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Plain & Valley

Covering Southeast Saskatchewan and Southwest Manitoba
November 2015 • Volume 8, Number 11

As part of Christmas promotion:

Area businesses giving away \$15,000

For the second time, local businesses are getting together to give away \$15,000 to reward one lucky shopper for shopping locally this Christmas season. The draw will be made on Dec. 22 and the winner will get the good news just before Christmas.

There are also 40 other prizes valued at more than \$5,000 in total to be given away in the World-Spectator's 2015 Christmas Giveaway. That makes a total of \$20,000 in prizes given away by local businesses in this promotion.

For several years, the World-Spectator and participating local businesses gave away a new vehicle each Christmas. Last year the decision was made to go a different route, with one winner receiving \$15,000 to be spent at any of the participating businesses.

The winner could, for example, spend \$4,000 on a trip, spend \$3,000 on new electronics, spend \$2,000 on new flooring—and still have \$4,000 to spend at local businesses.

In addition to the grand prize winner, 40 people will win subsidiary prizes donated by participating businesses, including everything from a rocker-recliner to an electric fireplace to a water cooler to a smoker to an area rug. World-Spectator publisher Kevin Weedmark said he is proud of the local business community for stepping up and supporting the promotion.

"This promotion has always been about rewarding local shoppers for supporting the local businesses, and the fact that so many local retailers and other businesses buy into this promotion shows that they are working hard to serve their customers," Weedmark says.



Publisher Kevin Weedmark and Associate Publisher Kara Kinna with some of the contents of the Prize Vault

"The first year we held the car draw, we had no idea if we could do it or not. We threw the idea out there to businesses in the area, and the response was overwhelming. In no time we had enough support to be able

to offer a substantial prize. "The car draw was always a success, but I think this promotion is even better. The grand prize winner will receive a book of special cheques they can only use at the participating businesses. That will ensure that the money the winner receives will stay in the local area."

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"The car draw was always a success, but I think this promotion is even better. The grand prize winner will receive a book of special cheques they can only use at the participating businesses. That will ensure that the money the winner receives will stay in the local area."

Shoppers can enter at any participating business—there are 47 locations across the area in total where people can enter.

The winner can spend their \$15,000 any way they want at participating businesses. They may choose to spend it at several different businesses, or spend the whole prize on a large ticket

item like a quad, furniture, flooring for the whole house, a boat, or a lavish trip.

"The possibilities are endless," says Weedmark.

"We asked our participating businesses what the winner could do with \$15,000 at their businesses, and there were some great ideas."

A full list of the prizes available, and some ideas of how you could spend \$15,000 at local businesses, can be found at www.world-spectator.com/xmas-2015

Scott Weatherald was the winner of the draw last year.

He and his wife Cheryl used the money to do some last-minute Christmas shopping last year, to take a trip with their children last winter and to do some renovations on their house over the summer.

Scott's winning ticket was drawn from Flaman Sales and Rentals in Moosomin.

"I was surprised to be told I won, because I only put my name on that one ticket," he says. "I was there getting parts for a trailer."

Scott says he shops locally as much as he can.

"It does pay to shop in town," he says. "I really believe that."

"It was exciting and surprising," says Cheryl. "We never win anything. I think it really encourages people to shop locally, which is a good thing, and it's a nice reward for people who do shop here."

Scott says it was nice to have \$15,000 to spend without any worries. "It's just found money. It was pretty nice to get that," he says. "It's nice to just pick what you want."



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<p style="font-size: x-small;">STOCK# 16041A 2010 Chevrolet Traverse 2LT AWD 7-Passenger, 6-Speed Auto, 85,000 kms, Heated Power Seats, Grey</p> <p style="font-weight: bold; font-size: large;">\$20,975</p>	<p style="font-size: x-small;">STOCK# 15249A 2010 Chevrolet Traverse LS AWD 7-Passenger, 3.6L, Auto, Silver, 85,000 kms, SK Safety Certified</p> <p style="font-weight: bold; font-size: large;">\$17,975</p>	<p style="font-size: x-small;">STOCK# 15193A 2010 Chevrolet Equinox LTZ AWD 2.4L, Auto, Heated Leather, Remote Start, Sunroof, White, 85,000 kms, SK PST Paid</p> <p style="font-weight: bold; font-size: large;">\$16,975</p>	<p style="font-size: x-small;">STOCK# 15301A 2011 Chevrolet Traverse LT AWD Auto, 151,000 kms, SK PST Paid, Silver</p> <p style="font-weight: bold; font-size: large;">\$16,975</p>	<p style="font-size: x-small;">STOCK# 15278A 2012 Chevrolet Orlando LTZ 7-Passenger Seating, Leather, Loaded, Heated Seats, Sask PST Paid, Alloy Wheels, White</p> <p style="font-weight: bold; font-size: large;">\$16,975</p>	<p style="font-size: x-small;">STOCK# 15247B 2010 GMC Terrain SLE AWD 2.4L, Auto, Cloth, Remote Start, Alloy Wheels, Black, 118,000 kms, SK PST Paid</p> <p style="font-weight: bold; font-size: large;">\$14,975</p>	<p style="font-size: x-small;">STOCK# 15132C 2008 Ford Escape XLT AWD 3.0L V6, Auto, Cloth, Alloy Wheels, Remote Start, Red, 110,000 kms, SK PST Paid</p> <p style="font-weight: bold; font-size: large;">\$9,975</p>	<p style="font-size: x-small;">STOCK# 15209B 2007 Pontiac Torrent AWD Sport Model, 3.4L, Auto, Power Seat, Remote Start, Sunroof, Alloys, SK PST Paid, Gold, 142,000 kms</p> <p style="font-weight: bold; font-size: large;">\$7,975</p>

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These are just some of the tin sheds that make up City-View Campus, one of the schools Ray McMillan is visiting during his seven-week stay in India.



Crossing generations and cultures: Tyler Jenkins of Yellowknife (right)—who accompanied McMillan's group on the trip—is exchanging information with Mr. Sharma.



The students at City-View Campus were on holidays to celebrate Puja, but students attended morning classes with their mothers during the week McMillan was present.



McMillan has made many friends in India over the years. He spent time teaching a dozen men about the presence of God in their lives during his most recent trip.

Retired Sask teacher helping teachers in India

BY ROBYN TOCKER

Ray McMillan from Kennedy, Sask. has been travelling to India since 1962, and he has no plans to stop. He is currently in India for seven weeks.

"In 1962, I was teaching at a school in Whitewood. It was my first year," McMillan said. "A fellow came along, and he said, 'I'm going to India as a missionary and I need a teacher to go with me.' He said, 'Would you be the teacher?' I was single at the time and decided to come and I've been involved with schools in India off and on ever since."

McMillan taught in primary schools, high schools and Bible colleges in India.

"I have been interested in the schools here ever since," he said. "My wife and I were married over here 51 years ago, and we have lived in India for about 15 years."

"At the moment, we are helping four or five schools for underprivileged children," McMillan said. "I come at least once a year to visit the schools. I came on Oct. 19 with six other Canadians. When I come, I usually bring other people with me to experience the Indian culture and get to know my friends over here."

What keeps McMillan coming back to India?

"We're trying to make a difference, especially for the kids that are in these schools," he said. "We're encouraging the teachers and doing some teaching as well."

"Part of my heart is over here," McMillan said. "We have thousands of friends and former students here. We keep connecting with them."

"India has progressed a lot financially, but there are still a lot of very poor people here," he explained. "Lots of them are getting by on very little. For example, the teachers at these schools are making about 2500 rupees a month. That's about \$50 to \$60 a month. Can you imagine?"

Over the years, McMillan has not faced many challenges in India.

"There have been ups and downs," he

said. "We're in a different culture. There is lots of bureaucracy. Sometimes you get frustrated when you're living in a different culture, but I get frustrated in Canada, too."

McMillan has no shortage of good memories in India.

"I came here when I was single at 21 years of age. My wife-to-be came over to India in 1964 and we had our wedding here," McMillan said. "Last year was our 50th anniversary. She came back to India with me and we visited friends in seven different cities. The celebrations that they gave for us on our 50th wedding anniversary—that was the big thing."

On McMillan's current trip, he said he was keeping busy.

"On Oct. 30, we're going to a school and for a couple hours, we will just sit in the different classrooms and help the teachers as much as we can," he explained. "When the school day is over, we'll gather the teachers together and discuss things that we think might be helpful for them to do to a better job at what they're doing."

"Last week, we put on programs in the school," McMillan said. "It was a holiday for all the kids, so the teachers invited them to come back as part of a play day and teaching day. A couple of boys that were with us were good at playing games with them."

McMillan has not planned his next trip yet, but he expects to be back in India this time next year.

"Maybe in the spring, too. I'm not sure," he said. "In India, the best time to come is in October, because the monsoons are pretty heavy in June, July, August and September. It's usually very hot. Now, it's still hot but it's bearable."

McMillan encourages everyone to make a trip to India.

"Everyone should have an opportunity to experience southeast Asia," he said. "It's a different world. It broadens your perspective of the world and it might re-adjust one's values of what is important."

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Canadian Federal Election 2015



Beutler talks about election experience

Donna Beutler was an assistant returning officer for Souris-Moose Mountain in the federal election. Following is an interview with her by the World-Spectator about her experience:

WS: You have spent the past several weeks working for Elections Canada. What role do you play in the election process?

DB: I work as an additional assistant returning officer in Whitewood. The main office for Souris Moose Mountain is in Weyburn but due to the geographical size of our electoral district, two sub-offices were established. One sub-office is located in Estevan and one is located in Whitewood.

WS: Is this the first time you have worked in this position?

DB: No, it isn't. After working as an enumeration supervisor back in 1997, the last time enumeration was done federally, I went on to work as an additional assistant returning officer that same year and then again in 2000, 2004, 2006, 2008, 2011 and now in 2015.

WS: Now that the election is over, are you breathing a sigh of relief?

DB: Well, in all honesty, the lead up time to a federal election is an intense period of time and this time was several weeks longer than usual, so it's been a busy time for sure. I definitely breathed a sigh of relief when I was done, but having said that, I really do enjoy my job with Elections Canada and always give it my best. This year, our office in Whitewood opened early in August and closed a few days after E-day, a period of about 11 weeks compared to the usual five or six week period we generally work.

WS: What is your main focus during the pre-election period?

DB: Besides the general administration involved in running an office, my main focus was in hiring and training the poll workers—those front line people that are out in our polling places serving voters. This year, we hired nearly double the number we have had in the past so it took a fair bit of time just to get every position filled. There were about a dozen training sessions to accommodate the approximately 140 people we hired to work at nearly 40 polls in the upper part of the Souris Moose Mountain district that my area covers. One of the differences this time around was the hiring of poll supervisors, people to open the doors for electors, as well as information and registration officers for every polling place. These positions were on top of the usual deputy returning officer and poll clerk positions that we have every election.

WS: How many staff members worked in the Whitewood office?

DB: At any given time, there were four of us—two of four revising agents at a time, one special ballots coordinator, and myself. While we each had specific duties, we worked together, helping each other as needed. It was definitely a team effort to bring it all together.

WS: Can you describe the main duties of your Special Ballots Coordinator?

DB: Our Special Ballot Coordinator (SBC) essentially assisted electors who wished to vote by special ballot, either right in the office or by mail, and in special care homes not served by a mobile poll. SBCs also make hospital visits to acute care patients who were in hospital during advance polling days and election day. For those electors who have difficulty leaving their home, an SBC can go right to their home with the ballot box so electors can vote at home. Special ballot vot-

ing is an awesome option for those who may have mobility challenges for instance, for those who are going to be away from their polling place on voting days, and for those who are, for instance, travelling across the country and wish to vote for the candidate of their choice from their home constituency.

WS: You also mentioned Revising Agents. What were they tasked with?

DB: Revising agents, at an elector's request, update elector information. Sometimes it means simply correcting the spelling of a name but often it involves updating an address. When a residential address is changed, it can also mean an elector's polling division may change. Having correct residential addresses is so important because that address determines which polling division an elector is in and where they will go to cast their ballot.

WS: Did any problems arise when electors arrived at the polls without acceptable ID?

DB: There were some instances where electors arrived without ID. In some cases, another elector from the same polling division vouched for that elector. In some cases, electors went home to get their ID and came back to vote.

WS: Did you have voters show up at any polls who were not eligible to vote at that poll?

DB: Yes, some people who were travelling across the province or across the country hoped they could vote at a polling place along the way, but because electors can only vote in the polling division in which they live, those electors were unable to vote on election day. It's so important for electors to understand their voting options if they will be away from their polling division during

advance polling days or election day. Special ballot voting is a great option for these voters, however it has to be done ahead of time, not on Election Day. The biggest thing to remember is that to vote, besides being 18 or older and being a Canadian citizen, is that you must live in the polling division where you vote. You simply can't "sign" up to vote at any polling place other than the one you reside in.

WS: What did you enjoy most about your Elections Canada experience in 2015?

DB: Without a doubt, the electors I was able to serve. I think it's a safe bet to say that my office staff would say exactly the same thing too. It was a pleasure to be able to assist electors every single day. We endeavoured to work with them in a professional, friendly and efficient manner. I worked (via phone mostly) with a great officer and assistant returning officer out of the Weyburn office as well as their staff. I had an awesome staff in the Whitewood office—every one of them was willing to go above and beyond and that made my job a whole lot easier. As well, the poll workers I had the pleasure of meeting and training were awesome to work with. There's a whole lot of information for them to absorb when they come to a training session, but they did a great job as our front line workers. I really appreciated their willingness to get involved in the electoral process.

WS: Were there any surprises to you in the outcome of this election?

DB: Well, I work in a non-partisan capacity as an Elections Canada employee so I don't make predictions or comment on outcomes. My job is to help ensure electors in my area of the Souris Moose Mountain district have the opportunity to vote. And that's essentially what I did!

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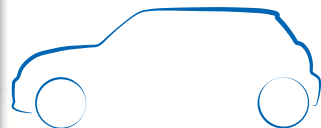
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BY ANDREA JAENEN

If you're not a fan of 30-below weather and blizzards, there's good news.

This winter is projected to be especially mild in Southeast Saskatchewan and Southwest Manitoba—temperatures will be higher than normal, and there will be a much lower rate of snowfall. This is thanks to an El Niño, says Jack Boston, a senior meteorologist for AccuWeather.

"Our long-range forecast is for what could turn out to be one of the warmest winters on record for Canada as a whole," he says.

"That is because of a very strong El Niño, which is unusually warm water temperatures in the equatorial Pacific.

"And what that does is that affects the circulation pattern across North America such that it brings a very strong jet stream across the Pacific, which splits into two pieces and the northern branch of the jet stream goes up through Canada and the southern branch of the jet stream goes through the southern United States.

"And that leads to very wet weather and cooler than normal weather in the southern United States because the storms are going through there."

Environment Canada is also predicting a much milder winter.

"Well, we're predicting that it's going to be a warmer than normal winter. Our models currently say from November, December, January, and February certainly the first half of winter it looks like it's going to be milder than normal," says Senior Meteorologist David Phillips.

"And that's probably because of the super El Niño—the warm waters in the Pacific are exceedingly warm. They haven't been this warm for 18 years and we know when we look in Saskatchewan for example, we see when we look at past super El Niños.

"For an El Niño to occur the water temperature just has to be a half a degree warmer than normal. But this one is about two and a half to three degrees warmer than normal," Phillips explains. "It's exceedingly warm, and that means that it's likely to be a dominant weather maker this particular winter."

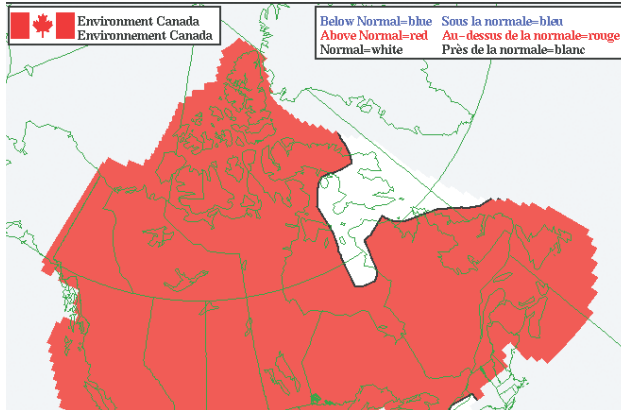
AccuWeather is predicting that the overall temperature will be roughly four degrees above normal temperatures for the months of December, January, and February. Snowfall will also be below average for this year.

"Here's the important thing, though, there will be storm systems that will be moving across southern Saskatchewan bringing some snow, and maybe some ice. But we do expect snowfall to be below normal," Boston explains.

"For the month of December your normal snowfall is 20 centimetres. We expect it to be below that by a few centimetres—so maybe you'll get 14 or 15 centimetres. Then in January your normal snowfall is also 20 centimetres, and we would expect it to run below normal—maybe 15 centimetres," he says. "And then in the month of February, your normal snowfall is about 18 or 19 centimetres. But over the whole winter—December, January, and February—we would anticipate the average to be below the normal."

A strong El Niño is often what dictates most weather patterns for the coming winter, which is seen through El Niños of the past.

"We have a high confidence in the forecast this year, higher than normal because of the very strong El Niño, which is taking place in the central Pacific. And what that usually does is that dictates a pretty standard weather



Environment Canada's seasonal forecast contains even more red than the electoral map on election night. Red areas in this map are forecast to be warmer than normal this winter, and that includes just about everywhere in Canada.

pattern across North America during a standard El Niño weather pattern," Boston says.

Phillips says a winter as mild as this winter is projected to be relatively rare.

"A strong El Niño, like the one we are in the midst of, usually occurs once every 10 to 15 years. That's why we expect this to be an unusually mild and drier than normal winter for the Canadian Prairie provinces," he said.

While he can't guarantee a warmer winter, Phillips says all indications are pointing in that direction.

"This super El Niño, it's been there since April and May, it's been affecting the world—areas that are seeing droughts or floods that you normally see with El Niño, you're getting them," Phillips says.

"There have been forest fires, and landslides in some areas, so it's behaving like its brothers in the past, and that gives you more confidence to say that it's going to play out on the Prairies like it has in other years. I wouldn't bet my life savings on it, but I'd bet you a few loonies that this is where we think the forecast is going.

"But when you look at the past—it's a good guide to the future—when we look at the Prairies we see that in the seven previous El Niños since the 1950s, and six of those have been milder than normal, and one has been colder than normal," Phillips explains. "So what it says right away that there isn't going to be any guarantee it's going to be milder—you could have that cold winter. But the deck is stacked to give you a milder than normal winter."

But does a milder winter mean an early spring? "That's a good question," says Boston. "Actually the way El Niño springs tend to be across the northern United States and southern Canada, they tend to be a little early peak—some mild weather comes in, even as early as March, but then you tend to get a setback in April where you get some cold weather and snow.

"That's kind of the flavor of the spring we're expecting. There will be an early start, but you have to be careful because then you get a setback after you have an early start to spring."

Phillips says this coming spring may show positive signs for farmers.

"The other thing too is our spring. The El Niño seems to peak in December and January, it begins to wane

but the weather effects still continue. The weather doesn't just go away—it's not like here today, gone tomorrow," Phillips explains. "So what we see for the spring is a little worrisome for growers, the beginning of the growing season might be a little dry. Now I wouldn't say that's a perfect forecast. One good thing is that farmers might see themselves entering the field earlier. There may be less flooding—as that's been a problem in recent years on some parts of the Prairies.

"So I think there's both good and bad to say about it," he says. "Sometimes El Niños are good for us because it allows us to graze our cattle on the prairie grasslands, and we don't have to feed them the expensive hay. Again, it's always winners and losers, gain and pain—it is the weather, and it's not perfect and yet farmers are great adapters, they're innovators. Farmers can learn to cushion the blow, or capitalize on the advantage."

Phillips advises those who take part in winter activities to take advantage of the snowy weather when it arrives.

"What I always say to people who love winter, when you get a super El Niño winter, don't procrastinate. Don't think that just because this weekend is perfect that next weekend is going to be even better," Phillips says. "El Niño years tend to be more yo-yo like weather—they tend to be back and forth, up and down, and all over the place. So if you are a skier, a snowmobiler, and an ice fisher and you get some good conditions then always go for it. Because with an El Niño year you might just lose it, and not see it for another three weeks."

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Above: Over 60 players from the Filipino community in Moosomin, Rocanville and Maryfield will participate in the Pinoy Moosomin Basketball Tournament from Oct. 25 to Nov. 22.

Filipino community basketball tournament under way for fourth year

BY ROBYN TOCKER

Moosomin's Filipino community started their fourth annual Pinoy Moosomin Basketball Tournament on Oct. 25.

Jules Francisco, chair of the Pinoy Moosomin Community Inc., said the tournament began four years ago because of the community's love of basketball.

"In the Philippines, it is the number one sport," he said. "We're short guys, so I don't know why we are so crazy about basketball."

Over 60 basketball players from the Pinoy communities in Moosomin, Rocanville and Maryfield will come to play every weekend at McNaughton High School until Nov. 22.

"We mixed the adult and kid players so they are able to develop their skills," Francisco said. "We're trying to encourage them to be into sports."

"Last year, we only had 50 players," he said. "More people are joining because more families have come to the area."

Francisco said there are about 300 people from the Philippines living in Moosomin, Rocanville and Maryfield. Players as young as 14 and as old as 45 are participating in the tournament this year.

"I think it will be a good season," he said. "We're trying to be part of the town and actually show our skills by playing basketball. We're trying to gather every Filipino here to encourage them to do what we're doing right now by being part of the community and joining whatever event the town has. That's our purpose here."

"We're also trying to be in other sports that Canadians do," he said. "Right now, this is what we think is the sport we're able to do. Someday, we want to be in hockey."

Francisco joined the tournament to be part of the community.

"It's the only way we can get every Filipino together," he said. "We're all crazy about it."

Francisco has been part of Moosomin's community for five years. He has enjoyed

his time in the town.

"The people are great here—very nice," he said. "That's why we're thinking of staying here because we found that the town is really nice."

The Pinoy Moosomin Community Inc. became a nonprofit organization this year. For Francisco, this means the Filipino Community can give back to Moosomin.

"We are a legal group now," he said. "The last three years, there was no registration whatsoever for the tournament. Right now, we can legally participate in whatever event the town has. We really like Moosomin and we're paying back the town that adopted us. Whatever the town needs from us that they think we can help with, we're always here."

Francis Santos is the internal vice chairperson of the Pinoy Moosomin Community Inc. He has lived in Moosomin for five years and been part of the basketball tournament since it began.

"I always support the games," he said. Santos also used to play in the tournament. "Now, my son plays. He really enjoys it."

Santos said the Pinoy Moosomin Community Inc. has brought the Filipino community together and organized the basketball tournament.

"We're planning to organize the Filipino community so that we can help the Town of Moosomin," he said. "We live here so we need to give our contribution to the community. We're going to promote camaraderie. We need to unite every one of us."

"We are here to organize and to do our best," he said. "I know that there is a lot of talent in every young Filipino, so we need to train them so that they are able to share their talents with the community, especially in the school."

"We are willing to contribute and willing to share our talents with the community here in Moosomin because we're living here and we would like to participate," Santos said.

Jylenn Valdez is the secretary for the Pinoy Moosomin Community Inc. She has lived in Moosomin for over a year and her family participates in the basketball tournament.

"I came here in February of last year, so I just joined the tournament last year," she said. "Moosomin has been very good for the family and I. People are nice. Everybody has been very friendly. It's like being home."

Valdez's husband is a board member on the Pinoy Moosomin Community Inc. and he plays in the tournament.

"He has been here since the tournament started," she said. "My son is also a player and the emcee for the tournament is also my son. Everybody is involved."

She joined the community to help unite the Filipinos in the area.

"Every Filipino deserves to be acknowledged," she said. "I feel like it is high time to really organize the Filipino community because we're getting to be a big family here. Everyone's family is coming. I think we could do more if we were united. Hopefully, we can send money back to the Philippines as a Filipino community here. Now that we're having some calamities in the Philippines, we're trying to give back whatever we can share to help them."

"Everybody deserves to be acknowledged as an individual," she said. "In reality, Filipinos are said to be born to be workers in other countries. But, it is nice to be acknowledged as a Filipino. Not as a worker, but as a server in the community. A worker is getting a wage, but a server doesn't need anything in return. We just serve and get involved in the community. It is really nice to get involved with the community and it really feels like we are in our real home. It really feels like we're home."

"This tournament is promoting camaraderie and sportsmanship," Valdez said. "We're in the fourth year and it is the first tournament that is done after our com-

munity was organized and registered as a nonprofit. We're really looking forward to whatever activities we may have."

Valdez said she enjoys the tournament because it brings the community together.

"I like how we enjoy being with one another," she said. "We're very busy with different jobs. A lot of the time, we just have a chance at seeing and chatting with one another if we have some parties, but this is a good time that we can be together in one spot where we can join with other families. It's nice to belong, although I really feel I belong in Moosomin. It is just like being home when you are with one another."

"It's important we have this tournament because basketball is really one of the most prominent sports in the Philippines," Valdez said. "It is one thing that we really miss. It's not even our national sport, but it's the most prominent one."

Sipa used to be the national sport in the Philippines. In sipa, players are required to kick a ball over a net. Now, the national sport is arnis—a form of martial arts.

"Filipinos are really fond of playing basketball instead of sipa," she said. "Sipa is for kids."

Valdez said she believes the tournament will go smoothly this year.

"Most of the players have been playing since the tournament started four years ago, so I don't think there will be a problem," she said.

Mayor Larry Tomlinson of Moosomin came to the opening ceremony on Oct. 25 and spoke to the Filipino community on behalf of the Town of Moosomin.

"They are a big part of our community," he said. "There are a lot of businesses that couldn't operate without them. It's important they have this tournament because it's nice to see them stay together as a community themselves, but yet be part of our community. They are very hardworking and dedicated. They are a great asset to our community."

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Low oil prices impacting Estevan area economy

Low oil prices are affecting communities in southeast Saskatchewan and southwest Manitoba to varying degrees, but nowhere is the impact more keenly felt than in the city of Estevan.

"The low oil prices have impacted businesses in Estevan across the board," said Jackie Wall, the executive director of Estevan's Chamber of Commerce. "We've also had an impact in our Salvation Army Food Bank."

"From a Chamber perspective, we're just trying to get feedback from our members," she said.

Wall said Estevan has felt the impact for at least eight months.

"We're seeing what we can do to support one another," she said. "There's a limited scope in what we can do. We can't control the prices of the oil or anything of that nature."

"The hotels have had an impact," she said. "We're trying to get the hotels together to strengthen the hotel association to bring more events to the city. We have a couple big events coming to the city, so that should really help."

The Saskatchewan Summer Games and the World Canada Cup are coming in 2016.

"That would really impact our hotel industry," Wall said. "These events also help the restaurants that have been hit."

"We have Small Business Week coming up in October and we're looking at mini-sessions on debt consolidation," she said. "Succession planning has also been impacted. In the future, where are the businesses going? Can they now continue to go to a family member? We're

trying to gear any topics that businesses come to us with that they need assistance in. We're trying to get those experts together to provide information to the businesses."

Wall said the chamber has heard rumours of businesses closing but is not aware of any closing yet.

If the oil prices do not increase, Wall said Estevan is not concerned.

"There's not that kind of a panic yet," she said. "We still have very strong industries that are here, including the mine and SaskPower. There still are those underlying industries."

"A lot of the oil companies have been through this before. It's not their first run at it," she said. "I think the oil companies are looking at lots of different and creative ways of keeping things running."

"Estevan is pulling together," said Wall. "This has happened before, not as prolonged, but a lot of businesses know what the impact is and they have had to weather this storm before."

Ronza Reynard, the Family Services co-ordinator for Estevan's Salvation Army, said they have seen a 60 per cent increase since the impact of low oil prices.

"When there's a slow down in the oil industry, that affects all the other things in the city," she said. "We're not necessarily seeing people who maybe worked in the oil field, but we're seeing the people who work at the local coffee shop, at the Wal-Mart, at the Tim Hortons, people who work at the hotels—places that have slowed down because there are not as many people in

town anymore. People have left town."

Reynard anticipates a higher demand as Christmas season begins.

"I had someone in my office on Oct. 7 applying for a food hamper and right away she said, 'I have no idea what we're going to do for Christ-

mas.' I said, 'Well that's fine, we have things in place for Christmas time,'" said Reynard. "It's going to be a tight, very busy fall and Christmas season for us here at the Salvation Army and for the Estevan Christmas Hamper Association."

Reynard said the Salvation

Army is increasing their aid.

"This is the time of year where people do start donating to the food bank," she said. "We're saying to everybody, 'Expect to have a higher increase this year in Christmas support that we're going to need.'"

Reynard has heard peo-

ple in the community say it could take three years for the situation to improve.

"We're hoping things will just level off now and people will get used to this so the demand won't be as high," she said. "Then we just have to work with the normal, whatever that normal is."

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The farmland ownership consultation revealed the majority of survey participants are opposed to foreign ownership and investment in Saskatchewan farmland. They also are opposed to investors such as Canadian pension funds to purchase farmland in Saskatchewan. The Ministry of Agriculture hopes to introduce new legislature that will reflect the consultation results.

Farm consultation results show opposition to foreign investment

BY ROBYN TOCKER
The Ministry of Agriculture conducted farmland ownership consultations and the results are in.

The consultation survey was posted online from May until August. The information was gathered to inform the government on how to best approach farmland ownership.

"It was a good consultation," said Agriculture Minister Lyle Stewart. "There were over 3,200 respondents that all had the opportunity to wade through the questions in the privacy of their own homes without any pressure."

Sixty-two per cent of the respondents were farmers. Other participants include investors, retired farmers, Saskatchewan residents interested in potential changes to the rules and farmland owners.

The public was asked who should be eligible to purchase and own farmland; are new rules needed to govern farmland transactions and financing for land purchases; and what is the appropriate level of government monitoring and enforcement to ensure land transactions comply with the rules?

Seventy-five per cent of respondents are opposed to allowing investors such as Canadian pension funds to purchase Saskatchewan farmland. Eighty-seven per cent do not support foreign ownership of farmland and 69 per cent do not support foreign financing. Eighty-five per cent supported giving the Farm Land Security Board (FLSB) a greater role

in enforcing compliance of farmland ownership rules.

"The results don't surprise me," said Stewart. "Saskatchewan farmland is different and there is a strong connection between family identity and land ownership. Saskatchewan people make a strong connection between land ownership and good stewardship of the land. The strength of communities is tied to local farm ownership. It is felt by many of the respondents that farmland value should be determined by the forces that affect farming in the province, not outside interests."

Foreign ownership and investment became more of an issue in Saskatchewan, causing the consultation to become necessary.

"People have been concerned about large tracts of land being sold to foreigners in recent years," said Stewart. "It was hard to prove under the existing legislation whether or not that was happening. In cases where the proponents came forward and admitted they were not qualified, that's a slam dunk, but there were lots of cases where the structures were complicated and it was hard to tell who was really funding some of these deals. Those are hard to police under the legislation."

"Only in the last two years, institutional investors have been purchasing farmland in the province," he said. "Our justice ministry told us that Canadian Pension Plan Investment Board (CPPIB) is technically eligible to purchase

farmland in the province because they are a wholly Canadian-owned corporation. On the other hand, CPPIB isn't necessarily qualified to own it."

Stewart said investment of Saskatchewan's most strategic resource is a problem. "Most people don't think it's appropriate for control of that land to be in the hands of foreigners," he said. "It's an essential ingredient to farming in this province. From the survey, the vast majority of people think that that control should be in Canadian hands."

Stewart said land ownership is not a Saskatchewan-only issue.

"It is happening in other places," he said. "Other jurisdictions are talking about this issue. I don't know if their governments are going to move to change the rules or not. Manitoba is very much like our Act. Alberta is pretty similar. Other provinces are different, but then they have different types of agriculture and different forces that affect the market. It's certainly becoming more and more of an issue."

As a farmer, Stewart agrees with the majority of respondents.

Now that the consultation has been completed, Stewart plans to bring forward new legislation.

"We hope to introduce new legislature this fall that will reflect the results of the consultation," he said.

Moosomin MLA Don Toth said he has had peo-

ple bring their concerns about farmland ownership to him.

"Especially concerning people out of the province and out of the country," he said. "A lot of MLAs were having this happen. As the minister indicated when the public consultation was brought forward, that's exactly why the public consultation process was put in place. Not only was his office hearing these concerns, but MLAs were hearing it."

"The general feeling was we want to see that farmland is actually being owned by people who are actually residing in this province, not owned offshore, and ensuring that we have families living in our province," said Toth. "The process reflected what I was hearing."

Toth said the consultation does not impact the Moosomin area.

"The reason I say that is most of the land transactions that have taken place around here that I'm aware of have been by people who have either moved here or local farm family opera-

tions that have expanded," he said.

The summary of results included direct quotes from survey participants. The names were omitted in the summary.

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Liquor consultation shows support for privatization

BY ROBYN TOCKER
Saskatchewan's liquor laws are not favoured by all, and a recent consultation by the provincial government has some groups expecting change.

David Morris, the spokesperson for Saskatchewan Liquor and Gaming Authority, said the government is trying to determine what changes need to be made to Saskatchewan's liquor laws.

"On Nov. 4 of last year, the government launched a three-month, public consultation process to gather feedback from the public and from other stakeholder groups that we have in the province," he explained. "That process wrapped up on Jan. 30, 2015. Through that process, there were more than 7,000 people that visited the consultation website and there were another 6,000 people that took time to complete an online survey. Another 3,000 people left personal comments on the matter. There were a lot of opinions about the future of liquor retailing in the province."

"Going from there, now the government is considering all those comments that were received through the process and a final decision on what the future of liquor retailing will look like is being made by the government," Morris said. "We expect that the decision should be made later this fall."

Morris isn't sure what the future for liquor laws looks like.

"In terms of what people said during the consultation, it varied," he said. "There were people that like the current system, others that want some significant changes and some others had said the current situation is generally fine but maybe we need some improvements. There really was a mix of feedback that we received. Overall, we're pleased that people did take the time to participate in the consultation and complete the survey. We're very pleased with the results. People in Saskatchewan have always had a lot to say about the way alcohol should be retailled in the province."

Morris said this consultation process was necessary.

"Saskatchewan has long had a mixed system of liquor retailing," he said. "There has always been a mix of public stores, particularly in the cities. In smaller, rural communities, there are the private franchises that are operating in existing businesses, everything from grocery stores to pharmacies—those sorts of private businesses are selling alcohol on behalf of SLGA (Saskatchewan Liquor and Gaming Authority). Recently, SLGA added some fully private liquor stores to help meet customer demand in growing neighbourhoods in both Saskatoon and Regina."

"The public opinion about what the best model for liquor retailing is varies, so the gov-



ernment decided they wanted to hear directly from the public and stakeholders about what they would like to see going forward," Morris said.

Todd MacKay, the Prairie Director for the Canadian Taxpayers Federation, is pleased the consultation process was done.

"I think it's great that the government is listening," he said. "For too long, there have been government solutions that have been imposed on people, and usually what they've been is a balance between different industry players, giving some disadvantages and others different disadvantages, but the one who gets disadvantaged the most is the consumer, because they don't have as many places. The more free market options there are, the better choices and the better outcomes that you get for consumers."

"It's great to see them asking consumers what they think and they certainly have an opportunity here to make some real changes," MacKay said.

Why is the Canadian Taxpayers Federation involved in the debate about liquor regulations?

"First of all, our mandate is all about lower taxes, less waste and accountable government," MacKay explained. "On the taxes side, it's pretty obvious. The government taxes alcohol heavily. It's something we want to keep an eye

on and to make sure taxpayers are taken care of.

"This really is an accountability issue, too. For example, there are regulations on the books right now that prevent both government-sourced and a lot of private-sourced stores from selling cold beer. That doesn't make sense. If you're selling beer and you're going to do a good job, you put it in the fridge. That's how any smart person would do it. But they have got rules on the book that prevent people selling beer from doing a good job. That's not right, that's not accountable."

"The best way to get accountability is through competition, so we're following it from that angle," he said.

MacKay said the government needs to get out of the "booze business."

"There are important roles for the governments—paving the roads, keeping our streets safe, things like that. There's no reason that the government needs to be involved in selling alcohol," he said. "If they are going to remain involved, they need to at least make sure that the playing field is level."

MacKay said the government makes it challenging for rural vendors to sell alcohol.

"That's not right. They need to have the same access, the same fair prices and the same regulations to make sure they can serve customers as well," said MacKay.

"It's important these regulations are changed for consum-

ers," he said. "When someone wants to pick up a six-pack so they can go watch the Rider game at a friend's house or a bottle of wine for a special evening, they should have choices on where they are going to pick that up, choices in terms of selection and choices in terms of prices. Right now, the government regulations stifles all those choices. We need to get those regulations out of the way and let consumers make their own choices."

MacKay hopes changes are made in the future.

"I think the government has created a great opportunity to change things and move things forward. They have asked consumers what they think. They have heard from hundreds of customers across the province and they have heard from industry stakeholders who have made it very clear that no matter what else happens, there needs to be fairness in pricing and regulations. What they do with this opportunity is up to them. People certainly want change and it needs to go in that direction."

Marilyn Braun-Pollon, the VP Prairie and Agri-Business from the Canadian Federation of Independent Business (CFIB), said "CFIB conducted their own survey."

"We did a survey of our members with a number of questions related to the issue and we asked our members how important is it that the Government of Saskatchewan review the current liquor retailing system in the province and 80 per cent of them said that it is very or somewhat important," she explained.

"When you look at that, it is very clear that this is an important review. Eighty-four per cent feel that the government should be focusing on other issues such as education, health care and infrastructure than investing in the operation of government liquor stores. This review is important because we need to change the focus."

The survey was conducted in January 2015 with 418 small business owners responding. The survey results were then sent to the Government of Saskatchewan's liquor retail.

"What this submission does is outline findings from the survey and really provide a selection of member comments as well," Braun-Pollon said. "We got comments from members from all sectors throughout the province." This includes members in, retail, construction and manufacturing.

"Seventy-two per cent of the members agree with the statement that they care more about the quality of their purchase experience than they do on whether the store is publicly or privately operated," said Braun-Pollon.

"The fact that there was a consultation documented with

a number of options outlined, that brought focus to the discussion and so we were able to go back to our members and ask them their perspective on their views on the specific liquor retail system options," she said.

"Seventy-one per cent of business owners in Saskatchewan believe that any change to the liquor retailing system should not reduce government revenue," Braun-Pollon said. "The members don't believe that the government retail system is the only means of delivering liquor sales in a socially responsible way. Business owners trust private retailers to sell alcohol—85 per cent of them agreed with that."

How can liquor laws be modernized?

"Our members are very clear that this is an important discussion to have and they believe the government has bigger fish to fry," she said.

"While they would like to see changes made and more options and a move to expanded private retail systems, they also feel it's important the government continues to regulate and enforce those liquor laws. A majority of our members would like the government to pursue the following options. Eighty-two per cent say expand the private retail system. Sixty-six per cent say an Alberta-style, fully private retail system and managed transition to a fully private retail system. If the government is considering any of those, there is strong support from the small business community in Saskatchewan to move in that direction."

CFIB provided comments from their survey in their submission. Names have been omitted in the report for privacy.

"I have never understood why the government feels the need to be in retail of any sort. The government's only role should be to maintain a tax structure that oversees and provides decent roads, education, law and order and healthcare. No more, no less."

"The sale of liquor should be regulated by the government, but not owned by the government. It is important to require the liquor retailers to promote responsible rules in regards to drinking and driving and being a responsible citizen with regards to alcohol."

"The current system is patronizing and assumes that private businesses cannot responsibly market liquor. We have had liquor vendors in private stores in small communities for decades without societal degeneration in those communities."

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Fowl suppers provide opportunity for fundraising and fellowship

BY ROBYN TOCKER

Every fall, churches in Rocanville, Maryfield, Spy Hill and Moosomin hold their annual fowl—or fall—suppers.

Fowl suppers are common in many churches and have been for some time.

Barb Swallow, one of the organizers from Maryfield, said St. Andrew's United Church has had a fowl supper since the 1960s at least. She has been involved with the supper for eight years.

"It was started by the United Church Women (UCW) who were looking for a way to help raise funds and to hold an event that could bring together the community—working and socializing together as a group," said Swallow.

Rocanville's fowl supper at St. Paul's United Church has been held for 80 consecutive years. Only one was cancelled in 1957.

"That supper was cancelled because of an influenza that was going around," said Marjorie Thompson, one of the fowl supper organizers for Rocanville.

"In 1935, there was a club organized. We have records of them having some of the first fall suppers, but we don't know if that was the first," said Thompson.

"Our church is over 100 years old, so the fowl supper has probably been going on for a long, long time. I'm sure it's over 50 years," said Elaine Erlendson, the organizer for the Spy Hill United Church fall supper. Erlendson has attended Spy Hill's United Church for 30 years. She enjoys volunteering at the fall supper and has been doing so for 20 years.

Wendy Lynd became involved with St. Mary's Catholic Church fall supper when it was started four years ago.

"I think there always used to be fall suppers when there was the Catholic Women's League (CWL)," said Lynd. "Then it closed at St. Mary's. They used to be the leaders behind it. I think people just decided it was a good way to do a fall fundraiser together."

"I'm involved with the church, so I try to help out where I can. I thought with the fall supper it sounded like something I could do to volunteer my time," Lynd said. She helps with advertising, planning and gathering donations of food.

Fowl suppers are seen as places for fellowship, but also fundraising.

"It's one of our major fundraisers for the church," said Swallow. "I think it's important that people who are a part of the church community get involved in fundraising for the church. The fowl supper is just a really good way to help raise some funds for the church."

"It's a time for socializing and visiting," said Swallow. "I think it's also a time for people from other communities to come and visit with those here in our community. It's about raising funds but also about creating an awareness of the church community and what the church does for the community. We have people that come early and they would sit there all evening if they could."

"It's wonderful to see the community come out and support it, not only by attending but by donating food and coming and working. It's an opportunity for people to work together to achieve a goal," said Swallow.

"Churches nowadays need additional funds," said Jan Skulmoski from St. Mary's. "Churches aren't full like they used to be. We needed a fundraiser and we thought it would be a good idea. The main reason we have it is fundraising, but it turns out in the end that it brings people together. Any work activity like that brings people together. People come and help and donate—everybody donates—and everyone is very generous."

"It's a lot of work and you're a bit nervous about whether you're going to have enough food, but you go ahead and hope for the best. It usually works out," said Skulmoski.



Fowl suppers are a tradition in many Prairie communities

"The purpose of it is an annual fundraiser and it's a great way to have some fellowship with all the congregation together," said Lynd. "I like getting everybody together for the church. It's really nice to have members of the church get together and work together. It's nice to have a visit with everybody."

Mildred Muir became involved with Rocanville's fowl supper because there was a need for volunteers.

"I bring food and work there," said Muir. "It's our UCW Pathfinders group—all of the ladies get involved with bringing food and stuff like that."

"I've always been a United Church Women member and being a part of the United Church Women, you just do the fowl supper," Thompson said. "Our United Church Women work so well together that it's a joy to be a part of the fowl supper."

"It brings in quite a bit of money to keep our church going," said Muir. "It's also a great fellowship. You meet new people and get to see other people that don't come to church."

"We keep putting it on because it's a fundraiser as well as a social time," said Thompson.

"It's a fundraiser to try and keep our church going," said Erlendson.

St. Andrew's raises roughly \$2,500, which goes towards the general maintenance of the church, and serves around 300 people during its fowl supper.

"We share a minister with the church in Wawota, so some of our funds cover the cost of having a minister in our community," said Swallow. "It helps us keep our church alive."

St. Paul's raises about \$3,200 from their supper. On average, they serve 275 people.

Spy Hill brings in around \$4,000 a year from their fall supper, which goes towards the general maintenance of the church. The church seats 300 to 400 people for their supper.

St. Mary's sells tickets to their fall supper. They raise about \$2,000 for general upkeep of their church. Last year, the volunteers served 253 people at the supper.

"That's all that we plan for. Those tickets

include the volunteers. Everyone has a ticket," said Lynd.

"We need a lot of help with peeling vegetables, cooking meat, serving, doing the dishes and bringing the food," said Skulmoski. "The nice thing about it is people will come and eat and then you turn around and here they are in the kitchen doing the dishes!"

The big question for every church: is it a fall supper or fowl supper, and what is the difference?

"We often call ours a fall supper," said Swallow. "I think either term is just fine. Fowl was because it was traditionally a turkey supper. Some people don't go fowl because sometimes they do have ham. Because they're not totally turkey, they like to extend their spread, so they change the name to fall."

"I put fowl in our bulletin," said Muir. "Other people say fall, so I don't know. I still say fowl is where it started off, but it is in the fall, too."

"It's always been called either or," said Erlendson. "It's in the fall, but we do serve turkey. I think the name gets changed quite often. It's whatever is in your head at the moment."

"Ours is fall because we don't have turkey," said Lynd. "There used to be so many fowl suppers at that time and everybody had turkey, so we decided to do roast beef. It's been a popular choice. This year, there aren't as many fall suppers in Moosomin as there has been, but we still thought we would stick to the roast beef and have something different."

"We debated because beef is so expensive, but we went ahead and did it again this year," said Skulmoski. "It's a bit different."

Many of the churches rely on community support when it comes to supplying food.

"We've always depended on our community for donations of food," said Swallow. "We continue to do that. We buy the turkey and a few odds and ends, but the community supplies the food to a large extent."

"There have always been some people outside the United Church that help us out

by working or wanting to give pies, which is just awesome of them," said Erlendson. "An awful lot of people bring food."

"We always serve turkey," said Thompson. "Some serve cabbage rolls or beef, but we always serve turkey. We always have homemade pies. They are a big seller."

Lynd said St. Mary's also receives homemade pies.

"We might actually try to sell some pies this year, too," said Lynd.

"We have a chart we put up and people put their name on it," said Skulmoski. "We ask for different things—sour cream, butter, onions, you name it—people just put their names on the chart and bring the items."

Although the focus is on the meal, some churches have added events to the night.

"Over the last three or four years, we've added an auction table," said Swallow. "Members of the church community donate things to put on our table, and people pay \$5 for ten tickets then drop them in the buckets. We have a wide array of items on our table. Anything from homemade pies to planters to jams and jellies."

"We've always just done the fall supper, but this year we're going to sell 50/50 tickets, too, to see if that helps bring in additional funds and make somebody a lucky winner," said Lynd.

It's important for churches to continue having fall suppers, said Swallow.

"Fowl suppers keep the church communities alive," she said. "At some point in time, everybody does rely to a certain extent on the church community and the support that it provides."

"Our church is struggling. There might not be too many years left," said Erlendson. "The doors might have to close. We're trying to keep the doors open. I think a lot of churches are in the same predicament now."

"We're making an effort to get the young people involved," said Skulmoski. "Many young people don't go to church anymore. Even to come to the fall supper—it makes you know you're welcome. It's easier to walk into a fall supper than it is to come to church. It's hard to go to church when you haven't gone in years. It's hard to walk in."

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Community consultation held in Broadview

RQHR says it's facing a financial crunch

BY DONNA BEUTLER
The Regina Qu'Appelle Health Region (RQHR) is facing a projected \$15.2 million deficit as of year end, March 31, 2016. This compares to a \$16.2 million deficit in 2014-15 and a \$1.6 million deficit in 2013-14. The \$15.2 million deficit includes a \$4.3 million WCB rebate.

RQHR hosted a community consultation meeting in Broadview on November 2 to share some of the challenges the region is facing and to respond to questions from the audience. Approximately 60 people attended the meeting as well as several RQHR board and staff members.

RQHR Chairman Dick Carter invited Ochapowace First Nation Elder Isaac to open the meeting in prayer. Carter then spoke of RQHR's vision: "Healthy People, Families and Communities," and their desire to see better care, better health, better teams and better value. He emphasized the budget will not compromise patient safety. Carter also reviewed the range of health services RQHR provides and spoke of the pressures the health system is under.

Keith Dewar, RQHR President and CEO, presented a number of statistics with regards to the health of communities, comparing RQHR's stats to Saskatchewan's and Canada's rates in areas such as heavy drinking, children vulnerable in areas of early development, obesity, smoking and physical activity during leisure time. While some of the health region's stats compare similarly to provincial and national rates in the areas of heavy drinking, smoking and physical activity for instance, the other two, vulnerable children and obesity, are higher than provincial and national rates.

"This is a billion dollar organization," Dewar said of RQHR as he went over the financial picture for this fiscal year. He discussed the cost of care and the deficit that RQHR is projecting. "Approximately 80 per cent of our costs are related to staffing expenses," he explained, adding that they are having a "tough time staying on budget."

"Without the WCB rebate, our deficit would have been higher," Dewar said. "The Province and RQHR can't sustain the deficit." The solution to these financial challenges



Karen Earnshaw, VP of Integrated Health Services for the Regina Qu'Appelle Health Region, responding to questions at the recent community consultation in Broadview.

is, according to Dewar, to "do a better job with what we have. That's how we are going to get to a balanced budget," he explained, "Not through lay offs."

Karen Earnshaw, VP Integrated Health Services, spoke on how well rural areas share services, saying the region is applying what they have learned from sharing services in rural areas and utilizing those same techniques in urban areas as well. RQHR, which is one of 13 health authorities in Saskatchewan, has divided its region into four areas including Prairie East (an area that includes Moosomin, Whitewood, Rocanville and surrounding areas) and Twin Valley (an area that includes Broadview and Indian Head and surrounding areas). Further to the west are the Touchwood Qu'Appelle and Regina areas.

"We look at ages and demographics," Earnshaw explained, "and we know we have different needs per area. Some areas have younger people, some areas, older people." She went on to pose the question, "How do we spread our resources across these areas to meet the needs? How do we share our wisdom? How do we support where there are gaps?"

Audience members had an opportunity to ask questions following RQHR's presentation, and the first one asked was why Whitewood is now in the Prairie East (with Moosomin) and

no longer in the Twin Valley (Broadview/Indian Head) area of RQHR.

"Indian Head to Whitewood is a larger area than Whitewood to Moosomin (Prairie East)," Earnshaw responded, explaining that public health nurses, for instance, have a smaller geography to cover when they cover a smaller area. Earnshaw also explained that Broadview, with its three physicians, provides services to its residents and area residents as well as First Nations residents while the higher number of physicians in Moosomin serves the Moosomin-Whitewood area.

Audrey Isaac of Ochapowace First Nation spoke about the need for education for her people so they can learn how to prevent chronic diseases. She also spoke about the stressors for patients who have to travel to Regina for dialysis, saying there are high numbers of patients with diabetes on Ochapowace. She spoke too of the problems with addictions and mental health issues and of the hard drugs that are coming into her community.

"The cost is going to go way up," Isaac said, referring to the areas of mental health and addictions. "We need to focus more on prevention," she said. She expressed her concerns about the potential legalization of marijuana which, in her opinion, will mean more mental health issues. She stressed the

need to find better ways to help prevent addictions and mental health problems. While Dewar noted that legalization of marijuana is a federal issue, he acknowledged that everyone has a responsibility to address the problems their communities face.

Earnshaw responded to Isaac's comments regarding renal disease, recognizing the importance of the prevention so people don't have to go to Regina for dialysis. She spoke of the education component of health care and how, for instance, home care workers can in turn provide education and assistance to people in their communities, citing as examples, smoking cessation and exercise.

"This is the first generation of people," Keith Dewar said as prevention and education was discussed, "who will not live as long as their parents. Anything you can do to help your community (in getting healthy) is important."

The next question from the floor spoke of the financial challenges RQHR is facing as an audience member asked if RQHR is in a serious financial position. Dewar's answer, simply a "yes," was met with the question of whether or not services would be cut.

"Our commitment is not to cut services and not to cut staff," Dewar responded. "Some changes are needed," he explained, saying people have to ask themselves, "How can we

be more effective with the same amount of resources?" He used home care services as an example, saying services in that area have doubled in the past 10 years with very little more money, so that area is doing more with the same amount of resources.

"It's not going to get better," said one audience member as he expressed his doubts about how people are going to get better care with the same amount of dollars.

To the question of where things are at in regard to electronic medical records, Dewar told the audience that they are behind. The costs are high and the health region feels, according to Dewar, that most people feel that that type of infrastructure (electronic medical records) is not as important as, for instance, the need for more physicians. Earnshaw said the technology is being used for X-ray and lab reports.

Earnshaw also responded to a concern about the difficulty in filling specific positions when they are advertised as a temporary position, something that few people will "move out" to rural areas to take on. Earnshaw suggested that where there are gaps, such things as tele-health could be utilized, a service that is used in the north.

One audience member asked about surgical wait times and Dewar responded to the comment, saying that though the number has risen from about 200 to

980 waiting three months for surgery, it is substantially less than it was five years ago and that Saskatchewan still has the best wait times in the country.

Bill MacPherson, a Moosomin Health Foundation board member, said Moosomin's emergency department is swamped and wanted to know, when locums come out to Moosomin, what they make in comparison to working in emergency departments in the city. Earnshaw explained that there is a difference in compensation between certain facilities, according to government-set rates.

According to Earnshaw and Dewar, emergency room visits are the most expensive and least effective way to treat patients as 75 per cent of emergency visits could be seen at the primary care level as opposed to the emergency room.

Dewar also explained, in answer to a question about whether funding follows the patient, that some does, but generally funding goes to where the facilities are located. The government, Dewar said, is looking at this but explained that it is a hard transition. As an example, money hasn't flowed from Sun Country (south) to RQHR when patients from that region end up in hospital, for instance, in Moosomin.

Patient pooling was also discussed when an audience member asked about the pool that patients' names go into when they are referred to a specialist.

"Theoretically speaking," Dewar answered, "patient pooling is efficient—it is the way to go," as opposed to being referred by a general practitioner to a specific specialist. Dewar also responded to the concern about the province not covering costs when a patient chooses to travel to another province for medical services that involve technology not available in Saskatchewan. Dewar explained that prior approval must be granted by the province before a patient can claim out-of-province medical expenses. He also explained that it takes time for new technology to get across the country as well as the need for specialists to use that new technology.

Many challenges face RQHR with regards to finances and services. Despite these challenges, RQHR says it does not plan to cut services or staff and will continue to look for ways to utilize RQHR's resources more effectively.

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CTF bringing attention to Saskatchewan's rising debt

BY KEVIN WEEDMARK

The Canadian Taxpayers' Federation took the Saskatchewan Debt Clock on the road last week to bring home to Saskatchewan residents how high the provincial debt is getting.

Todd McKay of the Canadian Taxpayers' Federation says Saskatchewan's debt problem is not in the same league as other provinces, but the debt is rising.

"Government debt is an important thing to keep your eye on," said McKay. "This government soon after it was elected did a great job of paying down debt. It paid off \$7 billion worth of debt. And they deserve a lot of credit for that."

"But right now, the debt is going back up again. It's going up by about \$2.7 million a day. It's important for people to know about that. Government money is our money! Government debt is our debt! There's only one way to pay it off, and that's through taxes. So we need to keep an eye on that. Ultimately, what we're hoping to see is that government spending comes down a bit, and start paying that back down again."

McKay says Saskatchewan is doing better than other provinces. "Our problems are way better than everybody else's problem, but there's a reason for that—because we paid down debt in the past. We don't need to follow them where they're going."

"In Manitoba, they had balanced budgets up to 2009. In 2009 they said they're going to start borrowing a little bit. Now they borrow a lot. Saskatchewan pays about \$3 million in interest payments a year. Manitoba pays \$842 million in interest a year. Let's fix this in Saskatchewan before we find ourselves in the problem Manitoba is in. And if we get on top of it right now, it doesn't have to be that hard."

McKay says he doesn't believe a lot of people are aware of the extent of government debt.

"I don't know if a lot of people know the specifics. They know there's too much debt, they know that it should calm down. But I think it's really hard for people to grasp it in that you and I don't deal with \$2.7 million very often, if ever. So it's hard to even imagine it. That's why we bring the debt clock out, because it gives a very visual presentation. When they see those numbers flying by, it gives them an idea of what's going on."

McKay says that, while Saskatchewan's debt is smaller than many other provinces, the debt is still being added to.

"In their last quarterly update they stated that they have an operational deficit of \$292 million. They've been very clear that they're going to trim spending and get that back under control. That's great—very happy to hear that from them. From all indications, they're doing all the work that needs to be done to do that, and it's not easy work."

"On the other hand, they're borrowing \$700 million for infrastructure. And their view is that borrowing for infrastructure is fine. They often liken it to a mortgage that a family may have. I would note a few substantial differences between government debt and a mortgage. The most substantial which is all of us pay down our mortgage every month, that debt goes down—we don't often see that happening with government debt. And that's what we need to see is those payments happening and those debts coming down."

McKay says public concern over public debt varies across the country.

"When I talk to people in Manitoba, they're very concerned about it because the debt is much higher, and interest is around \$842 million a year. Here in Saskatchewan I think people are much less concerned overall because our debt is much lower."

"What I am sensing right now is a



Kevin Weedmark photo

Debt rising

Todd McKay of the Canadian Taxpayers' federation was in Moosomin last week with the Saskatchewan Debt Clock, showing the rising debt of the province.

sense of disappointment. People wanted the debt to go down, and it was, but now they're finding out the debt is going up. This is a new Saskatchewan, this is bigger and better, and stronger, why aren't we going in the right direction here? But I'm also hearing optimism. People are saying 'Hey, we can get this back under control.'

McKay says the creeping increase in Saskatchewan's debt is a problem of over-spending not lack of revenue.

"It's not fundamentally a revenue problem," he said. "Low oil prices are taking a chunk out of the government's budget. That said, when you're small business and you're home, sometimes you have to deal with money getting tight. And then you have to prioritize. The fundamental problem is that spending has been going up too much. And it's simply that they're spending too much and they need to bring it back down again. If we do that, we can turn this around very quickly. If you look at their projections for spending in the next number of years, if they just reduce that by three per cent they could pay for that \$700 million very easily."

McKay said Saskatchewan's debt and deficit are small enough that the government could begin reducing the debt by spending reductions at this point.

"If I told you that you have to cut three per cent out of your personal budget you might be a little bit annoyed, but you could probably do it if you need to. That's what we're asking our government to do. It's not easy—and I want to be very clear about that, it's hard, it takes a lot of work and there are no easy answers. But either we can make those decisions and trim that spending now or we can let interest costs go up and force us to do it later. What we're saying is let's do it now before it gets harder."

McKay said the provincial debt clock is getting some strong reactions from the public.

"I think we're getting a strong reaction to this debt clock tour simply because there hasn't been a focus on the debt in Saskatchewan for a long time, because the debt had been going down here for a long time."

"While debt is higher in other places,

when is there going to be a better time to take care of this issue in Saskatchewan? Should we wait until we have more debt, or should we try to get on this now? It's easier to do it quickly."

"I look at Manitoba—what if they had turned things back around in 2010? Well, they wouldn't be in a world of hurt as they are now. That's what we're saying—this isn't the time to panic in Saskatchewan. We're still in very good shape but let's make the correction now before it's harder."

Saskatchewan's debt is more than \$5 billion and is growing at \$2.7 million a

day.

"It's funny when people drive by and they look at it and they realize what it is and they look again and they see the numbers and how fast they're going and that's something that's hard to explain to somebody. When you think of \$2.7 million a day, well I mean that's over a hundred grand an hour. That's a lot of money when you think about it. But just like when you have some credit card debt, it's amazing how fast that can go back down when you start chipping away at it."

"The key thing is, don't wait until tomorrow, start today."

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Photo courtesy of Dana Smith

Above: In April 2015, a boy in Haiti plays a gift—a harmonica—after receiving one of 700,474 boxes delivered around the world.



Above: A child receives a gift through Operation Christmas Child

Moosomin and area prepares for Operation Christmas Child

BY ROBYN TOCKER
Every year, Samaritan's Purse's Operation Christmas Child sends hundreds of thousands of shoeboxes full of gifts to children around the world, and Moosomin does its part to give children a Christmas they never forget.

Rolna Pranke is the organizer for Moosomin and the surrounding communities. "As far as the number of shoeboxes from the area, it's stayed steady," she said. "We usually gather between 800 to 900 shoeboxes. They are from a wide area—Rocanville, Wapella, Whitewood, Maryfield and Welwyn. They all bring their shoeboxes to the Moosomin collection centre."

Next year, Pranke will step down and Summer Heide will become the new organizer for the area.

"I think it's time for

someone fresh who has a fresh perspective," she said. "It's time to pass the torch."

For anyone who hasn't been involved with Operation Christmas Child before, it is simple.

"If they want to pick up a box in town, they are available at the Dollar Store. They have the boxes and the brochures there," Pranke said. "It gives you a few ideas of what you can put in your boxes. There are a few things you can't put in boxes. Anything that could harm or scare a child, nothing that's liquid that could freeze—you can't include toothpaste or liquid soap. One thing that is new is they don't want any candy included, just with regulations and border crossings and things like that. People include \$7 in their box and that covers the shipping."

Pranke got involved with Operation Christmas

Child 15 years ago.

"It was promoted through our church and it was a simple way to help someone. It's anonymous so you're just helping someone in need. You don't need a 'thank you' or anything. It's just something you're able to do. We're so fortunate here with where we live with access to everything."

"It becomes a tradition," she said. "It's something that you do every year. It's just like the other gifts that we buy on our shopping list."

Pranke said it's important communities keep supporting Operation Christmas Child because it impacts so many lives.

"It's a great way to show God's love to people that have nothing," she said. "Sometimes, it's the first gift they have ever received."

Boxes can be dropped

off at Moosomin Baptist Church from Nov. 16 to 22. From there, the boxes will be shipped off to the processing centre for Western Canada in Calgary.

Summer Heide has been packing shoeboxes for five years. She wanted to take on more of a leadership role and got her wish this year when Pranke asked her to take her place as organizer.

"I approached Operation Christmas Child before I knew Rolna did it," Heide said. "It all just fell into place once Rolna figured it was time to let someone else take over. I just couldn't say no to it. I have a soft spot for kids and I enjoy doing stuff like this."

Heide keeps coming back to help with Operation Christmas Child because of the work the program does.

"I love watching those videos of a classroom open-

ing up those boxes and just seeing more excitement than you could ever imagine," she said. "It just melts my heart."

Heide said Moosomin is a generous community when it comes to the shoeboxes.

"Moosomin is such a great community and really pulls together when anybody local needs anything," she said. "I just think Operation Christmas Child shows how good our community is. So many people are willing to send a lot of stuff to people that they don't know."

Heide said her children enjoy packing their shoeboxes every year.

"My six-year-old loves to pack the boxes," she said. "She was very excited about getting some packed."

Shoeboxes from Canada will go to countries such as Haiti, El Salvador, Chile

and Uruguay.

Lynnette Harris, the regional manager for Saskatchewan, Manitoba and northern Ontario, said Canada is in charge of 17 countries and sends to those same ones every year.

"We build teams in all these countries and we have volunteer teams over there that are working yearly to look for places that will distribute the boxes," Harris explained.

Last year, Canada sent 23,121 boxes to Ukraine.

"Ukraine is not usually part of our list, but because of everything that is happening, the president of Samaritan's Purse mandated that we are to do extra boxes on top of our goals this year," she said. "Our goal for Canada is 710,000 shoeboxes. Last year, it was 700,000 and we surpassed it. This year, it's 710,000 plus 20,000 for Ukraine."

Continued on page 28

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Moosomin's Lorelei and Brooke Petreny travelled to Churchill on the train and spent October 29, 30, and 31st touring the area. They travelled with a group of 38 other students, teachers and parents from Wadena as part of a field trip organized by Lorelei's brother, teacher and principal Darin Faubert, for the Outdoor Education class he teaches. Lorelei says they had a great time, and lost count of the number of bears they saw after the count reached 20. These are some of Lorelei's photos from that trip.



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Donation will help with repairs to Bond School

BY KEVIN WEEDMARK

On a warm but windy October afternoon, the people of the Ryerson district gathered at Bond School, a one-room schoolhouse that has become a community hall in the decades since it closed as a schoolhouse.

The gathering was to accept a \$5,000 donation from Tundra Oil and Gas to help pay for renovations to the schoolhouse.

Bond School sits next to Highway 8 at Ryerson, between Fairlight and Redvers.

The schoolhouse still serves to bond the community together, as the site of summer picnics and the odd event through the year.

The community is planning to replace the siding and repair or replace the windows on the former school.

The building was used as a school from 1928 to 1956. Some local residents remember going to school in the building.

"My dad (Garry Chambers) and Jack Aulie are the only two people still living here that went to school here," said Jeff Chambers.

There are a lot of memories tied up in the building, says Myrtle Chambers. "All rural schools were used as community halls," she says.

"They had their Christmas concerts—the stage was up at the front of the room for concerts.

"There were weddings, and funerals, and dances," she says. "When we were

married 49 years ago, every second week we'd come to the school on Friday night. There was badminton one week, there was ping-pong, cribbage, whisk drives. There was something every other week."

"At that time everybody came out," says Jeff Chambers. "And there were a lot more people in the community at that time too, because there was somebody living on every half-section."

What does Garry Chambers remember about going to the school?

"Well I do remember I was top of my class," he says.

And how many were in the class?

He holds up one finger and laughs. "For one year there were only three of us in the whole school," he says. "I went to Bond School until grade 8, I went to Amethyst for 9 and 10, and Maryfield for 11 and 12."

Garry Chambers said he believes it is important to preserve the school. "We want to redo the siding and the windows, and this will go a long way toward that. This is the only one-room schoolhouse left in the area and as a community we'd like to preserve it. There have been a lot of successful businessmen, farmers, and even one doctor of agriculture who started their education here," he said.

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"We're very grateful to Tundra for their assistance in us attaining our goal."



\$5,000 for Bond School renovations

Members of the community gathered to accept a \$5,000 cheque from Tundra Oil and Gas that will help with upgrades to Bond School. From left are Jaxon Aulie, Heather Aulie, Jeff Chambers, Garry Chambers, Myrtle Chambers, Joan Fowler, Henry Fowler, Helen Aulie, Don Heal, Tarin Nahachewsky, surface land representative for Tundra Oil and Gas for the Ryerson area, and Tundra Oil and Gas Senior Production Engineer Ana Gray, who lives in the Ryerson area. On the grass in front are Will Gray and Adriana Gray.

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Beef, canola groups happy with TPP

BY ROBYN TOCKER

Canadian beef and cattle organizations are happy with the Trans-Pacific Partnership agreed to by the Canadian government.

Dave Solverson, the president of the Canadian Cattlemen's Association, said the agreement is good for the Canadian cattle industry.

"We are pretty confident that it will increase demand in the Asia-Pacific Region," he said. "We have markets in Japan, but prior to this deal, it goes in at 38.5 per cent tariff. Our negotiators have negotiated it down to 27 per cent immediately and down to nine per cent over a period of 15 years. That's very positive because the Japanese like our beef, but it costs a lot for them to import it because of those tariffs."

"The agreement aligns with our priorities," he said. "We've seen record high prices for the past 18 months, but there's been



a significant decline in the last six weeks. The more markets we have available

to us, the less volatile our industry will be." Solverson said he feels

members of the Cattlemen's Association feel the same as he does about the

agreement.

"I don't believe there are any mixed feelings on the side of the beef," he said. "Ninety percent of agriculture relies on trade for a large part of their production. We have CAFTA—the Canadian Agri-Food Trade Alliance—it's ourselves, pork, wheat and canola. Everybody was working for the same goals to diminish those tariffs."

This agreement involves countries representing 40 per cent of global GDP.

"It is the largest trade deal ever and for Canada to get to be part of it and be one of the founding members is critical to get us going on rule-based trade," said Solverson. "It's not only the reduction of tariffs but the rules so that a country can't throw up a barrier just based on the emotion of the consumers or something like that. That's important for us, too."

"This is a case where there was great collaboration between the government and the industry," said Solverson. "We were present in Atlanta as well as in Hawaii back in the summer. We had very good consultation with the negotiators and even with the minister. These deals were not done in secrecy. The industry was consulted every step of the way."

Solverson does not see the agreement changing, even with the waiting period.

"I don't think there's much risk of amending it too much," he said. "I think it will be an up or down vote. The new Canadian government that is elected will have to deal with it. That goes for all 12 countries, too. The process in the United States will not be a slam dunk either. I think most people, when they see the deal, especially in Canada, it will be very hard to walk away from it. For our business, if our government walked away from it and our competitors—Australia, New Zealand and the United States producers have a tariff advantage over us. We would quickly lose market share."

Ryder Lee, the CEO of Saskatchewan Cattlemen's Association, said the agreement is a step forward.

"We see it as important not only to look to the future and growth, but it's also letting us keep pace with our competitors," said Lee.

Tariffs on other commodities such as fish, canola, forestry products and industrial goods will

be eliminated or lowered as well.

"It's important because of the opportunity for growth in all of these member countries, especially when you look at some of the Asian countries," said Lee. "Vietnam and Malaysia will eliminate their tariff on beef imports. Japan will reduce theirs. Tariffs are a tax and if you can eliminate those, your sales become more profitable and profits generally are a positive sign for the marketplace to grow. That's a goal for beef producers in Saskatchewan—to find more markets, be more profitable and if it makes sense to grow, then to grow. I think there's room to grow our herd."

"It's important globally to keep pace with our competitors," he added. "There are too many beef exporting nations involved in this agreement for us to be on the outside."

Brian Innes, the VP of government relations for the Canola Council of Canada, said this agreement is positive for the canola industry.

"With canola, more than 90 per cent of what we produce is exported, so with the TPP agreement bringing more value for our canola, that means more value for everyone who is touched by canola," he said.

"Canola is one of the highest value crops for Saskatchewan growers and more value from exports means more value for growers."

Innes said the agreement will help overcome trade barriers canola has faced.

"It's a good thing for the future of canola," he said. "It's an outstanding agreement that really positions canola for the future. That's canola farmers, canola exporters and canola processors."

"When it comes to canola oil, we haven't been able to export that oil to Japan," he said. "So getting rid of tariffs on canola oil will allow us to add more value in Saskatchewan and that means good news for everybody who is either working at those facilities or who grows canola."

"Saskatchewan is dependent on exports. Canola is a good example of that," he said.

"Agreements like the TPP that bring more value back to where it's produced is a really good thing, not just for growers, but everybody in a community where canola is grown."

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Saskatchewan Farmland Moose Project

Researchers studying moose movement on the Prairies

Moose are on the move this time of year in Saskatchewan and some are being tracked by wildlife researchers. It's part of the Saskatchewan Farmland Moose Project at the University of Saskatchewan.



Fifty adult female moose between Saskatoon and Regina were fitted with satellite collars in 2013.

Researchers are studying moose habitat and movement in Saskatchewan. Once all the data is collected, they hope to learn where moose cross highways and how they interact with the prairie landscape. The location of each collared moose is sent to scientists every hour.

"We're really trying to understand the whole notion of moose showing up in farmland because of course this is a new phenomenon," said Ryan Brook, lead supervisor for the Saskatchewan Farmland Moose Project.

"Everybody has always thought, and I always thought, that moose belong in the boreal forest or in the aspen forest," he said. "The fact that they are occurring here is a new thing. When I moved here six years ago, we saw these moose crossings on the highway and I took a photo because I didn't even know it was possible."

Over the last 30 years, moose populations have spread from forested areas to farm land. The study area—between Saskatoon and Regina—has less than one per cent forest coverage.

"There will be [moose] generations that don't know what forest really looks like," said Brook.

Pothole wetlands, which are small marshes with trees, provide moose with a habitat on the prairies. They eat select crops like field peas, alfalfa, and flax.

"There's everything they need. Why move? And the likelihood of predators is very low," said Brook.

Moose movements do spike during the fall.

Both females and males are very mobile during breeding season and Brook said collision data shows that vehicle accidents with moose increase during the mating season.

One collared moose was hit on Highway 11 during the study.

"Animals are more concerned about finding love than staying safe so they do some silly things sometimes," said Brook.

While moose populations have been declining in other parts of North America, they have been thriving in Saskatchewan.

Brook and his team have a few theories about that. The Saskatchewan prairies lack big predators like bears and wolves and pothole wetlands allow moose to keep cool in the warming climate.

"If we lose that water, we may lose that farmland moose," said Brook.

The project is near the end of the data collection stage and only three collars remain active. A final report will be released in the spring of 2016.

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Food industry demonstrates willingness to adapt to changing markets

The food industry is showing signs it can change, and the timing couldn't be better.

Animal proteins have been a dietary mainstay in much of the western world for thousands of years. But demand for processed and red meats has been declining for a number of years now, for a variety of reasons. The arguments against animal protein consumption continue to pile up—among them: higher prices, health concerns, animal welfare and sustainability.

And recently the World Health Organization announced that bacon, sausages and other processed meats can cause cancer, making the case for eating animal protein in general weaker.

However, the food industry has started to demonstrate its willingness to adapt to changing market demands.

Take McDonald's Restaurants of Canada's recent decision—in the face of consumers' growing wariness about the use of antibiotics on animal farms—to procure antibiotic-free chicken. The non-therapeutic use of antibiotics in farm animals encourages antibiotic-resistant germs that ultimately threaten humans.

Last March, McDonald's U.S. arm grabbed headlines by announcing that over the next two years it will phase out serving chicken treated with some antibiotics. McDonald's U.S. has the corporate muscle to do practically anything it feels is right for its business. And this move makes sense in an era marked by supply chain transparency.

In Canada, though, things are very different, and so McDonald's Canada's approach was more guarded. McDonald's is one of Canadian chicken farmers' largest customers. (It is estimated that more than 400 million



Sylvain Charlebois

McNuggets are consumed annually in Canada alone.) McDonald's said it wanted to evaluate purchasing chickens raised without antibiotics before making a decision since Canada's farming landscape is strictly regulated by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency.

Then, after some months of investigation, McDonald's Canada decided to go antibiotic-free.

In a supply management system like Canada's, recognized farming practices help marketing boards set farm gate prices so that farmers are assured of a decent living. By limiting imports with high tariffs and controlling production through quotas, the system creates an equilibrium between supply and demand that would be much more difficult to achieve in an open market.

However, altering codes of practice is always challenging in Canada since farmers are concerned about how markets will react to potentially higher prices caused by any change. We shouldn't forget that chicken competes in the supermarket and on restaurant menus with other animal proteins like pork or beef. Price points are therefore carefully managed across the food chain. And for the most part, the existing system has served chicken farmers very well for decades.

Antibiotics have been used in chicken farming since the end of the Second World War, when protein production became a priority in North America. Their use was encouraged to prevent and treat diseases, keeping animals healthy and managing losses on farms. Antibiotics enhanced production and kept prices stable for consumers.

So for years, the economic rationale for using antibiotics was justifiable. But times are changing. We now know more about the impact of farm antibiotic use on consumers and that adjustments are necessary. So it's "Back to the Future" in chicken farming.

While changing the code of practice in Canada for supply-managed commodities like chicken is difficult and slow, the industry can and should align itself with consumer expectations.

The same thing can be said about egg farmers. They decided to partner with McDonald's Canada a few weeks ago to supply cage-free chicken eggs over the next decade. Addressing consumers' concerns about animal welfare and their own health was simply the right thing to do.

Because of McDonald's clout and market power, it will be easier for other restaurant chains to follow suit and work on new partnerships with farmers. Some have been asking in vain for such a change for years.

McDonald's Canada and Canadian chicken farmers and egg producers should be lauded for building partnerships that work for all, especially for consumers.

Dr. Sylvain Charlebois is a Professor at the Food Institute at the University of Guelph. He is currently on leave at the University of Innsbruck in Austria.

Crown land purchase incentive introduced

Agriculture Minister Lyle Stewart recently announced a new incentive program to encourage the sale of eligible occupied agricultural Crown land. The program, which comes into effect immediately, offers purchase incentives on the sale of the land to current lease-holders.

"As a government, our priority is administering land that has a higher public good from an ecological, environmental, heritage or economic perspective," Stewart said. "The government still owns a lot of land that does not serve these purposes. We want to sell eligible agriculture crown land to lessees."

All agricultural Crown land including cultivated,

grazing and hay land that is deemed to have no public and low environmental benefit will be eligible for the program. The Ministry of Agriculture estimates that approximately 600,000 acres of land will be sold under this program. From now until March 31, 2016, a 15 per cent discount will be applied to all sales. The incentive drops to 10 per cent on April 1, 2016 and five per cent on January 1, 2017.

This new incentive program is similar to the Agricultural Crown Land Sale Program that was in place from November 2008 through December of 2014, which sold more than 500,000 acres of Crown land.

If a lessee does not purchase the land, they may continue leasing. However, rental rates on cultivated lands and previously cultivated lands will increase for the 2016 cropping season by approximately 15 per cent over the formula rate and by 30 per cent over the formula rate for the 2017 cropping year.

"During our recent review of farmland ownership rules, a large majority of producers told us they opposed large institutions owning farmland," Stewart said. "The provincial government is probably the largest institutional owner of farmland and owning farmland is not a business the government needs to be in.

"Our first priority for sale is cultivated lands as they are easily identifiable and the least likely to have any ecological or environmental value because they are already broken. This program allows Saskatchewan farmers and ranchers, individuals who have managed the land for the better part of a century, to purchase this land and realize the benefits of ownership."

Land that is designated as having high ecological value under The Wildlife Habitat Protection Act (WHPA) is not eligible for sale and discounts will not be applied to land classified as having moderate ecological value. Lands classified as low are eli-

gible for the incentive program. Sales associated with public tenders and Treaty Land Entitlement are not eligible for the program. Any parcel of land that has previously been determined as ineligible for purchase will remain as

such. Lessees interested in purchasing their leased agricultural Crown land can contact the Agriculture Knowledge Centre at 1-866-457-2377 or visit www.agriculture.gov.sk.ca/crown-land-sale.



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25	WEDNESDAY	PRESORT FEEDER SALE	10 A.M.
27	FRIDAY	BRED COW & HEIFER SALE	11 A.M.
30	MONDAY	BUTCHER SALE	9 A.M.

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7	MONDAY	BUTCHER SALE	9 A.M.
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9	WEDNESDAY	FEEDER CATTLE	9 A.M.
11	FRIDAY	BRED COW & HEIFER SALE	11 A.M.
14	MONDAY	BUTCHER SALE	9 A.M.
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Farm injury and fatality rates decreasing across Canada

BY ROBYN TOCKER

Farm injury and fatality rates are declining, but farming is still one of the riskiest occupations in Canada.

In Canada, there have been 2,324 fatalities between 1990 and 2012. Between 1990 and 2001, the average number of fatalities was 116 per year. The number dropped to 85 fatalities annually between 2002 and 2012.

The largest number of agricultural fatalities occurred in September at 13 per cent of fatalities throughout the year. The most common locations for these fatalities were fields, farmyards, roads and barns.

Glen Blahey, the Agricultural Health and Safety specialist from the Canadian Agricultural Safety Association (CASA), said there are specific reasons why the rates are decreasing.

"Generally speaking, there is greater acceptance of safe work practices and trying to make the farm a safer workplace. That is helping rates decrease," he said.

Injuries and fatalities occur on farms for a number of reasons.

"The predominant cause remains in the area of machinery—tractor rollovers, tractor runovers and entanglements in machinery," Blahey said. "Livestock-related incidents and slips and falls also contribute to the overall fatality number."

Rollovers account for 20 per cent of deaths. Runovers account for 18 per cent.

To drop the rates, Blahey said the hazards need to be acknowledged.

"We need to recognize that the hazards exist," he said. "Incidents are preventable. Ninety-nine per cent of situations where fatalities or serious injuries

occur, when you take a look back, there are multiple intervention points. Spur-of-the-moment decisions are what cause many of the fatalities.

"Farmers need to stop and ask, 'Am I willing to sacrifice my life to save 30 seconds? Am I willing to sacrifice someone else's life because I don't have the time to take a look and see what they're doing?'" he said.

In Saskatchewan, there are programs in place to educate the public. The Canadian Centre for Health and Safety in Agriculture (CCHSA) does a variety of farm safety activities.

"They generate a lot of very useful resources," said Blahey. "They should be utilized more often by more people."

In Manitoba, Safework Manitoba has information for farmers to keep them safe.

"They have a farm safety advisor who is available for consultations with producers as well as delivering safety and health awareness training programs," he said. "Safework Manitoba also has a former inspector available to go out to farms. She will go out to any producer's farm and will walk around and say, 'Here are some of the hazards that you should be addressing.' There is no costs associated with the visits to the farm."

Louise Hagel, a research associate from CCHSA, said the number of fatal farm injuries and farm population in Saskatchewan has been decreasing since 1990.

"When those fatality rates are adjusted to the population, we see that the rate of fatal farm injuries has remained the same from 1990 to 2013," she said. "In spite of our best efforts in working with farmers and their communities to help re-

duce the frequency of these events, we haven't been successful yet.

"The numbers per year are small for Saskatchewan," said Hagel. "In the period from 1990 to 2004, the average number of farm fatalities per year was 22. Compared to just the recent past—from 2004 to 2013—we are, on average, seeing 13 farm fatalities per year. It may be the beginning of a declining trend."

People of all ages die from farm-related incidents. The average annual rate of farm injuries increases with age. The rate is lowest among the youngest and highest among the oldest.

"Often, older folks have other health issues and they are less likely to survive the effect of severe trauma than their younger counterparts," Hagel explained. "There are many, many more men killed in farm injury events than females.

The overall ratio of males to females is 12 males to one female. That ratio is lowest among the youngest age group—the 14 and younger group. There are more girls in the youngest age group involved in these fatalities."

The majority of these events are work-related.

"The most common causes of these farm injuries differ between age groups," Hagel said. "When you look at the population overall, machine rollovers are the most common event, followed by the running over of bystanders.

"One pattern of injury that seems to be increasing is traffic collisions, such as people who are transporting grain equipment on the rural roads that are in collision with a nonfarming vehicle," she said.

Rollovers are the most common cause of fatalities for children 14 years and younger. For the 15 to 39 age group, it is also machinery rollovers. Entanglement in machinery causes the highest fatality rate for peo-

ple 40 to 59 years old. For people over 60, dismounting from the machine while it is still running and being run over is the most common cause of fatality.

Norm Hall, the president of the Agricultural Producers Association of Saskatchewan (APAS), said reducing farm fatalities requires more than keeping children away from farm equipment.

"It's not just the kids. As more and more farms hire outside help—bringing untrained folks into what's considered a dangerous occupation—in a lot of cases, the skills aren't there," Hall said. "They're not taking the day and a half or three days to train somebody on everything. They are saying, 'Okay, here's this. Don't touch that, don't hit that and you're good.' What we need to do is provide more training for the employees.

"For our teenagers, they've been with Dad or Mom watching and seeing how things are done, so you skip on the training because they've seen this done and they know how it's done," Hall said. "There needs to be that time spent training our family, kids and employees, making sure that Grandpa stays safe, too. He may resist because he's been doing this all his life, but maybe he needs training on that new combine."

What else can be done to lower the rates of fatality and injury?

"We all do things in the heat of the moment because we are farmer operators," Hall said. "We are our own bosses. We don't have anyone else to answer to. Sometimes, we take shortcuts and sometimes those shortcuts come back and bite us. We need to make sure that safety is always front and centre of our day-to-day operations."

There are organizations in Canada and the provinces to provide information on farm safety, but they have

no formal responsibility, except to collect data and disseminate that information, Hall said.

"They can't enforce it. They can't say, 'Thou shalt' or 'thou shalt not.' They can only say, 'Here, try this,'" he said.

Isabelle Dietrich taught children in the Moosomin area about farm safety for 12 years. She began teaching when she was working for Mainline Terminal.

"I kept telling my boss no. He would bring me an article about some guy in the United States who rented a tractor and how his kids wanted to ride on the tractor. He said no and then finally let them ride. He took them out just for a few minutes and the fender broke and he ended up running over his kids," Dietrich said. "There was an incident that happened at our farm with my husband and our son. I decided, 'Okay, this is hitting a little too close to home.' I decided I would go start teaching."

During her 12 years, Dietrich taught students in Rocanville, Moosomin, Wawota, Elkhorn, Redvers, Arcola, Carlyle, and Manor about farm safety. She also spoke to 4-H groups.

"I did a lot about farm safety and animal safety," she said. "I had a display with a little farm. They had to pick out the hazards on the farm. They had lots of questions. I did day camps where we had mock accidents and the RCMP came in with their sirens and the ambulance and fire department.

"I had a picture of my son with a black eye and cracked cheekbone when he had an incident with a horse," she said.

"Some of it was situations that I learned from kids when I would go into the schoolroom and talk to the kids. They would tell me, 'Such and such happened to me' and I would go 'You did what?'"

The content Dietrich taught years ago is still relevant today, she said.

She stopped doing the presentations and hopes someone, or a group of people in the community, will step up to educate children on farm safety.

"I see a real importance for it," she said. "Maybe it's just because it's my passion. I know there are a lot of dangers on a farm."

She suggests children on a farm stop and ask themselves, "Is this really safe?"

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Operation Christmas Child under way for 2015

Continued from page 17

"The Ukraine ones are just a little bit different because it's a cold climate," Harris said. "We have specific labels for them. We know people might have specifically packed along with toys and stationery a scarf or mitts or a hat. Everything else is the same." Harris said the boxes are appreciated in Ukraine.

Harris went to Uruguay last year to deliver shoeboxes.

"It was amazing," she said. "A lot of the kids there live in squatter villages. A lot of the places we went, it's like going to the local dump. The streets lit-

erally have garbage everywhere. You would pull up to this tiny little gravel area with a fence and they call that the play area. It was crazy going into these areas. These kids see people coming and they have no idea they're going to get a gift, but they know that there's a program for them and so they get really excited when they see the gift. The gift was really opening doors.

"We keep telling that to people," Harris explained. "Shoeboxes put a smile on the child's face, but the shoebox is a tool that allows us to get into communities that we can't get into

and to help people.

"When our team goes to the government and says, 'We have a gift we want to give to your children and these are the things that could be inside,' then the doors are opening," she said. "That allows not just the groups but our organization to go in and sometimes build water wells and to send doctors. It really does open the door more than people even realize."

Harris said it's important people keep donating because there is never a lack of need.

"It puts a smile on a child's face and lets them know that they're loved

and that people on the other side of the world care about them," she said. "We're also providing a community around them that's going to love on them and help them, teach them, help them to learn trades—all that kind of stuff—and it all happens because the shoebox let us in the door."

Harris said the Moosomin area has been doing well when it comes to donating boxes. "They've been pulling out some great numbers," she said. "Our region is doing very, very well. Last year, Saskatchewan donated 33,101 and Manitoba hit 37,694.

"Our goals are going to be a little bit higher this year and we're always surpassing our goals. There is still a lot of potential and untapped places. Overall, the prairie region is doing fantastic. If you look at it in

a different way, Newfoundland packed 35,042 and look how tiny that place is! I always try to challenge my region."

Harris encourages families to pack a box this holiday season.

"You might not necessarily see the smile on the kid's face, but just to have that feeling that you are definitely brightening the life of a child and you've opened opportunities to that child who will never understand," Harris.

Dana Smith is the senior communications advisor for Samaritans Purse. He traveled to Haiti to deliver boxes in April.

"It was absolutely incredible," he said. "You see the pictures of the kids receiving the boxes, but just to be there as they count down and all together open into the boxes—it's just amazing. Every face in the room

just lights up. For a lot of kids, this is the first present they have ever had. You can imagine the excitement of them seeing toys and seeing school supplies. It's the little things we take for granted. For girls, it's the hair clips. It was incredible.

"I expected some of the things that would make the kids happy," he said. "Soccer is huge there so when kids get a soccer ball, they just are over the moon. We encourage people to include a picture of themselves and a note of encouragement or something to go along with that in the box. What really surprised me is how the kids would often look in the box, take the picture, and really look at the picture and really inquire who was in the picture and that kind of thing, even before they ripped into all the toys. That was one of the things that really surprised me. It was really neat.

"One of the pastors I met there was telling me about this boy in his early teens," said Smith. "He got a little toolkit. This kid was so over the moon with this. The village we were in was poor to begin with, but the pastor said in that context, this boy's family was exceptionally poor. His parents were ill and for him to get this little toolkit meant that he had some options. He could actually do some things around the community to earn some money."

Smith said that if people miss the deadline to deliver their shoeboxes, they can pack shoeboxes online at www.packabox.ca all year round.

"I encourage people to pack a box. It's a fairly simple thing for us to do. Most of us can afford to fill these boxes," he said. "They truly, truly impact kids and the joy that it brings is worth every penny that we put into it."

OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD 2014



Operation Christmas Child:

What to pack

On Samaritan's Purse's website, there is a section with a list of ideas for items to pack in Operation Christmas Child shoeboxes.

- School supplies: pens, pencils, pencil crayons, note pads and picture books
- Hygiene items: face cloth, toothbrush, comb and soap. Soap should be put in a sealable bag.
- Toys and other gifts: stuffed animals, small musical instruments, hair clips, toy jewelry, t-shirts and socks

It is also encouraged that shoeboxes include a personal note in the box along with a picture.

There is also a list of items that should not be included in the boxes.

- Decks of standard playing cards: other card games such as UNO are allowed
- Food or candy: this includes gum
- Used items
- Toothpaste
- Liquids or items that could leak, melt, freeze, or break such as shampoo, creams, lip balm, bath gels, mirrors or glass.
- Items that can scare or harm a child such as war-related toys, knives and toy guns

For more information on Operation Christmas Child, visit www.samaritanaspurse.ca

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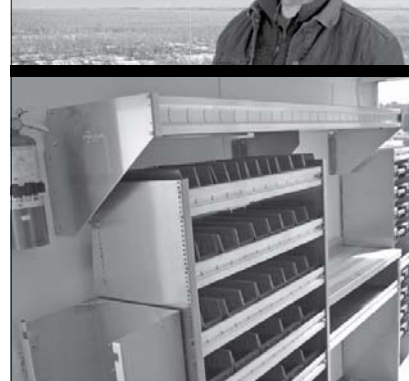
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Small business not so small after all

October was Small Business Month. Did you notice? If you checked the business media, you probably found some upbeat stories with pictures of bright young people who had started a little business and were now offering food services, tech support or e-tail to their community or, more broadly, electronically. Everything was upbeat. Growth and success seemed likely.

Maybe you saw an interview of a small business owner that was less positive. Those operating a small business can find enough to complain about. Rules, regulations and red tape are often more troublesome than taxes. Workers with the right skills and, more importantly, the right attitudes, are hard to find and harder to keep as big employers and governments with better pay and benefits lure them away.

Getting capital to expand is perhaps the biggest challenge of all. From a small business person's point of view, Canadian bankers seem to take seriously the old joke about how to run a successful bank: never lend money to anyone unless they don't need it. The numbers seem to bear them out. Small business received a mere 15.3 per cent of business loans in 2013, down from 17.4 per cent in 2007 and the lowest it has been in this century.

The good news is that this risk averse behavior on the part of our bankers has provided Canada with what is likely the most safe and secure banking system in the world. This was apparent in the 2007 recession. The bad news is that the cost has been borne by the very people who are at the growing edge of our economy. And we all pay for it in terms of our productivity, that is output per worker, and by foregoing growth in our income.

Most productivity comes from doing new things in



Roslyn Kunin

new ways. Nowadays, it is largely the application of new technologies and it is small business and start-ups that do most of it, but not much in Canada. Productivity in Canada has been creeping along at 1.4 per cent a year for decades. Compare this to the United States, still our biggest trading partner although we are losing ground to Mexico and China. Over the same time period, American productivity has been increasing at 2.2 per cent, leaving Canada falling ever further behind. It has been estimated that our lack of productivity has reduced our potential income by \$7,000 per person per annum.

Slow productivity growth means a weaker economy. British Columbia is expecting growth in the two per cent range for this year and next. Canada will probably do a little worse. Meanwhile in the United States, there are debates about whether growth will come in at 3.7 per cent or 3.9 per cent. In B.C., growth is coming from a weaker dollar, more spending by our indebted consumers and the rising housing prices in Vancouver. In the States it is coming from increased business investment.

Small business is important not only because of its potential contribution to growth and productivity, but also because it is not a small component of B.C.'s economy. It

is where the jobs come from. Almost every day we hear of big companies and even governments cutting back and laying off hundreds of workers. Guess where those people go. In B.C., eight out of 10 private sector hires were in small- and middle-sized businesses. If we define big businesses as those having 500 or more employees, 98 per cent of us work for small or medium firms. Tiny companies (zero to five employees) provide over one million jobs in B.C. out of a total of 2.3 million. This leads to another important question. Why do so few of these companies become big?

Apart from the lack of capital and other challenges, there are two main reasons. First, many operators are quite content to stay small. They are not ambitious. They have found a niche. They are making a living. They don't need the extra stress, risk and work hours that getting bigger would entail. This preference is much less common south of the border.

Second, big companies tend to leave the country. Some companies are more ambitious and do want to grow. The Business Development Bank of Canada (BDC) has been instrumental in providing those Canadian businesses with needed capital to get to the next level. Far too often, when these firms attain a net worth of \$10 million or more and are on the cusp of becoming globally competitive, they are sold or move outside of Canada.

Canada needs to encourage and support our small businesses better. We also need to do more to encourage big businesses. Our standard of living depends upon it.

Troy Media B.C.'s Business columnist Roslyn Kunin is a consulting economist and speaker.

Disc golf course coming to Moosomin Lake

BY ROBYN TOCKER

By spring of 2016, Moosomin Lake will have a disc golf course open to the public.

"Disc golf is a lot like ball golf. The concept is the same," Calvin Daniels, an avid disc golfer from Yorkton, explained. "You have a tee box. From that tee box, you have to throw a golf disc, which will remind people a lot of a frisbee, but it's not. They are specially designed discs. You will throw a driver. It will land somewhere on the fairway and from that point, you will probably decide to throw a mid-range disc, which is a slightly differently designed disc. You will throw it and hopefully you are close enough to the basket after that second throw that you will pick up your putter and throw it onto the target and complete the hole."

When Wayne Beckett, the park manager at Moosomin Regional Park, heard about the opportunity to have a disc golf course, he thought it would be a good fit for the park.

"It's part of our overall plan to help increase attendance at the park and for those people that are here, it gives them something else to do," he said. "It's similar to a real golf game, but it's very low cost. It's very easy for anybody to partake in it. It's quick. You can be around the course in less than an hour. It's part of our overall strategy to increase the options of things for people to do while they're here."

Beckett began work on the course in September and it is nearing completion.

"Calvin came out from Yorkton to help me set it up," said Beckett.

"We have nine temporary holes set up here," said Beckett. "It's just a matter of

Chris Istace demonstrating how disc golf works.



putting the proper posts in the ground to complete it."

Beckett said he hopes to have the posts in the ground before the snow falls.

The course will be on the north and the south of the park's store. The course will cost \$500 to set up and the maintenance is not a challenge.

"The grass is already cut because it's in our green space north and south of the beach," he said.

Beckett expects disc golf to be a popular activity in the park.

"Based on the number of courses you

see popping up around the area, it's definitely becoming more popular," he said. "There is a meeting in Yorkton in mid-November to set up a league. We hope to have a date for next summer to host a tournament."

Beckett plans to also tend to the hiking trails as part of his strategy to give park visitors more activities.

"We're revamping our hiking trails. We have got some of the nicest trails in the area as far as scenery and the condition of the trails," he said. "We think they are under-utilized, so we're going to put a big

effort into new signs, markings, a new entrance to the hiking trails and more information along the hiking trails. We're also going to hopefully have mountain bikes for rent next year to ride the trails."

Discs will be available to rent next summer, along with canoes, kayaks and paddleboards.

"We have lots of people that use the park and we just want to have some more options for them," said Beckett.

Daniels has spearheaded many disc golf courses similar to Moosomin's since the beginning of 2015.

"Disc golf is a very low cost sport for a community to install," he said. "It's very reasonable to maintain and it's very low cost for people to play. It was just something I fell in love with and I thought, 'Hey, this is going to work in a lot of communities and regional parks.' We went out and promoted the heck out of it, and thanks to a lot of those E-mails and phone conversations and meeting with some councils, it has caught on."

"Moosomin was one of those places we had contacted five or six months ago and there hadn't been a lot of response," said Daniels. "We did a follow-up a couple of months ago and in that interim, Wayne came on as the new manager and he goes, 'This just makes sense. It's something that we can provide without spending tens of thousands of dollars.' He bought into it real quick. We went out and we laid out the course for him. We showed him what would work. He went to his board of directors. Following that, they bought into it and it was all a go after that."

Continued on page 34

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TPP welcomed by provincial government, chamber

BY ROBYN TOCKER
The Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) agreement has been welcomed by the Saskatchewan Chamber of Commerce and the Saskatchewan government.

The agreement reached on Oct. 5 will lower tariffs for members of TPP, change North America's automotive industry and give Canada's supply managed agriculture sectors greater trade opportunities. This agreement will give Canada hundreds of millions of potential new customers in the Asia-Pacific region.

The 12 countries involved in the TPP are Australia, Brunei, Canada, Chile, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Peru, Singapore, the United States and Vietnam.

C OF C IN FAVOR
"Anything that opens up that large of a market on a free and open basis is a good thing for Saskatchewan," said Saskatchewan Chamber of Commerce CEO Steven McLellan.

"Many different sectors will be looking at the details to see what it means to them," McLellan added.

Saskatchewan's beef, pork and grain sectors will be impacted by these changes. Canada's beef tariff in Japan will be lowered from 38 per cent to nine per cent over the next 15 years.

"I think it will generally be very positive from an agricultural perspective," said McLellan. "The beef and the grains industries should have a heyday here. By opening up more markets, it creates greater demand, which should increase the

price offered and that's very good. It also means that as our production continues to increase, we have more markets that are interested in it. Nothing about that is bad for Saskatchewan."

"Without question, free trade is a help for the economy of Saskatchewan, when you consider so much of our products are shipped to the world," said McLellan. "If, for any reason, we got shut out of those other jurisdictions and they stopped buying our product, or tariffs went in place that made it difficult for our products to be sent there, we would be in trouble—economically, socially, culturally this province would be changed dramatically."

"The issue, I think, is we need to get better at selling to those markets," he said. "We need to be able to compete with global players head to head and we've done this on a growing basis for decades. We simply need to get better at it when we step into a new league. It's like coming out of high school football into the CFL and there's still the NFL there as well. As we compete with better players, we need to and have and will get better at it. Those that are not prepared to innovate and add expertise to their firms are going to be in trouble."

People should pay attention to the agreement because it has an impact on the bottom line of almost every Saskatchewan resident, according to McLellan.

"Whether you're directly or indirectly involved in selling a product to a global market, as a province we

are absolutely linked to this for our overall success and the success of our trade," he said. "It will also impact our ability to bring products into the country. From a retailer's perspective, this might open up some opportunity to bring products here at a different price, or better prices than they have done before. That is also important to the average citizen. There's both the consumer side and the seller side that are impacted by a trade deal. This is not a one-way trade deal. It's a two-way trade deal. We'll see other products come into play and we'll have more of our products competing globally."

The TPP agreement will not come into effect until after the governments in each country have approved it. Canadians will have to wait until after the federal election before the agreement is looked at.

"Elections are no time for public policy, sadly," said McLellan. "The two opposition parties particularly have used it as a ping pong ball, trying to make it look like it's nefarious dealings by the Conservatives. The reality of it is these trade deals are always negotiated in private so that they're not dealt with through the media until the deal is done and people who have the authority to sign them sign them. It's become a political football and it's sad to see because it's such an important agreement for Canada. Would we expect during an election anything else? No. It's not about the parties. It's about politics. Public policy during an election

period is often not very eloquent."

MINISTER ENTHUSIASTIC
"We're going to see a very rapid doubling of our beef exports into the Asia-Pacific region," said Jeremy Harrison, the Minister of Trade in Saskatchewan.

"It's a very, very good deal for Saskatchewan, which is very much an export-orientated province," said Harrison. "This is going to allow us tariff-free access to 800 million new customers—a trade zone that accounts right now for about 71 per cent of our exports that we're now going to have even more advantageous access to because of this agreement. We're going to see duty-free market access for the majority of industrial goods, including agricultural equipment and for most agricultural and agri-food products."

"It's going to result in some positive economic developments for Saskatchewan," he added.

"Right now, we have tariff walls between five and 40 per cent, depending on what the particular good is," said Harrison. "If we were not a part of this agreement, we would still be paying those tariffs, whereas all of our competitors and trading partners in the Asia-Pacific region would not. Even though we have some very well-established relationships and export markets, we would just not be competitive."

However, there are concerns with this agreement.

"I've seen some commentary with regards to supply-managed industries, but we

have to remember as well that supply-managed industries here in Saskatchewan are about 3.5 per cent on our entire agricultural sector," said Harrison. "I've heard some comments that are fairly positive from some supply-managed sectors with regard to the programs that the federal government are putting in place—over \$4 billion over 10 years to alleviate any market impacts in terms of supply-managed industries. We're very optimistic about the agreement."

Harrison said he firmly believed Canada needed to be present for this agreement.

"It's important to note that this is a final agreement," said Harrison. "This isn't an agreement in principle. Canada needs to be at the table. We were very much encouraging Canada to be engaged and involved. We were kept very much up to date during the

course of the negotiations. I spoke to International Trade Minister Ed Fast as recently as a couple of days ago with regard to the latest developments."

"We were kept up to date daily from his office and from the Prime Minister's office as to the status of the negotiation, so we think that this is going to be a very positive thing for this province."

"We encouraged the Canadian government to stay at the table, even though there was an election underway because it's too important for us not to be a part of it," said Harrison. "We have encouraged all of the federal parties to support this deal. We would hope shortly after the national election, whoever is elected, that the deal would be put into the Parliament of Canada for ratification and that the deal would be ratified as rapidly as possible."



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Peter Baran Photography

TransCanada drops Quebec terminal from Energy East

TransCanada has changed its plans for the Energy East Pipeline, dropping the proposed marine terminal in Quebec.

The pipeline will still include connections to two refineries in Québec.

The change was made Thursday, Nov. 5.

"Today's announcement demonstrates our dedication to listening and delivering a vital infrastructure project that will provide significant economic benefits to all provinces along the pipeline's route," said Russ Girling, TransCanada's president and chief executive officer. "We will do this while maintaining our commitment to environmental stewardship and the safe, responsible development of this pipeline. We have demonstrated for more than 60 years that TransCanada has the expertise and commitment to build safe and reliable pipelines to better serve Canadians."

"Pipelines remain the safest and least GHG-intensive way of transporting crude oil to market," added Girling. "By approving and building the Energy East Pipeline we will create the capacity to displace the equivalent of 1,570 rail cars of crude oil per day to Eastern Canada."

A recent study supports this point by concluding that Energy East would change the mode of transport of crude oil already produced from rail to pipeline (Navius Research, Report to the Ontario Energy Board, August 2015.)

Girling points out that once the crude oil makes its way to market, Energy East will directly connect with refineries in Québec and New Brunswick, allowing them access to a secure and less expensive Western Canadian crude oil supply.

Thousands of men and women will be employed in the design and construction of this important infrastructure project. According to a Conference Board of Canada study



TransCanada's Energy East project would include a tank terminal at the Moosomin compressor station, including three 350,000 barrel tanks for a total capacity of 1,050,000 barrels of oil.

published late last year, the Energy East project is expected to support an average of 14,000 direct and indirect full-time jobs annually across Canada during development and construction and generate more than \$7 billion in ad-

ditional tax revenues for governments over the next 20 years, along with approximately \$36 billion in GDP for Canada.

• Over 4,000 jobs annually in both Québec and Ontario during development and construction, in

addition to \$2.6 billion in tax revenues for Ontario and \$2 billion for Québec

• Close to 3,000 jobs on the Prairies and more than 2,300 jobs in New Brunswick that will be created each year during development and construction of the pipeline in addition to hundreds of millions of dollars in tax revenues for local communities for years to come

• Other benefits outside of the Conference Board data include 250 jobs that were previously announced for GE Canada in Peterborough to build electric motors for the project

• \$30 million invested in Ontario to-date to support Energy East development

• \$100 million in signed contracts in Québec with more than 250 suppliers in the past three years

scope and further refinement of the project schedule is expected to result in an in-service date of 2020, subject to receiving the necessary regulatory approvals and permits.

The 1.1 million barrel per day Energy East project is an important element of TransCanada's \$47 billion of commercially secured growth initiatives. Over the remainder of the decade, subject to required approvals, this industry-leading portfolio of contracted energy infrastructure projects is expected to generate significant growth in cash flow, earnings and dividends.

TransCanada operates a network of natural gas pipelines that extends more than 68,000 kilometres (42,100 miles), tapping into virtually all major gas supply basins in North America. TransCanada is one of the continent's largest providers of gas storage and related services with 368 billion cubic feet of storage capacity.

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A piece of heaven on Haro Strait

BY EMMA GILCHRIST

As I bike up to Oak Bay Beach Hotel, a deer is wandering out of the courtyard.

The luxury boutique hotel is just a 20-minute bike ride from downtown Victoria, but its leafy oceanfront location makes it feel more like a secluded retreat.

About a year ago I saw a picture of the hotel's seaside hot mineral pools and have been itching to visit ever since. As a spa-lover and resident of Victoria, I've been treating it as my personal mission to find the best spa on southern Vancouver Island (tough life, I know!).

With its three outdoor mineral pools and sweeping views of Haro Strait and Mount Baker, the Oak Bay Beach Hotel's Boathouse Spa & Baths sets the bar high.

The five-star hotel has been around since 1928 but just went through a six-year re-building process, which finished in December 2012. Styled after an English country manor house, the hotel houses a pub, café and formal dining room and hosts dinner theatres and movie nights in a

custom-built theatre.

But back to the point: the spa. Hot pools on the Haro Strait? Yes, please! Nowhere else in the Victoria area offers such an indulgent oceanfront experience.

We arrived an hour early and headed down the trail behind the hotel to the extra-secluded spa facilities, where we slipped into soft robes and headed straight to the hot pools. We had one of the pools all to ourselves and luxuriated in the views. Just as we began to think life couldn't get any better, a waiter arrived and took our wine order.

Lounging on the pool deck, wine in hand, ocean lapping just beneath us, we soaked up some early summer sunshine. Only the promise of someone kneading our bodies for an hour could lure us away from this scene.

My friend headed off for her one-hour sport massage (\$130), while I slipped into a treatment room in yet another secluded building for an organic seaweed facial (\$120). The treatment uses mild exfoliation and a treatment mask, which combines a gel enzyme mask with a

seaweed concentrate designed to offer a "detox boost to your skin."

My skin specialist was excellent and gave me a divine scalp and foot massage on top of all the magic she worked on my skin. I emerged with a sublime glow to find my friend in a similar state from a massage she described as divine.

All of this lying around being pampered made us hungry so, on our way for a second round in the hot pools, we ordered sushi and a prawn salad. This is the one area in which the Oak Bay Beach Hotel let us down – the food selection poolside came pre-packaged from a fridge. That would be OK if it was made clear on the menu, but it wasn't, so our expectations exceeded the delivery.

Still, it would have taken more than pre-packed sushi to dampen our spirits at this point. After our snack we made a stop in the eucalyptus steam room before deciding we're thoroughly pampered out – for this trip at least. We're already plotting to come back.



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Disc golf course coming to Moosomin Lake

Continued from page 29
 "A lot of times, it just takes that one person to go, 'This is a good idea' and it moves forward," said Daniels.
 Daniels said Moosomin's course will be divided.

"There are six holes going on the one side and then you will walk across the beach and play the other three holes," he said. "It's going to be a nice little course. When we first got there, I wasn't quite sure how it was going to fit into the area. Wayne said, 'We can go across here and we can put in a couple more.' We found three really nice, challenging holes on the other side.

"It's going to be a par 28," Daniels added. "Eight holes will be par threes, which is standard in the industry, and then there will be one par 4."

After Daniels and Lyons helped design the course, Beckett took over the setup. Daniels is working on other courses and a bigger project.

"On Nov. 14, we're having a meeting with representatives from just about all the courses in the region, including Moosomin," said Daniels. "We're going to create a regional association of disc golf. One of the goals of that association will be to host a tournament series in 2016 with each course hosting at least one tournament that would go toward the series. If we play enough of the tournaments over

the course of the summer, you would be eligible for some season-end awards. Moosomin will be part of that series."
 Daniels said communities gain another outdoor activity when they have a disc golf course in their area.

"It's available to anybody," he said. "We have people on our Yorkton course coming out with families. Little kids are throwing a disc around and having fun with their moms and dads." They also see senior couples playing on the course.

"You can be very good at the game. There is a professional tour where guys are throwing discs 500 feet, but it's really open to everybody," said Daniels. "It's very low cost for the group involved to maintain it. It's basically grass cutting. It's something that is available as a recreational attribute without costing the park or the community thousands of dollars a year in maintenance.

"Anything that can get people outside and doing something physical is a good thing," said Daniels. "A little bit less television and a bit more walking around the park is a good thing.

"For people that aren't familiar with disc golf, I would anticipate that as soon as the course is in and the park is open that there will be a workshop or two at the park for people," said Daniels. "Trevor and I have told Wayne that we would come down and do that. I really encour-

age people to take a chance and go out and try it. I think they are going to find it's a lot more fun than you might realize. It's a quick and great way to have some fun."

Chris Istace of Moosomin loves disc golf and is glad there will be another course close to his community.

"I have been playing off and on for the last 10 years, but I just started playing it more often in the last two years," he said. "My son came to an age where we're trying different things and I gave him a shot with the disc and he really enjoyed it. That's what I like about it most. It's something that we both can do. We can both compete against each other. There are not very many sports where your 11-year-old son can beat you at something.

"The other aspect for me is getting out into the fresh air. I'm a hiker and I love the outdoors," he said.

Istace said disc golf is a family-friendly sport. "You're basically just against yourself trying to improve yourself. There's not as much alcohol involved that can turn people away from other sports like ball golf," he said. "It's a social thing more than anything else. Plus, it gets people out and active. There's no golf carts involved."

Istace helped with Rocanville's disc golf course and helped lay out the one at Moosomin Lake.

"It's a very natural setting along the ski trail in Rocanville," he said. "In Moosomin, the park there is a great, wide open area that I felt is a great location for one of these disc golf courses. It's another opportunity for us to play in this area."

Istace hopes to start a local league. "The league I would like to start up in this area is a group of local people who would get together once a week and play on the course," he said. "That would be just a fun thing where we get together and play a couple of rounds and then have little games. If we start a league in Moosomin and a league in Rocanville, it would be perfect, or if we interchange between the two it would be great, too."

Istace's son is excited there will be another course nearby. Istace encourages people to give disc golf a try.

"A lot of people I talk to have never heard of it, which is surprising because it's been around almost 40 years now. It's something that is really beneficial in terms of a social thing. It's much less competitive and more about getting together with people and having fun. Once you get the discs, you can go out to just about any park and just play for free, because most of them are in public green spaces. You just walk on and play. That's a huge advantage over other sports as well."

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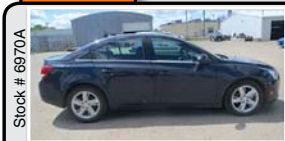


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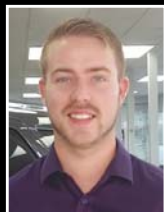
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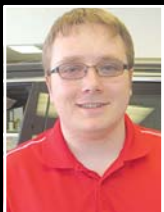
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- One Owner

\$10,900 **\$126** BI-WEEKLY

2005 GMC Denali STOCK# 5C209A **\$7,900** AS TRADED

- 6.0L
- Crew
- 4WD

2011 Dodge Grand Caravan STOCK# 5T212B **\$128**

- Only 59,000 kms
- New Tires
- Nav

\$15,900 **\$128** BI-WEEKLY

2002 Chrysler Intrepid STOCK# 5C165A **\$2,900** AS TRADED

- PST Paid Trade

2009 GMC Canyon STOCK# 5T203C **\$115**

- Only 102,000 kms
- Box Cover
- Fun to Drive

\$9,900 **\$115** BI-WEEKLY

2011 Ford F-150 XTR STOCK# 5T213A **\$214**

- No Charge Warranty
- 5.0L
- SK Tax Paid

\$26,900 **\$214** BI-WEEKLY

2011 Ford F-150 Limited STOCK# 6T019B **\$306**

- 6.2L
- Local Trade
- No Charge Warranty

\$38,900 **\$306** BI-WEEKLY

2010 Ford F-150 FX4 STOCK# 6T019C **\$11,900** AS TRADED

- Leather
- 4x4
- Moonroof

2015 Ford F-150 Platinum STOCK# 5P232 **\$479**

- Fully Loaded
- EcoBoost
- Box Cover

\$61,900 **\$479** BI-WEEKLY

2015 Ford Fusion Titanium STOCK# 5P233 **\$228**

- AWD
- Ruby Red
- Low Kms

\$28,900 **\$228** BI-WEEKLY

2010 Ford F-150 XTR STOCK# 5P234 **\$175**

- No Charge Warranty
- 5.4L
- 6.5 Ft. Box

\$21,900 **\$175** BI-WEEKLY

2013 Ford F-150 STOCK# 5T221A **\$288**

- Local Lariat
- 3.5L
- Box Cover

\$36,900 **\$288** BI-WEEKLY

2011 Ford FX4 STOCK# 5T235A **\$245**

- Local Truck
- Leather
- Only 84,000 kms

\$30,900 **\$245** BI-WEEKLY

2012 Dodge Ram 1500 STOCK# 5T219A **\$251**

- Hemi
- Crew Cab
- 17,000 kms

\$31,900 **\$251** BI-WEEKLY

2013 Ford Focus ST STOCK# 6T030B **\$199**

- Local Pocket Rocket
- PST Paid
- 24,000 kms

\$24,900 **\$199** BI-WEEKLY

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MONDAY - FRIDAY: 8 A.M. - 5:30 P.M.
SATURDAY: 9 A.M. - 2 P.M.

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