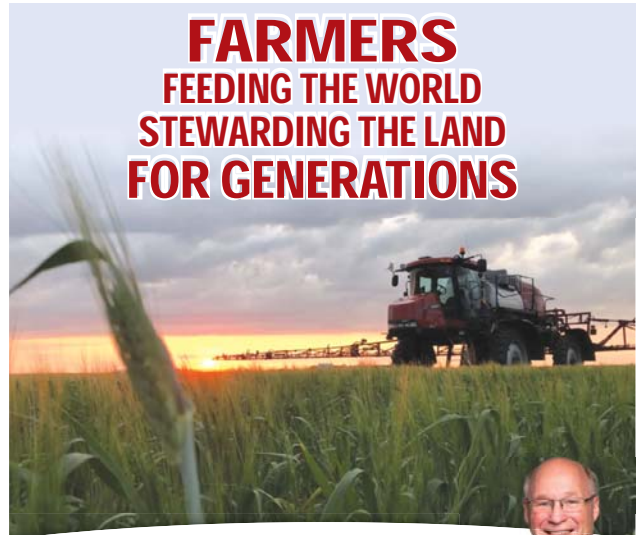
The new research chair will be located in the College of Agriculture and Bioresources at USask, as a joint appointment between the Department of Plant Sciences and Department of Animal and Poultry Science. Among key roles will be to ensure USask is at the leading edge of research on use of forage in the beef industry, connect expertise in the field locally, nationally, and inter-

nationally, and grow funding support for research.

"This is a great opportunity for GIFS and the Plant Phenotyping and Imaging Research Centre program that we manage on behalf of USask, as it gives us the opportunity to work together with partners—government, industry and USask's College of Agriculture and Bioresources—

to deliver value to the agriculture and food sectors," said GIFS Chief Executive Officer Steven Webb. "This collaboration will help us advance the sectors in a manner that is economically, environmentally and socially sustainable."

The international search will begin this summer and USask anticipates filling the position before the end of 2021.



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# Farmland values influenced by many factors

For most farms, farmland is the biggest asset, and in recent decades, land values have appreciated steadily, making it a great investment. In many cases, the increase has contributed more wealth to the farm than the income derived from the production.

Beginning farmers wonder how they'll ever be able to afford to buy land. Retiring farmers wrestle with how to transition the farm to the next generation when so much value is in the land base. Everyone wishes they could know what farmland values will do in the future.

The annual FCC Farmland Values Report tracks and highlights average changes in cultivated farmland values—regionally, provincially and nationally. Using a system based on benchmark farm properties across the country, it provides important information to help producers manage risk and make informed business decisions.

Over the past decade, the biggest increases in the national value of farmland came in 2011 to 2014, at over 14% in each of those years. In 2013, the increase was more than 22%.

Since 2015, national increases have been more modest with 2019 pegged at 5.2%. However, the FCC Farmland Values Report recorded a great deal of variability across the country. While Alberta had a 3.3% increase in 2019, Prince Edward Island's farmland prices increased by 22.6%.

The variation in prices within a specific region can be huge. For instance, in B.C.'s Okanagan region, 2019 farmland prices ranged from a low of \$9,500 to a high of \$163,800 an acre. The value range represents 90% of the sales in each region and excludes the top and bottom 5%.

Price variation within a region comes from different use options and suitability, parcel size, quality and location. The FCC report highlights the factors affecting prices in each region.

## Supply and demand

Land values follow the laws of supply and demand. A shortage of available land in a region (low supply) and many farmers interested in buying land (high demand) are factors contributing to higher prices.

Since farmland prices in almost all regions of the country have steadily increased for many years, there is sometimes an assumption that land prices will never decline. However, land prices fell in many regions from the early 1980s to the early 1990s due to low farm gate returns and record-high interest rates.

## Interest rates

Interest rates have hovered near record lows since 2010. Low interest rates favour increased farmland values.

With low interest rates, mortgage payments are more affordable, allowing buyers to pay a higher land price as long as they have the down payment and can demonstrate repayment ability.

Low interest rates also make land an appealing investment compared to investment bonds or GICs (Guaranteed Investment Certificates).

## Outside investor influence

Non-farmer investors influence land prices, particularly in scenarios where they anticipate a strong return on investment. However, in most land markets, the main factor is competition from farmers looking to expand their operations.

When investors own a significant amount of land in a region, they can impact the land rental market. Local producers usually end up farming the land even though they don't own it.

## Relationship between prices, rental rates and farm income

Land prices and cash rents for land are both influenced by the farm revenue generated from that land. However, prices

and cash rents can sometimes move in opposite directions, and the relationship between the two can be very different in different regions.

Consider land that's selling for \$3,000 an acre and is cash renting for \$100 an acre. The rent provides an annual return of 3.3% before the payment of property taxes.

Now consider land with a value of \$10,000 an acre with a cash rent of \$200. That's an annual return of just 2% before property taxes.

For an investor, the annual return is more attractive on the lower-priced land in this example. Of course, an investor would also consider which property has the most significant opportunity to increase in value.

The bottom line is that land prices, cash rents and farm revenue will tend to move together over time. But there are periods when one of these variables may not match the pattern of the other two. Market adjustments can take time, and past relationships in these variables can evolve based on the outlook of the farm economy.

## The productive value of land

You'll sometimes hear someone proclaim, "That land is so expensive that it will never pay for itself." The net farm revenue you can derive from a parcel of land may not make the mortgage payment on its own. Revenue from other land or off-farm revenue can be required to afford that new parcel of land.

Does that make buying land a bad deal? There are two revenue considerations with land – the revenue from what you produce on the land and the wealth generation if the value of land continues to appreciate.

As a farmer, you can be cash poor while being asset rich. Revenue and cash flow can be a struggle while your net worth continues to increase courtesy of the land you own.

## When is farmland overpriced?

To determine if land is becoming more expensive in relation to the income it generates, a price-to-revenue ratio is often used. Analysts take the average farmland price per acre in a region and divide that by the average expected receipts per acre.

To calculate the expected receipts, a standard crop rotation is assumed, and the average crop prices and average expected yields are used.

There's no "ideal" value for the ratio as the mix of crops, the region and the outlook for crop revenues all influence. According to FCC analysis, the price-to-revenue ratio has been rising since 2014 and is now above its historical average. That means affordability has been declining relative to farm income, and that land is expensive from a historical standpoint. But this is not necessarily indicative of future land price declines. The higher ratio can be sustainable if buyers and sellers believe in stronger future growth in farm revenues, continued low interest rates, etc.

## Making land purchase decisions

If you're a field crop producer, you need access to fields, and you can either rent the land or own it. Most producers have a combination of both.

Farmland has always appeared too expensive, but waiting for prices to drop has been an unsuccessful strategy for many decades.

Farmland often carries an emotional attachment, particularly if it's land that has been in the family for many years. While passion is commendable, it's unwise to let emotion govern farmland purchase decisions. Be clear on your short and long-term goals and objectives and crunch the numbers for a detailed financial analysis.



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# Manitoba ensures programs and services available to livestock producers managing water supplies during dry conditions

Manitoba Agriculture and Resource Development is reminding agricultural producers affected by dry conditions of the programs and services available to livestock producers. To date, low levels of precipitation and soil moisture have slowed the growth of pastures and forage crops and reduced water levels in dugouts in parts of Manitoba.

Tools and resources for producers to manage the water supply for their livestock include:

## Funding for management of surface and ground water sources for livestock on pasture

Canadian Agricultural Partnership funding is provided through the Managing Livestock Access to Riparian Areas beneficial management practice (BMP) under Ag Action Manitoba-Assurance. Eligible items include:

- water source development, constructing new or rehabilitating existing wells or dugouts;
- solar, wind or grid-powered alternative watering systems;
- permanent fencing to restrict livestock access to surface water and dugouts; and
- permanent pipeline development.

Applications for the next intake will be received beginning June 8 until 11:59 pm CST on September 1. Details on the BMP are available at [www.gov.mb.ca/agriculture/canadian-agricultural-partnership/pubs/guidebook/ag-action-mb-program-guide-for-farmers.pdf#page=30](http://www.gov.mb.ca/agriculture/canadian-agricultural-partnership/pubs/guidebook/ag-action-mb-program-guide-for-farmers.pdf#page=30) and answers to frequently asked questions are at [www.gov.mb.ca/agriculture/canadian-agricultural-partnership/pubs/faq/bmp-503-faq.pdf](http://www.gov.mb.ca/agriculture/canadian-agricultural-partnership/pubs/faq/bmp-503-faq.pdf). For information on how to apply, visit [www.gov.mb.ca/agriculture/](http://www.gov.mb.ca/agriculture/)



[environment/environmental-farm-plan/assurance-bmp.html](http://environment/environmental-farm-plan/assurance-bmp.html).

## Well and groundwater resources

The Constructing and Sealing Water Wells in Manitoba guide provides information to private well owners on who can construct or seal a well, standards for well construction and information on well maintenance. The guide provides information when a permit, such as water use licence is needed and information on what needs to be reported to the Water Branch. It also outlines the well owner's responsibilities after the well is constructed. To view the guide, visit [www.gov.mb.ca/water/pubs/water/groundwater/publication/2017\\_constructing\\_and\\_sealing\\_water\\_wells\\_for\\_private\\_owners.pdf](http://www.gov.mb.ca/water/pubs/water/groundwater/publication/2017_constructing_and_sealing_water_wells_for_private_owners.pdf).

The Manitoba Well Aware booklet provides information on groundwater, water wells, water quality and water-well maintenance and can be viewed at [www.gov.mb.ca/sd/pubs/water/well\\_aware\\_en.pdf](http://www.gov.mb.ca/sd/pubs/water/well_aware_en.pdf).

The Water Branch can provide information on your current well if available and what the expectations might be for constructing a new well. Email your contact information, the legal land location and the information you are looking for (existing well information or groundwater potential) to [groundwater@gov.mb.ca](mailto:groundwater@gov.mb.ca). Feedback provided may include aquifer

depths, potential pumping rate, and if available the water quality in the area.

A listing of Licensed Well Drilling Contractors is also available at: [www.gov.mb.ca/water/groundwater/wells\\_groundwater/well-driller-contractors/index.html](http://www.gov.mb.ca/water/groundwater/wells_groundwater/well-driller-contractors/index.html).

## Watershed Districts

Manitoba's 14 Watershed Districts offer agriculture producers a variety of locally developed land and water stewardship programs to protect and improve watershed health. During dry conditions and where there are watershed health benefits, some districts provide incentive programs to assist producers with the development of livestock watering systems, water supply, pasture pipelines and riparian area fencing. Watershed Districts also assist producers with accessing funding for habitat protection, soil conservation, land restoration and water management projects through the GROW and Ag Action programs. More information on Manitoba's Watershed Districts can be found at [www.manitobawatersheds.ca](http://www.manitobawatersheds.ca). (Growing Outcomes in Watersheds) program can be found at [www.gov.mb.ca/water/watershed/grow](http://www.gov.mb.ca/water/watershed/grow).

Producers can visit the Managing Dry Conditions section of the department website for information on managing dugouts and water quality at [www.gov.mb.ca/agriculture/dry.html](http://www.gov.mb.ca/agriculture/dry.html). They will also find timely information about grazing practices and alternative strategies for sourcing feed during dry conditions.

Producers can contact their local ARD and MASC Service Centre, or call 1-84-GROW-MB-AG (1-844-769-6224) for more information on any of these programs and services, or go to [www.gov.mb.ca/agriculture](http://www.gov.mb.ca/agriculture) under Quick Links.





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# Manitoba cattle producers facing uncertainty

BY SPENCER KEMP  
LOCAL JOURNALISM  
INITIATIVE REPORTER

Livestock producers in Manitoba have been struggling with dry conditions this summer.

President of Manitoba Beef Producers (MBP) Tyler Fulton says the conditions have impacted all of Manitoba and have created conditions that have not been seen in years.

He says the dry conditions are already creating complications for winter feed.

"It's unlike anything most of us have ever seen before. The conditions are terrible across huge portions of the Prairies and for the most part, they continue to deteriorate further. We have regions where there is no current pasture and where they completed their winter feed production with less than 10 per cent of what they typically would be able to produce on that land. It's a dire situation in places. There is a bit of variation but most remarkable is the widespread nature of the drought. It spreads right from Northern Ontario all the way across the Prairie provinces and into BC. It feels like we are smack dab in the middle of it," said Fulton.

He says the Government of Manitoba expanded its ag programs to help producers deal with the current conditions.

Fulton says the Manitoba Government has been taking steps in the right direction to help producers that are struggling.

"Based on the urging of Manitoba Beef Producers about a month ago the province opened up a program called the Ag Action program, and that was one that really addressed the obvious concern over livestock watering systems and developing those



Manitoba Beef Producers president Tyler Fulton says the current drought situation is one he has never seen before.

resources. That's been in place for just over a month. "The Manitoba Government also initiated an Ag Recovery Assessment the other week and so the actions being taken are pretty comparable across the Prairie provinces. We did see a difference in the way Saskatchewan handled it, they did double their zero thresholds for marginal crops that might be able to be baled for livestock producers," said Fulton.

"We need action to really incentivize the conversion of these marginal crops that aren't going to make grade this fall into livestock feed."

Fulton encourages both agricultural and livestock producers to work together during these trying times to make use of crops as feed for cattle that would otherwise be unused.

"It's becoming a widespread practice and it's re-

sources. That's been in place for just over a month. "The Manitoba Government also initiated an Ag Recovery Assessment the other week and so the actions being taken are pretty comparable across the Prairie provinces. We did see a difference in the way Saskatchewan handled it, they did double their zero thresholds for marginal crops that might be able to be baled for livestock producers," said Fulton.

"We need action to really incentivize the conversion of these marginal crops that aren't going to make grade this fall into livestock feed."

Although timely rains are needed by producers across the province, Fulton

says that it is too late for many producers already affected by the drought.

"We're beyond that already. Those timely rains are already too late. I spoke with an individual from the interlake region in Manitoba who shipped 240 cows to market and that represented their total herd. That's where we're at in some of these areas, these animals are already going to market because there's no prospect for them to be able to source reasonably priced feed in their area and not being able to secure alternative feeds for the winter. It's

such a heartwrenching and stressful circumstance that we've gotten into in some areas.

"If we could get some decent rainfall it would no doubt help pasture conditions for the latter part of the season and maybe we would get a shot at growing some alfalfa that we would not otherwise get."

He says that he's been seeing more producers selling cattle.

"We are seeing it more and more and the reality is that in my lifetime I can't remember seeing such an urgent situation develop. The reality is that it does end up becoming an animal welfare emergency and if there's really no prospect to get feed then you need to be taking action ahead of that in order to address the fact that those animals will go downhill. We're still at the early stages of this, but in some cases, the die is already cast and those ani-

mals are already moving."

But the biggest concern on Fulton's mind is the stress and anxiety that producers in Manitoba are facing.

"There's an attribute of this story that is really concerning and that is just the stress and mental toll that's being taken on the operations that have been forced to make these tough decisions. What they're doing is they're really impacting the viability of their farms and ranches for the next two to four years, and for many of these operations that have farmed and ranching that land for two and three generations you can only imagine the anxiety that comes with knowing that it could be on your watch that you lose the farm. It's really a terrible situation," said Fulton.

Producers feeling the stress of the ongoing situation can call the Farm Stress Line at 1-866-367-3276.

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# Sask Ag Minister Dave Marit says impact of dry conditions varies across the province



Ag Minister Dave Marit says that the effects of the dry weather are impacting producers across the province in different ways.

BY SPENCER KEMP  
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

Following recent efforts made by the Ministry of Agriculture and Government of Saskatchewan to help provide assistance to ag producers in Saskatchewan struggling with the dry conditions, Spencer Kemp with The World-Spectator reached out to Ag Minister Dave Marit for comments regarding the measures put in effect.

Do you believe these measures will be enough to help get producers through the season, or is your department considering additional measures?

This was a big first step and a huge step forward. By doubling the level of the crop insurance deductible for write-off was a step that really would trigger an opportunity for a lot of livestock producers to source feed. That's what this was really about, we have a livestock industry in this province that is a big part of this economy that can't source feed virtually anywhere. This isn't just Saskatchewan alone, this is Alberta, British Columbia, Manitoba, Montana, and the Dakotas, it's right through the whole midwest. It's a huge issue about trying to source feed for livestock and we felt this was a good mechanism to give that opportunity for the livestock sector to work with grain farmers to find ways and means to source that green feed.

Did you consult with any ag groups before putting these measures in place? What was their input?

This was something where my Ministry officials and crop insurance took a

look at and obviously for me to do anything like this it would have an impact on the provincial treasury so I had to talk to my cabinet colleagues as well. We had a stakeholders meeting (Tuesday) with stakeholders from the grain industry and the livestock industry and pretty much everybody on the call, both from the grain side and the livestock side, said what we did was probably the most practical, common-sense approach we could take to this issue.

What have you heard from producers regarding the measures and conditions?

It's a big area, it's a huge area. We're hearing from producers where grain producers have worked with livestock producers. We've worked with our crop insurance officials to make sure they can get out there as quickly as possible to do the assessment of the crop to see if they will fall below those thresholds, depending on what crop it is, and we've also put measures in place for farmers to do whatever they might have to do to put cattle on it and graze it off and to have part of that crop where it won't be impacted by livestock. So there are measures we've put in place to do this.

Of course, the other big one is the Farm and Ranch Water Infrastructure Program where we expanded that side of it from the \$50,000 cap to the \$150,000 threshold for April 1, 2021, to March 2022. That just gives the opportunity for ranchers to find sources of water, whether it's trenching in or deep wells or whatever the case may be where they have to try and find good, long-term sus-

tainable water sources.

Do the current conditions appear to be affecting all parts of the province equally, or are there parts

of the province that are more or less affected than others?

There's a lot of places that are doing okay, but is it going to be a big crop? No. But in some places, it will be an average or above-average crop and some places will be below average.

I know that even on our own farm and the guys that rent our land, they told us it would be a slightly below-average crop. We've had good crops over the last five years, so they're still going to harvest a crop in some areas. In some areas, they're sitting pretty good. It varies across the province from where there is absolutely nothing to where there's not a bad crop. I spoke with a farmer the other day who's a fair-sized operator and his crop, depending on whether it's pulses or cereals or canola, it varies.

He said his cereal crops aren't looking too bad, his canola is going to be good, and his pulses aren't going to be bad either. So it varies across the province and it varies within a farmer's own operations.

Another thing that we did, and we were the first province to do so last Thursday, we sent a letter to the federal government seeking AgriRecovery and also for province-wide tax deferral for livestock too. We've done some measures that will hopefully trigger other opportunities for the livestock sector to get things done.

Can officials quantify the expected impact of the dry conditions on this year's harvest at this point?

It's pretty premature we really don't know what the state of the crop is and

I don't even think the grain industry is getting a handle on what is there and what is not there and we won't know until it's harvested because we won't know what the quality is.

Have you experienced these conditions before?

I haven't seen one like this since the '80s, and we're talking 35 to 40 years ago. I know there was some drought in pockets of the province in recent years, in the southwest and other parts as well, but I think for the most part to see this as widespread as it is, I haven't seen it since the '80s.

I know harvest is going to get underway in some parts of the province in the next few weeks or so, cutting peas and some lentils, so I just want everybody to be safe out there

## Upcoming Auctions

<p><b>Online-timed Antique Vehicle, Antiques &amp; Collectibles Auction for Keith &amp; Denise Neufeld</b></p> <p>Bidding Starts: Fri. Aug. 13 @ 9am</p> <p>Bidding Ends: Sun. 22 @ 1pm—soft close</p> <p><b>Carnduff, SK</b></p> <p>Featuring: 2008 Dodge Magnum Srt8; Oil &amp; Gas advertising; vehicles; car parts &amp; more</p>	<p><b>Online-timed Antique &amp; Collectibles Auction for Bill &amp; Gisele Harding</b></p> <p>Bidding Starts: Fri. Aug. 20 @ 9am</p> <p>Bidding Ends: Sun. Aug. 29 @ 7pm—soft close</p> <p><b>Boissevain, MB</b></p> <p>Featuring: Advertising tins; glassware; pine furniture; primitives; crockery &amp; much more</p>	<p><b>Online-timed Household &amp; Antiques &amp; Collectibles Auction for Philip &amp; Heide Sheane</b></p> <p>Bidding Starts: Fri. Aug. 27 @ 9am</p> <p>Bidding Ends: Sun. Sept. 5 @ 6pm—soft close</p> <p><b>Boissevain, MB</b></p> <p>Featuring: IKEA furniture, antique pine painted furniture, oil lamps, advertising items, &amp; much more</p>
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<p><b>Online-timed Collection Reduction for Dollard Mailhot</b></p> <p>Bidding Starts: Fri. Sept. 3 @ 9am</p> <p>Bidding Ends: Sun. Sept. 12 @ 6pm—soft close</p> <p><b>Dunrea, MB</b></p> <p>Featuring: Oil &amp; gas advertising; signs; oil lamps &amp; parts; furniture for restoration; Early MB license plates; gas pump parts &amp; more</p>	<p><b>Online-timed Stationary Engine, Antique Tractors Auction for Est. of Ron Beddome Pt. 2</b></p> <p>Biddings Starts: Fri. Sept. 17 @ 9am</p> <p>Bidding Ends: Sun. Sept 26 @ 1pm—soft close</p> <p><b>Minnedosa, MB</b></p> <p>Featuring: 100+ stationary engines; Hart-Parr tractors; magnetos; antiques; tin &amp; lumber &amp; more</p>	<p><b>Online-timed Tool &amp; Shop Equip. Auction for the Estate of David Franklin</b></p> <p>Bidding Starts: Fri. Oct. 1 @ 9am</p> <p>Bidding Ends: Sun. Oct. 10 @ 6pm—soft close</p> <p><b>Boissevain MB</b></p> <p>Featuring: Woodworking &amp; Shop Tools</p>
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<p><b>Online-timed Household &amp; Collectables Auction for Anne Woloski &amp; Consignors</b></p> <p>Bidding Starts: Fri. Oct. 8 @ 9am</p> <p>Bidding Ends: Sun. Oct. 17 @ 6pm—soft close</p> <p><b>Boissevain, MB</b></p> <p>Featuring: Collectibles, glassware, household, Christmas decoration, many new in box items &amp; much more</p>	<p><b>Online-timed Antique Tractor, Shop Equip. and Stationary Engine Auction for Ed Vandendorpe</b></p> <p>Bidding Starts: Fri. Oct. 15 @ 9am</p> <p>Bidding Ends: Sun. Oct. 24 @ 6pm—soft close</p> <p><b>Melita, MB</b></p> <p>Featuring: Restored JD tractors; Restored JD stationary engines; shop equip.; trailers &amp; more</p>	<p><b>Online-timed Farm Toy Collection Dispersal for Ed Vandendorpe</b></p> <p>Bidding Starts: Fri. Oct. 22 @ 9am</p> <p>Bidding Ends: Sun. Oct. 31 @ 6pm—soft close</p> <p><b>Melita, MB</b></p> <p>Featuring: Nice selection of pedal tractors, variety of 1/16, 1/32 &amp; 1/64 scale toys, NIB toys, hard to find &amp; rare toys, Limited Ed. JD combine.</p> <p>Featuring JD, JH, MF, MH, Case IH etc.</p>
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# Sask increases AgriStability interim payment

BY KEVIN WEEDMARK

The federal and provincial governments have agreed to increase the 2021 AgriStability interim benefit payment percentage from 50 per cent to 75 per cent for Saskatchewan producers.

The interim benefit provides the opportunity for producers who are enrolled in AgriStability to access a portion of their benefit early, to help support losses and cover costs. With this increase, Saskatchewan producers can apply for an interim benefit to receive 75 per cent of their estimated final 2021 benefit, before completing their program year.

The interim benefit is calculated based on the estimated margin decline or loss for the year compared to the farming operation's reference margin. The decline must be at least 30 per cent below the reference margin to access a payment. If a producer receives an interim benefit payment, they must still file all final program year forms and meet program requirements by the assigned deadlines.

Saskatchewan Agriculture Minister Dave Marit told the World-Spectator Thursday that he hopes the change makes a difference for producers.

"Under the program you could advance 50 per cent of what your eligibility was, and now we've raised that to 75 per cent just because we know there are producers out there who will be in cash strapped situations," he told the World-Spectator in an interview Thursday.

"I think this is going to make a difference for a lot of people. I got a message from a farmer this morning and he said 'thanks, that's going to help me.' He knew he was going to be in a payment situation and he could use the extra 25 per cent. It'll be taken up by whoever feels that they're going to be in a payout situation. With the removal of the reference margin limit there will be a few that will trigger some type of payment so hopefully this will help. It is just a measure we thought we could take along with the other measures we have taken, especially for the livestock

sector."

Marit said he believes AgriStability is flexible enough to be a useful tool in a drought year like 2021.

"I think the biggest thing, in talking to my stakeholders over the past year, the big deterrent was the reference margin limit. That seemed to be the biggest deterrent for all sectors, both the livestock and the grain side. We felt it was important to get that looked after, and we did. Another thing we took to the table was that any private insurance revenue you got doesn't go against your AgriStability. If guys got hauled out or had a livestock price insurance payout then that didn't go against them as revenue. Those two changes will make a big difference to some AgriStability patrons, and we will see where that goes. I think with those changes it's going to make a big difference to a lot of producers here in Saskatchewan."

Marit said AgriStability has become more user-friendly.

"They just take their numbers to their accountant and they can go online and there is an app where they can fill in their numbers and it will do a quick calculation on what they might be receiving.

"So it's a lot better than it was a few decades ago when it first came out and there were producers scared to go and get it because there were guys that had to pay it back and things like that, so the program has changed significantly in the calculations to really benefit the producers. I think with that and some of the other things we've done with crop insurance on raising the limits on write offs is going to help, not only grain farmers but also cattlemen because it has to be used for green feed to get it to go to zero."

Marit says the changes made this summer on farm support programs come from a combination of consultations with industry groups and discussions within Saskatchewan Agriculture.

"It's a combination of working within the department and working with producer groups to figure



Saskatchewan Agriculture Minister David Marit

out what will help producers the most.

"We have a good working relationship with our stakeholders both on the grain and the livestock side.

"We listen to what they think are the concerns and what they want, that's why the reference limit margin was removed, we heard it loud and clear from our stakeholders. So we look at that and we look at what the financial implication could be to the taxpayers and then there's another partner here that's the federal government. So we have to be communicating with them and if there are changes that we're going to make or they want to make there has to be a working relationship there to say whether something makes sense or doesn't. The provinces do have some flexibility on programs that they want to put into their jurisdiction versus other provinces."

Marit says 2021 is an extreme year.

"This year is a very severe year for all sectors, for the crop guys and the livestock guys," he said.

"We just got off the calls this morning with a producer group, we've been having weekly calls with producer groups. We talk to the crop groups for an hour, and the livestock groups for an hour, so we have a good discussion on

what the challenges are and what the concerns are. With the severity of the crop and the yields, everyone is concerned about that, and then on the livestock side we have a couple of concerns. Feed is number one, and water is becoming an issue as well. We listen to them and they make recommendations on things that they think might work and we look at it as a ministry with my officials and say can we do this within the parameters of the programs and then there is another lens to put on it, which is affordability."

Marit said the changes should help producers but the department is always looking at additional measures.

"We are always open to the discussion," he said. "We will have another discussion next week with the stakeholders and the one thing we have engaged in now is we are pretty well on daily calls with my colleagues from Alberta, Manitoba, Ontario, and ourselves to talk about what are some things we can do, and the federal government is going to have a big part to play in that. We've all made applications for Ag Recovery and we're just waiting for the federal government to do the assessment on that and we have asked for the tax deferral for the livestock sector across the board and

looking at things like that that we can do to assist the producers and work with our colleagues across western Canada."

Marit said he is concerned about a possible selloff on the Livestock side.

"We are worried about it and that's why we're looking at some of the options that we are looking at. It's decisions that the ranchers will have to make, based on what their individual situations are. I know some ranchers that have their feed, they have good water and lots of pasture, it's still dry but they're doing well. Then we have some that have virtually no feed left and the pastures are pretty well done, and then they don't have a water supply either. It's a real mixture. So you try and find a medium and try to work and figure out what will help in all aspects of it."

In what has been a very challenging year for producers, Marit says he has had a challenge in trying to navigate through the crisis as agriculture minister.

"It's a lot different than it was a year ago," he said. "We came off of a record crop and livestock prices were good and rainfalls were good.

"These are the challenges that we always have in this province, we've had years before where we didn't have rain and no runoff and it caused challenges then too.

"So the industry and the agriculture community will figure this out. It'll

balance itself and we'll work with them the best way we can to try and deliver something that really is meaningful to them and to help maintain or at least sustain a big portion of the industry here."

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23	Thursday	Sheep Goat & Horse Sale	12 Noon
27	Monday	Butcher Sale	9 a.m.
29	Wednesday	Presort Feeder Sale	10 a.m.

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11	Monday	No Butcher Sale	10 a.m.
		Receive Feeders	5 p.m.
13	Wednesday	Presort Angus Feeder Sale	10 a.m.
14	Thursday	Sheep Goat & Horse Sale	12 Noon
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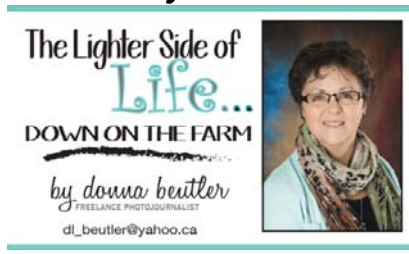


# Finding comfort in family while the crops deteriorate

The image is ingrained in my mind. A farmer standing about a hundred yards out into his deteriorating spring wheat crop, hands on his hips, his dog at his side. Just standing there, perfectly still. What made it so poignant is simply that sense of loss that seemed to emanate from him. Watching your crop die off is downright tough to see. It was a heartbreaking moment and I couldn't help but feel his pain. I happened to be north of Regina that day and after countless crop checking trips at home with my hubby and seeing some of our own deteriorating crops, I could totally relate to that lone farmer standing in his field knowing that no amount of rain now is going to bring it back.

Ironically, as I write this, July 20, 2021, it is raining—at least around Whitewood. It's too late for some crops in our area I know but it was sure sweet to get a bit of rain just the same. After several no-rain weeks combined with extreme heat, the humid, damp days were most welcome.

Of course drought has a depressing effect on farmers who grow grain and raise livestock, but on the flip side, this summer did bring us something we have been sorely lacking—togetherness! A lifting of the lockdown in July 2021 has offered us some wonderful opportunities to reconnect with family and friends and it felt quite wonderful to have a backyard barbecue with family and to get together with neighbours and friends for some great visits. We have also been able to enjoy some time at the lake. There is no better place to be on a hot day than out in the boat and last week, after several fishing excursions out to our favourite fishing spots, us "girls" suggested to the "boys" that instead of fishing just this one time, that perhaps going for a cruise around the lake would be nice. "Now why would we do that?" one of the twins (10) asked as we pushed the boat out from



shore. The twins very quickly had their rods and hooks ready and could hardly wait for Gramps to start up the motor before dropping their lines.

And sure enough, we had hardly started trolling along when one fisherlad caught one, then their sister, then Gramps, then the other twin. Perhaps there is a reason Fishing Lake carries that name lol!

Of course by the time we had caught our limit, barely 20 minutes out, Grandpa was thinking about the cleaning he was going to have to do before nightfall. All I was thinking was getting up to cruising speed for that tour around the lake I had been asking for. As for the story about the fish that got away, we have one of those too. With rod bent waaayyyy over, I was sure whether to grab the net or the camera and catch it all on video. "Oh no! That was a big one," one excited twin called out as the ginormous walleye fell off the hook before I could net it. A collective groan filled the boat, but as true fishermen/women, we didn't let that dampen our spirits for long.

In between trips to the lake, on our back-at-home days, we have had the pleasure of the company of the grands, including most recently, our youngest two (seven and five). I love mornings and when I hear their little footsteps coming down the hall I get so excited to see them. "Good morning!" I say with a big grin and a big hug. Yesterday, the response to my greeting was this: "Why are you so happy in the morning, Grandma?" Ahh, to come up with a good answer to certain questions is sometimes tough.

Now when it comes to bedtime, the process takes a long time. Last night, our grandson (seven) asked for ice cream for his bedtime snack. Grandpa went out to the garage and pulled out some vanilla ice cream and put some in a bowl for him. "Vanilla?" he said. "There are other kinds in the freezer you know." (Who knew he knew). And so began the listing of the choices and bringing in all the choices from the freezer. Once we had them all lined up on the counter, and he took it all into consideration, he said: "Actually, I think I won't have ice cream. I'll have something else for snack." Ahh yes, there is quite a process at bedtime that involves prolonging it every single time. Did I think the younger generation had changed since I raised my own kids?

It's hard to believe we are half way through what lake time we have and we must soon turn our thoughts toward harvest. The anticipation and excitement of the season is tempered this year by knowing the once promising-looking crops have definitely taken a hit in this drought. Regardless, we will tackle the job as always and put everything we have into it. And we hope all our farmer friends out there can take all the uncertainties of the year in stride and continuing doing what they do best—bringing in the harvest safely and carrying on the great (but sometimes stressful) business of farming!

## Fleming planning reunion for 2022

Continued from page 12

### Organizations, caterers to handle meals

The reunion organizers are looking for a few volunteers for some small jobs like staffing the registration desk, but in order to make sure as many Fleming residents as possible can fully take part in the reunion events and are not tied up with volunteer duties, organizers are hopeful that organizations and caterers can take on the meals over the course of the weekend.

"We have some very small volunteer jobs that we need people for, over short periods of time so you're not tying

people up with that," said Hamm. "And even when people come in and volunteer, they'll have a little bit of a visit. If they're working the registration desk they can have a little visit with whoever is registering as well.

"We're hoping the meals and the pancake breakfast can be taken care of by the Firemen or 4-H groups or youth groups or any groups that are interested."

Anyone interested in donating to help get the reunion off the ground can text or email Chelsey Hattum at 306-434-6833 or email chelsey.hattum@gmail.com noting the funds are for the Fleming Reunion or can drop cheques off at OK Tire in Moosomin made out to the Fleming Community Organization.

### Big crowd expected

Organizers are expecting large crowds for the reunion. They say previous reunions have been well attended and they expect this one to draw an especially large crowd.

"There haven't been as many chances for people to get out, and I know people are really taking advantage of every opportunity right now because they're so hungry for things to do, but some people are still worried about Covid," said Hamm.

"I think it will be calmer next year with all the Covid stuff and people will feel more comfortable. I think we'll have lots of people come down for it, and that's good because the more we get the more fun it will be for everyone."



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**Chris Henderson, Teagan Littlechief perform at The Happy Nun**

Chris Henderson and Teagan Littlechief performed at The Happy Nun in Forget, Sask. on Saturday, July 17. Henderson is a Canadian country music singer based in Regina, and Teagan Littlechief is a singer from White Bear First Nation. The pair performed to a packed house as people filled the restaurant/music venue for one of the first big nights at The Happy Nun since all Covid-19 restrictions in Saskatchewan were lifted on July 11. **Above:** People enjoying dinner. **Above right:** Teagan Littlechief blowing the roof off the house with her powerful voice. **Right:** Chris Henderson performing for the audience.



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# Esterhazy moving to address ER closures

BY KARA KINNA

The town of Esterhazy is taking action to address ongoing emergency room closures at St. Anthony's Hospital this summer due to a lack of staff to cover shortages in the lab at the hospital.

On July 7, Mayor Grant Forster wrote a letter of concern to Everett Hindley, Minister of Rural and Remote Health, and Paul Merriman, Minister of Health, with a copy sent to Melville-Saltcoats MLA Warren Kaeding and Daniella Fiske, administrator at St. Anthony's Hospital.

At their council meeting on July 28, Esterhazy town council decided to plan a meeting some time in August with council members, hospital board members, MLA Warren Kaeding, and hospital administration to discuss the issue further.

In his letter, the mayor stressed the consequences the ER closures could have on the community.

"As you are aware, the Esterhazy area is a very active area of the province with the Mosaic operations and K3 construction activity. This construction activity has brought an influx of workers and their families to our community, meaning our hospital is providing services to an estimated 5,000 people. We are a 24/7 community and in the event of an emergency within the town or at the Mosaic operations during these shutdowns, having an injured person travel an hour to the next nearest facility is extremely concerning," the letter read. "Our paramedics are now servicing a larger area due to reductions in the Whitewood ambulance service, potentially causing further delays in getting Esterhazy patients to other facilities when St. Anthony's is not available. Recent closures of the Broadview hospital has increased the number of patients from that area now using our hospital emergency services thereby further increasing the number of people relying upon St. Anthony's for emergency services."

Forster says he felt it was important to write the letter to try to raise awareness that this is a real issue for the community.

"Health care is so important and it's frustrating to have to see that happen, to see these closures," says Forster. "We're such a busy town and with all the activity of Mosaic (potash mine) and everything else, it's just frustrating to have a facility like we have that's supposed to be here to provide the services to the community and to have somebody from town go to Melville, Yorkton or Moosomin in the event of an emergency when we have a hospital here.

"It's disappointing, and that facility here, it should be staffed sufficiently to operate on a 24/7 basis. Things happen, I get it. You have staff shortages for whatever reason, but this shouldn't be happening anywhere, let alone here. It shouldn't be happening anywhere."

Forster says this has been the first time that he can recall consistent disruptions to ER.

"This is the first real disruption that we've seen. There may have been occasional shutdowns over the years but it's never been like this," he says. "We've had multiple shutdowns in a month and then when they go ahead and publish the schedule and it says they're going to be shut down on these days because of staff shortages, that's where to me it became too much. You know you're going to be short, there's people around that can do this. You've got other hospitals in the area, bring some temporary staff in. It just doesn't make sense."

If the closures continue, what kind of effect does Forster think this will have on the town?

"Hopefully none if you're looking at it from the glass half full perspective, but I'm afraid somebody somewhere might end up losing their life because of the closures," he says. "Where there's been a serious incident and they need to get attention immediately and they're forced to go the extra hour to one of the three closest places. To me that's the biggest concern and the immediate concern.

"Then in the long term, what does that do to our ability to have a hospital here? If people are interested in moving here and they're saying 'well Esterhazy's got a hospital but half the time the emergency's closed, do we really want to go there or do we want to go somewhere else that's going to have a hospital in operation 24/7 like Esterhazy should have?'"

Forster says he hopes his letter has the effect of simply making the provincial government aware of the problem.

"Number one, I just want to make them aware. I'm sure that the ministers aren't up to date on every individual facility and what's going on, but I want to make them aware that this is happening and that we as a town are not happy with the situation and we don't want to be ignored," he says. "We've got a huge population and workforce here and we contribute a lot to the operation of the province in this whole area. I think they need to be



The ER at St. Anthony's Hospital will continue to see disruptions this summer.

looking at this area with a little bit more of a concern as to what's going on.

"We're in the process of trying to get a new hospital built and that's taking a long time and then something like this happens. To everyone in town, it becomes a frustration and a sore point because it seems like we're getting ignored. So we're hoping that the ministers will look at this and maybe a light will go on and they will say 'hey we need to look at this a lot closer.'"

"I know minister Kaeding has been taking our cause to them and he represents us well, but at the same time, sometimes you've got to reach out directly to the people involved and give them a little bit of a wake up call."

### SHA says issue is ongoing

The Saskatchewan Health Authority said the issue of finding enough people to cover for staff who are away is an ongoing issue that they are trying to address.

"Acute and emergency services may be temporarily suspended in rural communities due to challenges in

staffing across disciplines across these locations. Esterhazy is no exception," said Kevin Wasko, Physician Executive, Integrated Rural Health, Saskatchewan Health Authority.

"Staff require much-deserved time off, which poses challenges to fill limited, temporary positions while staff are away. These challenges affect almost every health discipline, but some of the more notable ones that impact acute care disruptions are physicians, nursing, laboratory medicine and diagnostic imaging.

"The SHA always attempts to cover shifts with available human resources but that is not always possible. This is the case for planned disruptions in July and August at the Esterhazy's emergency department.

"Patients should call 911 in an emergency or present to the nearest emergency department.

"The SHA is engaging local communities and working diligently to recruit into vacant positions in order to restore stable and predictable acute and emergency services to these facilities."

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## 1872 demonstrations in Canada led to rights we enjoy today

What evolved into just another summer holiday began as a working class struggle and massive demonstration of solidarity in the streets of Toronto.

Canada was changing rapidly during the second half of the 19th century. Immigration was increasing, cities were getting crowded, and industrialization was drastically altering the country's economy and workforce.

As machines began to replace or automate many work processes, employees found they no longer had special skills to offer employers. Workers could easily be replaced if they complained or dissented and so were often unable to speak out against low wages, long work weeks and deplorable working conditions.

This is the context and setting for what is generally considered Canada's first Labour Day event in 1872. At the time, unions were illegal in Canada, which was still operating under an archaic British law already abolished in England.

For over three years the Toronto Printers Union had been lobbying its employers for a shorter work week. Inspired by workers in Hamilton who had begun the movement for a nine-hour work day, the Toronto printers threatened to strike if their demands weren't met. After repeatedly being ignored by their employers, the workers took bold action and on March 25, 1872, they went on strike.

Toronto's publishing industry was paralyzed and the printers soon had the support of other workers. On April 14, a group of 2,000 workers marched through the streets in a show of solidarity. They picked up even more supporters along the way and by the time they reached their destination of Queen's Park, their parade had 10,000 participants—one tenth of the city's population.

The employers were forced to take notice. Led by George Brown, founder of the Toronto Globe and notable Liberal, the publishers retaliated. Brown brought in workers from nearby towns to replace the printers. He even took legal action to quell the strike and had the strike leaders charged and arrested for criminal conspiracy.

Conservative Prime Minister John A. Macdonald was watching the events unfold and quickly saw the political benefit of siding with the workers. Macdonald spoke out against Brown's actions at a public demonstration at City Hall, gaining the support of the workers and embarrassing his Liberal rival. Macdonald passed the Trade Union Act, which repealed the outdated British law and decriminalized unions. The strike leaders were released from jail.

The workers still did not obtain their immediate goals of a shorter work week. In fact, many still lost their job. They did, however, discover how to regain the power they lost in the industrialized economy. Their strike proved that workers could gain the attention of their employers, the public, and most importantly, their political leaders if they worked together. The "Nine-Hour Movement," as it became known, spread to other Canadian cities and a shorter work week became the primary demand of union workers in the years following the Toronto strike.

The parade that was held in support of the strikers carried over into an annual celebration of worker's rights and was adopted in cities throughout Canada. The parades demonstrated solidarity, with different unions identified by the colorful banners they carried. In 1894, under mounting pressure from the working class, Prime Minister Sir John Thompson declared Labour Day a national holiday.

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