



Looking back on the year that was 2020



MP Gary Vidal (centre left) and Mayor Gary Von Holwede (centre right) attended the senior hockey game for a ceremonial puck drop to wrap up 'Hockey Day in Spiritwood.'

JANUARY

The Catholic Church was packed to the rafters with spectators awaiting the ever popular Rivier Christmas Concert on Dec. 19. Father Peter gave a blessing before the Kindergarten to Grade 6 classes of the Catholic elementary school took the stage for a variety of singing, dancing, and joke telling before entertaining the crowd with play reminding everyone of the meaning of Christmas.

For some folks in Shellbrook, Curtis Olsen may be most recognizable in his Shellbrook Elks uniform. But for the past decade he's also worked as

the recreation director for the city of Prince Albert.

That all changed Monday morning, with the announcement that Olsen has been promoted to the position of recreation manager for the city.

In this new role, Olsen will oversee all of the city's sports fields, arenas, aquatics facilities, and fitness and recreation programming.

The Spiritwood Lions held their Christmas Potluck and Games Night at the Legion Hall on Jan. 2. There was a large selection of food to choose from and a wide variety of games to play after. A cheque was pre-

sented to Tanis and Callie Franson for Spiritwood Minor Ball who were the winners of the 2019 Lions Lottery Grant.

While Christmas is meant to be a time of joy and togetherness, this past holiday season in Shellbrook saw greater need than ever for the food bank operated by the Shellbrook and District Ministerial Association.

All told, the faith-based organization handed out 42 food hampers, complete with ham and turkey, to families and individuals, benefitting 134 people in the community (73 adults and 61 children).

You learn to do without.

That's how Shellbrook senior Edith Henry explains the options many seniors in the province are left with each month, as they are forced to decide between purchasing groceries or necessary, but sometimes costly, prescription medications.

The comment came near the tail end of an informal discussion about the challenges facing Saskatchewan Seniors. That discussion saw Premier Scott Moe spend nearly two hours with members of the Shellbrook Senior's Association, listening and empathizing with the struggles they're facing.

Continued on page 2

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2021

NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS?

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Looking back on the year that was 2020

January Cont'd

Just two-months ago, Brooklyn Anderson was making history as a member of the Team Saskatchewan squad that won the province's first-ever U18 Women's Nationals medal (a silver).

Now, the 17-year-old Shellbrook-born hockey player, who currently captains the Prince Albert Northern Bears of the Saskatchewan Female Midget AAA Hockey League, is further padding her resume with a commitment to play for the Trinity Western University Spartans in Langley, B.C.

The Cut Knife Sledge Hockey Club made a trip up to Spiritwood on Jan. 11 to promote the sport and give kids and adults an opportunity to try out the sport. They brought along the sleds and helped interested parties get strapped in and started on the ice. Saturday afternoon was full of smiling faces coasting around the rink trying to shoot the puck off the ice while they tried this variation on a game they know and love.

The accolades continue to pile up for 13-year-old Shellbrook figure skater Ash-



Retired NHLer Dennis Hull was this year's special guest at the Hockey Day in Shellbrook Banquet. Both at his table, and on the stage, he wasn't afraid to enjoy a good laugh.

lyn Schmitz.

After a busy summer of skating with her pairs partner Tristan Taylor, the pair was back in action last week, earning a silver medal in the novice pairs category at the 2020 Canadian Tire National Skating Championships in Mississauga, Ont.

The Shellbrook Recreation Complex was the place to be over the weekend, as the fifth and penultimate Hockey Day in Shellbrook celebration brought two days jam-packed with hockey action to the community.

The celebration of all things hockey brought in a whopping \$100,000, lifting the five-year fundraising total over \$500,000

The Spiritwood Recreation Centre was packed on Saturday, Jan. 18 for Spir-



Shellbrook's Ashlyn Schmitz and pairs partner Tristan Taylor won novice pairs silver at the 2020 Canadian Tire National Skating Championships.



After years of playing in different cities, local hockey talents Brooklyn Anderson and Ashlee Wolfe will be reunited at Langley, B.C.'s Trinity Western University.

paint a tree and a mountain and different things."

The Parkside Community Club continued its long-standing tradition of giving back to the community last Tuesday, when club president Jeff Ledding stopped by the Shellbrook Public Library to present a \$1,000 cheque to the library.

The donation was directed towards the library's computer fund.

The Witchekan Wildlife Federation (WWF), a branch under SWF with approximately 460 members, hosted their Wildlife Banquet on Jan. 25 to wrap up a busy 2019.

The 48th installment of the Banquet was attended by 134 people and catered by Marion's Burger Bar, who served a smorgasbord of game meat donated by members of the WWF.



Witchekan Wildlife Federation Banquet attendees enjoying the meal and visiting.

itwood Minor Hockey's 'Hockey Day in Spiritwood.' The fun-filled day was organized by Sheila Turgeon who was helped out by Kirstin Buswell, the Northern Wolves Female Hockey Team, the Spiritwood Timberwolves Senior Hockey Team, and Spiritwood Minor hockey players and parents.

At least two suspects are wanted by the Saskatchewan RCMP, following a string of rural break-ins during the wee hours of the morning on Friday, Jan. 17.

All told, police say the suspects hit 10 rural businesses or rural municipalities in Hafford, Blaine Lake, Leask, Shell Lake, and Rabbit Lake, stealing more than \$16,000 worth of money, merchandise, tools, or other items.

When Tammy Smart attended a paint night event in Shellbrook a couple years ago, she had no way of knowing what she was getting herself into.

By the end of that evening, however, she was hooked on painting.

"I thought maybe I should go out and buy some canvases and some paint and just play around at home, so that's what I did," she said. "I went online and watch tutorials of how to



The students from Rivier School put on a much-enjoyed Christmas Concert to ring in the 2019 holiday season.

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Lake Country Co-operative Association Limited Notice of Call for Delegate Nominations

Lake Country Co-operative Association Limited is seeking candidates to fill the following 2021 Delegate positions:

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BIRCH HILLS - One 2-year term	NIPAWIN - One 3-year term
BIG RIVER - One 3-year term	PADDOCKWOOD - One 3-year term
CANWOOD - One 3-year term	PRINCE ALBERT - Five 3-year terms
CHOICELAND - One 3-year term	SHELLBROOK - One 3-year term
DOMREMY - One 3-year term	SMEATON - One 3-year term
DOMREMY - One 2-year term	SPIRITWOOD - One 3-year term
KINISTINO - One 3-year term	WAKAW - One 3-year term
LA RONGE - One 3-year term	

Delegate Nominations will be held January 5 to January 11, 2021. Nominations will not be accepted after 5:00 pm on January 11, 2021. Eligibility requirements, roles & responsibilities can be found within the nomination packages which can be obtained online at www.lakecountryco-op.crs or are available at all Lake Country Food Store locations, Agro Centre in Shellbrook, and Service Centre in Spiritwood.

CO-OP

LAKE COUNTRY

Looking back on the year that was 2020

FEBRUARY

Two Shellbrook recreation facilities have been named beneficiaries of large donations from the estate of the late Velma Ell.

Velma, a career teacher who lived many of her years in Shellbrook with her husband Joe Ell (who passed in 2004), passed away on Feb. 10, 2018 at the age of 91. Though Velma taught in many communities up until her retirement, she and Joe both said they liked Shellbrook best, and even built their home in the community.

To give something back to the com-

munity that she and Joe loved best of all, Velma left \$153,020.73 to the Hidden Hills of Shellbrook Golf Course, and another \$76,510.36 to the Shellbrook Swimming Pool, bringing the total donations from her estate to \$229,531.09.

After more than three decades of painting, artist John Chin says he still follows the wisdom of Pablo Picasso.

“Picasso once said you paint according to what you think, not what you actually see. I have always been very interested in doing that,” he said. “You do a lot of internalization and imagination, and change things from one perspective to another. You create something interesting or unusual.”

For Chin, who was born in Malaysia, the love of art began when he was seven or eight years old and just beginning his education. This love and excitement for the visual arts brought him to Saskatchewan and the U of S, where he obtained a bachelor of fine arts.

Nine teams came down to the Spiritwood Curling Club on Saturday, Feb. 1 for



Amidst the dancing at the Shellbrook Seniors Hall, the band members and seniors gathered for a group picture, both to commemorate the event and to show off all of the Valentine's Day red they were sporting.

The Shell Lake Curling Club was a hopping place from Jan. 31 through Feb. 1 for the Shell Lake Open Bonsel.

A team from Spiritwood, skipped by Wayne Pauls, had a three game sweep to take the top spot in the tournament.

Instead of tackling two productions, one for Juniors and one for Seniors, the Spiritwood High School drama troupe combined forces to put on one larger play, “Just Another High School Play.”

Seventeen students took on the acting roles while nine students were part of the tech crew, managing the sounds, lights, and props. Mrs. MacFarlane, assisted by Ben Willick headed up the production's direction, which was a big task considering the number of actors involved.

Spiritwood artist Richard Thunderchild received a \$6,800 Indigenous Peoples Art and Artists grant to “provide classes for adults and youth to learn the powwow craft of headroaching.”

The Shellbrook Curling Club was the place to be for curling fans of all ages, when the club hosted its annual Open Bonsel on Friday, Feb. 7 and Saturday, Feb. 8.

In a hard-fought A-Event final, team Goertz, including Donn Goertz, Clint Rissling, Terry Goertz, and Dave Kopera, remained unbeatable and claimed the title.

Continued on page 4



The Spiritwood High School Girls Team placed first at the Battle West District Playdowns. From left: coach Jason Reddekopp, lead Amber Simonar, third Payge Galambos, skip Aleah McNabb, and coach Brad Nemish. Missing from photo is second Jaida Jones.



From left: Skip Donn Goertz, third Clint Rissling, second Terry Goertz, and lead Dave Kopera. The Team topped Mostly Sticks in a gruelling final match at the Shellbrook Open Bonsel on Saturday, Feb. 8.



Members of the Shellbrook Kinettes and Shellbrook Kinsmen braved bitter-cold conditions to host 2020's Day of Kindness, which coincided with the 100th anniversary of Kin Canada and Kin Canada Week (Feb. 16 to 22).

New Year celebrations will be a little different this year. While we cannot gather together as we have in the past, we can be confident that better days are ahead.

Happy New Year; be safe in 2021.



Nadine Wilson

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Looking back on the year that was 2020

February Cont'd

Thanks to Affinity Credit Union District Funding, the Leask Sports Centre was able to purchase a new Fire Suppression system for above the grill and deep fryer. It's a safety system that's needed to operate the grill and deep fryer and ours needed replacing. The lunch counter is where we make our income on our Fun Fridays wing nights and during skating/hockey events, without it our goose was literally cooked!

The Medstead and District Recreation Association (MADRA) put on their annual Ladies Bonspiel Jan. 24 through 25.

Sheets were full of games as only one team had a bye all weekend. In the end, Darcy de Montarnal's team hailing from Edam beat out Kristine Raess' hometown crew from Medstead to take the top spot in the tournament.

Two members of the Spiritwood and Dis-



Lion Megan Allard (left) and Lion Shelley Allard (centre) were presented with certificates denoting Life Membership in the Lions foundation of Canada. The presentation was made by Spiritwood Lion President Bryan Ferguson (right).

trict Lions Club were presented with Life Memberships in the Lions Foundation of Canada (LFC) at the Feb. 6 meeting of the club.

The two, Lion Megan Allard and Lion Shelley Allard were chosen by the club to receive these honorary distinctions, which are granted to the club by the Lions Foundation of Canada.

It seems Old Man Winter has it out for the Shellbrook Kinettes and Shellbrook Kinsmen.

This year's Day of KINdness, held at the Kinsmen outdoor rink on Monday, Feb. 17 to coincide with Kin Canada's 100th anniversary and Kin Canada Week (Feb. 16-22), brought another year of bitter cold and snow.

Even still, the Kinsmen and Kinettes persevered.

Some danced with their lifelong sweethearts, others danced with new loves, and others, still, danced with good friends.

Regardless of who they linked up with on the dance floor at the Shellbrook Senior Citizen's Centre on Friday afternoon, everyone had a good time at the Shellbrook Senior's Association's Valentine's Day potluck and old-time dance.

Shellbrook residents will be paying more for water, sewer, garbage, and recycling services starting this month, following a rate increase by the town.

Assuming ratepayers don't exceed their monthly water or sewer consumption rates, they'll now be paying a base utility bill of \$107.37 per month, compared to \$101.02.

At Parkland Integrated Health Centre's annual Sweetheart Lunch eight out of 11 couples joined in the romantic dining experience. Linda Bator, Saskatchewan Health Author-

ity volunteer, led six elders in two hand bell selections.

A woman who stabbed and killed her common law partner during a heated argument has received an eight year prison sentence.

Danielle Lidguerre, 34, pleaded guilty to a charge of manslaughter in the death of Lindsay Voyer, 33, in June, 2018. The incident happened at a residence in Shellbrook, where the couple lived with their two young daughters.

Hartley Clark hosted an Aboriginal Storytelling session by Chad Solomon for students from Hartley Clark and Rivier Elementary Schools on Feb. 11. Mr. Solomon brought along some Rabbit and Bear Paws puppets for children and adults to use to help tell the story about a treaty made as a promise to share the earth so that everyone would benefit from all animals.

Greeted by near-perfect conditions for snowmobiling, 112 riders showed up at the little Cameo Hall on Saturday, Feb. 15 to take part in the annual Cameo Snowmobile Rally.

A former administrator for the Rural Municipality of Buckland, and beloved figure in Shellbrook's hockey community, is facing a serious accusation.

Tara Kerber, who served as administrator for the R.M. of Buckland from 2012 to 2019, has been charged with theft over \$5,000.

The circumstances surrounding the charge have not yet been publicly released, and representatives from the R.M. have declined comment on the matter while it's before the court.

They arrived on Feb. 2 at Hartley Clark Elementary School, a hundred little orange spheres each with two black dots that would later turn into eyes. These eyed rainbow trout eggs made the trek from the Fort Qu'Appelle Fish Culture Station up to Spiritwood as part of the Saskatchewan Wildlife Federation's (SWF) Fish in Schools program.

The Spiritwood Curling Club was the host of the high school Battle West District Play-downs, which took place on Feb. 11 and 12.

All the students came out and played well during the two-day event with all three teams from Spiritwood going home with gold medals.

MARCH

Students from W.P. Sandin High School and Shellbrook Elementary School united on Wednesday, Feb. 26 to send a strong message for Pink Shirt Day, an annual day, observed by schools across Canada, that focuses on stamping out bullying once and for all.

The message this year was one of encouragement, calling on students to "lift each other up."

As many as 70 kids were on the ice at Shellbrook's Richardson Pioneer Recreation Centre, when the Prince Albert Raiders rolled into town for a practice, sponsored by MJW Chartered Professional Accountant, on Tuesday, Feb. 25.

Following the practice, the team hosted a meet and greet, allowing kids to join them on the ice for a skate, and get autographs from their favourite players.

Continued on page 5



The cast and crew of Spiritwood High School's "Just Another High School Play."



W.P. Sandin High School Students Josee Schatkoske and Addison Kerber cook up hot dogs for their young charges from Shellbrook Elementary School, during the schools' Pink Shirt Day festivities.

Shellbrook Chronicle

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Spiritwood Herald

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Member of



Looking back on the year that was 2020

March Cont'd

It was well worth the short trip to the Spiritwood Main Street Galley on Friday, Feb. 28. A new show has opened called "A Journey Through My Eyes" which is displaying a large collection of work from local artist Monica Kitching.

The Spiritwood High School Senior Curling teams were back at it again over the weekend, with the girls and mixed teams returning to the Spiritwood rink while the boys hit the road down to Wilkie.

The boys had a good couple of days down in Wilkie and made it through to the final. Martensville got the better of them and sent them home with a silver medal and the end to their season.

The Canada Post Staff in Spiritwood hosted a retirement party at Ming's Wok on March 1 to celebrate the departure of Diana Tiringer and Monica Kitching from the company.

There was a great turn out for the Medstead Skate Club's 2020 Skating Carnival. Medstead hosted four guest skaters travelling from Spiritwood and the Battlefords. Despite March coming in like a lion, they made the trip for our carnival which was appreciated. Their performances were very much enjoyed by both the club and the community.

The Town of Spiritwood and SARCS are very pleased to announce the appointment of Kaeli Cross to the new position of Events & Recreation Co-ordinator.

Kaeli's principle duties will run alongside



Monica Kitching answers questions about her painting journey.

those of the Rec Facility Manager, Glenalda Saam. With more focus on bringing new events, enhancing existing events, and planning for funding initiatives through grants and fundraisers, Cross will liaise with user groups to ensure their event's success.

There was no shortage of activity on the Big River First Nation on Friday, March 6, when the community hosted its second annual Hockey Day in conjunction with Se-Se-Wa-Hum High School's Winter Carnival.

Where the high school's Winter Carnival was steeped in traditional activities designed to get students in touch with their culture, the action over the rink was almost exclusively focused on all things hockey.

What's more, players and fans alike got a taste of the NHL thanks to special guests, and retired NHLers, Cody McCormick and Jason Simon.

It wasn't quite a record-setting year, but, following in the footsteps of its immediate predecessor, Kinsmen Telemiracle 44 was still a highly successful one.

Altogether the campaign, which culminated in a weekend-long telethon at TCU Place in Saskatoon, saw the province raise a whopping \$5.5 million for a very good cause — just \$90,000 or so shy of last year's total.

As always, the Shellbrook Kinsmen and Kinettes played a part in this total, bringing in \$14,792.50

With its Learn to Curl program, the Shellbrook Curling Club is helping create the curlers of tomorrow — and also, potentially, securing its own longevity as a community organization.

From November to March, 16 kids in Grades 1 through 5 took part in 10 fun and educational sessions designed to teach them the ins and outs of the sport.

Three nights of comedic drama and two nights of delicious food. Spiritwood's cure for the winter blues as prescribed each year by the Spiritwood Spirited Players. Director Cari Cross announced that despite having thought it was the 35th year of the production, she realized



Retired NHLer Cody McCormick spent most of the Big River First Nation's second annual Hockey Day on the ice with hockey players, both young and old, trying to teach them lessons he learned throughout his own career. Photo courtesy of Samantha Stouffer

when MaryLnn Cross dug up the newspaper clipping from the first installment "Phantom of the Op'ry" that this was the 37th year.

The Spiritwood curling club was the lucky host of this year's Saskatchewan High School Athletics Association's (SHSAA) Provincial Mixed Curling Championships.

Going undefeated over the weekend, Spiritwood's mixed curling team was able to reclaim its provincial title.

Continued on page 6



The Shellbrook Curling Club's Learn to Curl program is all about teaching kids the basics of the game. Here, coach Marliese Kasner gives a young curler some advice before he throws his rock.



The Medstead Skating Club put on an excellent Skating Carnival for all who attended.

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Looking back on the year that was 2020

March Cont'd

In 2019, after a couple years and several meetings regarding necessary repairs and hall usage, the decision was made to close the Belbutte Hall. This year, the building will be 80 years old.

This hockey season will officially go down in history as the season when teams of all levels wonder what could have been — not because they ended their title runs with bitter defeats, but because they weren't given the chance to play their campaigns out to the end.

On Friday, Hockey Canada announced that all of its sanctioned activities, including National Championships, were cancelled until further notice in response to the spread of the coronavirus.

Locked out Unifor 594 workers made an appearance at the Shellbrook Co-op gas station and C-store last week, just as the special mediation window for the dispute between the union and the Regina Co-op Refinery Complex (CRC) closed.

It was, by all measures, a peaceful and law-abiding demonstration, that saw about a dozen workers picket and stop vehicles to chat or hand out pamphlets.

With five new presumptive cases of coronavirus (COVID-19) having popped up in the province over the weekend — bringing the total in the province to seven cases — the Saskatchewan government has announced new measures to combat the spread of the virus.

The province, working on the orders of Chief Medical Health Officer Dr. Saqib



Spiritwood Mayor Gary von Holwede cut the ribbon to officially open the renovated Credit Union. The ribbon was held by Spiritwood's Board Members Wayne Pauls and Jason Gaboury.



As the Co-op Refinery lockout of Unifor 594 workers stretches into its third month, workers made an appearance at Shellbrook's Lake Country Co-op gas station and C-store to send their message to the public.

Shahab, will be closing all pre-Kindergarten to Grade 12 schools in the province indefinitely, effective Friday, March 20.

The Shell Lake Fifty-Plus Club again hosted their Annual Senior Curling Bonspiel the first week in March. Curlers came from surrounding communities to compete in the event. A total of nine teams contested to be the top team. Guy Cyr and his team had a strong showing and went to the A Event final where he edged out the Lloyd Fisher team.

Prairie Centre Credit Union (PCCU) held a grand opening ceremony March 12 to unveil the renovated Spiritwood branch.

Spiritwood Mayor Gary von Holwede cut the ribbon held by PCCU Board members Wayne Pauls and Jason Gaboury.

Though COVID-19 is currently casting a long shadow over the global economy, the Sask. Party government decided to push ahead with tabling its estimates for the 2020-2021 fiscal year last week.

The estimates, provided in lieu of the provincial government's full budget for the year, outlines the Sask. Party's planned expenditures, pegging overall spending at \$14.15 billion — a 3.1 per cent increase from 2019-2020 — and including spending increases for healthcare, education, and social services.

However, due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and the unknown impacts it will have on the province's economy, the estimates don't include any forecasts for revenues.

With COVID-19 spreading across Saskatchewan, all village, town, and R.M. offices in the coverage area of the Shellbrook Chronicle and Spiritwood Herald have announced that they are closing to the general public. Some of those closures are slated to last two weeks, while others are indefinite in nature.

Rabbit Lake is home to a charming little retirement home commonly referred to as the Rose Gill Lodge. The town occasionally hosts fundraisers to bring in some money to keep the place staffed and running. On

March 14 the town hosted their Bunnock tournament which drew 10 teams all out for a few games of bones.

The Medstead Leisure Life club held their monthly meeting on March 2, 2020 at 7:30 p.m. Our birthday recipients for March were Fern Moen and Louise Casson. Congratulations to both ladies, and a special congratulations to Louise Casson who has reached a milestone of 90 years. We hope she will celebrate many more with us.

APRIL

With estimates that as many as two million Canadian workers have been laid off or are facing the threat of losing their jobs to the COVID-19 pandemic, the reality of the virus is being felt in rural Saskatchewan.

On Monday afternoon, Carrier Lumber temporarily suspended two of its operations, including the Big River Sawmill and the Tabor Planer mill in Prince George, B.C.

The closures will result in the layoff of around 120 staff members.

Normally around this time of year, Shellbrook's senior curlers would be crowning their champions in the local Senior Bonspiel. But with concerns about COVID-19, the difficult decision was made to protect the health of the curlers and cancel what remained of the wind-up.

They did give it the old college try, however. And, based on the action from the Wednesday March 11 and Monday, March 16 draws, it was shaping up to be another great bonspiel.

It was March 17, the height of the global toilet paper panic buying frenzy, when the town of Shellbrook sent out a notice to ratepayers cautioning them not to flush anything other than toilet paper into the municipality's sewer system.

Eight days later, the town's warning to ratepayers became a reality.

Due to an influx of improper materials being flushed, one of the town's sewer pumps has suffered "a substantial amount of damage" and is in need of a repair or a replacement.



Caleb and Marvail Philp helped bring some Easter spirit to the community in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic by stashing egg-shaped treats along the Shellriver Road.



Aaliyah Kennedy Sunrise Ross, a seven-year-old from Big River First Nation, was born with spina bifida, and had to undergo a four-hour surgery when she was just one month old. But her family says learning to skate and play hockey has helped change her life. Here she's pictured with Berno Bear. Photo courtesy Samantha Stouffer

As many people are stuck at home waiting for the COVID-19 pandemic to blow over, the band leaders of Sturgeon Lake First Nation have devised a novel way to bring the community together and keep them entertained.

After the virus forced the cancellation of the community's annual Winter Festival, the band began thinking of ideas to put on a different kind of show for the community. In the end, it landed on an online talent competition.

As Saskatchewan grapples with a state of emergency brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic, not even the province's courts are immune to the shutdown of everything in the province.

On Friday (March 27), the Provincial Court of Saskatchewan sent out a notice advising that all proceedings scheduled to be heard at the Whitefish First Nation Provincial Court on Tuesday, April 14 had been postponed for three months.

A hot goaltending prospect with ties to Shellbrook could find himself wearing a Nashville Predators jersey when the NHL gets back up and running.

Twenty-three-year-old Connor Ingram, the son of Brent and Joni Ingram, and nephew of Brent Miller, recently inked a three-year contract with the Predators worth \$700,000 at the NHL level and \$120,000 at the AHL level in 2020-21, \$750,000 at the NHL level and \$125,000 at the AHL level in 2021-22, and \$750,000 in 2022-23.

Continued on page 7

Looking back on the year that was 2020

April Cont'd

The Spiritwood Public Library was due to host Dr. Harold Fast, founder of Fast Genetics and recreational pilot on March 24.

However, due to the closure of all non-essential services amid the COVID-19 Pandemic, the library has had to forgo all programming until further notice.

The program, titled "Learn at Lunch," was to feature a lunch time presentation by Fast about his fundraising flight expedition with Give Hope Wings that would travel around South America to raise money for Hope Air.

As COVID-19 continues its gradual spread across Saskatchewan, few communities are as prepared as the Big River First Nation is to face the threats it poses.

Where governments of all sizes around the world were caught flat-footed and left reacting to the pandemic, Jack Rayne, Chief of the Big River First Nation, says his community began introducing preparedness measures "right away" when it first heard about COVID-19.

The COVID-19 pandemic has left Saskatchewan's small business community in uncharted waters.

As a small-town grocery store, Jody Lanovaz says the Shellbrook Bigway hasn't been immune to the changes brought on by the pandemic.

"It's been mostly supply chain issues and shortages; that's been the biggest thing," he said. "Then, because of what's been going on all over, it seems everything's been running late."

Students in the Light of Christ Catholic School Division (LOCCSD) were able to hit the books again starting March 30.

Following the indefinite suspension of all pre-kindergarten through Grade 12 classes on March 20, the provincial government's Education Response Planning Team (RPT) has been meeting daily to provide support for the school divisions in the province and help initiate supplemental learning opportunities.



Big River First Nation Chief Jack Rayne is doing his part to support the community during the pandemic. Here, he and others prepare meat gathered by the community's hunters.



W.P. Sandin High School teacher Lindsay Kyliuk writes on the whiteboard attached to his Math Mobile. The novel teaching method was devised as a way to teach students in person while practicing proper physical distancing.

With the COVID-19 pandemic preventing families from gathering for Easter, the Philp family decided to bring the spirit of the holiday to Shellbrook by hiding Easter treats all along the Shellriver Road.

Nicole Philp let the public know about the egg hunt via a Facebook post that took the form of a poem.

With the ongoing COVID-19 forcing businesses to make difficult cutbacks or close their doors altogether, some ratepayers have been wondering what sacrifices and cutbacks their municipalities are making to save money during difficult economic times.

Kelly Hoare, chief administrative officer for the town of Shellbrook, says the town office, which is closed to the public, isn't as full as it normally is. Currently she's there alone during the day, while one other staff member is working evenings and a third is working from home.

"We are considered an essential service and need to be available to our ratepayers," she said.

The economic storm generated by COVID-19 could cost the province between \$1.3 billion and \$3.3 billion over the course of the 2020-2021 fiscal year, depending on how long pandemic-related economic restrictions remain in place.

At least, that's what the provincial government's projections are telling it.

Amidst the closure of many businesses that are considered non-essential due to the COVID-19 pandemic, those providing necessities have remained open and finding ways to continue operating. Huber's Market on Main is one such business in the town of Spiritwood.

Taking action on March 13, the local grocer implemented a variety of protocols to help keep staff and

shoppers safe during these uncertain times. Their protocols have been continuously updated as more information is brought to light.

Though COVID-19 has given Shellbrook ratepayers plenty to worry about over the past month and a half, an increase in property taxes won't be added to those concerns.

Shellbrook's town council tabled the 2020-2021 municipal budget on April 20. The budget projects that revenues and expenses will be dead even at \$3,815,263 — an increase of just \$5,000 over the 2019-2020 budget, which was higher than normal due to infrastructure work being held over.

The budget also holds the mill rate steady at 3.98, after ratepayers saw a 3 per cent increase in last year's budget.

MAY

When the Hidden Hills of Shellbrook Golf Course is permitted to reopen on May 15, general manager Larry Ritchie says he and his fellow staff members will be following the provincial regulations to the T (no pun intended).

However, for all the ways in which COVID-19 will change the golf season, Ritchie says his spring was still very much business as usual.

"I always had suspicions that if they opened up anything, golf courses would be the one thing people could get out and enjoy for the summer," he said. "I pretty much followed the same things I do every spring, except I didn't bring any staff in."

Whether they're being homeschooled by their parents or taking classes posted online by their regular teachers, students are finding ways to maintain their study habits during the pandemic. And teachers, meanwhile, have been finding new and unique ways to instruct their students in this age of physical distancing.

Take Lindsay Kyliuk, a local teacher at W.P. Sandin High School, who took to teaching his classes in person using a giant whiteboard welded to the back of a truck.

As the province prepared to enter phase one of the Re-Open Saskatchewan plan on Monday, the Town of Shellbrook made the decision to formally prohibit access to



Kids cleaned up Cameron-Bourdages Memorial Park in Spiritwood as part of Rivier School's Be Kind Tuesdays.

all local playground structures and sports fields.

The town made the announcement on its website and Facebook page on April 29, citing concerns that the use of shared high-touch surfaces could help the spread of COVID-19 and endanger the health and safety of families.

A Shellbrook-based company is going to be contributing in a big way to the final phase of the project to upgrade the Shellbrook Recreation Complex.

Curtis Bloom's Livewire Electric was selected from a pool of 27 companies to complete the installation of the rink's solar panel array.

It may soon be the end of the line for one of Shellbrook's oldest original buildings.

At its upcoming meeting on Tuesday, May 19, Shellbrook's town council will be voting on a bylaw to repeal the heritage status of the CN Railway station, which currently serves as the Shellbrook and District Heritage Museum.

Barring an outpouring of objections from the public, the bylaw is almost certain to be enacted by council, paving the way for the railway station to be demolished.

School may out until at least the fall (the Saskatchewan government officially announced this on May 7), but staff from Shellbrook Elementary School and W.P. Sandin High School are still finding unique ways to connect with their students during the COVID-19 pandemic.

On Monday morning, staff from both Shellbrook schools held a parade to say hello to their students, and let them know just how much they miss them.

On the first Tuesday of each month, Rivier School in Spiritwood focuses on demonstrating a little more kindness. This has not ceased during remote learning as a result of COVID-19. Staff and students alike are encouraged to share a smile, good humor, forgiveness, and lend assistance to their families, friends and community.

Continued on page 8

Looking back on the year that was 2020

May Cont'd

A broken transmission line caused the power to shut off around 8:30 p.m. on April 30th in many Northern Saskatchewan communities.

SaskPower reported that the outage affected Patchunak, Turtle Lake, Glaslyn, Goodsoil, Pierceland, Buffalo Narrows, Beauval, Ile-A-La-Crosse, Turnor Lake, Turtleford, Spiritwood, Shell Lake, Moosomin FN, Jackfish Lake, Cochin, Meota, and Paradise Hill.

Power restoration came as early as 10:30 p.m. for some, while others were out until nearly 5:30 a.m.

One local project which has not seen any setbacks due to the COVID-19 pandemic is Spiritwood's Town Square. The Northern Lakes Economic Development Corporation (NLEDC) say they are still on track for completion by July 1.

The Shellbrook Recreation Project Steering Committee is one giant leap closer to its fundraising goals, after receiving a \$100,000 cheque from the Hockey Day in Shellbrook Committee.



Cervus John Deere handled the seeding for this year's Field of Dreams crop in Shellbrook.

The funds, which were raised at 2020's highly successful Hockey Day in Shellbrook (the event brought in more than \$100,000, making it the second most successful Hockey Day from a fundraising perspective), come as the Steering Committee is poised to begin work on the third and final phase of its project: the installation of solar panels to power the Shellbrook Recreation Complex.

With phase two of the Re-Open Saskatchewan plan getting under way earlier this week, Honeywood Heritage Nursery was able to herald the arrival of spring by holding its opening day on Saturday, May 16.

The nursery was blessed by warm and sunny conditions throughout the day, and, after two months of being discouraged to travel in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, guests were more than pleased for the opportunity to get out of the house (and perhaps pick up some flowers or plants in the process).

Along with many other summer mainstays, the COVID-19 pandemic continues to cast a long shadow of doubt over the 2020 softball season.

In its most recent announcement, which was made on May 6, Softball Saskatchewan suspended all sanctioned activities until May 31, extending, by two weeks, a previous suspension until May 15.

As part of a \$300 million investment in Saskatchewan's highways and infrastructure, the stretch of Highway 3 that connects Shellbrook to Prince Albert will be receiving three sets of passing lanes.

The provincial government announced the project last week, along with plans to upgrade 325 kms of thin-membrane surface highways, 24 to 26 new sets of highway passing lanes (including the Highway 3 passing lanes), reha-



Guests take a gander at some of the lilies and perennials available for purchase at Honeywood Heritage Nursery.



DL Construction busy at work putting up the Fast Genetics Silver Buckle Bandshell.

bilitation of at least 100 RM roads, and improvements to community airports.

"May long weekend kicked off to a great start with lots of golfing activity as well as several Memberships purchase," says Glennalda Saam, club house manager at the Spiritwood Golf Course.

Golf courses were allowed to reopen to the public on May 15, just in time for May long weekend.

The 4-H year has come to an end earlier than we hoped. The Regional Show and Sale in Prince Albert has been canceled this year due to COVID-19. The club is disappointed not to be able to show off their project animals, which they worked so hard with this year.

While very little feels normal in the COVID-19 world we find ourselves in, there is at least one dream that hasn't been dashed by the pandemic.

Shellbrook's Field of Dreams crop was seeded by Cervus John Deere on Monday afternoon, meaning it will continue to provide an important stream of revenue for the Shellbrook Recreation Complex this year.

It wheat crop is expected to bring in \$50,000.

Shellbrook's CN Railway Station, which currently serves as the Shellbrook & District Heritage Museum, has received a last-minute stay of execution.

At its May 19 meeting, Shellbrook's town council was set to pass a bylaw to repeal the building's heritage status, paving the way for its eventual demolition. However, following expressions of interest in the station, it agreed to wait 90 days before adopting the motion.

A few days before the coronavirus became COVID-19 and the scare in other countries became a pandemic in our own beautiful country, with almost every venue told to shut down and people told to stay home, the Leoville Healthcare Auxiliary had our Annual Fund-raiser Bake Sale.

Most of the money raised as a result of these fund raisers is donated to the Evergreen Center.

Heavy rains and strong winds started to rip through the RM of Spiritwood on the evening of Wednesday, May 20 and only let up midway through the following morning. The thunderstorm sent waves crashing up over the berm at Meeting Lake Regional Park.



Heavy winds and rains sent waves crashing up over the berm at Meeting Lake Regional Park causing extensive flooding and damage to the shoreline and buildings.

Looking back on the year that was 2020

JUNE

If you ever visited Shellbrook's Kinsmen Park in the midst of the spring thaw (or after a good rain), you no doubt noticed that there were small rivers and lakes of yellow-brown water in all of the park's ditches.

Thanks to ongoing COVID-19 restrictions, however, that may not be an issue in springs and summers to come.

"Due to only being able to rent out two camping stalls, we decided not to open at all this season and get the work done that we have been putting off due to how busy it has been in the past years," explained Town of Shellbrook CAO Kelly Hoare.

"We are fixing some drainage issues, and moving the road inside and blocking off some of the entrances to have better control over who comes and goes, which should help with people leaving without paying," she added.

While solar panels will be the primary focus of phase three of the Shellbrook Recreation Project Steering Committee's project to upgrade the Richardson Pioneer Recreation Centre, the inside of the rink will also look vastly different when it re-opens for the season, thanks to new seating acquired from Edmonton's Rexall Place.

Back in February, 100 rainbow trout eggs arrived at Hartley Clark Elementary Schools for the Fish in Schools program



Lloyd Fisher (right) presenting Brad Nemish (left) of the SARCS board with a \$1000 cheque to be put towards the Spiritwood Ball Diamond Restoration Project.

coordinated by the Saskatchewan Wildlife Federation. The program allows students to learn firsthand about aquatic habitats and fish lifecycles. The students follow the fish from eyed egg stage all the way until fingerling stage before they are released into a provincially stocked lake.

With Saskatchewan now in phase three of the Re-Open Saskatchewan plan, and only 17 active cases in the province as of Monday, a sense of normalcy is beginning to return to Shellbrook and surrounding communities.

In that spirit, the Shellbrook Kinettes, the Shellbrook Curling Club, and the Hidden Hills of Shellbrook Golf Course have resumed their annual Lucky 7 fundraiser.

COVID-19 may have hit the pause button on most people's regular lives. But it hasn't prevented the Town of Shellbrook from carrying on with a number of large local infrastructure projects, even if some ratepayers question the wisdom of spending money in economically uncertain times.

Apart from the sewer relining, which the town has spent the past few years working on, the Town of Shellbrook is continuing to build a second road to Parkland Integrated Health Centre on 2nd Street West (just north of the Hidden Hills

of Shellbrook Golf Course).

Just a hop, skip, and a jump up 2nd Street West, the town has also been doing work on Kinsmen Park, and readying the old Parkland Terrace nursing home property for the installation of solar panels for the Richardson Pioneer Recreation Centre.

Hair salons in the province were able to open back up again on May 19 and have been busy catching up on overdue hair cuts and colours. Local salons in Spiritwood were eager to get back to work and have

been happy to see the return of clients.

Graduation will look a little different for W.P. Sandin's Class of 2020.

With COVID-19 restrictions still in place — but gradually easing — this year's crop of 31 graduates will be celebrated by their school and the broader community in a parade and an outdoor ceremony at the Shellbrook Sports Grounds.

As the Co-op Refinery lockout of Uni- for 594 oil and gas workers stretches into month seven, union members made a three-day stop in Shellbrook to picket and get the word out.

About a dozen locked out workers were walking the line at the Co-op Card Lock along Highway 3, briefly stopping customers to share information. And though the lockout seems nowhere near to ending, picket captain Mikki Shaddock says the workers still have the same primary goal in mind: getting back to work.

A 25-year-old woman is dead, following a single vehicle rollover just east of Shellbrook last Thursday evening.

According to the RCMP, the rollover occurred around 6 p.m. on Highway 3 near the Shellbrook Airport. Speaking with paNOW, RCMP Sgt. Rob King said the woman was ejected from the vehicle and pronounced dead at the scene.

Continued on page 10



From left, Mason Wallin, Jamie Capner, Dave Philp, and Richard Bell were part of a small work crew that helped carry the new seats into the Richardson Pioneer Recreation Centre.



JRT Excavating has been contracted to do much of the work on the second access to Parkland Integrated Health Centre off of 2nd Street West.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

SPIRITWOOD: Wapiti Regional Library - Limited Capacity. Tuesday 9 am - 5 pm; Wednesday 9 am - 5 pm; Friday 9 am - 5 pm

LEOVILLE: Wapiti Regional Library - Appointment only. Wednesday 10 am - 4 pm; Thursday 10 am - 2 pm

SHELL LAKE: Wapiti Regional Library - Curb Side Pickup. Tuesday 12 pm - 4 pm; Wednesday 12 pm - 4 pm

BLAINE LAKE: Wapiti Library - Appointment only. Wednesday 12 pm - 6 pm; Friday 1 pm - 5 pm; Saturday 12 pm - 4 pm. Contact us for more info 306-497-3130, www.wapitilibrary.ca.

BIG RIVER: Wapiti Library - Curb Side Pickup. Monday 12:30 pm - 4:30 pm; Wednesday 12:30 pm - 4:30 pm; Friday 12:30 pm - 4:30 pm

CANWOOD: Canwood Branch of Wapiti Regional Library. Appointment only. Tuesday 10 am - 3 pm; Thursday 10 am - 4 pm; Friday 1 pm - 5 pm

DEBDEN: Wapiti Library hours: Appointment only. Monday 2 pm - 7 pm; Tuesday 10 am - 4 pm. Librarian: Aline Hannon

LEASK: Wapiti Library & Legacy Gallery Hours - Limited Capacity. Tuesday 10:30 am - 5 pm; Friday 10:30 am - 5 pm; Saturday 1 pm - 5 pm

MARCELIN: Wapiti Library - Appointment only. Tuesday 2 pm - 7 pm; Thursday 2 pm - 8 pm; Saturday 9 am - 2 pm. For information on all your library needs, please contact 306-226-2110.

SHELLBROOK: Shellbrook Branch of the Wapiti Library located at 105 Railway Ave., West (Provincial building). Library Hours: Limited capacity - Monday 2 pm - 6:30 pm; Tuesday 12 pm - 8 pm; Wednesday 2 pm - 8 pm; Thursday 12 pm - 6:30 pm; Friday 9 am - 4 pm.

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Looking back on the year that was 2020

June Cont'd

In a normal June, Grade 12 students from across Saskatchewan would be dressing to the nines to walk across the stage and received their high school diplomas right about now.

But 2020 has been anything but a ordinary year thus far, and thanks to COVID-19 this is no normal June.

Case in point, Medstead Central School and the broader community of Medstead, where grads will be fêted with a parade and short ceremony this Saturday, June 20, at 5 p.m.

Nearly three months after it presented



Shell Lake artist Rigmor Clarke was selected as one of 10 Saskatchewan Order of Merit recipients in 2020.

streamlined spending estimates in the wake of a burgeoning COVID-19 pandemic, the Saskatchewan government has tabled its formal 2020-2021 budget.

As expected, the economic impacts of the pandemic are visible in the budget's bottom line. Where the government had anticipated delivering a balanced budget this year and next, it's now predicting a \$2.4 billion deficit, thanks to a \$1.2 billion drop in revenues and \$1.1 billion increase in expenditures.

The Shell Lake Legion held Decoration Day on Saturday, June 13, with Legion and family members in attendance.

We heard inspiring messages from Comrade David Jensen and our village Mayor, Anita Weiers. Wreaths from Remembrance Day 2019 were laid at each of the Veteran's crosses in our Veteran's plot at the cemetery. We Shall Remember Them.

Spiritwood High School students and staff are congratulating retiring teacher Mr. Deon Nordstrom from a distance this year. Mr. Nordstrom first arrived at Spiritwood High School as an intern under the guidance of Mr. Glen Delisle in 1990. He then stayed in Spiritwood, teaching for his entire 30-year career at SHS.

When Shell Lake-based artist Rigmor Clarke got the phone call, she thought it was a hoax or a scam.

But, as it turns out, it was neither of those things. She really had been selected as one of 10 people to be presented with the Saskatchewan Order of Merit this year.

The Shellbrook Public Library may not



In true Medstead fashion, a John Deere Combine was decked out and carried a couple more graduates.

yet know when it's going to re-open to the public, but that isn't stopping librarian Dian Campbell from providing kids with ways to keep learning and reading over the summer.

For this year's Summer Reading Program, which runs from July 2 through August and is open to children aged 4 to 12, Campbell is putting together hundreds of hands-on learning kits.

After months of uncertainty caused by the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the Shellbrook Swimming Pool is finally getting the green light to open for what's left of the summer.

The whole village seemed to be out in Medstead on June 20 for the Graduate Parade that was held. Rural residents made the trip to the Community Centre to watch will village residents pulled benches and lawn chairs down to the end of their driveways. Someone even brought a gong.

Prairie Community Endeavors was allowed to open its doors again on June 11, which made attendees very happy. Jennifer Peters says that social distancing is still being practiced even though it's hard when you "miss your friends."

Attendees are enjoying getting back to their routines, going for walks, and making sun catchers.

The Town of Spiritwood has recently gotten to work on a 3-Year Sidewalk Restoration Project. Block 1 on the east side of Main Street is torn up and will be getting new concrete or resurfacing done by Lajcon Distributors. Weather dependant, this section should be completed within 2 weeks of the start date.

Two curb stops were repaired on the east block 1 before the rest of the work began. The town foreman will determine which other curb stops are not working and have them fixed prior to work for the next two phases as well.

Blocks 1 and 2 on the west side of Main Street are slated for 2021. Blocks 2 and 3 of

the east side and block 3 of the west side as well as the sidewalk on 3rd Avenue running past the RCMP are on the schedule for 2022.

JULY

It may not have been the graduation that W.P. Sandin High School's class of 2020 had imagined at the outset of the school year, but it was certainly a day to remember.

On Friday, June 26, after months of wondering whether the COVID-19 pandemic would allow them to celebrate at all, the school's 31 graduates were fêted by the community, their families, and their teachers, in a parade, an improvised in-person ceremony, and a digital presentation.

W.P. Sandin's Class of 2020 is: Nathan Anderson, Alexis Banda, Ashton Barden, Zachary Bernath, Mya Boettcher, Darla Bruneau, Tyson Crawford, Riley Crawford-Beauchesne, Jacob Feige, Austin Ferster, Johnathon Fonos, Spencer Fox, Dallas Galloway, Burk Gosselin, Brady Kelly, Mason Kelly, Logan Lajeunesse, Nicholas Lanovaz, Austin Larsen, Kerrington Long, Savannah Naber, Thi My Duyen Nguyen, Meghan Person, Hannah Remus, Chase Ross, Ethan Schmidt, Ethan Skauge, Ashley Skavlebo, Cameron Stene, Ashlee Wolfe, and Tasje Wolfe.

Continued on page 11



Dallas Galloway and Meghan Person rode together, and weren't shy about playing it up for the crowd, during W.P. Sandin High School's graduation parade.

PRAISE & WORSHIP

Regular services, Sunday school and special services will be listed.

PARTNERS IN FAITH

Lutheran/United/
Christchurch Anglican,
137-2nd St. W.
Spiritwood
Worship 11:00 a.m.
Rev. Sarah Urano

UNITED /ANGLICAN

Worship Services
Glaslyn
Time is on the sign
Rev. Kun Kim
Rev. Don Skinner

CATHOLIC SUNDAY

Spiritwood - 11:15 a.m.
Leoville - 9:30 a.m.
Chitek Lake - Closed for
the Season
Everyone Welcome
SATURDAY
Shell Lake - 8:00 p.m.
Medstead - 6 p.m.
Father Ramel Macapeia

PARTNERS IN WORSHIP

Shell Lake
Worship - Sunday 9 a.m.
306-841-7333
Pastor Sarah Urano

SEVENTH DAY ADVENTIST

407 - 2nd Ave .E.,
Shellbrook
Sat., 9:45 am -
Sabbath School
Sat., 11:00 am - Worship

Broadcast on
VOAR 92.1 FM
Pastor Liviu Tilihoi
306-747-3398

MENNONITE BRETHREN

Glenbush
10:00 am - Sunday School
Worship 10:50 am

FIELDS OF HOPE (HOFFNUNGSFELDER) MENNONITE CHURCH

Glenbush
Worship - 11:00 am

BETHEL

Medstead
1st Sunday, 10 am -
Worship
Pastor David Jensen
3rd Sunday - 10 am
Worship
Pastor David Jensen

Gideons International of Canada

Battlefords Camp
Phone Art Martynes
(306) 389-4633

EVANGELICAL FREE

Mont Nebo
Wed., 7:30 pm -
Bible Study & Prayer
Sun., 10:30 am - Worship
Pastor Bill Klumpenhower

LAKELAND COMMUNITY CHURCH

Spiritwood
Sun., 11 am - Worship
Service & Sunday School
Pastor Gerry Zak

BELBUTTE FULL GOSPEL

11 am Worship Service
1st Sun., 7:30 pm
- Hymn Sing
Pastor Floyd Berg

COWBOY CHURCH

Spiritwood
Every Wednesday Night
7 pm
Spiritwood Legion Hall
Pastor Rick Martin

Looking back on the year that was 2020

July Cont'd

W.P Sandin High School graduate Alexis Banda recently joined the esteemed company of 55 other students from across Canada, after being selected as one of the recipients of a \$1,000 Kin Canada Bursary.

Though Saskatchewan is still far from back to pre-COVID-19 normal, Shellbrook and area residents will at least have a place to cool off and make a splash this summer.

As of Monday, June 29, the Shellbrook Swimming Pool is officially open for business, operating daily from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m., and from 4:30 p.m. to 8 p.m.

École Debden Public School held a virtual graduation ceremony on Friday June 12. The video included the announcement of awards, scholarships and the future plans of each graduate.

Heart-felt speeches were made by the grade 12 class to honour their teachers and parents.

Debden's class of 2020 included: Dakota Aarrestad, Jett Amundson, Sonora Amundson, Morgan Beaulieu, Shay Dumais, Layton Ferster, Morgan Gaudry, Jayde Hinson, Thomas Jean, and Colten Shadlock.

As part of a \$110.5 million investment in six school infrastructure projects, the town of Blaine Lake will be receiving a brand new Kindergarten to Grade 12 school in the near future.

The build, which is part of the province's broader two-year, \$7.5 billion infrastructure strategy to stimulate the economy post-COVID, comes with an estimated price tag of \$9.5 million for the government.

According to Chris Hodges, a media relations consultant with the Ministry of Education, the full costs for the construction of the new facility will be split by the province



Spiritwood Lions President Bryan Ferguson (left) presenting Shandra Epp (right) with the 2020 Spiritwood & District Lions Club Graduate Scholarship.

and the Prairie Spirit School Division.

At this early stage, however, Hodges couldn't provide a timeline for when the project will be completed.

When Hugh Lauder decided he wanted to start his own landscaping company after visiting his sister in Toronto in the late 1950s, he didn't really know what he was doing.

Sixty years later, Shellbrook-based Shellview Sod employs 17 people and has foot-holds in nearly every major city and small town in Saskatchewan, serving customers from the American border all the way up to La Loche in the far north (though, half of its business is in Saskatoon, and another third is in Regina).

The 2020 Prince Albert Regional 4-H Beef Show and Sale was postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite the postponing of the event, the committee was still able to move forward with the sale of the charity steer and two scholarships that were awarded.

Winning the 2020 Dwayne Fremont Trucking Award of Merit is Makenna Bloom a senior member of the Wild Rose 4-H Beef Club.

Winning the 2020 Steen Agencies & SGI Canada Scholarship is Gage Grassick a senior member of the West PA 4-H Beef Club.

The Charity Steer sold in an online Facebook event. There were 17 businesses who put in \$500 each to purchase the steer for \$8,500 and then donate him back to be resold.

The second round of the sale was held the following day and the steer was sold for \$2,700 to Twin Groves Farms and Carter's Custom Ag.

Canwood Public School honoured the graduating class of 2020 with a virtual ceremony on June 19.

The video included history and prophecy by Briar Cain and Cassidy Anderson, a thoughtful valedictorian address by Noah Johnson, presentation of scrolls, subject awards, character awards and scholarships, as well as heartfelt messages from staff.

The cars were lined up at SAAD SAC park, Esso, and the Cameron-Bourdages Memorial Park, filled with spectators anxious for the promised fireworks show.

Northern Lakes Economic Development Corporation (NLEDC) was able to secure enough funding for approximately five times the fireworks that were lit off the previous year at the ball diamonds. A grant from Canadian Heritage played a big part in obtaining the volume of spectacular fireworks that were on display for the July 1 celebration.

A 56-year-old semi truck driver from Shellbrook is facing a slew of charges,

stemming from a multi-vehicle accident on a Manitoba highway that killed two people and injured 15 others.

A 15-year-old girl is dead after being struck by a car in Debden on Tuesday, July 7.

In the week since the tragic accident, the victim has been identified as Kaylan Keegan Lee Keenatch.

A series of costly acts of vandalism by young motorbike riders has the Lake Country Wildlife Federation wondering what it's supposed to do to recuperate the costs of fixing the damage.

The acts of vandalism and trespassing were perpetrated at the club's 500-metre range, which is located five km north of Shellbrook and about six km west on Highway 55.

The Shellbrook Volunteer Fire Department has upgraded its logistical capabilities to respond to emergencies, after receiving a \$1,500 grant through FM Global's Fire prevention Grant Program.

For the Shellbrook Volunteer Fire Department, the grant money will help it upgrade its tech configuration — consisting of iPads for the fire trucks and a large monitor in the Fire Hall — allowing the department to respond to service calls more efficiently.

The Shellbrook CN Railway Station may get a new lease on life, and a brand new purpose for existing, if Shellbrook's town council proves amenable to a proposal, being put forward by a local group, to save the building from demolition and transform it into an artisan's collective.

This year's first recipient of the Spiritwood and District Lions 2020 Lottery Grant is the Spiritwood Public Library.

Lion Shelley Allard, who heads up the Grant project, was happy to present the \$800 cheque to a thrilled Librarian, Joyce Carriere.



Fireworks lit up the sky at the SAAD SAC park in Spiritwood on July 1 for Canada's 153rd celebration.



Shellbrook firefighters Larry Bergen and Kerry Wendel, fire chief Darwin Baptist, and Fire and Rescue member Al Dion with the fire prevention plaque from FM Global.

Looking back on the year that was 2020

AUGUST

Nearly a year after releasing his debut novel, *The Road to Blackthrush: The Sixth Order Book One*, at the young age of 20, Debden's Dylan Aarestad (pen name Jarret Madden) is continuing the story he began with the release of his second book, *The Forsaken*.

The flat roof of the Town of Blaine Lake's municipal office will soon be a thing of the past, thanks to funds the municipality received through the Municipal Economic Enhancement Program (MEEP).

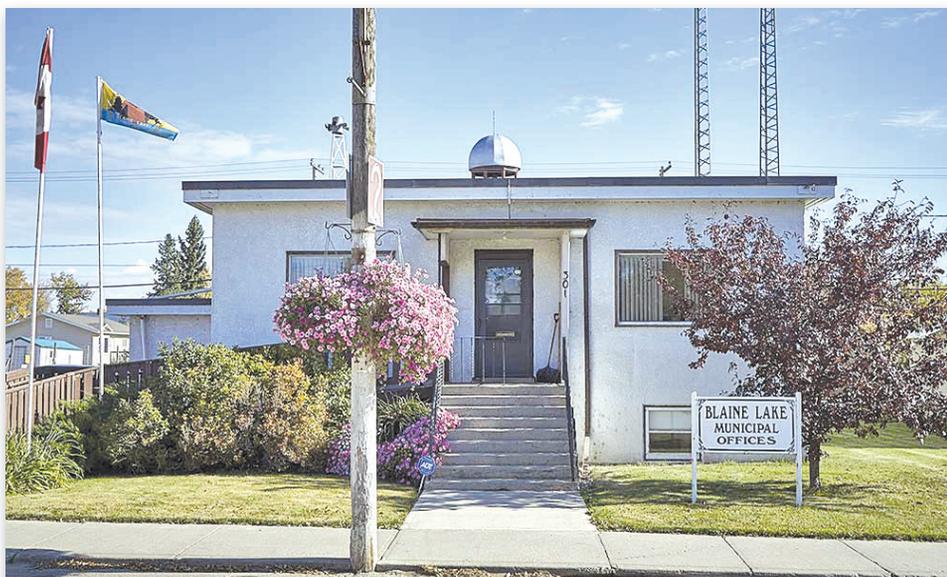
Town of Blaine Lake administrator, Brenda Lockhart, says the town's original plan was to repair issues with the office's current roof. But the \$60,000 it received through MEEP to do the repairs allowed for a more ambitious plan.

In other MEEP funding news, announced last Wednesday, the Town of Shellbrook received \$207,544 for its own \$6.8 million water treatment plant project. Like the Town of Blaine Lake, the Town of Shellbrook is also planning to switch to a partial reverse osmosis system.

Finally, the Village of Shell Lake



Crews completed roadwork on Shell Lake's Main Street in August.



Thanks to MEEP funding, the municipal office in Blaine Lake will soon have an entirely new look.



Three rows of solar panels now stand on the property that was once Parkland Terrace. The panels mark the final stage of the three-year, \$2 million renovation of the Richardson Pioneer Recreation Centre.

\$25,152 for upgrades to local roads and bridges.

After three years, and three phases, the end is finally in sight for the Shellbrook Recreation Project Steering Committee's \$2 million project to upgrade the Shellbrook Recreation Complex.

This summer, the focus has been on the final major piece of the project: a 100kW solar panel array that will power the rink more sustainably, and open up a new stream of revenue for the facility in the distant future.

As of Monday, Aug. 3, Amund Otterson, project manager for the Steering Committee, anticipated that the installation of the solar panels should be mostly completed at some point this week — barring any unforeseen delays with deliveries.

One person is dead, following a two-vehicle collision on Municipal Road 693, north of Holbein, over the August long weekend.

The Shell Lake Senior's Golf Committee met on July 28 to discuss the possibility of having the Annual Senior's Shell Lake Bud Dicus Golf Tournament. With great regret, because of the COVID-19 pandemic

and the accompanying restrictions, the Senior Golf Committee has decided to cancel the tournament for 2020.

It's not quite all fun and games as usual, but the Town of Shellbrook's Summer Playground Program did manage to get off the ground this summer and lend a little normalcy — and much-needed outdoor activity — to local kids during the COVID-19 pandemic.

This year's program kicked off in July, and is expected to continue through to the end of August. Due to COVID-19, the program is limited to 15 children, and two program supervisors to oversee each week's themed activities.

Plans for Shellbrook to host both the U14 and U16 provincial ball tournaments have officially be axed, thanks to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

"Before COVID, we would sell 12-15 pots of coffee in a day and as soon as COVID hit, we were down to 1 pot. Some days, on a good day, you would make 2 pots," said Sally Turgeon when discussing how the pandemic has affected business at Spiritwood's local pizza and sub shop, Papa Rene's.

At the onset of government restrictions, business was very slow causing

local business owners, Sally and Rene Turgeon, to have to lay off most of their full-time staff and transition to operating their business by themselves.

There were a few people who would come in for something almost every day, according to Sally, but once the grocery store closed, Spiritwood would become a ghost town

Dancers recently returned to the studio for the first time in almost five months, when Shellbrook's Studio 747 hosted its second ever Camp 747 from Aug. 5-7.

Led by studio director Kelly Woodley and instructor Rebecca Cohen, Camp 747 taught its participants everything from tap, jazz, and ballet to hip hop, contemporary, and acro. Most importantly, though, the 33 young dancers, who came from the broader Prince Albert area, as well as Hafford and Tisdale, to take part in Camp 747, had plenty of fun.

One driver in Shellbrook received an unwelcome surprise on Friday, Aug. 7, when a light standard, located on Main Street between the intersections of 2nd and 3rd Avenue, toppled over onto their parked vehicle.

Scott McGregor, a spokesperson for SaskPower, says the felling of the light standard is being attributed to the persistent strong winds in the Shellbrook area on that day, as well as the age of the pole.

The roads in Shell Lake are getting a much-deserved facelift this summer, thanks to budgeted spending by the Village of Shell Lake.

Road crews were busy repaving Main Street last Thursday, and Shell Lake Mayor Anita Weiers says folks can expect to see them again in a couple of weeks, when they redo 1st Avenue W going past the Shell Lake Hotel & Bar.

Continued on page 13



Sally and Rene Turgeon (left) and some of their staff at Papa Rene's in Spiritwood were hard at work on Monday filling orders.

Looking back on the year that was 2020

August Cont'd

Harold and Marjorie Fast were sad to have to cancel their annual Fly In Breakfast due to the pandemic's restrictions. The annual event would bring in a dozen or more pilots on their small aircrafts as well as neighbours and other members of the Spiritwood and area community for a morning of pancakes, socializing, and if the weather was permitting, a little bit of flying. The Fast's are hoping as restrictions lift that they will be able to resume the event next year and have it be even bigger and better.

Following a months-long race that went all the way to the final ballot, Erin O'Toole has been tapped to replace Andrew Scheer as the leader of Canada's Conservative Party.

After a summer lacking in the usual fundraiser barbecues for local organizations and sports teams, folks from Shellbrook and area got to enjoy grilled burgers and hot dogs for a good cause on Thursday.

Joining forces with local recreation volunteers, Randy Hoback, MP for the Prince Albert riding, hosted a physically distanced drive-thru barbecue, raising \$2,076.95 to help cover the costs of the new seats at the Richardson Pioneer Recreation Centre.



Randy Hoback, MP for the Prince Albert riding, hands out drinks to a customer at a drive-thru barbecue hosted in Shellbrook on Thursday, Aug. 20.

The staff and students of W.P. Sandin Public High School will be returning to school with a new roof over their heads, courtesy of a roof repair project undertaken by the Saskatchewan Rivers Public School Division over the summer vacation.

The Shellbrook RCMP and Saskatchewan RCMP Major Crimes Unit North are seeking the public's assistance following a suspicious death in Shellbrook on Friday evening.

According to an RCMP release, a young male was brought to Parkland Integrated Health Centre with serious injuries between 8 p.m. and 9 p.m. on Friday, Aug. 21. The male died of his injuries shortly after.

Shellbrook's town council has chosen to delay its planned upgrades to the municipal water treatment plant, in favour of pursuing an opportunity to cover a larger portion of the project through the federal government's Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program.

The decision came at council's Aug. 17 meeting, just as it was set to approve a motion to borrow up \$7.6 million to complete the project, and award the tender for the first phase of the work, which carried an estimated \$1 million price tag.

An early morning fire in the Town of Spiritwood destroyed the SaskTel building on Highway 378 on Sunday, Aug. 23.

The town was without landline and cellular services all day Sunday, and residents using SaskTel as their wireless internet provider were also without an internet connection.

SEPTEMBER

It's a waiting game, says Rav Gill of Greenco Farms Ltd., the company working to transform the former Shellbrook Union Hospital into a cannabis production facility.

Since news of the plans for the old building became public knowledge at the tail end of 2019, all the



The old Shellbrook Union Hospital has received a major facelift over the past few months, ahead of its eventual transformation into a cannabis production facility.

municipal hurdles have been cleared, and a lot of time and money has been invested in getting the facility ready.

Now, thanks to COVID-19, Gill says Greenco Farms Ltd. is stuck waiting for its Health Canada licenses to operate.

The Saskatchewan RCMP has requested an independent external investigation, following an in-custody death at the Ahtahkakoop RCMP detachment.

According to the RCMP, a 24-year-old male was taken into custody, in relation to an ongoing investigation, at approximately 4:30 a.m. on Wednesday, Aug. 26.

Speaking to the Chronicle & Herald Monday morning, Randy Jesse, a Staff Sgt. with the Moose Jaw Police Service, said two investigators have been dispatched to conduct the investigation and cautioned that details of the investigation won't be made public any time

soon.

A fallen light standard located on Shellbrook's Main Street, between the intersections of 2nd and 3rd Avenue, has been replaced by SaskPower.

The replacement was completed over a the span of a couple hours the morning of Thursday, Aug. 27, nearly three weeks after the original pole was toppled.

Past and present members of the Parkside Housing Authority gathered together to congratulate and thank one of their board members and chairman of the board Stewart Johnson for his many years of service. Stewart served the board and the community of Parkside for the past 37 years. We appreciate Stewart for all of his time and expertise!

Continued on page 14



Car owned by Battlefords Vintage Auto Club on display at the Rabbit Lake Museum on Aug. 16.



The SaskTel building was reduced to a pile of rubble following an early morning fire on Sunday, Aug. 23 leaving Spiritwood and area without landline, cell service, and some internet service. Photo submitted by Dave Hyndman



W.P. Sandin High School's roof is getting some major repairs to begin the school year.

OBITUARY

Pat Gunn



GUNN – Pat

It is with heavy hearts, the family of Francis Patricia (Pat) Gunn advise of her passing on December 16, 2020 at the Luther

Special Care Home in Saskatoon.

Born October 15, 1930 in Wells, Somerset, England, Pat grew up on the Coles family farm in Foxdale, married and raised her family at a neighboring farm in Foxdale. Pat was a young widow when she became one of the original staff at the time the Shellbrook Nursing Home opened; loving her job to retirement in 1995 when she left the farm and moved into Shellbrook. Her passion for friends, family, gardening, curling, golf, politics, and travel kept her busy.

Her active involvements in the St. Andrews Anglican Church, the Shellbrook Auxiliary/Legion, CNIB and the Shellbrook Housing Authority were interrupted by the on-set of Alzheimer's, leaving her beloved home, yard, and community in 2012. Following that her greatest pleasure were her return visits to Shellbrook and Foxdale.

Patricia is loved and remembered by her sister Sheila Coles of Prince Albert, sister-in-law Ruth Coles also of Prince Albert; children Derek (Martha McDonagh),

Gerald (Arlene), and Janet; grandchildren Geofrey (Mallory), Winnipeg, Cameron (Alexandra), Regina, Phillip (Suvisa), Calgary, and Patrick of Vanderhoof; great grandchildren Albert, Zacharia, Anthony, and Athena; the Coles and Gunn nieces & nephews and their families; cousins Nellie Berberski of Saskatoon and George Benjafield of Plymouth, England; and her many friends and their families. Pat was predeceased by her parents, Fay and Don Coles, her parents' in-laws Mabel and George Gunn Sr,

husband George Gunn Jr, brother Les Coles, the in-laws, Lois (Ron) Everett, Victor (Gertie) Gunn, Clara Coles, Glenna (Lee) England, Jessie (Gary) Crabbe, nieces Zena-Marie, Sharon and Barbara, nephews Garry and Gordon, and Pat's very special cousin Audrey Vaughn, Surrey, England (these women hosted each other's visits over a span of 70 years).

Family wish to thank the staff of Luther Special Care, the Franklin Retirement Community, Dr. N. Khayyam and ophthalmologist Dr. Ravi for their

supportive and compassionate care of our mother, sister, aunt and friend. The internment will take place at a later date. In lieu of tributes, memorial donations may be made in memory of Patricia to the Honeywood Farms, Parkside, Sask.

Family and friends wishing to send online condolences are welcome to visit www.beaulacfuneralhome.com Arrangements have been entrusted to the care of Beau "Lac" Funeral Home, Tammy Smart – Funeral Director, Shellbrook, SK. 306-747-2828.

Looking back on the year that was 2020

September Cont'd

Kai and Janet Wong, owner-operators of the Leask Cafeteria, have sold the business and are retiring to Saskatoon.



Owner-operators of the Leask Cafeteria, Leo Jiang and his wife, Jennie Li with their son, Andy, Janet and Kai Wong.

Kai and Janet purchased the cafeteria in late 1990 and moved from Saskatoon to Leask with their sons. Andy was two at the time, and Jason was only two-months-old. On Jan. 1, 1991, they opened their doors, serving the community of Leask and the surrounding area for almost thirty years.

With the announcement of the Municipal Economic Enhancement Program, the R.M. of Spiritwood has received approval for \$175,000 to assist in the construction of a new public works building.

The 50' x 60' heated building will provide additional work space for equipment maintenance and house snow plows for the winter months.

The 4 a.m. fire that

sent Spiritwood's SaskTel building up in flames on Aug. 23 left the area without landline, cellular, and internet services.

SaskTel was able to construct a cellular on wheels overnight Sunday to restore cellular service to the area, but landline and internet services were still unavailable.

SaskTel was able to construct a new permanent building during the week of Aug. 22 while crews cleared the debris from the lot. The new building was moved on to the lot on Aug. 29 and crews could be seen wiring the building throughout the day Sunday.

Tuesday morning was the first day of classes for schools in the Shellbrook and Spiritwood areas, marking the first time schools have been in session since being shutdown by COVID-19 in March. At Shellbrook Elementary School, students attending school in person were asked to gather in clusters with their homeroom teacher to be walked through some back-to-school safety basics, before being guided into the school.

Talk about taking it down to the wire. Brendon Canaday and Devin Dicus, both well known in the Shellbrook area for their exploits at the rink and on the links, earned Saskatchewan's Northern Team Championship at the Cooke Municipal Golf Course over the Labour Day long weekend.

The Village of Debden made upgrades to infrastructure in late August, including work on

roads and sidewalks. The work included replacement of sidewalks on Main Street, on the southwest side of the intersection with 2nd Avenue, as well as resurfacing of 2nd Avenue up to the Debden rink. Debden Mayor Rod Fisher says the projects were part of the village's infrastructure upgrade program, and preparation for Debden's upcoming centennial.

A year ago, Shellbrook's own Brian Hagel became royalty when he was named the Take off Pounds Sensibly (TOPS) weight loss king for Saskatchewan.

Now, with his wife Vici's help, Brian is hoping to impart this mindset on the members of Shellbrook's TOPS chapter, and support them on their own weight loss journey.

A few people braved the cold and rain showers in Debden last Thursday, to listen to an update on what was happening in Ottawa from Gary Vidal, Member of Parliament for the Desnethé-Missinippi-Churchill River riding.

Continued on page 16



Roads in Debden received some much-needed TLC, as part of the village's planned maintenance and preparation for its upcoming centennial.



A new SaskTel building was moved onto the cleared site just six days after a fire destroyed the old one in Spiritwood.



Scott Moe announces Highway 24 upgrades at Spiritwood's Cameron-Bourdages Memorial Park.

The best quips and quotes from 2020: part 2

• RJ Currie of sportsdeke.com: "Reuters reports a British man spent five years building a high-performance vehicle from scratch, despite being blind. So what's the NY Knicks' excuse?"

• Public-service tweet from Ottawa Public Health: "We admit, sometimes wearing a mask in public isn't the most fashionable or comfortable choice. But some people wear Leafs jerseys, so yeah. Just saying."

• Dwight Perry of the Seattle Times: "Sheila Ford Hamp, 69, has replaced her mother, 94-year-old Martha Firestone Ford, as Detroit Lions owner and chairperson. In other words, the Lions traded in their 1925 Ford for a 1951 model."

• Patti Dawn Swansson, aka the River City Renegade, on attempts by major league sports to resume playing: "I'm more excited to see toilet paper back on the shelves than shinny on the ice, hoops on the hardwood and rounders in the ballyard."

• Headline in TheOnion.com: "Washington Redskins Change Their Name To The D.C. Redskins"

• Headline at abcnews.com: "(Redskins owner) Daniel Snyder realizes he really likes money and will look into changing his team's name."

• Jack Finarelli of SportsCurmudgeon.com, on QB Bobby Layne putting a curse on the Lions when they traded him following their 1957 title season, vowing they wouldn't win another one for 50 years: "He underestimated the ineptitude of the franchise."

• Comedy writer Brad Dickson of Omaha, on Nebraska Cornhusker football fans: "There's something seriously wrong with people who will wear a rubber corn-cob head on their noggin but won't be seen in public in a Covid mask."

• Baseball writer Buster Olney of ESPN, on Dr. Anthony Fauci's wild ceremonial first pitch to start the MLB season: "A socially distant first pitch."

• Comedy writer Alex Kasberg: "Effective immediately, Washington will call itself the Washington Football Team. Apparently the name 'We Can't Think of Anything Else' was already taken."

• Sean McIndoe, in the Athletic, surmising how a decision may have been made about how the Columbus Blue Jackets were named: "As if a toddler was asked to name a team based on the first thing he saw on the floor in his front hallway."

• RJ Currie of sportsdeke.com: "The Jays released left-handed reliever Marc Rzepczynski. He was hampered by a high pitch count and a low vowel count."

• From the Seattle Kraken Twitter feed: "Fun fact: We are the only team that Connor McDavid has not scored against."

• Craig Calcaterra of NBCsports.com, via Twitter, on Nationals catcher Tres Barrera's 80-game suspension for testing positive for Dehydrochloromethyltestosterone: "If he can spell it on the first try, they should reduce his suspension to 40 games."

• Tim Hunter of Everett's KRKO Radio, on other CO-



BRUCE
PENTON

VID-19 victims, Big Ten and Pac-12 football: "I'm waiting for the leaves to announce they're not turning colour this year."

• Another one from Alex Kasberg: "The city of Los Angeles is going to name a street after Kobe Bryant. It will be like any other street except you are not allowed to pass on it."

• Comedy writer Brad Dickson of Omaha: "On the news tonight all they talked about were boycotts, protests, riots, violence, dissension, disease, lawsuits and court cases. And that was just the sportscast."

• Patti Dawn Swansson again, after Saskatchewan premier Scott Moe declared Sept. 6 to be Roughriders' Day across the province and for everyone to wear green and white: "A melonhead needs urging to wear green and white like a priest needs a reminder to say prayers on Sunday."

• Headline in the New York Daily News: "Normalcy in 2020 at last ... Jets remain Jets!"

• Sign of the times, from Dwight Perry: "Banner towed behind an airplane above Dodger Stadium when

Houston paid a recent visit: "Hey, Astr*s, try stealing this sign!"

• Joel Beall of GolfWorld, on Matthew Wolff shooting a third-round 65 at Winged Foot during the third round of the U.S. Open. "He did so hitting from spots requiring a compass rather than a yardage book, needing a weedwacker instead of a wedge."

• Brad Dickson again: "In Nebraska high school football Franklin defeated Elba by a score of 60-6. The Elba coach said his players could've come back from such a deficit if only they were playing the Atlanta Falcons."

• Boxer Gerald Meerschaert, who lost his last fight in 17 seconds, on Twitter while watching the Trump-Biden debate: "I wish this debate lasted as long as my last fight."

• Dwight Perry again: "The Yankees — for the first time in their 120-year history — hit into five double plays and committed four errors in the same game in a 4-3, 10-inning loss to the Marlins. Or as the 1962 Mets used to call such an occurrence, Friday."

• RJ Currie of sportsdeke.com: "The Nebraska State Fair broke a record for the longest parade of old tractors when over 1,100 showed up. In Canada, that's just part of the last-minute Labour Day crowd at Mosaic Stadium."

• Patti Dawn Swansson again: "I think (Jets' Blake) Wheeler is still a useful player, but a year from now he'll be slower than a sports writer reaching for the bar tab."

• Reader Steven S., responding to Sean McIndoe's

TheAthletic.com story on the 1977 NHL draft, where it was pointed out Larry Robinson's brother Moe was drafted by the Habs in the third round: "I think the big question is who drafted curly Robinson?" Reader Tim M. countered with: "I could have sworn he played for the Canyuk-nyuk-nyuks."

• @rslashpatriots, via Twitter: "The Jets are 750:1 to win the Super Bowl, meaning if you bet \$100 on it, you would lose \$100."

• Steve Simmons of the Toronto Sun: "Leafs have signed Joe Thornton. They're aiming to win the 2012 Stanley Cup."

• Dwight Perry of the Seattle Times: "Provincial authorities have told the Ontario Hockey League that if it wants to play amid a pandemic this season that it will have to ban bodychecking and fighting. In a related story, Don Cherry's head just exploded."

• Michael Farber of si.com, on Twitter: "Watching a parade from the bullpen early in a 1-0 World Series game is as entertaining as watching Bryson DeChambeau check his notes."

• Another one from Alex Kasberg: "Federal agents are questioning USC football players in connection to a fraud investigation. And the penalties could be stiff. Some of the players may be forced to attend classes."

• Fark.com: "Jimmy Kimmel to Clayton Kershaw and Cody Bellinger: 'Was it easier to win the World Series when the other team wasn't cheating?'"

• Conor Russell, head pro

at Portmarnock in Ireland, on public opposition to the government declaring a six-week ban on golf to help fight COVID-19: "At end-of-day (petitions) could be as useful as an ashtray on a motor-bike."

• Alex Kasberg again: "The New York Jets are going to follow Donald Trump's lead and are going to sue all 16 teams that beat them."

• Headline at @NotSportsCenter: "Report: Trevor Lawrence says his doctors have told him he'll be cleared from COVID to play football again as soon as the Jets draft another QB."

• Steve Simmons of the Toronto Sun: "History and irony: The mayor of Montreal is calling for all the citizens to wear masks. Her name is Plante."

• Patriots QB Cam Newton, to reporters, on his dietary habits: "Just because I'm vegan doesn't mean I just go outside and pick up grass and, you know, put ranch on it. ... I still love good food."

• Charles Barkley, on trying hypnotism to help correct his funky, hitchy golf swing: "All I got was a good nap. I woke up with the same crappy swing."

• Sign in front of a church in Winnipeg: "Wear a mask. It's not like we're asking you to wear a Riders' jersey."

• Saints coach Sean Payton, after his team's 31-3 win over hometown Denver Broncos, who played the NFL game without a legitimate quarterback, thanks to COVID-19: "I felt bad for the cardboard fans."

Care to comment? Email brucepenton2003@yahoo.ca

What happens when you don't advertise?

Very little.

Looking back on the year that was 2020

September Cont'd

The Spiritwood and District Lions Club kicked off the start of their 2020/2021 season with a socially distanced meeting at the Legion Hall.

The meeting provided an opportunity for Lions' past president Bryan Ferguson to present the 2019/2020 Lion of the Year Award to Lion Shelley Allard.

It was possibly the last warm day of the season on Saturday, Sept. 5, as Spiritwood High School was finally able to hold a graduation ceremony to send off the class of 2020.

Sidewalks in the town of Big River got a much-needed facelift at the tail end of August, as part of a multi-year budgeted project to upgrade local infrastructure.

The resurfacing work, completed by Saskatoon-based Lajcon and funded, in part, by the province's Municipal Economic Enhancement Program (MEEP), cost about \$35,000 and saw sidewalks along Highway 55, from Forbes Street up to Main Street on the east side, resurfaced or replaced.

Students in Blaine Lake will be learning in a brand new K-12 school as soon as 2023.

That's according to Premier Scott Moe, Deputy Premier and Education Minister Gordon Wyant, Batoche MLA Delbert Kirsch, and officials from Prairie Spirit School Division, who were in the community morning to announce the beginning of the planning and design phase for the replacement for Blaine Lake Composite School.

Saskatchewan Premier Scott Moe was in Spiritwood Tuesday, Sept. 8, to announce his government's plan to upgrade 50 kms of Highway 24 between Spiritwood and Chitek Lake.

Construction is scheduled to begin in 2021.

The Town of Spiritwood submitted an application for the Provincial Traffic Safety Fund Grant through SGI for a Speed Reduction Initiative & Pedestrian Safety Project. The application was approved and the town received a \$9,033.34 grant for two portable Ped-In-A-Bag School Stop Signs and two Pedestrian-Activated Crosswalk Signs.



Spiritwood Lions' Past President Bryan Ferguson (right) congratulated Lion Shelley Allard (left) on being named Spiritwood and District Lion of the Year for the 2019/2020 season.

Blaine Lake RCMP is seeking the public's assistance in identifying five individuals who are persons of interest in an assault and robbery that took place outside of an R.M. of Blaine Lake building.

Big River RCMP are seeking multiple suspects, following a break and enter and theft at Pawn Prophet in Debden.

Police say an employee of the shop reported seeing three males, all dressed in black and wearing masks, exit through the back door of the shop carrying stolen merchandise shortly after 6 a.m.

The Government of Saskatchewan announced it has recommended more than 120 infrastructure projects to Canada for final approval under the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program (ICIP).

Including a rebuild of the curling rink in Canwood, valued at \$450,000 and sewage pumping station replacements in Spiritwood, totalling \$2.1 million, the projects represent more than \$192 million in provincial funding.

There were a couple blasts from the past to take in this past weekend in Spiritwood that involved driving around in your car. The town was taken

all the way to the national contest with their entries.

Despite the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, and the fears of a rising second wave, this fall will be filled with most of the usual tricks and treats.

In the latest update to its Re-Open Saskatchewan Plan, the provincial government and health officials gave the go ahead to trick-or-treaters, albeit with a few caveats and guidelines.

The race is on.

On Tuesday morning, Saskatchewan Lieutenant Governor Russ Mirasty dissolved the Legislative Assembly, signalling the beginning of the province's 29th general election.

The College of Dentistry at the University of Saskatchewan (USask) has partnered with the Big River First Nation to launch a new dental clinic, providing service to a community with limited access to oral health-care.

The clinic, which officially started taking patients on Sept. 28, is located in the Big River First Nation Health Centre. Prior to its opening, community members would travel to the nearest dental clinics in Shellbrook, Prince Albert or Saskatoon.

In what has been a year filled with protests, Saskatchewan's general election kicked off last week with a peaceful, one-person protest in Premier Scott Moe's own backyard.

Crystal Frenette, a resident of the Prince Albert area, set up a lawn chair outside of Premier Moe's constituency office last Wednesday morning, and also affixed homemade signs to the side of the building, reading "No Small Nuclear Reactors" and "Climate Emergency."

Continued on page 17

back a few decades and were treated to a drive thru burger sale courtesy of the Spiritwood and District Lions Club and a drive-in movie Sponsored by Prairie Centre Credit Union.

OCTOBER

With school back in session for the first time since March, the Shellbrook Legion was finally able to conclude some leftover business from 2019's Remembrance Day Poster and Literary contest last Wednesday.

Though Legion representatives Helen and Henri Dagenais were able to hand out the local branch prizes in the fall of 2019, the forced closure of schools prevented them from handing out the prizes from the higher levels of competition.

This year, there were a few of them to hand out, as Reese Galloway and Marcail Philp, both Grade 7 students at W.P. Sandin High School, made it



A big screen was brought in to the SAD SAAC Park for Prairie Centre Credit Union's Drive In Movie Night.



W.P. Sandin High School students Reese Galloway and Marcail Philp (front) accept their awards from Shellbrook Legion members Henri and Helen Dagenais, and principal Karisa Klaassen. Galloway's junior black and white poster, and Philp's essay, made it all the way to nationals.

Looking back on the year that was 2020

October cont'd

A registered nurse from the Sturgeon Lake First Nation was fêted alongside her colleagues last Wednesday, after winning the 2019 Saskatchewan Registered Nurses Association's Award of Excellence for Truth and Reconciliation in health-care.

Norma Rabbitskin, who has served as a registered nurse for 31 years, was recognized for incorporating cultural practices into primary care.

The main outdoor project the Idylwild Lodge Auxiliary has been working on for the past 8 years is the Gazebo project. After years of fundraising and canvassing, construction finally began in 2017. Louis Marion was the project manager and L&L Construction built the beautiful Gazebo that stands there today. The project was completed this past Saturday with the installation of sod.

The sun was out and shining on Saturday, Oct. 3 for the Fall Fun Run hosted at the Spiritwood Golf Course.

Organizer, Lucinda Smolinski, was happy to see her available spots filled up by participants wanting to either walk or run 5 or 10 kilometers around the Spiritwood Golf Course. The group was mainly female, with a few men joining in and even some kids who ran/walked a 2 km loop.

Saskatchewan Party Leader Scott Moe is self-monitoring for COVID-19 symptoms after a potential exposure to the novel coronavirus during a recent campaign event.

An idea that has been three years in the making is finally coming to fruition for the owners of the Spiritwood Golf Course. One owner, Jim Bedi, described the province as hav-



Norma Rabbitskin, a registered nurse from the Sturgeon Lake First Nation, was recently honoured by the Saskatchewan Registered Nurses Association.

ing been overbuilt with golf courses, making it a very competitive market. Revenues from golf alone were not going to be enough to keep the golf course afloat.

With the help of Golfshape Development Inc., the owners finally settled on a design that suited them and their available space. Construction began this year, overseen by Pete Klassan, to create a park with 26 seasonal sites and 5 daily rental sites.

The first annual Thickwood Hills Adventures Arts and Crafts Show is in the books, and owners Doreen Kemp and Bryant Churko, who hosted the show and sale on Sept. 18, 19 and 20, say the credit for its success goes to all who participated.

Saturday, Oct. 17 was a day of many firsts.

For starters, it marked the first time the Richardson Pioneer Recreation Centre was home to hockey action and a large crowd since the COVID-19 pandemic reached Sas-



The Blue Sky Country Boys had the Rabbit Lake Community Hall rockin' and rollin' at an old-time concert and supper.

katchewan in March, shutting down hockey while many local teams were in the midst of playoff runs.

Second, it was the first game — albeit an exhibition match — for the Parkland AA U18 Elks, who played host to the Prince Albert Vikings in their debut, in front of a crowd of 150 enthusiastic spectators.

Finally, it was also the first victory for the team, which managed to top the visiting Vikings 5-4.

The Village of Canwood may soon have a new curling rink, after a \$450,000 infrastructure project to rebuild the facility was forwarded to the federal Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program (ICIP) by the provincial government.

Erin Robertson, administrator for the Village of Canwood, says the curling rink project will involve a demolition and rebuild of the portion of the building over the three sheets of curling ice, as well as the addition of a concrete ice surface, which will allow the rink to be a multiuse, year-round facility.

On Oct. 15, 2020, the Saskatchewan RCMP Major Crimes Unit North and

officers from the Ahtahkakoop RCMP Detachment attended the scene of a suspicious sudden death at a rural property approximately 32 kilometres north of Shellbrook, SK, along Highway 240.

The victim has been identified as 48-year-old Bradley John Schmalz, a resident of the RM of Shellbrook.

The Shell Lake Legion had applied for funding through the Community War Memorial Fund and were approved for our project of restoring our Memorials.

The funding allowed us to repaint the 720 feet of railing running up the hill, and sand and repaint the crosses in the Legion Memorial plot of the Shell Lake Cemetery, and replace the name plates.

Dahnis Duquette was nominated by the Staff at Leask Community School and then had to complete a personal application before being selected from many applicants across the Province to represent Prairie Spirit School Division as a member of the Provincial Youth Council. She is among 12 students across Saskatchewan that will provide their views and ideas to the Minister of Education.

Continued on page 18



21 volunteers were out early on a Saturday morning to help haul, lay, and trim the sod to fit the space outside the Idylwild Lodge.



The Parkland AA U18 Elks had their first action of the 2020-2021 season on Saturday. The team hosted the Prince Albert Vikings at the Richardson Pioneer Recreation Centre.

Looking back on the year that was 2020

October Cont'd

The Spiritwood and District Lions Club hosted their annual District Governor's visit on Oct. 8 at the Legion Hall in Spiritwood.

Spiritwood Lions President, Marg Pretli, was presented with the Marvin Chambers Fellowship for contributions to the Saskatchewan Lions Foundation and the Melvin Jones Fellowship for contributions to the Lions Clubs International Foundation.

Lion Dave Hyndman received the very special honour of being inducted into the Saskatchewan Lions Hall of Fame this year.

In a crushing defeat for Ryan Meili and the opposition Saskatchewan NDP, Premier and Rosthern-Shellbrook MLA, Scott Moe, has received his first public mandate since taking over leadership of the Saskatchewan Party in 2018.

Along with Moe's overwhelming mandate, Saskatchewan Rivers MLA Nadine Wilson, and Meadow Lake MLA Jeremy Harrison also won in landslides.

In what has, thus far, been a school year unlike any other in recent history, the numbers are in for the Saskatchewan Rivers Public School Division (SRPSD). And, as is to be expected, they appear to reflect the ongoing reality of the COVID-19 pandemic.

For all schools but one in the coverage area of the Shellbrook Chronicle, the enrolment numbers are (unsurprisingly) lower than in years previous, bringing an end to five years of student body growth in the area.

As COVID-19 case numbers continue to rise across the province, the Sturgeon Lake Cree Nation has been declared the site of an outbreak.



Lion Dave Hyndman was inducted into the Saskatchewan Lions Hall of Fame at the Spiritwood Lions District Governors Banquet. He is pictured here with his wife Glenda Hyndman.

The Spiritwood and Area Recreation Centre has been slowly reopening its doors to the public. The mezzanine has been available for rentals since Sept. 9 with Yoga, Dance class, and step fitness all starting up.

Hockey players and skaters were able to hit the rink again Oct. 26, curlers should be back out sweeping Nov. 2, and bowling is hopefully reopening Nov. 2.

NOVEMBER

After Monday, Nov. 9, there will be some new faces around Shellbrook Town Council's table, including a new face in the mayor's seat that has been occupied Mayor George Tomporowski for the past 11 years.

While COVID-19 may have resulted in the cancellation of the Halloween festivities that many of us are used to — including W.P Sandin High School's always well attended Quarter Carni-



Instructors from Focus Goaltending help the young goalies hone their skills at a goaltending school in Shellbrook made possible by the Rolston Memorial Fund.

val and haunted house — the town of Shellbrook came through and provided some treats for local ghouls and goblins on Oct. 31.

At the Richardson Pioneer Recreation Centre, the town hosted two free hour-long public skate sessions from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Each session was open for up to 30 skaters

Eleven goaltenders have gathered once again for the second year in a row to work on and improve their skills, thanks to the Rolston Memorial Fund. This year's list of goalies are: Brody Moe, Emmet Spriggs, Ty Keyowski, Brooklyn Anderson, Kendall Cook, Camerin Smart, Matt Muller, Eli Foy, Nikita Krayetski, Camden Altstadt, and Jace Dorward

The Shellbrook Public Library's first "Story Stroll" was a great success, even with the cold weather. 116 children registered and received story packets, then they travelled down the Story Stroll path to enjoy the story.

Pelican Lake First Nation and Witcheakan Lake First Nation and Paper Excellence Canada have announced the signing of a Letter of Intent that sets out the intentions of all parties to build a collaborative relationship with each other in Saskatchewan.

Jim and Elaine Tomkins hosted an-

other Rabbit Lake music and dinner night for a lucky few on Oct. 24.

Health guidelines were followed and the evening was enjoyed by all in attendance.

A supper by Jeanette and Tina was followed by some lively old time rock n' roll and classic country music played by Freddie and Sheila Pelletier.

Halloween was different than usual this year as a result of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

Children were still able to go around trick-or-treating if they chose to do so, however those wishing to hand out candy were asked to tie an orange ribbon on their door handle to indicate that it was safe to trick-or-treat there.

Nearly a year after it was announced that Shellbrook would be home to an U18 AA hockey team, the wait to see the Parkland Elks in action is finally over.

And boy, the team sure didn't disappoint.

The Parkland Elks opened their season on home ice against the Humboldt Broncos this past weekend, scoring a decisive 6-3 victory in front of an enthusiastic hometown crowd.

The ballots for municipal elections have all been tallied, and councils in towns, villages and Rural Municipalities will have a mix of new and familiar faces when they reconvene for their next meetings.

In the Town of Shellbrook, Amund Otterson was promoted to Mayor, receiving 307 votes to Donovan Kultgen's 163.

As for the council election, Cheryl Ledding and Bruce Clements were selected from the five competing candidates with 211 votes and 185 votes, respectively.

In the R.M. of Shellbrook, Christine Strube earned a decisive victory in the Division 3 race, besting opponent Curtis Bloom by 35 votes.



After 51 years of cutting hair, Jerry Heinbigner, owner of Jerry's Barber Shop in Leask, decided to hang up his scissors and retire.



Kaydence and Aubrielle Booth enjoy the Shellbrook Library's Story Stroll.

Continued on page 19

Looking back on the year that was 2020

November cont'd

In the Town of Blaine Lake ratepayers opted to elect a new mayor, giving Matthew Hutchings 136 votes to Allan Sorenson's 66 and Ernest Crowder's 26. The council election, meanwhile, brings a mix of new and returning councillors, including Jason Weber (143), Melissa Johnson (126), Rodger Pederson (116), Bev Breland (109), Darlene Harder (109), and Jennifer Gutknecht (104).

The R.M. of Blaine Lake also has someone new (sort of) at the head of the council table. Gerry Strelieff was able to win election as reeve with 105 votes, defeating Glenn Lamontagne (69) and Christine Dargin-Linsley (52).

As for the Division 1 seat, it will be occupied by Michael Chudskov, who beat out Brian Verbonac by just six votes (27 to 21). In a Division 5 nail-biter, incumbent John Priestley managed to hold onto his seat, scoring 17 votes to Ryan Dagenais' 16.

In the Village of Marcelin, it's mostly familiar faces, as Tom Hatfield (5), Craig Verbonac (49), and Lynn McCormick (44) were all re-elected. Newly elected is Lindsay Chmil (46).

By stark contrast, the Village of Leask has an all new council, including Valerie Priestley, Warren Morley, Murray Donohue, and Shea Donohue.

With two new potential Reeves on offer, voters in the R.M. of Leask chose to support the new face, Craig Hamilton, over long-time Division 4 councillor Edward Musich. Hamilton Received 179 votes Musich's 40.



Shellbrook Legion member Anne Gaboury reads out the roll call, honouring Shellbrook and area soldiers who fell in combat, during the Shellbrook Legion's Remembrance Day ceremony.

Rounding out the results along Highway 40, Parkside's council election saw Wayne Pringle receive 38 votes, and Perry Lecomte receive 26 ballots to earn re-election.

Moving north along Highway 55, Village of Canwood mayor Robert Thompson fended off a challenge from councillor Lloyd Bather, defeating him by a tally of 93 to 66. He'll have an all new council to work with, as Ken Moar (100), Ron Willner (91), Svend Hansen (83), and Lorne Benson (82) were elected to fill the four available seats.

In the R.M. of Canwood, meanwhile, Ralph Korody was re-elected as Division 1 councillor, receiving 37 votes to Gordon Skavlebo's 19.

As for the village of Debden, its council race delivered a mix of new and old councillors, with incumbent Norman Cyr (79), Raymond Brad (73), Cecile Compagna (69), and incum-

bent Paulin Beaulac (53) being chosen to fill the four available seats.

Finally, the R.M. of Big River's Reeve contest saw Dana Pettigrew unseat incumbent John Teer by a comfortable margin of 337 to 136. In Division 3 it was a similar story, with Jeff Wiebe earning 114 votes to Devin Block's 79.

In other R.M. results, the R.M. of Medstead saw the tightest possible race for Reeve, as Tracy Lockhart defeated Bernie McClean 79 to 78. The R.M. of Spiritwood's Division 1 race, meanwhile, saw Larry Vaagen oust incumbent Doug Johnson by a vote count of 81 to 45.

Lastly, in the Village of Leoville, incumbent Ron Craswell held onto his mayor's seat, earning 96 votes to Louise Beaulac's 77.

As for the council election, Marcel Bruneau and Ernest Denis earned re-election, while Mario Ruel and Beau Vandale



Some members and associates of the Spiritwood Legion held a small service of 8 people at the Spiritwood Legion Hall on Nov. 11.

were newly elected.

Aside from the municipal elections, the Saskatchewan Rivers Public School Division also held a school board election in Subdivision 4. In that race, newcomer Cher Bloom easily unseated incumbent John McIvor by a tally of 317 to 110.

Saskatchewan's hockey community is mourning the loss of one of the province's NHL greats, following the passing of Jim "Chief" Neilson at age 79.

Neilson was born in Big River to a Danish father and Indigenous mother. He was sent to an orphanage at age five and spent his 12 years there learning to play hockey, before launching a 16-year NHL career with the New York Rangers at age 21.

Brooklin Fry, a 15-year-old youth golfer from Shell Lake, had an eventful 2020 season which she thought would have wrapped up with her second place finish in Waskesiu's Ladies Lobstick tournament in

August. She and her family were surprised when she received an invitation to participate in Golf Canada's Junior Camp at Bear Mountain Resort in Victoria BC.

Hot off their first season and home opener, the Parkland AA U18 were able to keep their win streak going, with a shaky but successful outing against the Prince Albert Vikings in Shellbrook on Friday evening.

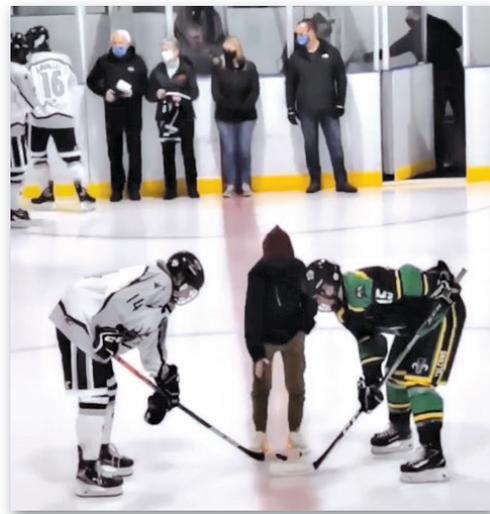
Before the action could begin, however, Shellbrook Minor Sports took a moment to honour the late Michael Clements, who passed earlier this year and was a staple in Shellbrook's hockey community throughout his minor hockey years and as the backstop of the Shellbrook Elks (a team he led to two Fort Carlton Hockey League titles).

In a Remembrance Day unlike any other, members of the Shellbrook Legion, special guests, and about 50 attendees braved blustery and snowy conditions to hold the community's annual Remembrance Day ceremony last Wednesday.

In the face of a surge of COVID-19 cases, the leadership of the Big River First Nation has announced that the community will be entering a "total lockdown."

In a memo sent to all Big River First Nation band members on Oct. 30, the Big River First Nation's chief, Jack Rayne, and its security officers outlined the new measures that will be in place. These include travel restrictions, which prohibit travel in and out of the community for anything other than groceries or medical and essential services.

Continued on page 24



A ceremonial puck-drop was held at the Friday Nov. 13 Parkland AA U18 Elks game, in honour of the late Michael Clements. With Clements' family looking on, Rylan Moe drew the honour of taking the faceoff for the Elks.



Lines at the Shellbrook Community Hall were long throughout the day, during the advanced municipal and school board election polls held on Nov. 4.

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MISSING SINCE: July 9, 2004

Height: 5' 3"

Hair: Brown

File: 3137 V

PARTICULARS: Last seen at 1:00 am on 9 July, 2004. When last seen, she was wearing a grey bunnyhug, orange shirt and blue jeans. Courtney has a birthmark on the nape of her neck and a 1 1/2 inch scar on her left shin.

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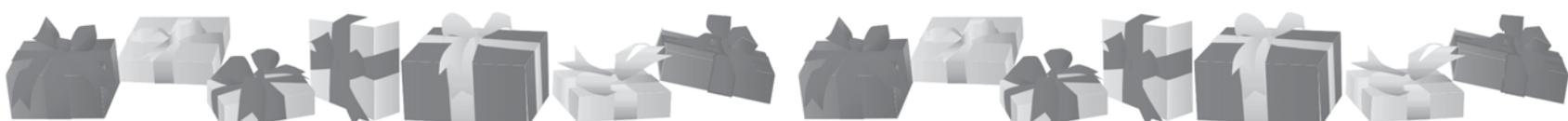
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Looking back on the year that was 2020

November cont'd

Remembrance Day was snowy, windy, and cold this year. While the weather wasn't too out of the ordinary for mid-November in Saskatchewan, it certainly was a different Nov. 11 than years past.

A small service attended by 8 people was held at the Spiritwood Legion Hall

on Nov. 11 this year to honour and remember the sacrificed made by the Canadian armed forces in past wars and current peacekeeping operations.

Late night drives along Highway 3 through Shellbrook will soon be much brighter, and safer, once Saskatche-

wan's Ministry of Highways and Infrastructure completes a project to install new lighting.

The Royal Canadian Legion Shell Lake Branch #15 held the annual Remembrance Day service on Nov. 11, with 33 people in attendance.

The service was held in the Lion's Hall with appropriate COVID-19 protocols being observed. The modified service

seemed to satisfy the needs of people to observe this day of remembrance.

It was 1979 when Murray and Helen Mack made their return to Spiritwood, building and opening Spiritwood Paint and Body. 41 years later, they are ready to say goodbye to their life's work as the shop is passed along to Murray's most recent prospects, Logan and Nolan Greyeyes.



The RM and Town of Big River wish to congratulate Douglas Panter who was presented with 'A First Bar to The Fire Services Exemplary Service Medal' in recognition of 30 years of loyal and exemplary services to public safety in Canada. The presentation was made Nov. 3, 2020, by Reeve John Teer. Your dedicated service to The Big River and District Fire Department and Community is greatly appreciated.



After 41 years of owning and operating Spiritwood Paint and Body, Murray and Helen Mack are retiring and have sold the business to former students Logan and Nolan Greyeyes. From left: Logan Greyeyes, Nolan Greyeyes, Helen Mack, Murray Mack.

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