

## CanPhill Apiaries' business is buzzing



Jeffrey Mangubat shows off the large extractor, used for spinning frames to release honey.

By BEVRA FEE

Spiritwood Herald Reporter

What started out as a “crazy idea” between two new Canadians has turned into a successful business in the area of Mayfair, Sask. CanPhill Apiaries is a partnership between Canadian investor Harold Fast and Filipino beekeeper Jeffrey Mangubat’s partners, created in 2015 when, during an English language class, Mangubat spoke of an idea to raise bees in the area.

Class teacher Edward Crossland mentioned that Mangubat’s current employer – Harold Fast, founder of Fast Genetics – would be a key contact with a large network in the agricultural world. Mangubat, who holds a degree in animal science and horticulture, thought that maybe he could pitch a plan to Dr.

Fast for two hives.

Having grown an international swine genetics company from one barn on the family’s original homestead in the Spiritwood area in 1982, Fast understood the aspect of humble beginnings. However, he pointed out to Mangubat that two hives was insufficient to attain any scale of business.

Dr. Fast toured Jeffrey and his start-up partners around the agriculture land south of Spiritwood and visited with beekeepers Terry and Diane Allchurch. They discussed the bee territory, and it was quickly determined that in order to not cross colonies (the term for collective groups of bees) Mangubat would be best locating farther south.

“Terry and Diane became great mentors to us as we got started with our bee business,” states Mangubat.

Once again, Mr. Fast’s network came into play, and the Reeve of the R.M. of Meeting Lake entered the picture. Randy Aumack knew the farmland of the area and was also aware of space available in the community of Mayfair. Another important collaborator was long-time Mayfair local Alice Grigor.

“Whenever we found a great pasture or hayfield, Alice would tell us who the property owner is and we would ask for permission to place a bee yard there,” states Mangubat.

Grigor also assisted as a member of the Mayfair Rink Board, where CanPhill would eventually secure their processing space.

In the meantime, there was the task of finding bees in order to start a colony. This time, Dr. Fast’s connections took them to Turtleford, where they were

able to source 32 hives from former Ag Rep Dick Roney and his wife Marilyn in order to establish their own colony, yielding a first harvest of two barrels of honey.

The group was then faced with the decision of whether to undertake rapid expansion or slow expansion. With rapid expansion, production is lower, but CanPhill was determined to create its own queen bees and so, with funding support from their major investor, the partnership grew rapidly to today’s 500 hives, and they are projecting 100 barrels of honey this season.

Mangubat outlined how the extraction process began in one partner’s garage with two small radial extractors. But with expansion of bees comes expansion of space for the extracting process.

*Continued on page 2*



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# CanPhill Apiaries' business is buzzing

## Continued from 1

Aumack's referral of the group to the community of Mayfair's rink board led to the group renting the kitchen area of the local repurposed hockey rink. Today, CanPhill occupies the kitchen, lobby, and part of the ice surface of the facility, where



Jeffrey Mangubat points out the smaller "brood nest" boxes where the queen is grown.

they have installed a very large extractor, along with the packaging operations, hot rooms, and barrel storage. Their honey is primarily shipped in bulk to Alberta's Bee Maid, with a secondary market being local outlets.

From Dr. Fast's perspective, the partnership was an opportunity for him to support what he recognized as a familiar scenario – young entrepreneurs who were keen on doing something new and growing their independence in agriculture.

"I felt that I could help bridge the gap between the young Filipinos and the Canadian agriculture business, thus CanPhill can also be interpreted as 'can-fill' in terms of quotas, growth, and opportunity," remarks Dr. Fast.

When asked where he sees the partnership heading, Dr. Fast recognizes that ultimately the working partners will grow to taking over the entire company.

"I have seen significant growth in the business decisions and the work of the partners as they mature in the bee industry. As well, bee producers in Saskatchewan have a strong support network among each other and are all very helpful to one another, as is evidenced by the Allchurch family and others."

The business that began in one partner's garage now employs two full time and up to 10 part time employees. Where once CanPhill was asking local farmers to allow bee yards on properties, they now have a waiting list of farmers wanting their bees to be located on fields.

CanPhill's bee yards are scattered from the Meeting Lake R.M. well into the Medstead R.M., and crossing Spiritwood R.M.

"The downside of our locations is the amount of driving, but it is a peaceful experience checking on the bees, and the scenery is very idyllic," notes Mangubat.



Jeffrey Mangubat with empty boxes (extracted earlier this summer) in storage space on the former ice surface of the Mayfair rink.



Jeffrey Mangubat outside the extraction and storage facility for CanPhill Apiaries – the former Mayfair rink.

## Shellbrook eliminates Rec Director position

By **JORDAN TWISS**  
Shellbrook Chronicle  
Reporter

The Town of Shellbrook is charting a new course when it comes to municipal recreation. In correspondence emailed to representatives of community groups and boards on Thursday, Sept. 7, Chief Administrator Officer Kelly Hoare announced the town was eliminating the role of manager of recreation and community development, currently occupied by Jessica Kernohan.

Though Hoare couldn't comment in any further detail on the internal human

resources issue, she noted in her correspondence that the role and expectations of the manager of recreation and community development position have changed many times over the years.

Hoare's correspondence also shed a little light on what drove the decision to eliminate the position.

"Council has determined that the role has never met the needs and expectations of the user groups, council, and employees, therefore council has decided to eliminate the position," she wrote. "I cannot stress this enough, this is not a reflection of the person performing the job."

As for how things work going forward, Hoare's correspondence outlines that requests from community groups and boards can be brought to the monthly recreation committee meeting for discussion.

Groups and boards are asked to submit their requests to the town office in person or in writing at least one week prior to the

monthly meeting (generally held on the last Wednesday of each month), to allow the committee enough time to research anything it needs to in order to provide appropriate information to the committee.

For now, all requests, aside from scheduling the ice and issues with a facility, will come through the town office, which will decide where they need to go. Ice scheduling will be handled by the town office during regular office hours (Monday to Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.), or by facility manager Jody Smart after hours.

Smart will also be the go-to for all facility-related issues and can be reached via email at: [facilitymanager@townofshellbrook.ca](mailto:facilitymanager@townofshellbrook.ca).

As a last piece of information in her correspondence, Hoare said town council will not be appointing council members to committees and boards, except for the library board and other boards and committees of town-owned facilities that are run by town employees.

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Dated this 11<sup>th</sup> day of September, 2023.

Donna Goertzen  
Returning Officer

# Canwood Library brings author back to Sask.

By **JORDAN TWISS**  
Shellbrook Chronicle  
Reporter

There was a homecoming at Wapiti's Canwood Public Library on Tuesday, Sept. 5, as Saskatchewan-born author Charlotte Sloan made the trip from Devon, Alta., with family members to treat library patrons to an afternoon of readings, music, and good, down-home visiting.

Originally from Maymont, Sloan left Saskatchewan in 1982 and moved to Alberta for work, prior to living in a number of other places, including overseas, for a time. Though she left

the province more than 40 years ago, she says she still considers Saskatchewan her home and loves the feeling of coming back.

As a writer, Sloan got her start in her teen years and spent what she calls her "younger life" writing for family magazines. While she always enjoyed the thrill of having her work published, life and work, which for her involves being a full-time caregiver to two women with special needs, forced her to put writing on the back burner.

Then, like so many other people, her life was changed by the COVID-19 pandemic, allowing her to

rediscover her love of writing.

Now, she refers to writing as her "fun time." And over a year and half, she used this fun time to write the four books in her Wandering Back to Saskatchewan series (*Dot on the Prairie*, *Sure as the River*, *Something to Say*, and *Hold Your Horses*).

"If I'm going to write a book, I like to figure out what my theme or message is. During COVID, we were locked up, and I was just wondering if the kids of today would be able to survive all the pressures," Sloan said, noting that this got her reflecting about what life was like for kids



**Author Charlotte Sloan reads from *Dot on The Prairie*, the first book in her Wandering Back to Saskatchewan Series.**

in the 1950s.

"I thought I'd like to capture what life was like for a farm kid in Saskatchewan in the 1950s. It's such a transition from that to the kind of life we live now."

This reflection led her to write and self-publish the first Wandering Back to Saskatchewan book, *Dot on the Prairie*, about 10-year-old Dot Cleaver, a 1950s prairie girl learning to overcome life's hardships.

Sloan says she chose to self-publish because the traditional publishing route can be costly and slow. With the help of a cover designer and formatter she discovered on Fiverr, the self-publishing process proved to be easier, allowing her to send copies of her books to any printer and have them all come back exactly the same.

Despite the ease of the publishing process, and her lifelong experience as a writer, Sloan says she was still nervous about how her books would be received.

"I was quite timid about flinging them out, because I thought, 'Maybe this is junk. I don't know.' But they just went over so well. That was very gratifying for me, and I realized they're making people happy," she said, noting that older audiences, especially, appreciate the books because they offer a

way for them to relive old memories.

"It's not so much about me, or how I feel, or is this good enough. Loads of people absolutely love them, and that was quite a shock to me at the beginning."

The love for Sloan's Wandering Back to Saskatchewan series was shared at the Canwood Public Library last Tuesday, as Sloan read passages from her books interspersed with era-appropriate music played by Erin Fore-

man, her niece from North Battleford.

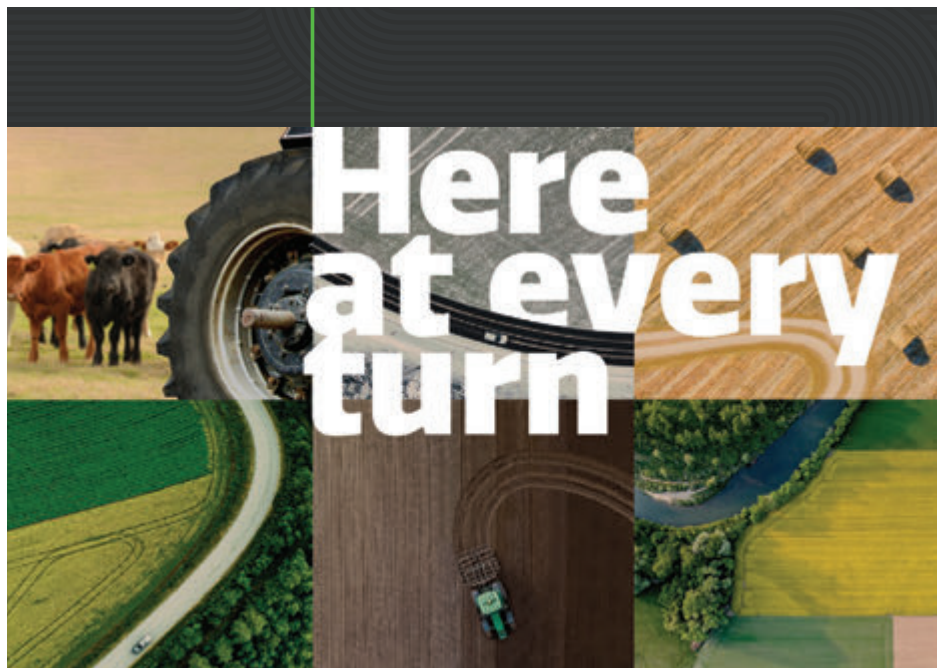
As a special treat for library patrons, Sloan also screened the trailer for *Dot's Diary: 1955*, a short film based on *Dot on the Prairie* produced by her grandson's company, Dream Labs Productions.

Sloan says the film will eventually be released on YouTube. In the meantime, she's already hard at work on some other writing projects.

"I like to have a purpose," she said.



**Author Charlotte Sloan talks with a patron after her reading at the Canwood Public Library.**  
Photos courtesy of Dream Labs Productions



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## Cons' policy convention points to out of touch party

As Conservative Leader Pierre Poilievre arrived in Québec City last Thursday for his party's policy convention, he found himself in an enviable position.

Though most new party leaders have to play catch up to mount any serious challenge against the ruling government, Mr. Poilievre has seen his party become the presumptive front runner in the next federal election after just one year at the helm.

To be fair, the margin is hardly insurmountable for Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's Liberals (Nanos polling from the end of August had support for the Conservatives and the Liberals at 33.1 per cent and 29.7 per cent, respectively). But increasingly, it seems like Mr. Poilievre's election strategy should focus less on pulling out all the stops to win and more on just not losing.

Unfortunately, it's not always this easy when the policies being presented at his party's policy convention are not his own, but those of party members.

Erin O'Toole, Mr. Poilievre's predecessor as Conservative Leader, learned this truth the hard way at the party's policy convention in 2021, when delegates voted against expanding the party's policy on climate change to state that the party "recognizes that climate change is real" and is "willing to act."

Though the objection to the policy change likely stemmed more from another provision that called on businesses in high-polluting industries to take more responsibility and reduce their greenhouse gas emissions, the rejection of the policy put Mr. O'Toole in an impossible position.

Unfairly, he was branded the leader of a party that didn't believe in climate change. And even after he defied his base by implementing the Conservative Party's first-ever climate change policy, he couldn't shake the party's label as climate deniers.

The rest, as they say, is history.

Mr. O'Toole led the Conservatives to their third consecutive electoral defeat, allowing the Liberals and the NDP to forge a pact that all but assures Mr. Trudeau's government will hold on to power until the next federal election in 2025.

More than two years later, Mr. Poilievre didn't enter his first policy convention with the same stinking climate



JORDAN TWISS  
~  
News Editor

change albatross hanging around his neck.

The policy convention, which was meant to pencil in a rough course for the party in the next federal election, saw members ready to discuss environmental and energy policy through the lens of improving existing technology and researching carbon capture technology, battery-based storage, and small modular reactors (in contrast to the Liberals' carbon tax policy).

Despite this small win for the party, Mr. Poilievre still has cause to be concerned about many of the policy proposals brought forward by members, and their seeming disconnect from the most pressing concerns of the average Canadian.

According to the same Nanos poll referenced earlier, top concerns for Canadians include jobs and the economy, inflation, and the cost of housing.

While Mr. Poilievre's slogans about "Justinflation" and "firing gatekeepers" who are slowing down new housing suggest he's aligned with voters' priorities, the proposals brought forward at the party's policy convention point to a party that is wholly out of touch with the wants and needs of their fellow Canadians.

From a policy perspective, the party seems to have little to say about affordability, with the only highlights being a proposal to bump the floor for small business GST registration to \$47,000 from the current \$30,000, and another proposal to remove GST from maternity and newborn expenses.

Instead, the priority of the party's members seems to be combating "identity politics," "wokeness," and the so-called "culture war."

Under this umbrella, one proposal would amend the party's constitution to clarify that references to "equality" mean equality of opportunity (rather than equality of outcome). Meanwhile, another would affirm "the existence of only one human race," as if merely making the declaration will end racism and transform Canada into a meritocratic utopia.

Other proposals brought to the table include bans on "forced political, cultural or ideological" training in the workplace, and on "altering medicinal or surgical interventions on minors under 18 to treat gender confusion or dysphoria."



And finally, there was a policy proposal to define "woman" in the Conservative policy book as an "adult female," and affirm the right of women to single-sex spaces, such as in prisons, shelters, locker rooms, washrooms, sports, awards, grants, and scholarships.

On the surface, all or most of these gender-related proposals may seem harmless, even logical; it's impossible, after all, to argue against protecting women and girls. But, intentionally or not, it also peddles in and reinforces common myths and stereotypes that trans women are opportunistic predators.

Beyond this, the Conservative policy convention was a mix of everything you'd expect from the party.

There were a few items under the party's tried and true tough-on-crime agenda, including stiffer sentences for pedophilia-related crimes, stiffer bail laws, and making breaches of probation a criminal offence.

A response to the Chinese foreign interference scandal earlier this year, getting tough on China was another key theme of the convention, with proposals including a military and research co-operation ban, and a ban on Chinese ownership in Canadian companies.

Conservative party members would also like to see more emphasis placed on national defence and strengthening Canada's military. Among the proposals was the construction of an Arctic naval base, the establishment of national cybersecurity standards, and a call for

Canada to seek out and join other military alliances.

Given the sorry state of Canada's military, one can hardly blame Conservative Party members for wanting Mr. Poilievre to commit to investing in it. But in an age in which Canadians have seen their typical monthly mortgage payment climb to \$3,500 from \$1,500, it's hard to imagine the majority of voters are all that concerned with whether or not Canada's military has all the latest top-of-the-line killing machines.

The same likely holds true for Canadians who are worried about the rising cost of groceries (and just about everything else), or the challenge of finding a family doctor or receiving a life-saving medical treatment in a timely fashion.

If there's any silver lining, it's that the Conservative Party may not make the policies adopted at the convention into election campaign pillars.

As Mr. Poilievre explained, "Leaders are never bound by convention resolutions, but we do take them into consideration."

If Mr. Poilievre wants to retain his hard-earned lead over the Liberals, he would be wise to continue focusing on what matters most to Canadians and hammering Mr. Trudeau on his government's many failures.

Doing so may frustrate his base, but getting distracted with "wokeness" and "culture wars" is a surefire way for the Conservatives to snatch defeat from the jaws of victory for the second election in a row.

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## Report from the Legislature

The beginning of September means it's time for more than 190,000 Saskatchewan students to head back to school. Our government extends our warmest welcome to all students and we wish everyone a year filled with fun, learning and new possibilities. Now is an exciting time to be a student in Saskatchewan as our province continues to experience growth.

After the first quarter financial report, Saskatchewan is forecasting a \$485.5 million surplus – a strong bottom line. The plan to retire up to \$1 billion in operating debt announced at budget remains on track. Our province's net-debt-to-GDP ratio is projected to be 13.4 per cent at the end of the fiscal year, which is currently ranked second among the provinces. Saskatchewan's finances remain strong, with a substantial surplus, but we need to continue to be prudent and manage spending carefully.

Our government con-



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tinues to promote economic growth and work on the development of zero-emission small modular reactor (SMR) technologies. The Crown Investments Corporation is providing \$479,000 to the Saskatchewan Industrial and Mining Suppliers Association and its partners to prepare local companies for their future participation in provincial, national, and global SMR development. Advancing SMR supply chains in our province will open economic and job potential

for communities across the province, including rural, northern and remote regions, and Indigenous communities.

Our government maintains its commitment to meaningful consultation with First Nation and Métis communities and supporting investment in the province with changes to the First Nation and Métis Consultation Policy Framework (CPF). The new policy, set to take effect by January 2024, is about our commitment to building positive relationships, respecting Aboriginal and Treaty rights, and supporting economic reconciliation while we continuously plan for growth across the resource sector. To learn more about the revised policy, please visit [www.saskatchewan.ca](http://www.saskatchewan.ca).

Investing in growth in our health care system remains a priority so that everyone can access the care they need. Plans are moving forward for the Regina General Hospital (RGH) parkade. Re-

gina-based Link Developments Ltd. has been selected as the team that will construct and maintain the parkade project, with construction beginning this fall. The parkade will include a total of 1,005 stalls, and provide safe, accessible, and convenient parking for years to come.

To create further growth in our health care system, we are expanding treatment options for those living with amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS) by listing two common ALS drugs, Albrioza and Radicava, on the Saskatchewan Drug Plan Formulary. Effective Sept. 1, eligible ALS patients who meet certain medical criteria may be considered for coverage of these medications under the Saskatchewan Drug Plan.

Our province recently recognized Overdose Awareness Day on Aug. 31. Our government continues to invest in accessible mental health and addiction services for



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everyone, with a record \$518 million this year. This includes increasing treatment options and expanding addiction services across the province in honour of Overdose Awareness Day on Aug. 31.

World Suicide Prevention Day, recognized on Sept. 10, is aimed at promoting understanding around suicide and providing support for those affected by a suicide attempt or loss. The mental health and addictions budget also includes \$2.25 million specifical-

ly for suicide prevention. We are also working with the Public Health Agency of Canada and the Centre for Addictions and Mental Health to implement "988," a national suicide crisis number to be launched later this year. For more information about resources available on mental health, please visit [www.saskatchewan.ca](http://www.saskatchewan.ca).

As we transition into the fall season, we want you to experience the beauty of camping in Saskatchewan Provincial Parks, easily secure camping spots online and enjoy full services and events all throughout September. To learn more about seasonal discounts, booking, and events, please visit [www.tourismsaskatchewan.com](http://www.tourismsaskatchewan.com).

Our government continues to pursue growth for Saskatchewan. We highly value your questions, concerns, and feedback. Please feel free to reach out to your MLA constituency office.

## YOUR TWO CENTS

### Shellbrook Chronicle article muddies the water issue

Dear readers,

During a committee meeting that was intended to inform all members of Council and Administration of the work being done by many toward making a choice of water source and treatment for the town, multiple facts and opinions were presented. Historical and current information was brought forward. Not all items presented for context were currently accurate and must be carefully considered.

The editor of the Chronicle asked to be in attendance and although this was not a regular public meeting, was invited. The front-page article, Shellbrook council deadlocked over water, appeared on Aug. 31, 2023. The Chronicle chose to present a summary of the proceedings that is completely confusing to the readers and certainly not written in the spirit of "being understood by the readers." I believe there were quotes from previous articles that are no longer relevant.

I hope to use my skills to clarify our current position. No votes have been cast!

The Town of Shellbrook is lucky to have the luxury of two good alternatives to upgrade the characteristics of the water delivered to its residents. Many towns have only one water source, and thus have either lived with it or found alternative ways to purify

the existing source to meet both the mandate of the Water Security Agency of Saskatchewan (WSA) and the aesthetic expectations of the residents.

Firstly, the WSA recognizes that our water source requires more than the maximum allowable treatment with sodium hypochlorite to arrive at the required chlorine disinfection considered safe for human consumption. The Town is on the verge of being mandated to remedy this concern, hence work is being done by Administration and Council.

Secondly, the WSA has also identified that our existing water storage reservoir of 700 cubic metres is below standard for a Town such as ours that has experienced growth and is projected to continue to grow. The Town is expected to increase the storage to 1,200 cubic metres to meet firefighting standards and to have at least two days of storage backup in the event of a supply problem.

Alternatives:

1. Fund and build a new water treatment plant that would be a sophisticated upgrade of the existing process, with the addition of blended reverse osmosis to remove the hardness. The water delivered to residents would then meet provincial health standards and have the aesthetic qualities desired. This would be a combined proj-

ect to include the increased storage and some upgrades to the distribution pumping system.

This new plant could be built by SaskWater if the Town were to turn over the ownership of water treatment to the Crown Corporation.

2. The existence of the Prince Albert Rural Water Utility provides the second regional alternative. The source water would be the City of Prince Albert water treatment plant that is reported to be operating at 50 per cent of its capacity. The water characteristic needs and desires would be met without any further processing in Shellbrook. Water is sold to the Utility by the city. PARWU in turn delivers water to over 1,000 direct subscribers and more via commercial truck delivery from pump stations.

The Town of Shellbrook would become a single subscriber.

A pipeline from Prince Albert to Shellbrook and the required booster pump stations would be built. The water would flow into the reservoirs in Shellbrook on demand and from there be distributed to the residents and businesses. There would also be additional storage built and upgrades to the distribution pumping system either at the same time or as additional projects.

Since PARWU has "never subsidized any subscriber's connection" the pipeline construction would be funded primarily by the Town of Shellbrook as the main subscriber. There are potential rural subscribers along the path of the proposed pipeline that would benefit from a reliable water source and thus would help pay for the project.

The SaskWater Corporation has also completed projects like this for other

communities.

The decision to choose an alternative is pending. The Mayor and Council need to have all the facts in place to make this decision. The cost of construction, the ongoing cost of operating and maintaining, the life span of the system, the cost to produce or purchase water are financial concerns. The other important factors include the effect on the environment and the social benefits of having better water.

The public deserves to be informed. The sensationalist article almost seemed to be designed to undermine and diminish the skills of Council and Administration. Once we have all our facts together, we will have some community meetings to discuss everything with the ratepayers of Shellbrook, to assist us in making the best decision for Shellbrook.

An understandable summary that excludes personal quotes and unsubstantiated facts would have better informed the readers.

Sincerely,  
Amund Otterson,  
Mayor of Shellbrook

## NOTICE

DUE TO STAFF HOLIDAYS, WE KINDLY REQUEST THAT **ALL ADVERTISING, OBITUARIES AND NEWS SUBMISSIONS FOR THE OCTOBER 12<sup>TH</sup>, 2023 EDITION BE SUBMITTED AS EARLY AS POSSIBLE.**

THANK YOU FOR YOUR UNDERSTANDING.

Shellbrook Chronicle  
Spiritwood Herald

# Shellbrook caps off summer of recreation

By **JORDAN TWISS**  
Shellbrook Chronicle Reporter

A successful summer of recreation programming in Shellbrook ended with a bang on Friday, Aug. 25, as the town's recreation department and the staff of the Shellbrook Swimming Pool invited the community in for a Party in the Park.

The event, held free of charge thanks to support and donations from local businesses, saw about 250 people come out to Kinsmen Park to enjoy an afternoon of swimming, as well as other activities like a bouncy castle, a slip and slide (kept wet by the Shellbrook Volunteer Fire Department), mini putt, and face painting.

As afternoon bled into evening, the Parkland Pool Project Committee kept guests fed with a fundraiser BBQ for the new pool, and *Finding Nemo* was screened.

"This event was an opportunity to provide fun for our community that had no financial barriers to allow it to be accessible to all," said Jessica Kernohan, former manager of recreation and community development for the Town of Shellbrook.

"This was also an opportunity to not only celebrate our community, but to celebrate our wonderful staff that put a lot of

hard work into making this event, and the entire summer, a success," she added, noting that the pool's staff held a night swim fundraiser and donated the proceeds to the party.

Looking at the numbers, it's no boast to say that summer programming in Shellbrook was successful. This summer saw 831 participants register for swimming programs, be it through swimming lessons (public and private), the diving and water polo clinics, the national lifeguard course, or the Junior Lifeguard Club.

Meanwhile, the town's S-CAPE program offered weekly programming to 232 participants over the course of eight weeks, and was full or had a waitlist for much of the summer.

"Summer programming at both the swimming pool and S-CAPE Program went well this summer. It was very busy," Kernohan said, noting there's always room to improve the way programming is implemented.

"We are looking into ways to improve upon some programming at the swimming pool, such as how we can develop our Junior Lifeguard Club to be more desirable, and options to offer additional water workout classes."

New this summer, the swimming pool offered evening swimming lessons Monday to Friday throughout August, as opposed to just offering them once a week from the end of July through August. Kernohan says this decision resulted in an increase in registrants.

With the hope of turning the Richardson Pioneer Recreation Centre into a year-round recreation destination, the town also introduced a \$25 recreation pass, allowing buyers to participate in drop-in sessions of pickleball, lacrosse, roller blading, and ball hockey as much as they wished.

Kernohan says these passes will also be good for upcoming public skating programming through the winter.



Some kids found creative ways to jump off the diving board.



Mini putt was among the activities on offer during Shellbrook's Party in the Park.



The slip and slide provided another way to cool off.



When they weren't looking after swimmers, some lifeguards took a moment to have their faces painted.

## YOUR TWO CENTS

### Shellbrook pet owners must be more responsible

Dear editor,

I consider myself a responsible pet owner. I feed my dog regularly, I walk him daily, and when he does his duty, I do mine and pick it up. I always walk him on a leash, and when he is outside, his tie out does not pass our property line. He is not left to run free in the dark of the early morning or evening.

Recently, my dog was viciously attacked by a larger dog. The owner had been visiting a neighbour and his dog was left untethered. Unprovoked, it attacked my dog as I was walking him. I stood yelling in the street as my dog was shaken with such force that his eyes became bloodshot. He had two tears in his underbelly, a tear in his back leg, and a large chunk taken out of his shoulder (just a side note here, my dog has no teeth). It has

been over a month since this attack, and my dog is still healing.

As for myself, the trauma still exists. I find my heart beats a little faster every time I prepare for that daily walk, and they have become much shorter.

Non-pet owners may think this is just silly, that it's only an animal, but I would be upset to see any animal go through this, and it was worse because he is my companion.

The owners of the large dog did pay the first vet bill and expressed remorse and surprise that their pet acted this way. I guess we must all realize that however fond we are of our pets, they are animals.

I think there are expectations from anyone walking in town. Pets should not be loose (cats or dogs), and people shouldn't have to step around animal drop-

pings. Your pet should be on a leash anytime you are out with it. Even on that walk to the car, a dog especially can be easily distracted from his destination.

The Town of Shellbrook does not have a dog park, and the high school grounds isn't a dog park! If your pet runs free in your yard, your fence should properly enclose them for their safety, as well as the safety of others. If your pet is on a tie out, it should not exceed your property line. No one likes to see an animal come rushing out at them onto the boulevard.

I feel sad that I felt the need to even write this letter, but experience has proven that it needed to be said. Love your pets, keep them safe, and consider others when you're out with them.

Deb Ethier, Shellbrook

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# AGRICULTURE

## Who pays for farmers' woes?

With current drought conditions across broad swaths of the prairies this summer, agriculture producers are going to feel the squeeze financially.

For cattle and sheep producers, there is the added pressure of having to buy feed as pasture, and hay land production has also been impacted.

To offset at least some of those costs, producers are looking to government for dollars.

The expectation for government help for agriculture in times of weather disaster is of course not without some level of irony.

By nature, farm producers are a rather independent lot, and most often are suggesting government can best serve their needs by limiting regulation and getting out of their way as they undertake the business of farming. The call by many in the day to dismantle the Canadian Wheat Board to allow greater freedom in marketing wheat and barley is a rather obvious example of



CALVIN DANIELS

this.

But droughts and floods and frost are of course beyond the best practices of farmers to overcome, and when such forces of nature impact the bottom line of producers, there really is no other place to look for support

than from government.

So, we see farm groups asking today for help.

The situation brings into focus a couple of questions which really need to be answered as we move forward.

To begin with, what is the political appetite to send money to prairie producers?

This is really a twofold question, in the sense there is the political will of increasingly non-ag connected voters and of course the view of the ruling party in Ottawa.

The voter will be increasingly a tough sell, as there will be a view the farmer – many who see climate change as 'fake news' – want help when severe weather hurts their bottom line. It's a difficult reality to reconcile for an environ-

mentally conscious voter in Toronto or Vancouver.

For the ruling Liberals, there is also their obvious understanding that they have become the prairie whipping boy for all ills. Prime Minister Justin Trudeau has become the trump card for the premiers of Alberta and Saskatchewan, who simply deflect all blame for all things to the prime minister. Meanwhile, the majority appear to nod in agreement.

No level of federal help for farmers will change the blame game in Ottawa's favour or result in Liberal victories in the region in the next election. So, while there is an obligation to help all Canadians, sending money west must leave a bad taste in the mouths of federal Liberals right now.

And what of the future, as severe weather is certainly more common, meaning more crop impacts are likely down the road? Is there a limitless pool of government dollars to offset increased weather disasters for farmers?

If the answer is no, it brings up a bigger question, what happens when the dollars run out?

## Shellbrook boys win field lacrosse bronze

By PAM BOETTCHER

WP Sandin High School, were both chosen to be members of the U19 Team Saskatchewan Field Lacrosse team.

Local Shellbrook boys Talon Sandry and Jacob Boettcher, both Grade 12 students at

They competed at the Canadian Field Lacrosse Nationals in Prince Edward Island, held Aug. 31 to Sept. 3.

Team Saskatchewan battled hard, falling to team Ontario in their first game, but redeemed themselves with a victory in game two against Nova Scotia. The Saskatchewan boys then went on to defeat Manitoba in game three.

They fell in a close game against B.C. in the semi-finals, but came out victorious against Quebec in the bronze medal final.



Shellbrook lacrosse players Talon Sandry (left) and Jake Boettcher are national field lacrosse bronze medallists, after competing with Team Saskatchewan at the U19 Nationals in P.E.I.

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# Highlights of a Shellbrook Town Council meeting

BY JORDAN TWISS

Shellbrook Chronicle Reporter

(The following council highlights are not the approved minutes of council for Sept. 5)

Shellbrook's Town Council met for its regular meeting in person and via teleconference on Tuesday, Sept. 5.

In attendance were Mayor Amund Otterson, Councillors Bruce Anderson, Larry Batten, Peter Halayka, Cheryl Ledding, Brent Miller, and Kathleen Nording, and the town's CAO, Kelly Hoare.

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Otterson, and council began with its customary recognition of Truth and Reconciliation, then approved the meeting's agenda, adopted the minutes of its Aug. 21 meeting, and moved on to reports.

In discussion of water and the PARWU board, Councillor Miller requested that meetings on the topic be held

monthly to allow council to keep itself informed of any updates and work towards a decision on whether to pursue the pipeline partnership with PARWU or upgrade the town's existing water treatment plant. Council was in favour of this idea, and agreed that town foreman Mike Tanchuk should be included in these meetings.

With council still waiting on some final numbers from PARWU, as well as a proposal for the town's water treatment plant upgrade project from SaskWater, council closed out the discussion with an agreement to meet with Tanchuk, PARWU general manager Ken Danger, and representatives from Associated Engineering to ask for their insights and opinions on how the two projects might pan out.

In the hospital and clinics report, Mayor Otterson informed council of the expected arrival of a new SIPPA-trained physician some time in October. He also noted that the Physician Recruitment

and Retention Committee has been inundated with soft landing assistance requests from healthcare professionals coming to work in the community. Calling this a good problem to have, he said it does seem to have improved the HR situation at Parkland Integrated Health Centre.

In the mayor and council forum, Councillor Batten expressed concerns that the property on the northwest corner of the 2nd Avenue West and 2nd Street West intersection is beginning to look like a junk yard. This concern was to be brought to the attention of the community safety officer.

Elsewhere, Mayor Otterson voiced criticism of the *Shellbrook Chronicle & Spiritwood Herald's* coverage of council's Aug. 22 water meeting, which appeared on the front page of the Aug. 31 edition. He suggested council should respond to the article to clarify the issue for readers (his letter to the editor can be read on page 5 of this week's issue).

Proceeding into a light agenda of new business, council's first item was to give first reading to Bylaw 2023-09, the building bylaw, which is intended to administer and enforce the National Building Code of Canada. After this, it approved a request from the recreation committee to open the curling rink lounge Fridays from 6 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. from Oct. 13, 2023, until May 10, 2024 (excluding March 29, 2024).

In response to a request from the Ministry of Health to establish a community representative to support new Filipino healthcare professionals relocating to Shellbrook, council agreed to inform the ministry of the support system it has in place through the Physician Recruitment and Retention Committee.

Then, before adjourning for the evening, council carried motion to replace a damaged sign at the disc golf course in Centennial Park at a cost of approximately \$45.

## Shellbrook Library Lego Club builds creativity

By LORRAINE THIBEAULT

Assistant Librarian

On Tuesday, Aug. 1, 2023, children involved in the Shellbrook Public Library's Lego Club took on the challenge to create Lego people 15 centimetres tall.

Some Lego people were tall



Ethan shows off his tall Lego person.



During the Lego Club's tall people challenge, Bennett preferred playing with little Lego people.

and thin, and others were wide. However, all were 15 centimetres tall. It was interesting to note that the height of the Lego people was in their legs and not in their torsos.

One of the younger participants who was unable to make such a tall person decided to surround himself with lots of little Lego people.

Lego challenges give children the opportunity to use their imaginations, problem solve, work co-operatively and have fun.

On Tuesday, Aug. 8, 2023, a small group of children made name plates out of Lego blocks. Adapting letters with curves proved to be a bit of a problem, but participants succeeded in

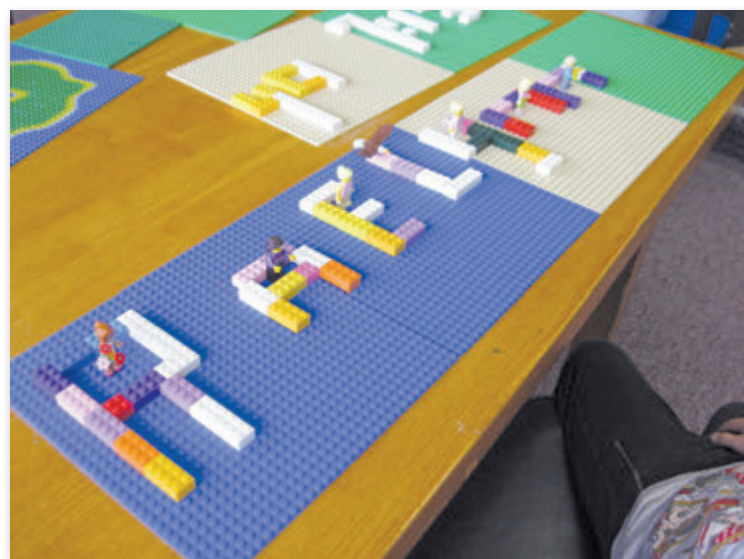
making their names readable.

Once they completed this challenge, they made blocks out of 20 pieces of Lego and tested them for "stick togetherness," as they were dropped from the height of the child. Adjustments were made so that the block was more compact and less likely to break.

The final test was to have their block stay together when dropped from the height of the library staff member.

These activities encourage participants to use their problem-solving skills to complete challenges posed by the library staff. Each child had a unique way of adjusting the Lego pieces to accomplish the task at hand.

On Tuesday, Aug. 22, 2023,



Raelynn put creativity into her Lego nameplate.

eight youngsters got together at the Shellbrook Library to create levers that could balance on wooden wedges.

Once the lever could balance, a small soft item was launched. Some items flew a few feet; some flew over the heads of the children. Excitement prevailed as levers were adjusted to make the launch more spectacular.

It was an enjoyable afternoon, with lots of laughs as levers fell off wedges before launches could take place.

This Lego challenge served to increase the children's knowledge of levers, pivots and wedges. As always, problem-solving skills came into play as adjustments were made to the levers.



Kareen shows off her creative take on the lever challenge.



Derrick tests the balance of his lever, during the Lego Club's levers and wedges challenge.



**Hon. Jeremy Harrison**  
MLA for Meadow Lake  
jharrisonmla@sasktel.net

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**Hon. Scott Moe, Premier**  
MLA for Rosthern-Shellbrook  
scottmoe.mla@sasktel.net





# Ozobots & VR at Spiritwood Library

By **STACEY GABOURY**  
Library Board Member

Summer has nearly drawn to a close and kids are back in school, ready to learn. The Spiritwood Public Library offered two great programs to children this summer to help with ongoing learning and get them exploring the world around them. The programs were

offered by a summer student from Wapiti Regional Library, Madelyn Antaya.

July offered the kids a look at using robots to teach programming through drawing. Kids were able to create and code a pattern for a mini robot, known as an Ozobot, to follow. The Ozobots have sensors on the bottom that follow coloured lines drawn on

paper. Different colour combinations make the robot perform different movements.

August brought in the world around us through virtual reality. Kids were able to explore galaxies, black holes, under the sea, endangered animals, and ancient pyramids. The kids thought it was "the coolest thing ever" and there were lots of "oohs and aahs".



Kids take in the sights during a VR session at the Spiritwood Library.



Kids learned the basics of programming with an Ozobots session at the Spiritwood Library.

## Spiritwood Library hosts Regional Kids First

By **HEATHER GATZKE**  
Librarian, Spiritwood Library

Chantelle Sprenger with Regional Kids First returned to Spiritwood Public Library on Friday, Sept. 1, to host the first fall program. The theme was Under the Sea.

Songs, crafts, games, and activities for learning through play, suitable for Ages 0 to 5, were enjoyed by all.

Programming is focused on making early learning opportunities more accessible in smaller centers. It also helps parents with growing their own knowledge skills for interacting with their child.

Chantelle will be back with more fun every first Friday of the month. Everyone is welcome including moms, dads, and caregivers with their child(ren).



Chantelle Sprenger from Regional Kids First leads kids in under the sea-themed activities at the Spiritwood Library.

# SaskEnergy rate changes approved by review panel

By **JORDAN TWISS**  
Shellbrook Chronicle Reporter

Changes to SaskEnergy rates, proposed by the Crown corporation in June, have been given the green light by Saskatchewan's Rate Review Panel.

Earlier this year, SaskEnergy made an application to the panel to drop its commodity rate from \$4.20 per gigajoule to \$3.30 per gigajoule effective Oct. 1. At the same time, it was also seeking approval for a five per cent hike on the delivery service rate to take effect.

According to SaskEnergy, the changes, if approved, will drop the average customer's bill by about \$5.66 per month, offering just under \$68 in savings per year.

On Thursday, Sept. 7, the Rate Review Panel recommended to the minister responsible for SaskEnergy, Dustin Duncan, that the commodity rate be dropped to \$3.20 per gigajoule, lower than SaskEnergy's initial application.

But while the panel recommended the minister apply the five per cent hike to delivery rates as proposed, it also recommended that the increase be approved with the provision that no further increases occur during the 2024-25 fiscal year.

The review panel also recommended that SaskEnergy set a deadline to make the conversion to billing in energy, and called on the Crown corporation to "consider and introduce

further strategies that will reduce the trend of increasing operating, maintenance, and administrative expenses."

When SaskEnergy made its application in June, Don Morgan — the minister responsible for SaskEnergy at the time — said the changes were timely, given the growing concern about affordability in the province.

"Thanks to a drop in the market price of natural gas, as well as SaskEnergy's continued focus on price risk management, SaskEnergy is able to cut the commodity rate for its customers," Morgan said in a statement.

"SaskEnergy's commitment to provide stable natural gas rates to the people and businesses of Saskatchewan helped shield customers from the volatile price fluctuations we saw in 2022, both across the country and the world."

The mandate of the Rate Review Panel is to review the application and provide an opinion on the fairness of the rate adjustments requested, considering the best interests of the customer, the Crown corporation, and the public.

The Panel says it believes these recommendations represent a fair balance impacting the affected parties.

These recommendations to the Minister will be reviewed by the government, and a final decision on implementation will be made by cabinet.

A complete copy of the Rate Review Panel's report is available on its website at [www.saskratereview.ca](http://www.saskratereview.ca).

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## COMMUNITY CALENDAR

**SPIRITWOOD:** Wapiti Regional Library - Tuesday 9am - 5pm; Wednesday 9am - 5pm; Friday 9am - 5pm

**LEOVILLE:** Wapiti Regional Library - Wednesday 10am - 4pm; Thursday 10am - 3pm

**SHELL LAKE:** Wapiti Regional Library - Tuesday 11am - 4pm; Wednesday 12pm - 5pm

**BLAINE LAKE:** Wapiti Library - Wednesday 11am - 6pm; Friday 11am - 5pm; Saturday 10am - 4pm. Contact us for more info 306-497-3130, [www.wapitilibrary.ca](http://www.wapitilibrary.ca).

**BIG RIVER:** Wapiti Library - Wednesday 11:30am - 4:30pm; Thursday 11:30am - 4:30pm. Phone # 306-469-2152

**CANWOOD:** Canwood Branch of Wapiti Regional Library. Tuesday 10am - 3:30pm; Thursday 3:30pm - 8pm; Friday 1:30pm - 4:30pm. Kids Club is Fridays 3:30pm - 4:30pm, Crafter's Choice is the 2nd and 4th Tuesday of each month.

**DEBDEN:** Wapiti Library hours: Tuesday 10am - 4pm; Wednesday 1pm - 7pm. Librarian: Aline Hannon

**LEASK:** Wapiti Library & Legacy Gallery Hours - Tuesday 9am - 2pm; Wednesday 3pm - 6pm; Friday 1pm - 5pm

**MARCELIN:** Wapiti Library - Thursday 2pm - 7pm; Saturday 9am - 2pm. 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: Monday 2pm - 6pm; Tuesday 12pm - 8pm; Wednesday 2pm - 6pm; Thursday 12pm - 6pm; Friday 10am - 5pm (Story Time 11am - 12pm); Saturday 10am - 4pm.

**PARKSIDE:** 'A TOUCH OF AUTUMN' Honeywood (Dr. A. J. Porter) Heritage Nursery Inc. Provincial Heritage Site Parkside, Sask. - Sept. 17th - 1pm - 4pm. Enjoy the 'Jam Fest' of local musicians. Artisan displays, Tours, Desserts, Refreshments, Potted lilies, perennials and trees & shrubs! \$5.00/person, Children 10 and under free. Ph: 306-747-3307 - email: [honeywoodn8@gmail.com](mailto:honeywoodn8@gmail.com), Facebook @ Honeywood Heritage Nursery Inc

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# Minutes of an RM of Shellbrook meeting

(Where necessary, the following minutes may have been edited for clarity or brevity)

Minutes of a regular meeting of Council of the Rural Municipality of Shellbrook No. 493 held on Wednesday, July 5, 2023, in the Municipal Office Council Chambers at Shellbrook, Sask.

Present: Reeve - Doug Oleksyn, Division 1 - Cliff Skauge, Division 3 - Christine Strube, Division 4 - Jay Ferster, Division 5 - Derwin Joelson, Division 6 - Ivan Ten Bos, and Administrator - Duane Storey.

Absent: Division 2 - Phil Hamel.

Delegations:

11:20 a.m. Foreman Bill Aug update on municipal activities

Reeve Oleksyn called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m.

Strube: That the following items be added to the Agenda: Road Allowances, Airport Road, By-Election, John Deere Grader Inspection, RRIG Letter. Carried

Skauge: That the Agenda be adopted as amended. Carried

Ferster: That the minutes of the Regular Meeting of Council held on June 14, 2023, be amended as follows: Motion 185.06.23 - Remove "add amount." Carried

Strube: That the minutes of the Regular Meeting of Council held on June 14, 2023, be approved as amended. Carried

Ten Bos: That the Statement of Financial Activities for the month of June 2023 be approved as presented. Carried

Skauge: That the bank reconciliation for the month of May 2023 be approved as presented. Carried

Ferster: That the accounts payable dated July 3rd, 2023, as attached hereto and forming part of these Minutes, being regular cheque numbers 13514 to 13570 in the

amount of \$124,553.88 and payroll cheque numbers 14520 to 14544 in the amount of \$58,981.50 be approved. Carried

Skauge: That the Administrator's Report for the month of July 2023 be accepted as presented. Carried

Delegation Foreman Bill Aug and Todd Lande entered the Council Chambers at 11:40 a.m. to update Council on municipal operations.

Delegation Foreman Bill Aug and Todd Lande left the meeting at 1:36 p.m.

Joelson: That the Anderson Gravel Agreement be approved for a term of 5 years at the rate of \$5.25 per yard. Carried

Strube: That Bylaw No. 2023-07 be amended as follows: (b) remove "enacted this" replaced with "this bylaw comes into effect". Carried

Joelson: That Bylaw No. 2023-07, being a bylaw to compel the removal of dirt, stones, filth or rubbish from road allowances, public highways or any public place., be given first reading. Carried (*Editor's note: council voted unanimously to give the bylaw three readings at the meeting.*)

Ten Bos: That Bylaw 2023-07 being a bylaw to compel the removal of dirt, stones, filth or rubbish from road allowances, public highways or any public place as annexed hereto and forming a part of these minutes be read a third time. Further this Bylaw be now adopted, sealed and signed by Reeve and Administrator. Carried

Joelson: That the Rural Integrated Roads for Growth Capital Project Funding Agreement be signed and that a further quotation to alter the specification be acquired from Associated Engineering (Sask.) Ltd. Carried

Skauge: That the following appointments be made for the newly formed Manage-

ment Committee: Division 3 Councillor Strube, Division 4 Councillor Ferster, Deputy Reeve Joelson, and Division 6 Councillor Ten Bos. Carried

Reeve Oleksyn declared a conflict of interest and left the meeting at 2:28 p.m.

Administrator Storey declared a conflict of interest and left the meeting at 2:28 p.m.

Deputy Reeve Joelson assumed the Chair.

Ferster: That the time being 2:30p.m., Council close a portion of this meeting to the public to go in camera under the authority of Part III of The Local Authority Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, to discuss Code of Ethics complaint, the public gallery be vacated and those present for this closed session be Deputy Reeve Joelson and Councillors Skauge, Ferster, Strube and Ten Bos. Carried

Strube: That the regular council meeting reconvene at 2:49 p.m. with all members of council and administration present. Carried

Reeve Doug Oleksyn returned to council chambers at 4 p.m.

Administrator Duane Storey returned to council chambers at 4 p.m.

Joelson: That the information provided in regards to the Gullickson correspondence be received and filed. Carried

Reeve Oleksyn assumed the Chair.

Skauge: That the Westar Group of Companies be sent an invoice for extraction fees in regards to 25,000 yards of gravel sold to the Rural Municipality of Buckland No. 491. Carried

Skauge: That the matter [country residential rezoning] be referred back to Northbound Planning for Bylaw and Community Plan Amendment's. Carried

Joelson: That Bylaw No. 2023-05, being a bylaw to establish Municipal Assessment Exemptions for 2023, be given first reading. Carried (*Editor's note: council voted unanimously to give the bylaw three readings at the meeting.*)

Ferster: That Bylaw 2023-05 being a bylaw to establish Municipal Assessment Exemptions for 2023 as annexed hereto and forming a part of these minutes be read a third time. Further this Bylaw be now adopted, sealed and signed by Reeve and Administrator. Carried

Ferster: That the Council of the RM of Shellbrook No. 493 agrees that 2023 Mill Rate to be set at 6.7 mills; Municipal Mill Rate Factors - Commercial @ 240%, Residential @ 145%, Agricultural @ 120%.

A minimum tax of \$100 on land, and a minimum tax of \$100 on improvements to all property classes and the library mill rate shall be set at .13 mills.

Further, that the Hamlet of Crutwell

adopts a 3.8 mill rate with a minimum tax of \$300 on land and a minimum tax of \$400 on improvements.

Further, that the Hamlet of Holbein adopts a 4.5 mill rate with a minimum tax of \$50 on land and a minimum tax of \$350 on improvements: a minimum tax of \$50 on extra lots and a mill rate factor of 200% for Commercial property.

Further, that Sturgeon Lake Regional Park mill rate be set at 5.1 mills with a lease fee of \$770.

Further, that the mill rates for education purposes for that portion of the municipality within the boundaries of the Sask. Rivers School Division No. 119 shall be as follows: Agricultural classes 1.42 mills, Residential classes 4.54 mills, Commercial/Industrial 6.86 mills, Resource (Oil and gas, mines and pipelines) 9.88 mills. Carried

Skauge: That Bylaw 2023-06, being a Bylaw to Establish Mill Rates and Mill Rate Factors for 2023, be given first reading. Carried (*Editor's note: council voted unanimously to give the bylaw three readings at the meeting.*)

Ten Bos: That Bylaw 2023-06 being a Bylaw to Establish Mill Rates and Mill Rate Factors for 2023 as annexed hereto and forming a part of these minutes be read a third time. Further this Bylaw be now adopted, sealed and signed by Reeve and Administrator. Carried

Strube: That that the request by Triple S Transport to alter road allowance in front of their property east of SW-15-49-03-W3 be approved as long as proper drainage is achieved. Carried

Skauge: That correspondence be sent to Dave Rondeau to contact Saskatchewan Environment or The Department of Highways in regards to the request for memorial signage. Carried

Ferster: That the request by Dave Rondeau to be added to the 2023 Beaver Control Listing be denied. Carried

Strube: That the request by Brandt Tractor to complete a warranty check on the 772G Grader be approved subject to Brandt absorbing the cost. Carried

Ferster: That the Engineering Services Roadway Improvement Proposal presented by Associated Engineering be approved and that the Tender process be postponed until 2024. Carried

Skauge: That the resignation by Division 2 Councillor Phil Hamel received by email on July 5, 2023, be received and filed. Carried

Skauge: That a gift valued at \$200 be provided for Phil Hamel be approved. Carried

Ferster: That the meeting be adjourned at 4:06 p.m.

# J & R

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## Ohtani the A.L. MVP; not as simple in N.L.

The sports world doesn't yet know the winner of the Most Valuable Player award in the National League. Meanwhile, the presumptive Most Valuable Player award winner in the American League doesn't know what his future holds.

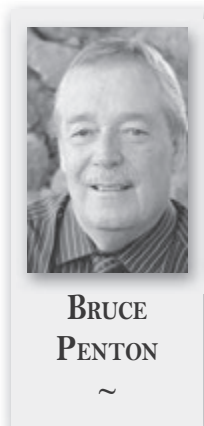
Let's start with Part II — the A.L. MVP. The 2023 season still has a couple of weeks to go, but Shohei Ohtani of the Angels winning the award will be about as surprising as Connor McDavid cracking the roster of the Oilers. Ohtani, the Japanese phenom who pitches and hits with the best in baseball, has put up spectacular numbers. At last glance, he led the A.L. in home runs with 44, in the OPS (on-base percentage plus slugging percentage) category by an enormous margin, was fourth in batting average (.306) and third in runs-batted-in. On the mound, he was 10-5 with a 3.14 earned-run average (third-best in the AL) and was the only pitcher

in the league to limit opponents to a sub-.200 batting average.

So, give Shohei the trophy. But hold the massive cheque that he was hoping for as a free agent following this once-in-a-lifetime statistical season. Ohtani tore the ulnar collateral ligament (UCL) in his elbow in mid-August, effectively bringing his pitching season to an end. Whether he will undergo Tommy John surgery for the second time in his career remains to be seen, but Ohtani still plans to take a regular turn at the plate as the season winds down with his Los Angeles Angels out of the playoffs again.

That \$800 million to \$1 billion free-agent contract is now a big question mark. Will teams be paying for a slugging outfielder or a pitcher-slugger with a history of arm trouble? Big decision. Expensive decision.

Meanwhile, over in the National League, Atlanta's Ronald Acuna, Jr., may have to halt con-



BRUCE PENTON

struction of the trophy case he's having built especially for the 2023 MVP trophy. While he was the acknowledged leader, and likely winner, for most of the season, he suddenly has some company in the MVP race. Acuna, Jr., is the first player in MLB history with a 30 home-run, 60-steals season (and likely to hit 70 steals), and the Braves are the runaway leaders in the N.L. East, but Mookie Betts of the Dodgers is making a late charge. Unlike A.L. MVP voters, those casting ballots for the N.L. award will actually have to put some

thought into it. Acuna has a big edge in batting average and steals, but Betts leads his rival in three important categories — OPS, home runs and RBIs. Those making a case for Betts, also point to his versatility. A regular outfielder, Betts has filled in due to injuries at second base (48 games) and shortstop (16). A valuable guy to have at manager Dave Roberts' disposal? You bet.

Voters will either pick A or B (Acuna or Betts). The choice is much simpler in the A.L.

Jack Finarelli, at sportscurmudgeon.com., quotes Swedish playwright, August Strindberg: "I loathe people who keep dogs. They are cowards who haven't got the guts to bite people themselves."

Phil Mushnick of the New York Post: "Drunk gamblers are now the most welcomed patrons at sports events as they best fit the officially authorized financial goals. Buy a ticket. Buy lots of

booze. Bet with an official gambling sponsor."

Janice Hough, of leftcoastsportsbabe.com: "The New England Patriots have waived QBs Bailey Zappe, Malik Cunningham, leaving Mac Jones without a backup. Wonder if Bill Belichick got an 'I'm available' call from Tom Brady?"

German tennis pro Alexander Zverev on the scent of marijuana at the U.S. Open: "(Court 17) smells like weed. It definitely smells like Snoop Dogg's living room."

Eamon Lynch of gulfweekusatoday.com, on Zach Johnson's choices for the U.S. Ryder Cup team: "... if it (U.S., team) loses, the firing squad will be loading muskets before the European guys sober up from the celebrations."

Comedy writer Brad Dickson of Omaha, a devoted Nebraska Cornhuskers' football fan: "Good news, Husker fans, most of the offensive line from last year is back. Bad news, Husker fans, most of the offen-

sive is from last year is back."

Comedy writer Torben Rolfsen of Vancouver: "Tough to watch Alek Manoah clowning around in fried chicken commercials while he's trying to put his career back together in Buffalo."

Steve Simmons of Sunmedia, on the Braves' Ronald Acuna, with 60-plus stolen bases, getting married on the day of a game in Los Angeles: "Apparently, no one has ever walked down the aisle faster."

RJ Currie of sports-deke.com: "A Galapagos tortoise named Diego has reportedly fathered 800 offspring. It's been named an official mascot for the NBA."

And from the website onelinefun.com: "Today a man knocked on my door and asked for a small donation towards the local swimming pool. I gave him a glass of water."

Care to comment? Email [brucepenton2003@yahoo.ca](mailto:brucepenton2003@yahoo.ca)

## Shellbrook Library gets kids crafting

By **LORRAINE THIBEAULT**  
Assistant Librarian

On Aug. 17, 2023, three youngsters joined the librarian at the Shellbrook Public Library to make a crab craft.

The children used their cutting skills to cut out the many parts of the crab and glued the pieces together to get the crab just the way each child wanted. A discussion on what crabs eat took place as the crabs took shape.

Craft time aims to encourage in children a love of crafts, knowledge, and conversation.

On Aug. 18, 2023, seventeen youngsters at the Shellbrook Public Library listened to stories about beavers. Reg-

ular patrons were joined by children from Happy Hearts Childcare Centre.

A beaver craft was made, with each child taking their beaver home.

In one of the stories, beavers made their lodge on a dock belonging to a human family. We considered the rights of beavers and of those of humans as we laughed at the antics of both beaver and human.

Laughter filled the library as the problem was solved when a storm detached the dock and the beavers floated down the river with their lodge intact on the dock and the humans having to build a new dock.

Storytime aims to encourage in children a love of reading, crafts and games.



Together, kids made a whole colony of beavers.



Liam works on his crab craft at the Shellbrook Library.



Raelynn proudly displays her beaver craft, made during the Shellbrook Library's Aug. 18 storytime sessions.

## OBITUARY

*Mary Krushelniski (née: Cherniatenski)*

Mary Krushelniski (née: Cherniatenski)

October 22, 1923 – August 23, 2023

It is with deep sadness that we announce the passing of Mary at the age of 99 years. She

passed away at the Shellbrook Hospital, Shellbrook, SK at 6:06am, August 23, 2023.

Mary was born October 22, 1923, in the Ukraine. She immigrated to Canada with her mother and two siblings John and Kathy arriving in Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada April 22, 1934. From there she travelled by train to Glaslyn, SK where her father was working as a shoemaker and the family was reunited.

She later moved to a farm in the Junor, SK district. While there she met her husband Peter Krushelniski, through

an arranged marriage they were married November 19, 1939.

They eventually settled on a farm in the Junor, SK district where they raised 10 children, John, Mike, Walter, Bill, Orest, Ruth, Jim, MaryAnn, Doreen, and Kory.

On the farm she was kept very busy raising her children, cooking, planting a garden and helping with chores.

Eventually Peter and Mary retired to Leoville, SK and Mary became involved with various organizations by volunteering her time to the Leoville Health Care Auxiliary for 54 years,

Leoville Seniors Centre and she won numerous awards for her garden vegetables and flowers at the Horticultural Society Fairs.

Mary was an avid sports advocate for her children and participated in the sport of curling where she was active well into her 90s.

She was predeceased by her husband Peter, her sons John and Orest, her brothers John (Olga) Cherniatenski and George Cherniatenski, brother-in-law Pete Belay and her parents John and Martha Cherniatenski.

Mary is survived

by her sister Katie Belay, her cousin Mary (Roman) Karopestka, her children Mike, Walter, Bill, Ruth, Jim, MaryAnn, Doreen, Kory, and their spouses, also 69 grandchildren, great-grandchildren and great-great-grandchildren.

A Funeral Service was held Tuesday August 29, 2023, 1:00pm at the Leoville Community Hall with Delores Beau-lac officiating. The eulogy was given by Shannon Laventure, Lindsay Dauvin and Jennifer Soucy. The pallbearers were Wayland Purdy, Karstin Soucy, Dillan Scott, Jayden Dauvin,

Cole Krushelniski and Deon Laventure. Interment followed in the Leoville Cemetery.

Memorial donations may be made to the Canadian Cancer Society in memory of Mary Krushelniski as tokens of remembrance.

Family and friends wishing to send online condolences are welcome to visit [www.beaulacfuneralhome.com](http://www.beaulacfuneralhome.com). Arrangements have been entrusted to the care of Beau "Lac" Funeral Home and Crematorium, R. Mark Muir Funeral Director, Spiritwood, SK (306) 883-3500.

## GOOD NEWS

## BE ANGRY AND DO NOT SIN

By DAVE BODVARSON  
*Shellbrook Pentecostal Assembly*

Ephesians 4:26-27 says "Be angry and do not sin. Do not let the sun go down on your wrath, nor give place to the devil."

Fresh out of high school, I got a job with Northern Construction. The company was refitting a barge that they would take from Hay River to the High Arctic. We would work around Tuktoyaktuk, dismantling artificial islands that had been built in the Beaufort Sea in exploration for natural gas.

Before we headed north, much work had to be done. It took some long hours, we had welders working, other tradespeople, and painters. I was part of the painting crew.

We had layers of bosses. I recall one

foreman who I was fond of would at times get frustrated with the delays. He had this habit of removing his helmet and throwing it on the ground. It was a sight to behold. Somewhat humorous. I'm not sure what he hoped to accomplish. I guess he was just letting off steam.

Who could forget Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev losing his cool when he attended the 1960 United Nations Assembly in New York city? Apparently, he got upset when a delegate suggested that Eastern Europe had been "deprived of political and civil rights" and had been swallowed up by the Soviet Union.

Khrushchev wanted to show his displeasure, so he did something unforgettable: he removed his shoe and started pounding his desk. Least that

is the story I was told as a boy, reading on this I find the incident debatable.

Is anger wrong? No. Jesus displayed 'righteous anger' in John chapter 2 when He cleansed the temple. Anger is an emotion that is God-given. The problem arises when we don't use it properly. Let me give you an example.

Frances Havergal the author of well-known hymns the church sings even today, like "Take My Life and Let it Be," wrestled with a temper. I read that after she lost her temper, she would be mortified and confess it to the Lord.

But Frances would still lose her temper again and again.

On one particular day that she struggled with anger, she knelt down and prayed "Lord, must it always be so? Will I always have this temper to keep me humble before you?"

What is interesting, is that as she knelt down on her knees God gave her a passage of Scripture. "The Egyptians whom you have seen today you will see no more forever."

That is what God had told Moses when the Egyptians pursued the Israelites to take them back to Egypt. Frances Havergal, as strange as it may seem, took that Scripture and applied it to her life. The enemy wanted to use Havergal's temper to pull her into bondage. She saw that God could take her temper away.

Frances Havergal asked God, "Lord, could it be forever?"

She seemed to hear the words, "Yes. No more, forever."

Frances' sister testified that she never again lost her temper. She believed God, and God performed a miracle.

## Fiscal update shows Sask. needs better budget plan

By GAGE HAUBRICH  
*CTF Prairie Director*

The Saskatchewan government's first quarter results reveal the cracks in its budget plan.

Budget 2023 initially projected a \$1-billion surplus, but after four months, that supposed surplus has been cut in half and is now predicted to be \$486 million.

Compared to its 2023 budget, the government is now projecting to take in \$529 million less in resource revenue. Last year, it raked in a record amount of resource revenue that helped it balance the budget and was counting on near-record amounts to do it again this year.

Spending is also up compared to the budget. This year, the government is planning to spend \$408 million more than it budgeted. And that's the problem. When faced with a large drop in revenue, instead of stopping and looking for savings, the government continues to spend.

If the government had held the line on spending, since tax revenue is up from the budget, the province would be projecting a surplus of \$893 million instead.

Last year, the government took credit for the large surplus. "Our finances are strong," said Finance Minister Donna Harpauer.

But what will provincial politicians say now that more than half a billion dollars is predicted to vanish from government coffers?

Unfortunately, this is the Saskatchewan government way. Spend taxpayer money like it's going out of style when times are good, continue to spend when it gets tough and pray that some higher power bails out the province with a surge in oil prices.

This year, the government's resource revenue take is expected to fall because the price of both potash and oil have dropped. Politicians will remark about how this is out of their control, but this is nothing new. Resource revenues are predict-

ably unpredictable and for them to change drastically over the course of a year is not unexpected.

The government decided to hinge the budget on an oil price of \$79.50 per barrel. The government now forecasts it will be \$5 less. It also predicts that the price of potash per tonne will decrease by more than \$30. Over the last year, the price of oil has ranged from \$63.64 to \$93.74 and the price of potash from \$328 to \$513.75.

The government is foolish to be pinning its entire fiscal strategy on revenue that is not guaranteed. Something needs to change. Saskatchewan needs a coherent plan to get its finances back on track.

At this point, the government still plans to pay back up to \$1 billion of debt, but this plan could be in jeopardy if resource revenues drop further. By the end of this year, the debt will be \$18.1 billion, or about \$15,000 per Saskatchewanian. Taxpayers cannot afford for the debt to

keep increasing.

In the past five years, the government has spent \$2.5 billion dollars on debt interest payments. That's enough money to build 87 new schools or cut the provincial sales tax by one point for each year. Instead, that money has been completely wasted, paying for the government's inability to keep the budget balanced and pay down the debt.

The Saskatchewan government paid back \$1.5 billion in debt last year. It can't let that good work go to waste by sliding back into deficit.

The government's first quarter update shows that something

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# Corn smut – an anomaly in your cornfields

By **SHERRI ROBERTS, PAg**  
Crops Extension Specialist, Weyburn

As corn producers scout their cornfields, they may see odd looking clusters of greyish blobs on their corn stalks. These blobs are whitish coloured growths known as galls that expand and turn black as they fill with spores. These galls are formed as a result of a fungal infection caused by *Ustilago maydis*, commonly known as corn smut. It may also be referred to as boil smut or blister smut. Once an infection occurs, *Ustilago maydis* establishes a parasitic relationship with its host. Infection can occur throughout the growing season, but gall development usually occurs within 10 to 14 days after infection and prefers hot, dry weather for development. While the galls are generally seen on the ears, any above ground plant part with young, actively growing tissue is susceptible to infection. If the apical meristem of a young corn plant is infected, galls will develop beneath the soil surface. Initial infection will appear as white to silvery tissue on the infected plant part. As the disease progresses, dark masses of fungal bodies known as teliospores develop inside the gall's membrane. Once the galls mature, the membrane will rupture and the teliospores will be released.

These spores will be carried by wind, rain, farm machinery, insects and irrigation to infect new plants. Wounds from various injuries, including cultivation, spraying, detasselling and abrasion from blowing soil, provide points for the fungus to enter the plant.

Teliospores will overwinter in soil and can remain viable for five to seven years. Infected corn residue is another source of infection and if rotations are non-existent or very short, the infected residue will serve as the source of infection for next year's corn plants. Early infection may kill young plants. High-

ly infected fields will have teliospore "clouds" that can be seen as the crop is combined. Corn ears are predisposed to infection by common corn smut if environmental conditions at the time of pollen release and silk emergence create stress. Fortunately, corn silks are only susceptible to infection prior to pollination. Once pollination has occurred, the fungus is prevented from growing into the ovary and immature kernel as the silks have rapidly developed an abscission zone at the point of attachment to the kernel. Environmental conditions such as heat or drought stress, which will increase the length of time between silk emergence and pollination, will increase the length of time that silks are susceptible to infection. If infection occurs on a leaf, the galls on leaves will remain small and eventually become hard and dry.

Corn smut can cause substantial yield losses in susceptible varieties of field corn as well as in sweet corn. In fact, it has been shown that a 25 per cent yield reduction can be expected from just a single gall. With plants infected with multiple galls, this yield reduction increases to 50 per cent. Infection will also cause ears to be shorter, smaller in diameter, weigh less and there can be reduced kernel depth along with delayed leaf development and reduced leaf area caused by a reduction in photosynthetic activity.

Ingesting plant leaves, stalks or grain contaminated with smut is not toxic to livestock; however, the spores may remain viable throughout the digestive process and can be carried in manure. When this infested manure is spread on the surface of a field, sporidia produced by the germinating teliospores may become a source of infection if it is blown or washed to the surface of a corn plant where it can germinate and cause infection. If producers would like to use smut infected corn for silage, the acidifying ensiling process will kill off the smut spores. As for its effect on humans, immature galls are a sought-after delicacy by chefs worldwide and are referred to as huitlacoche.

As there are no chemical methods for dealing with

this disease, prevention is the key. Using resistant varieties can greatly reduce corn smut losses; however, since environmental conditions vary year to year, even cultivars that are considered moderately resistant to common smut during a normal year can develop severe outbreaks if plants are stressed during the vulnerable period. Planting date may also impact how well variety resistance holds up during the growing season. The earlier the corn is in the ground, the more likely it can handle heat and drought stresses.

Careful fertility management should be practiced, as young, actively growing tissue is the most susceptible to infection and high levels of available nitrogen can promote rapid plant development. Studies have also shown that ensuring proper phosphorous levels can reduce the level of corn smut.

Since spores require an entry point, controlling damaging insect populations such as European corn borer, corn rootworm and grasshoppers can also reduce infection rates.

For more information regarding corn smut, please contact your local crops extension specialist or the Agriculture Knowledge Centre at 1-866-457-2377.

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# Research shines spotlight on cow fertility

By **JORDAN TWISS**  
Shellbrook Chronicle  
Reporter

They say one should never judge a book by its cover. With her current project, Dr. Susan Markus, a livestock research scientist with Alberta's Lakeland College, is striving to prove why this adage holds true for determining cow fertility.

"You're going to look at her breed cross, her age, her weight, her conformation, her feet and legs, udders and teats, her muscling," Dr. Markus said of the standard practice many ranchers use in hopes of selecting the most fertile replacement heifers.

"All these things we look at visually, but there are a lot of things we can't really see."

Born and raised on a large cow-calf operation in northern Manitoba, Dr. Markus was involved in her local 4-H Beef Club throughout her youth and says she always enjoyed working with cattle. So, when she went off to university, she was determined to chart a career course that would



A research project led by Dr. Susan Markus of Lakeland College is hoping to provide livestock producers with tools to better assess the fertility of cattle.

allow her to continue working with cattle.

Despite these aspirations, Dr. Markus never imagined her chosen path would lead her to a career in research. But now, she's determined to use her position to help livestock producers find greater efficiencies in their herds.

Joining Lakeland College after it had recently introduced an agriculture technology degree program offering either a crop stream or a livestock stream, Dr. Markus immediately saw an opportunity to explore the applications on the livestock side of the program.

"On the cropping side... we have GPS, tractors, spot spraying, etc. We have a lot of technology for the field," she said. "What is the equivalent for cattle that these students might be exposed to?"

While there was always the option of using drones to observe and manage cattle, Dr.

Markus admits that she wasn't initially convinced there was a wide enough range of technology for students in the livestock stream of the program to work with.

To remedy this, she decided to develop some of her research projects and try to incorporate new technologies into them. Though the initial

project may produce results that are too pricey for livestock producers to implement right away, her hope is always to make her research useable.

"If I do something or use something on the ranch, I want it to be practical. I want to get some bang for my buck," she said. "I want it to be useful, not to just use technology because it's new and exciting."

When it comes to livestock, Dr. Markus could think of nothing more important, or potentially profitable, for producers than the ability to more accurately predict which heifers in their herds are most fertile, and therefore most worth investing precious resources in (including time, labour, and pastureland).

To this end, she partnered with ranches in Manitoba, Alberta, and British Columbia that are providing the animals she and her students need to answer their biggest question: is there any tool or technology to help us determine bovine fertility with greater accuracy?

"As far as performance, I want a heifer that breeds in the first or second cycle. She has to be bred and in calf less than 45 days after being exposed to a bull. Then, she has to breed back in that second year," Dr. Markus said.

Certainly, factors like breed cross and age, and physical traits like weight, conformation, feet and legs, udders and teats, and muscling, do provide some hints about a replacement heifer's fertility. But, when all is said and done, heifers who score the best on these factors aren't guaranteed to be the most productive.

For greater certainty, Dr. Markus says one must look "under the hide," so to speak.

"On the research side, we know there's heifers that maybe don't look as great, but they're producing calves, they're breeding back, and they're making money for the ranch. It's not all about looks," she said, noting that hybrid vigour (the improved traits of cross-bred animals) plays an important role.

"Fertility is really not that impacted by the genetics. Fertility traits are impacted by your management. That includes nutrition, and your herd health protocols."

Continued on page 15

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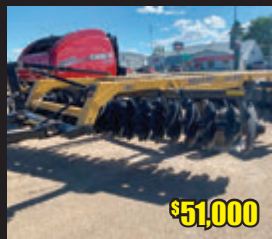
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# Research shines spotlight on cow fertility

## Continued from 14

For measuring hybrid vigour, Dr. Markus says a one-time DNA analysis called Invigor HX is an indispensable source of information about the breed composition of an animal. Using this data, producers can select the best breed of bull to produce offspring with optimal traits.

Another tool leveraged by producers is carcass trait ultrasounds, which offer an in-depth look at the fat depth and ribeye area of cattle and provide producers with more valuable data about the traits a heifer might pass on to her offspring.

Though fat levels are an indication of the maturity of heifers (similar to humans needing to reach a certain fat level before going into puberty), Dr. Markus believes it's possible to go deeper.

For most producers, it's common practice to call the vet to the farm to have heifers palpated to ensure they have a uterus. Pairing this with an ultrasound of the reproductive tract, Dr. Markus says producers can more accurately determine how mature a heifer is, and rate the heifers in their herds on a scale of

one to five (with five being optimal).

Through the first year of her research project, Dr. Markus and her students have already noted a correlation between a more mature reproductive tract and earlier calving, which is beneficial to producers as it means offspring will grow bigger sooner.

Although having these scans done requires producers (especially those on mixed farm operations) to take a day off at what is a busy time of year, Dr. Markus says the information gleaned from them eliminates the need for carcass trait ultrasounds and is more than worth the cost of just \$5 to \$6 per head.

Other technology Dr. Markus is exploring includes a bolus commonly used in the dairy sector. Inserted into the first and smallest compartment of the four-stomach chamber of cattle, the bolus tracks their activity and temperature, providing clues about when a heifer might be in heat, as well as advance notice of when a cow might give birth.

Though not foolproof, Dr. Markus says this data can be further validated

via drone monitoring.

Elsewhere, through a partnership with a ranch in British Columbia, where it's common to allow animals to freely graze in forests, Dr. Markus is experimenting with GPS trackers in the ears of cattle. Though not directly related to her research into fertility, the data captured with the help of drone

monitoring does tie into herd management and sustainability.

"It's really all about knowing these bits of information you can't guarantee or see, and putting them in your management plan and managing around it," she said, noting once again that weeding out the less mature heifers all goes back to saving

valuable pasture, as well as time and labour.

"At a minimum, if I'm going to keep female calves for replacement, they cost me at least \$1,500 to \$3,500 before I've even gotten any income from them. If I'm spending that much money to grow these replacement heifers, I want to be sure that the ones I keep are the ones

that are more likely to provide me a calf. These tools allow me to make these determinations."

Set to wrap up in 2025, Dr. Markus' project carries a price tag of just shy of \$1.3 million. The project is supported by the Canadian Agri-Food Automation & Intelligence Network, which has contributed \$143,237 in funding.



Part of Dr. Markus' project involves attaching GPS trackers to the ears of cattle to monitor their activity, improving herd management and sustainability.

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# Conditions mixed as harvest gets into full swing

By **JORDAN TWISS**  
*Shellbrook Chronicle Reporter*

As a dry, smoky summer turns to fall and harvest operations get into full swing across Saskatchewan, drought, and the impact it will have on crop yields and quality, remain a top concern for anxious producers.

While a far cry from the worst year on record, challenging conditions across the province — including the dry warm weather and a surge in the grasshopper population — have seen about 40 of Saskatchewan's rural municipalities declare agricultural disasters and join industry-wide calls for greater assistance for producers from the provincial and federal governments.

For their part, both levels of government have come forward with additional support measures.

In mid-July, the Saskatchewan Crop Insurance Corporation (SCIC) implemented a change to allow additional acres of low yielding cereal and pulse crops to be diverted to feed. The measure was aimed at helping crop producers recoup some of their losses on this year's crop, while making additional feed available to livestock producers facing shortages.

Meanwhile, at the end of July, the Water Security Agency (WSA) announced it would make water and vacant land

available to support farmers and ranchers experiencing drought conditions. To help avoid future challenges with water, the WSA also provided \$700,000 in funding for agricultural producers and local governments to complete water management projects.

Part of a two-year, \$1.5 million commitment, the program offers applicants up to \$95,000 per project based on a cost-sharing approach, and can be used for qualified persons support, technical and engineering costs, and mitigation and rehabilitation works for new agricultural water management projects.

While local farmer Drew Ferster of Ferster Farms Inc. has heard of plenty of producers struggling with drought and other challenges this year, he says his mixed grain and cattle operation, located 14 kilometres north of Shellbrook on Highway 240, has been spared the worst of it.

Though conditions were dry at the end of July and into August, leaving lighter land in hilltop areas burnt, Ferster says he's been pleasantly surprised by what he's seen with harvest operations between one-third and halfway completed.

However, there are still some concerns.

"With the late rain, we're not sure about the chitting on the barley... and the wheat is looking like a number one

quality. We haven't got into the canola or oats yet, though," he said.

"But when we got into the cereals, we've been pleasantly surprised how well they're yielding," he added, noting that he's heard similar sentiments from neighbouring producers.

Despite the unexpectedly positive outlook, Ferster says this season has highlighted the fears every producer faces when they begin seeding operations in the spring.

Every year, producers put a lot of money into their operations, and Ferster says the last five years in particular have seen producers' input costs (fertilizer, equipment, fuel, etc.) grow astronomically.

At the same time, every year comes with no guarantee of seeing any return on investment.

"I know we have crop insurance and a few other programs, but you're always worried that you'll do everything right, put all the money in, and just one thing from Mother Nature will put you in a heck of a bind," Ferster said, noting that his goal is always to at least break even.

Though appreciated, existing supports and programs aren't without their shortcomings. Where crop insurance is concerned, for instance, Ferster says it only covers up to 80 per cent of a producer's crop, meaning they face at least a 20 per cent loss in a worst-case

scenario.

What's more, it's not just crops and natural disasters producers find themselves worrying about. In tandem with rising input costs, there are also costs associated with government policy, like the federal Clean Fuel Standards introduced in the summer.

According to the Parliamentary Budget Office (PBO), the standards increase the price of fuel by 17 cents per litre. That's on top of the 37 cents the carbon tax will add to a litre of gasoline by 2030, causing an economic cost to Canada's GDP of roughly \$9 billion.

On days like Ferster experienced a couple weeks ago, where smoky conditions caused by wildfires prevented crops from drying, this meant incurring additional costs associated with firing up the grain dryer. If wildfires grow more prevalent in years to come, this means only more costs to be shouldered by producers.

Finally, with producers growing older and retiring, Ferster says finding employees is becoming a challenge, due to the seasonal nature of the agriculture sector.

"For the six weeks to two months in harvest time, you need employees to run the equipment, and they're hard to find," he said. "It's hard to keep them employed for the full year when you only need them for two months."

## Considerations for extensive winter feeding of beef cattle

By **SHAWNA WILLIAMS**  
*Agriculture Extension Summer Student, Yorkton*

Extensive winter feeding is the act of housing and feeding beef cattle in a field setting during the winter months with the aim of reducing management costs for producers as well as having positive agri-environmental impacts on the land and water resources. There are some important considerations to keep in mind for selection of a winter-feeding site to maximize the benefits to the operation. Consider the slope of the ground to protect against erosion and nutrient runoff. The best management practice recommendation is to choose a site with a slope of less than two per cent steepness and less than 90 metres in length. Adequate groundcover is import-

ant to reduce the risk of runoff and erosion from livestock and equipment traffic. It is recommended that producers choose a perennial forage stand with less than 25 per cent bare ground to effectively control nutrient runoff. Soil type is another aspect to consider. Coarse soil textures such as sand and gravel are not recommended for use as an extensive wintering site due to increased risk of leaching nutrients into the groundwater.

To maximize animal welfare and performance, ensure cattle will have access to adequate bedding, quality water and feed and appropriate shelter. Although snow can be used as a water source, it is often unreliable and can have negative impacts on cattle in lactation or being fed high-fibre diets. Always make sure you have a backup plan for water-

ing and observe animals often when using snow as a water source. Feeding systems can include swath grazing, bale grazing and corn grazing depending on the goals of your operation. It is recommended to move feeder locations often for a more even nutrient distribution. Portable windbreaks are another great way to distribute nutrients effectively while also providing animals with good shelter.

Rotating wintering sites annually is another strategy to manage nutrient levels and residues. Proper management of the site after the winter-feeding season is important. Post-wintering practices may include harrowing to spread manure and feed residues. Remember to soil test to monitor the status of available nutrients on the site prior to the growing season.

The Resilient Agricultural Landscapes Program (RALP) offers funding through the Extensive Wintering Site Management BMP to assist eligible producers with a portion of the costs associated with implementing an extensive winter-feeding site on their operation. To find out more about the program and eligibility requirements, contact your local agri-environmental specialist.

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# Dry down your crops for harvest

By **ELLEN KEYS**

*Summer Student, Moose Jaw*

and **MACKENZIE HLADUN**

*MSc, AAg, Crops Extension Specialist*

Desiccants can be helpful tools at harvest time to encourage crop dry down. They work by interfering with photosynthesis, causing rapid plant cell breakdown and the release of their liquid contents.

Also known as contact herbicides, desiccants rely heavily on canopy penetration and plant coverage to achieve the desired efficacy. True desiccants include group 10, 14, and 22 herbicides. Producers must use higher water volumes and nozzles that provide good coverage to maximize their performance. Proper appli-

cation of desiccants may provide producers with some benefits including elimination of swathing, reduced time from maturity to threshing readiness, fewer shatter losses, minimized late disease development, more even ripening of crops and preventing lodging.

There is a minimum number of days that must pass after applying a product before a crop can be swathed or straight cut, also known as the pre-harvest interval (PHI). These PHIs are in place to ensure the levels of chemical residues on the harvested crop are within acceptable limits. This is important to protect Canadian grain markets as well as the animals who ingest it. Following the PHIs will ensure that chemical residues do not go over the maximum residue limits (MRLs) and are safe for consumption. More information on MRLs

can be found on the Government of Canada's website.

One of the most important factors for successfully using desiccants is the timing of application. Applying desiccants too early can interfere with seed filling and cause yield loss. Because desiccants do not accelerate maturity, only promote plant dry down, applications made too early can also promote green seed in the crop. Applications made too late may not prevent shattering and could eliminate some benefits associated with desiccation. The grain moisture should be less than 30 per cent in the least ripe part of the field before a desiccant is applied. Ensuring applications are at the right crop stage, using recommended product rates, surfactants and water volumes will go a long way in achieving desired results.

Staging for pre-harvest desiccation application depends on crop type. A general rule of thumb for lentils, field peas, chickpeas, dry beans, faba beans and soybeans is not to apply before there has been a change in colour for approximately 80 per cent of the pods. For canola, different desiccants require application at different maturity stages. For example, diquat formulations should be applied after 90 per cent of the plant's seed is brown whereas saflufenacil formulations can be applied at 80 per cent brown seed. For wheat, utilizing a thumbnail test is a good strategy for timing. If you can leave a dent without the kernel splitting, it's ready to be desiccated. Always check the product application timing prior to spraying to ensure green seed isn't harvested in the crop and proper dry down is achieved. Desiccated crops are generally harvested earlier if combining starts as soon as dry down is complete. Earlier harvest reduces crop exposure to wet weather and eliminates the risk of swath movement from the wind and reduces the risk of post-swathing disease. Desiccation may be a good option in cooler, wetter falls.

Desiccant should be chosen accordingly and depend on what the intended end use of the crop is. For more information about desiccants, refer to the 2023 Guide to Crop Protection, speak with your local crop extension specialist or contact the Agriculture Knowledge Centre at 1-866-457-2377.



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# Transforming chicken manure into fertilizer for crops

By ERIN MATTHEWS  
Canadian Light Source

An international collaboration between researchers from Brazil and the United States has identified a process for turning poultry waste into a soil additive for agriculture.

“Several countries have large poultry production, especially United States and Brazil, where agriculture is also concentrated,” says Aline Leite, a Post Doctoral researcher from the Federal University of Lavras in Brazil. “So, reusing a global residue generated in large amounts is an interesting way of promoting a circular economy.”

The researchers harvested poultry manure from an experimental site in the United States, which they heated to turn into biochar, a carbon-rich substance that is used as a soil additive to replenish critical nutrients like phosphorus.

“We are focused on understanding mechanisms that are responsible for increasing phosphorus availability in materials like manure,” says Leite.

Poultry manure is full of calcium and requires higher temperature treatments to turn the waste into biochar, however, these higher temperatures can have an effect on the amount



International researchers are using Saskatchewan resources to look at ways to turn chicken manure into fertilizer. Photo courtesy of Canadian Light Source

of phosphorus available.

In order to ensure that the biochar contained sufficient available phosphorus, the researchers enriched it with another mineral, magnesium, which protected the phosphorus from the heat and enabled it to form more soluble forms of phosphorus.

Using the IDEAS and VLS-PGM

beamlines at the Canadian Light Source (CLS) at the University of Saskatchewan (USask), the researchers were able to visualize the connection between phosphorus and magnesium and confirm the success of their technique.

Their findings were recently published in the scientific journal, Che-

mosphere.

While phosphorus reserves are found across the globe, the nutrient is a finite resource. Finding ways to recycle the mineral is an important issue for scientists.

“There’s no excuse for not using the phosphorus that is already in the food chain, for example, by reusing the waste that is already generated,” says Leite.

Leite says that synchrotron technology is essential for research into agricultural applications.

“This technology is extremely important for agriculture because it helps determine the concentration and forms of elements that are essential for plant growth,” says Leite. “By accessing the distribution of elements and understanding potential impacts, it gives us a great perspective for sustainable agriculture. The effective use of this technology in the study was only possible due to an international collaboration with researchers of different backgrounds.”

Leite’s study was developed at Cornell University, and carried out under the supervision of professors Johannes Lehmann (Cornell University) and Leônidas Melo (Federal University of Lavras, Brazil).

## Crop Report: Aug. 29 to Sept. 4

Producers have crossed the half-way point of harvest this week at 51 per cent complete. This is up from 33 per cent last week, ahead of the five-year average (2018-2022) of 34 per cent and the 10-year (2013-2022) of 33 per cent.

The southwest continues to lead harvest progress at 81 per cent complete, this includes an estimated three per cent of all crops being used as a feed source. Harvest in the west central region is also rapidly advancing with 60 per cent of the crop in the bin. The southeast is close to the half-way point at 49 per cent complete. The northwest has made significant progress this week and is now 21 per cent complete.

Harvest progress was made in all crops this week. Harvesting of fall cereals are now completed, with lentils 91 per cent and peas 92 per cent complete. Significant progress was also made in

all spring cereals, with durum leading at 73 per cent harvested. This is followed by barley at 68 per cent, spring wheat at 50 per cent and oats at 36 per cent. Seventy per cent of triticale has been harvested, with 61 per cent of the crop being used for feed. Mustard continues to lead the progress in oilseeds, with 68 per cent of the crop in the bin, followed by canola at 23 per cent, flax at 14 per cent, and soybeans at 31 per cent. Canaryseed and chickpeas are near the half-way mark, with 45 per cent and 51 per cent harvested respectively.

The diverse growing conditions across the province this year are apparent as producers are seeing varying yields for all crop types. The drought conditions the southwest have led to yield averages well below the provincial averages. Meanwhile, the moisture received in the northeast has led to above average yields. Hard Red Spring Wheat is

provincially estimated at 42 bu/ac, durum yields are estimated at 23 bu/ac, and barley is estimated at 53 bu/ac. Canola is estimated to yield 31 bu/ac, while mustard is estimated at 599 lbs/ac. Lentils are estimated to yield 1,058 lbs/ac, chickpeas at 1,071 lbs/ac, and peas at 30 bu/ac.

Pockets of moisture moved across the province this week, with the Kelliher area receiving the most rain at 44 mm. Regionally, the southeast received the most moisture, with the Corning area reporting 41 mm of rainfall. Cropland topsoil moisture remains relatively unchanged, with 36 per cent having adequate moisture, 39 per cent is short and 25 per cent is very short. Hay and pastureland topsoil moisture increased this week, with 29 per cent having adequate moisture, 40 per cent is short and 31 per cent is very short.

Grasshoppers remain the primary concern for producers this week, while gophers remain an issue and waterfowl have returned to the northern fields. Regions that received rain are concerned with sooty molds resulting in downgrading of standing crops. Producers are busy swathing and combining, while also hauling feed and water for cattle. Some producers have brought cattle home for the winter and have begun feeding them.

Harvest is a very busy and stressful time for producers. They are reminded to take safety precautions in all the work they do. This includes having fire mitigation resources at the ready and taking precautions when working around powerlines. The Farm Stress Line is available to provide support to producers toll free at 1-800-667-4442. The public is reminded to take extra caution, time and space when encountering machinery on the roads.

A complete, printable version of the Crop Report is available online at <https://www.saskatchewan.ca/crop-report>

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# Crop rotation options in central Sask.

By **ASHLEY KAMINSKI**  
*Crops Extension Specialist,*  
*Humboldt*

Central Saskatchewan is not only filled with fields of wheat and canola, there's also a wide variety of crop options available for the region. Other crops grown within this region, some of which are not as popular as others, are still viable options to increase diversity within a crop rotation. Pulses such as peas and lentils are quite prevalent in the central region, while oats are more common near the Yorkton area while mustard is grown mostly in the west part of the province. Flax is grown consistently throughout central Saskatchewan, but most of the acres show up in the west.

Minor crops grown in the region may include canary seed,

coriander, winter wheat, fall rye, mustard and hemp. Canary seed is most commonly grown in the west part of central Saskatchewan around the Kindersley/Rosetown region, totalling over 68,000 acres in 2022. Winter wheat seems to fall more in the central to east part of the region. In 2022, there were over 13,000 acres of winter wheat in this area. Fall rye acres have been more centralized and overall, we grew over 11,000 acres in central Saskatchewan in 2022. Mustard acres are greatest in western Saskatchewan, although there are still acres in central Saskatchewan. Nearly 55,000 acres of mustard were grown in west central Saskatchewan, with 74,000 acres being the total recorded Saskatchewan Crop Insurance Corporation (SCIC)

mustard acres in central Saskatchewan in 2022. Only a few hundred acres of hemp were recorded in central Saskatchewan for 2022, but more have been grown in previous years.

When trying a new crop on your operation, you may want to consider a few things before committing too many acres. Here are a few tips before trying a new crop:

1. Establish your market. Talk to different grain-buying companies and see what is available for market opportunities close to your operation. What kind of logistics are involved in delivering grain? Who is responsible for delivering?

2. Know your fertilizer requirements. Depending on what crop you are growing and the soil type in your zone of opera-

tion, the fertilizer requirements might need to be adjusted to meet targeted crop yields and quality. Talk to an agronomist to get an idea of the crop fertilizer needs and arrange a soil test to determine which nutrients are deficient. Also, discuss the safe rates of nutrients to be seed-placed.

3. Understand potential disease and pest issues. This can be unpredictable due to environmental conditions year to year, but it's important to plan out what issues could arise if conditions are ideal for insect and disease outbreaks. Learn what options are available if control is required?

4. Know your machinery and storage requirements. Can the machinery in your operation handle the crop you want to

grow? Small-seeded crops can be tough to combine without blowing out the back. Are there certain storage considerations that need to be planned through to safely store the grain? Hemp, for example, can have issues with fires in combines and can be a challenge at harvest time.

Central Saskatchewan has great potential for adding new crops to our rotations. Different field days throughout the summer, such as Agri-Arm sites, have minor crops to display how they would make out in that region. For further information, contact your local Ministry of Agriculture crop extension specialists.

You can also contact your local SCIC office for more details on adding minor crops to your rotation and insurance policy.

## Four tips for healthy farm animals

Whether your farm is big or small, you care about your animals. More than just an asset, your animals are important to the overall well-being of your farm. As you know, keep-

ing them healthy means staying up to date on the latest information. For a quick refresher, or to learn something new, check out these tips:

1. Keep a watchful eye.

Regularly keep an eye on how animals look. If you notice any cuts or scrapes, signs of infection or changes in behaviour like laboured breathing or not eating and drinking, you

may want to consult a veterinarian as soon as possible. Of course, be sure to work with your veterinarian regularly and schedule routine visits. Your vigilance can prevent an infection or illness from getting worse.

2. Practice good biosecurity. We've all learned the importance of infection prevention in the last few years. Just as it's important to prevent illness spreading between humans, cleaning and disinfecting is also essential when it comes to interacting with your animals. Whether you have a few animals or a whole herd, practicing good biosecurity (like cleaning equipment and avoiding exposure to wild animals) reduces the risk of illness and infection.

You can establish a good biosecurity plan with the help of your vet.

3. Vaccinate when possible. Vaccines help provide immunity against a disease and reduce the chance that an animal will become sick. So, ensure your animals are vaccinated, and be sure to ask your vet about updating your farm's disease management protocols.

4. Fight antimicrobial resistance. Antimicrobial resistance is an ongoing threat to animal and human health in Canada and around the world. It happens when microbes (like bacteria, viruses, fungi and

parasites) adapt and make antimicrobial drugs less effective, or not effective at all. This means the drugs can't stop or slow down microbial growth to properly treat infections. Keeping your animals healthy will reduce your need to use antimicrobials and can help preserve the effectiveness of these medications.

To help prevent antimicrobial resistance, consult a veterinarian before treating animals for injury or illness. If medications are prescribed, use them as directed, and properly dispose of any unused amounts.

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# Salvaging crops as feed for livestock

By ALICIA SOPATYK

PAg, Livestock and Feed Extension Specialist, Tisdale

In any given year, localized conditions can result in crops being unsuitable for harvest. It presents an opportunity to salvage them as livestock feed. However, there are a few points to consider before commencing salvage operations.

Can the crop be salvaged?

There are a few things that every producer should determine before launching salvage operations. If the crop was insured through Saskatchewan Crop Insurance Corporation (SCIC), they must be contacted prior to any salvage operations commencing. Call SCIC toll-free at 1-888-935-0000 to discuss all your options.

If the crop was sprayed with a product that has a feed or grazing restriction on the label, those must be adhered to prior to harvesting as livestock feed. Make every effort to determine what the crop was sprayed with and when. Then follow product label directions prior to using as feed. If the label is not readily available, consult the 2023 Guide to Crop Protection or contact the Agriculture Knowledge Centre at 1-866-457-2377 to speak to a livestock and feed extension specialist.

Finally, are the economics favourable? According to the 2022-23 Farm Machinery Custom and Rental Rate Guide, baling costs range from \$8 to \$13 per bale or more depending on a variety of factors (fuel cost, tractor use, twine vs. net wrap, etc.). Typically, there are also additional transport fees to move the feed to where it can be used by the animals. Based on estimated nutritional value, is it worth baling and trucking the salvage crop, or does it make more sense to source other feedstuffs and supplements to compliment your winter-feeding program?

How will you salvage the crop and are the conditions favorable to salvage?

Mature crops that have lain and weathered in the field for several weeks will not make good quality chopped or bale silage. Aerobic bacteria will have established in the swath and will outcompete the anaerobic bacteria needed for proper ensiling.

As with all feed, moisture content of the

feed needs to be considered. Bales containing 18-20 per cent moisture (or higher) have the potential to heat and lose their quality. During the heating process, some of the sugars (or feedable energy) will be used by microbes, resulting in a reduction in energy content available to the animals. If temperatures within the bale get above 40 C, a portion of the protein will be tied to fibre and therefore less available to the animals. The bales can smell sweet or like tobacco and the colour can change to dark brown or black. If this happens, it's important to request an Acid Detergent Insoluble Nitrogen (ADIN) or ADIP (protein) test in addition to the regular feed analysis and use the adjusted lower protein value when formulating rations. Also consider the fire risk of heated bales – they should be monitored closely.

Moulds can also develop in higher moisture bales. Buffered propionic or formic acid can be applied to higher moisture feed to help prevent mold growth and heating. In some cases, these products could allow baling four to five per cent

higher than normal. Moisture levels will likely remain high and the feed should be monitored and fed as quickly as possible. If mould growth does occur, bales can be rolled out to allow animals to sort through the feed. In these situations, feed waste will be higher, but it will limit the amount of moldy feed the livestock eat. In some cases, the feed may become so spoiled that it is not suitable for livestock, especially gestating animals.

How does the salvaged crop fit into your feeding program compared to other alternatives?

Feed tests are critical in these situations. In addition to gaining knowledge on the nutrient profile of the salvaged crop, you may also need to test for mycotoxins (fusarium, ergot alkaloids etc.), molds, sulphur or nitrates. Stressed (from drought or hail) or highly fertilized crops can contain high nitrate levels, which could lead to nitrate poisoning in livestock. In addition to nitrate concerns, brassica crops like canola can contain elevated amounts of sulphur, which can result in trace min-

eral deficiencies, polio and in the worst cases death.

In mature cereal crops, there is an approximate weight ratio of 1:1 grain to straw. Therefore, roughly one-half of the weight of each bale would be mature cereal grain. Depending on the type of cereal grain and the class of livestock being fed, there is potential for grain overload and rumen acidosis. Care and planning when feeding this type of feed will be required.

Consider your overall winter-feeding program and total dietary intake (feed and water), in addition to palatability of the salvage crop. Will these salvaged crops be useful or a hindrance given cost (purchasing, baling, transport, etc.), storage and use (toxins, mold, nitrates, etc.) implications? In some cases, their use needs to be limited to avoid toxicity and other supplements may be a better fit.

For more information on utilizing salvaged crops as feed for your livestock, contact your local livestock and feed extension specialist by calling the Agriculture Knowledge Centre at 1-866-457-2377.

## Recycling phosphorus from wastewater to grow better crops

By ERIN MATTHEWS

Canadian Light Source

Researchers are helping close the loop on the sustainability cycle with research into nutrient-enhanced biochar – a charcoal-like material made by heating recycled biomass in the absence of oxygen (a process called pyrolysis). Biomass is any living or once-living material – including plants, trees, and animal waste -- that can be used as a source of energy.

Daniel Strawn, Professor of Environmental Soil Chemistry at the University of Idaho, and his colleagues are interested

in enhancing biochar – which can be used as an amendment to promote soil health -- by adding phosphorus, a crucial nutrient for crops.

The research team, which also included scientists from the University of Saskatchewan and Washington State University, has focused its efforts on recovering phosphorus from wastewater.

“Phosphorus is a limited resource, taken out of the ground, processed to produce fertilizer, and eventually it ends up in wastewater,” says Strawn. “We are developing technology to recover it using

biochar in a water treatment process.”

Biochar is an effective sponge that can soak up phosphorous and other nutrients, like nitrogen, from waterways. The team is testing this treatment process on municipal and agricultural wastewater systems.

With the help of the Canadian Light Source (CLS) at USask, Strawn and his colleagues confirmed in a recent paper which type of phosphorous had been absorbed by the biochar – a crucial step to understanding and refining their process.

Strawn says that the bright light from the synchrotron is crucial for analyzing his samples at the mo-

lecular level.

“With the CLS, we were able to confirm how efficient the biochar is at removing phosphorous and what its value is going to be when we add it to the soil,” says Strawn.

The biochar-water treatment process developed by Strawn and his collaborators has received a patent, which is owned by the University of Idaho.

“We’re hitting on many factors,” says Strawn. “We are recycling phosphorus, producing cleaner water, increasing soil health, and are creating a carbon sink that reduces atmospheric greenhouse gases, so it really is a multifaceted technology.”



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## Fall soil testing in dry conditions

By **KIM STONEHOUSE**  
MSc, PAg, Crops Extension Specialist, Tisdale

When harvest wraps up, there are some things to consider right after. Fall soil testing, for example, is always a good practice to make the most efficient use of the fertility dollar. This year's unusually dry conditions make soil testing even more important.

In most years, crops use up a lot of the nutrients that were in the soil. This year, due to the dry conditions, some nutrients may not have been consumed or were lost to leaching and immobilization.

Some nutrients such as phosphorus and potassium, may be in sufficient amounts and you can save costs by reducing application volumes next year. This will depend on previous fertilizer practices and the amount of crop harvested this year. In the case of potassium in light textured soils, it will also depend on the amount of precipitation received between now and spring that can result in leaching.

Nitrogen and sulphur also have the potential to be present in higher-than usual-residual amounts. However, prediction of these levels is much more complex. Both are highly mobile in the soil and are subject to leaching. How far they move depends on the level of moisture recharge and when it happens. In the case of nitrogen, other losses such as immobilization, volatilization and denitrification may also occur. These processes may have been reduced due to dry conditions but by how much is difficult to say. Therefore, it is very difficult to determine exactly what has been left behind, how available it is and where it is. The only way to know for sure is to soil test.

When soil testing, the most important thing to remember is that a test is only as good as the soil sample taken. It is recommended to take a minimum of 15 to 20 samples per field. Taking more samples

improves accuracy, especially in larger fields. Avoid irregular areas of the field. If you hire someone to collect your soil samples, it is a good idea to go with them to point out unrepresentative areas in the field or give accurate directions to avoid these areas.

Fall soil sampling should be done after the soil temperature has dropped below 10 C. This minimizes the risk of nitrogen mineralization before freeze-up. Mineralization is the process where nitrogen in its organic form is converted to a plant available form by soil microbial activity. Lower soil temperatures ensure that this activity has ceased and that the nitrogen levels measured are less likely to change before spring. Soil phosphorus and potassium are generally less affected by sampling date.

Soil testing on a regular basis has certain advantages. It will help to establish upcoming crop nutrient need, monitor changes in nutrient levels over time and guide in nutrient management planning.

Nutrient management planning should take into account not only the requirements for the next crop, but also maintenance of the correct nutrient balance well into the future. Phosphorus is a good example of the importance of nutrient balance. Increased yields without increased phosphorus application rates has resulted in some fields approaching deficiency levels. Since fertilizer use efficiency also decreases as availability decreases, the problem is compounded. It can take multiple seasons to restore this balance, so soil testing to avoid phosphorus deficiencies is important.

Fall soil testing can also be used to inform decisions about when to purchase crop nutrients, as it is difficult to predict where fertilizer prices are going to go.

For more information on fall soil testing, please contact the Agriculture Knowledge Centre at 1-866-457-2377 or your local crops extension specialist.

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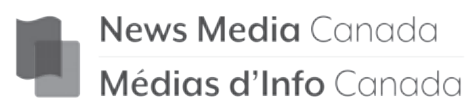
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# Three things every small farmer should know

Starting a small farm can bring many advantages, including the satisfaction of raising animals and the opportunity to produce fresh eggs, milk or cozy fibres. But whether you have ten animals or a hundred, there is also a lot of responsibility. Here are some things every small farmer needs to remember:

**A close eye is key**

Obtain animals for your farm from trusted sources and limit how often you introduce new animals to your herd. You may need to

quarantine certain animals when they arrive to prevent introducing disease.

Be sure you can identify each animal individually and monitor their health regularly to proactively detect any potential health issues.

**Meat scraps aren't feed**

Be careful when feeding animals scraps or other food from your kitchen, and never feed them meat products – it's actually illegal to feed meat scraps to pigs in Canada. Diseases like African swine fever, which is a deadly dis-

ease for pigs, could infect them through even a small amount of the virus introduced via contaminated meat scraps. Be sure to source your feed carefully from a reliable supplier with proper health and safety controls, who can share information on ingredient sources.

**Biosecurity is no joke**

Though it may sound like a science fiction term or something only large-scale farmers need to consider, biosecurity measures are crucial on farms of any and every size. Simply

put, they are preventative measures to keep your farm animals healthy and avoid spreading disease. Sourcing animals from trusted suppliers and practicing caution with feeding aren't the only measures to reduce risk. Other areas of farm activity such as ensuring you have regular cleaning procedures for equipment, clothing and footwear worn around animals, and control of who has access to animals will help keep them safe too.

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