

Shellbrook council grilled over water issue



From left to right: Shellbrook town councillors Kathleen Nording, Cheryl Ledding, Peter Halayka, Larry Batten, Bruce Anderson, and Brent Miller faced many questions from ratepayers at a Dec. 7 public meeting about proposed water rate increases.

By **JORDAN TWISS**

Shellbrook Chronicle Reporter

An audience of about 100 Shellbrook residents let their opposition to proposed water rate increases be heard loud and clear on Thursday, Dec. 7, when the Town of Shellbrook hosted a public meeting about the issue at the Shellbrook Theatre.

The rate changes, which were introduced in a bylaw at council's Nov. 2 meeting, start with a conversion in units of measurement to cubic metres from imperial gallons (cubic metres are a more common unit of measurement, which would improve efficiencies for the town).

Under this new measurement, current water consumption rates would be 31 cents per cubic metre, but would rise to \$1.10 per cubic metre in 2024, an increase of 360 per cent. Similarly, the sewer consumption rate would climb to 82 cents per cubic metre from 26 cents, a 320 per cent increase.

The bylaw, which governs water and sewer rates from 2004 until 2028, charts out small annual increases to both consumption fees, as well as their corresponding service fees throughout this period. At the same time, the infrastruc-

ture fee is set to increase to \$33.84 from \$23.84 in 2024, and increase another \$10 in 2025, before receiving smaller increases in 2026, 2027, and 2028.

A proposed new addition to residents' monthly utility bills is a \$50 capital project fee, which would remain in place until the town's water improvement project — either a locally-built water treatment plant with reverse osmosis, or a partnership on an intermunicipal water pipeline with the Prince Albert Rural Water Utility — has been paid off.

Though, after initial backlash to this move, council is considering eliminating the infrastructure fee and solely implementing the capital project fee (meaning a monthly bill increase of just \$16.16 in 2024, compared to \$60 dollars under the bylaw as it's currently drafted).

Over the course of an hour-long presentation, Shellbrook Mayor Amund Otterson outlined how these changes will affect residents' utility bills in 2024.

Under current rates, a resident who consumes 23 cubic metres of water each month (a high-end estimate, Mayor Otterson said) would pay a utility bill of \$117.37. However, if the bylaw was approved as drafted, the bill would climb to

\$209.79 in 2024. Or, if amended to eliminate the infrastructure fee in favour of just the \$50 capital fee, the monthly bill for ratepayers would be \$176.51.

"It comes down to what you really want and how do we pay for it," Mayor Otterson said multiple times throughout the night, clarifying that, despite some misconceptions, the bylaw has not yet received a final approval from council.

Mayor Otterson said the town's thinking is that imposing the \$50 capital project fee on utility bills is a means to help it build up its reserves — currently sitting at just under \$500,000 — so that it will have to borrow less money to finance whichever water project it chooses to pursue. With 720 water metres in town, the fee would deliver an additional \$432,000 to the town's coffers each year.

Another possible financing option, could see the town follow the model it used for the wastewater treatment plant upgrade and take out a loan that is paid for from municipal tax revenues. However, Mayor Otterson said paying for the water improvement project this way would have some drawbacks.

"It has caused some issues around other work — paving streets — because

\$270,000 comes out of taxation to pay that debt down," he said of the wastewater treatment plant project loan repayments, which will end in the next year or so.

Both the proposed utility bill increases, and the rationale behind them, earned a cold reception from the ratepayers in attendance. Indeed, a common question throughout the night revolved around how the town expects ratepayers to be able to afford to pay their bills.

Bea Kobialko, a long-time Shellbrook resident, pointed out that nearly one-third of Shellbrook's population were senior citizens as of the 2021 Census. She said the fee increases aren't inclusive, and criticized the town for its poor communication and reliance on social media to inform residents of the proposed changes.

Kobialko also delivered a petition opposing the changes, bearing the signatures of about 110 households, to council.

"Can this community afford this type of project?" she asked council. "Forcing a \$50 fee on people who are on fixed incomes... I think it's a lot. I want us to consider everyone in our community, because that is the heart of our community."

Continued on page 2

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Kobialko's sentiments were shared by many ratepayers, including Susan Hetu of the Shellbrook Housing Authority, who argued that the proposed rate increases would leave anyone on a fixed income unable to pay their bills.

Meanwhile, Nitasha Palumbo questioned the town's spending on the Richardson Pioneer Recreation Centre over priorities like snow plowing and street paving, which benefit the whole community. She also criticized the town for relying on social media to inform the public of the pending water rate increases, and for shutting off comments on posts about the subject, thereby preventing the community from providing feedback.

"Where is our money going and when are we actually going to see it?" she asked, with Mayor Otterson responding that the town's bylaws and budget are published on its website for the public to see.

Clive Raheer was also among those to question the proposed consumption rate increases. When he asked Mayor Otterson why ratepayers are being made to pay 360 per cent more for the same water, Mayor Otterson said the rate increases were "arrived at somewhat arbitrarily" by administration in an effort to more accurately reflect the town's actual costs for producing water, but could be adjusted if they're too high.

The concept of paying considerably more for the same quality of water didn't sit well with ratepayers, and was challenged by Paul Beaulieu, who asked when council plans to make a decision on the water project, and when the new water infrastructure will be in place.

"How do you decide? You go where the money is," Mayor Otterson said of the town's next steps, which he said will be to put one of the projects out there for grant funding while PARWU puts out the other. "You don't want to spend 100 per cent when grant funding is out there."

While council isn't yet ready to make a decision between building the town's own water treatment plant and reverse osmosis system or partnering with PARWU on a pipeline, it did hear a number of ratepayer concerns about the pipeline option.

Elke Hutton questioned the wisdom of making such a monumental and costly decision without gathering all the available information. Citing a Natural Resources Canada report, she expressed concerns about the pipeline project, which would rely on water from the North Saskatchewan River, due to a projected extreme risk for drought in Saskatchewan in the future.

"Once we make a decision, it's really not reversible," she said. "We need to be smart and consider all angles. The last thing we want to do is make a decision and run out of water."

Elsewhere, ratepayers Dave Sansom and Trent Martin pointed out that PARWU's water consumption rate currently sits at \$4.00 per cubic metre, meaning a large increase in water consumption rates for Shellbrook residents if the pipeline option is chosen.

Sansom also challenged council to commit to a timeline to removing the proposed \$50 capital project fee, so that

it doesn't just stay on the books as another permanent fee. And his concern was echoed by ratepayer Tyler Klumpenhower, who had many questions about the rate increases and the project as a whole.

"What are the timeframes of these charges? What is the timeframe of the water upgrade project?" he asked. "The understanding I have based on what I've read is it's pretty vague, not a lot of detail, no timeframe at all."

To this, Mayor Otterson said the expectation would be for bills to be lowered when the project has been paid for, similar to how a levy was implemented to pay off the town's share of the Parkland Integrated Health Centre project.

One last question from ratepayers, including Graham Anderson, was about the timeline for the project once council makes a decision. Asked whether it would be a five or ten year timeframe, Mayor Otterson said he'd hope for five years or less, but noted that the town only has high-level designs at this stage. Either option would need to go through the full engineering and design process before a timeline could be set with any certainty.

This answer from Mayor Otterson prompted another question from Anderson about whether the town has prepared worst case scenarios for both projects and established emergency preparedness plans prior to pursuing either option. CAO Kelly Hoare answered this question, explaining that the town only has a plan for its current operation, and would have to develop a plan for whichever option it chooses.

Closing out the evening, the microphone was passed to each of the members of town council, giving them the opportunity to voice their opinions about the project — a request made by ratepayer Bev Howat.

The following is what each councillor, and the mayor, had to say.

Brent Miller: I heavily favour putting in a water treatment plant at this point. I promoted the idea of investigating the idea of a pipeline. I've come to the conclusion that it's not a viable option. The costs are prohibitive. Not only that, now we're dealing with the City of Prince Albert and PARWU. You've got two third parties you're always having to discuss and negotiate with.

Bruce Anderson: I'm probably leaning more now towards our own reverse osmosis system, so that we control our water, we're not dependent on the whims of a change of government in Prince Albert or a change in the management of PARWU.

Larry Batten: I'm more for controlling it ourselves and doing the water right here in town. That's a better option than getting stuck with PARWU or PA jacking the price up on you, then you have no control. I think the extra money they want for the capital projects is way too much. We need to look internally to see where we can cut and save money.

Peter Halayka: I don't support the PARWU pipeline. My support for is for the town to provide its own water supply and not be dependent on two or three other people to provide water for us down the road.

Cheryl Ledding: I'm not prepared tonight to say either way.

Kathleen Nording: I'm leaning towards our own. But after hearing everybody tonight, I think we've got to go back and really think this thing through again. You've given us a lot of feedback.

Amund Otterson: The benefit of the pipeline is it's one and

done. When something goes sideways, we have a whole lot of people to pay for it. The pricing is stabilized. It may help PARWU subscribers. Financially, it looks like the RO system. But other components of it lead me towards the pipeline. We have to go with the majority and with what makes economic sense.

How we got here

The issue of water quality has been a discussion in Shellbrook for decades. But it wasn't until 2017, when council at the time became aware of pending regulatory changes to water treatment and storage capacity requirements, that it began considering options for delivering long-desired improvements to the town's water.

In 2019, Associated Engineering completed a high-level design that would improve the town's water treatment processes and upgrade the town's water storage to the new legislated limit of having enough water for two days of peak usage in case of an emergency.

AE proposed two options. The first, which would involve simply making the changes to meet the new requirements, was quoted at about \$4.5 million. The second, which included reverse osmosis, was quoted at just shy of \$8 million.

On three separate occasions, the town sought federal and provincial grant funding for the project and was denied. As such, council opted to spread the work across multiple phases, starting with a \$700,000 contract to activate the third green sand filter at the water treatment plant.

Council had all but finalized its multi-phase plan to pursue the reverse osmosis option, before municipal elections in the fall of 2020 brought new faces and new perspectives to the council table, and the project was paused in favour of exploring a partnership with the Prince Albert Rural Water Utility (PARWU) on a water treatment plant and pipeline project.

Per the original vision, PARWU would have resurrected old plans to gain independence from the City of Prince Albert by building its own water treatment plant, opening the door for it to expand its customer base.

If the project had been determined to be feasible, the pipeline to Shellbrook would have been the centrepiece of PARWU'S expansion. But as cost estimates for the project increased, and no grant funding materialized, options had to be reconsidered.

A re-evaluation of its own situation caused the City of Prince Albert to reconsider limits it had placed on PARWU'S freedom to expand (largely due to concerns about having an adequate water supply). This re-opened the door for a pipeline to Shellbrook to be built, with the water coming from the city via PARWU.

Council continues to explore both these options in an effort to determine which is most feasible for the town.

Currently, the water treatment plant and reverse osmosis project is still expected to cost about \$8 million, while the PARWU pipeline project has been quoted at between \$6.5 million (an estimate from PARWU general manager Ken Danger) and \$12 million (an estimate provided by AE in a technical memorandum).

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(Section 66 of The Act)

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(By-Election)**

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Councillor: Village of Leask
Number to be elected: One

will be received by the undersigned at the Village of Leask Office during normal office hours until Wednesday, January 10th, 2024 at 4:00 p.m. local time.

Nomination forms may be obtained from: Village of Leask Office 15 Main Street, Leask, Saskatchewan and on the Village of Leask website <https://leask.ca>

Public Disclosure Statements and Criminal Record check are required to be submitted with all nominations forms.

Dated this 11th day of December, 2023
Returning Officer
Yvette Hamel

Spiritwood bids fond farewell to Ming

By **BEVRA FEE**
Spiritwood Herald
Reporter

na, Ming's Wok has been a staple of sit-down dining, Wednesday smorgs, and the very popular take-out service.

With the recent passing of Ming, the restaurant has now paused operations, but not before a final philanthropic undertaking by Nancy and her sons, Kevin and Ken. In order to honour the community that wel-

comed and supported their family restaurant business, a group of Nancy's (mostly) quilting circle friends gathered to cook two final days of meals in order to raise funds for donation to the Idylwild Lodge Auxiliary Inc.

Billed as a "Last Call for Ming's" take out event, the menu was comprised of a condensed number of items

and scheduled for 4 p.m. on Nov. 22 and 23. Terms were cash-only, with the disclaimer of "while quantities last." Advertising noted that all proceeds would be donated to the local care home in memory of Ming. The resulting response overwhelmed the organizers and shortened the event to a single day.

"Many people pre-ordered earlier in the day, and the phone was ringing non-stop. By 3:30 the lineup was out the door – it was pandemonium, and we had to stop taking orders by 5:30 as we

were beginning to run out of certain items," commented Linda Pauls.

Far surpassing Nancy's anticipated \$1,000 revenue mark, the event brought in a total of \$5,541.95 – a sum comprised of food sales and on-site memorial donations.

"We had people ordering not only for supper that night, but to freeze for future meals," noted Pauls. "And many people donated over and above the price of their food when paying."

Visiting with Nancy, her rationale for the donation

to Idylwild Lodge came to light: "Many of the people who supported us when we started our restaurant are in the Lodge now, and this is a way of giving back to them."

According to Pauls, the funds will help to cover the cost of replacing some of the resident rooms' window blinds, as there are still rooms with the original (1986) curtains in place. In addition, new armchairs are a priority that will be addressed with the funds donated by Ming's memorial "Last Call."

Sask. extends rural recruitment program

By **JORDAN TWISS**
Shellbrook Chronicle Reporter

The provincial government is boosting funding for its Rural and Remote Recruitment Incentive by \$3 million to continue offering it to healthcare workers into 2024.

Available to new employees in nine high-priority health occupations, this incentive of up to \$50,000 has seen great success with 226 hard-to-recruit-to positions successfully filled as a direct result of this program to date.

"Filling hard-to-recruit positions is key to stabilizing and strengthening health care services in rural and northern communities," Rural and Remote Health Minister Tim McLeod said in a statement. "Continuing the Rural and Remote Recruitment Incentive program supports the success we are seeing under our Health Human Resources Action Plan."

The Rural and Remote Recruitment Incentive program is available in 54 rural and remote communities across Saskatchewan, including Big River and Shellbrook.

The extension comes just weeks after the province expanded the Saskatchewan Loan Forgiveness for Nurses and Nurse Practitioners program to include Prince Albert, Moose Jaw, Swift Current, Yorkton and The Battlefords.

The province is also providing incentives of up to \$100,000 for a five-year return-in-service agreement to perfusionists interested in a position with the Saskatchewan Health Authority (SHA). Perfusionists work with cardiac surgeons, anesthesiologists, and other members of the operating room team and are in high demand.

As a key retention strategy, the Saskatch-

ewan Health Authority (SHA) is offering a voluntary mentorship program to all employees. According to the SHA, the mentorship program "aims to support a meaningful employee experience through relationship building and interactive workshops, develop participant leadership capabilities, and provide program participants with necessary guidance and support to excel in their roles."

In the meantime, the province says progress continues on multiple pillars of Saskatchewan's HHR Action Plan to recruit, train, incentivize and retain more healthcare workers.

Since Dec. 2022, the SHA has hired 877 new nursing graduates from Saskatchewan and out-of-province.

Meanwhile, as part of a large-scale recruitment push in the Philippines, 185 registered nurses are enrolled in the Transition to Nursing in Canada Education Program. Of these, 89 have arrived in Saskatchewan for the clinical portion of the program, and will begin working once they get licensed.

The SHA has also filled 206 of the 250 new and enhanced permanent full-time positions in nine high-priority, hard to fill occupations, part of an initiative to stabilize staffing in rural and remote areas of the province.

Finally, more than 200 potentially eligible applications have been received for the enhanced Rural Physician Incentive Program of up to \$200,000 over five years offered to family physicians practicing or returning to practice in rural Saskatchewan. So far, nearly 80 applications have been approved.

Details on healthcare opportunities, how to access them, and more information on the province's HHR Action Plan are available at saskatchewan.ca/HHR.



The group of Nancy's helpers, from left to right: Linda Pauls, Susan Teatreault, Kevin Huang (back), Nancy, Vi Anderson (back), Helene Fisher, Diane Wingerter, and Laurie Seguin.



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It's time for leaders to tackle food inflation

After two years, odds are we're all more than a little tired of hearing about and living through inflation.

We're also likely tired of listening to the squabbling between the federal government and the country's out-of-touch grocery executives, who want to paint their businesses as victims and scapegoats.

Lucky for Canadians, Empire Co. (Sobey's) CEO Michael Medline seems to be demonstrating some understanding of their plight.

"Although our country's food inflation has been among the lowest in the world, and Canada is among the most competitive nations on Earth when it comes to grocery retail, this provides little comfort to Canadians who are struggling," he told MPs on the House of Commons agriculture committee on Dec. 4, after being summoned alongside other grocery CEOs to provide an update on plans to stabilize grocery prices.

In his appearance before the committee, Mr. Medline said his company will be implementing a price freeze on all packaged products through January. And though he couldn't provide more details due to "commercial and competitive sensitivity," he said plans were in place to stabilize food prices beyond January, as well.

The plans outlined by Mr. Medline are also supposedly being made by Canada's four other major grocers – Loblaw, Metro, Walmart, and Costco – which earlier this fall agreed to tackle rising food prices through discounts, price freezes, and price-matching campaigns.

As this work is done, the cost of living continues to rise.

Food price growth continued to outpace inflation in October, with prices growing by 5.4 per cent compared to a year ago while Canada's overall inflation for the month was 3.1 per cent (this, at least, is a big step down from the peak food price growth of 11.4 per cent in January).

Meanwhile, in a quarterly earnings update in November, Loblaw – whose outgoing CEO, Galen Weston, has been aggressively dismissive of the notion that grocers are abusing inflation to pad their bottom lines – reported a 12 per cent jump in quarterly profits.

Of course, Loblaw sees nothing wrong with this, and says its prices are higher due to factors beyond its control.



JORDAN TWISS

~
News Editor

"It's important to reiterate that grocers are not the reason for high food prices," Mr. Weston said in his final conference call as CEO. "We are unable to resolve inflationary pressures on our own."

Building on this notion, Loblaw CFO Richard Dufresne was far less vague in laying the blame for higher food prices squarely at the feet of food manufacturers.

"As we continue to do our part to fight inflation, we remain concerned about the

level of commitment to this cause from some of our suppliers," he said. "With lower supplier costs, we can lower prices on the shelf for customers. Unfortunately, several large global suppliers are still coming with higher-than-expected cost increases for next year."

So, there you have it. Canada's grocery industry is plenty competitive (with five corporations controlling roughly 80 per cent of the market), and Canada's grocery giants are heroically fighting against food suppliers to lower costs for customers (yet, also somehow reaping huge profits).

Mystery solved!

Nothing more to see here, folks; move along!

To be fair to Canada's grocers, there has historically been some degree of discord between them and food manufacturers.

Indeed, industry leaders from both sides have spent the past two years negotiating a new code of conduct to "put a stop to alleged bullying tactics in the food chain and end decades of acrimony over the fees and fines manufacturers say they're forced to pay just to get their products on shelves."

Thus far, these negotiations have produced a voluntary system that "allows companies to decide whether or not they want to sign the code and abide by the new rules."

As of last week, however, this system looked to be on shoddy footing, as Loblaw and Walmart are refusing to play ball over concerns the code, as drafted, could raise food prices by more than \$1 billion and impact their ability to get the right products on shelves to meet customers' demands.

These claims have been refuted by Mr. Medline, who says the code is "not a huge ask" for the grocery giants and wants to see it get finalized quickly.



"It asks this industry to act with respect. It asks [for] some very basic rules, that apply and people just do in other retail other than grocery, and it would be a missed opportunity of epic proportions," he said.

While Canada's grocery giants struggle to reach a consensus on how best to lower prices for consumers who are struggling to fill their shopping carts, consumers can all agree that they're paying significantly more and receiving far less for their hard-earned dollars.

Anecdotally, before inflation began its meteoric rise, the average bi-weekly grocery trip would run my household \$150 to \$200.

These days, a sub-\$200 grocery trip seems like a far-off dream, and \$250 to \$300 is more the norm, even with efforts made to save money – either by purchasing cheaper alternatives, taking advantage of sales, or cutting items out altogether.

That's a swing of \$50 to \$150 per trip, or \$1,300 to \$3,900 over the course of 26 trips in a year. Little wonder, then, that 51 per cent of Canadians are just \$200 away from being unable to meet their financial obligation, according to MNP's latest consumer debt index report.

Looking at Statistics Canada's most recent Consumer Price Index, which examined food price increases and decreases for the month of October, it's easy to see why Canadians are in such dire financial straits.

In October, with overall inflation at

3.1 per cent, edible oils and fats led the way with a 14 per cent price increase compared to last year. Meanwhile, fruit juices were up 13.5 per cent, "other fresh fruit" jumped by 11.5 per cent, pasta increased by 10.5 per cent, and fresh or frozen beef rose by 9.9 per cent.

Not everything increased in price, of course, but by and large, the needle is ticking ever upwards, putting more financial strain on Canadian households as we head into the thick of the holiday season.

We can all agree that inflation is a problem that needs to be tackled, sooner rather than later.

Instead, there seems to mostly be finger pointing and blame shifting coming from those with the power to address the issue.

As he talks a big game about affordability, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's government continues to spend beyond its means to the tune of \$40 billion, and Jagmeet Singh's NDP continues to prop it up. Meanwhile, Pierre Poilievre's Conservatives seem interested in little more than pithy taglines like "Justinflation."

Meanwhile, in Saskatchewan, Premier Scott Moe's Sask. Party government is far too busy picking every fight it can with Ottawa and policing children's pronouns to do anything to address affordability, be it by cutting the PST or temporarily suspending the provincial fuel tax.

Petty politicking and finger pointing won't stop inflation. What Canadians need, and deserve, is real leadership.

Shellbrook Chronicle

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Spiritwood Herald

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Report from the Legislature

The fall sitting of the Legislature is now complete and our government was able to move forward on several efforts to build and protect Saskatchewan's families, economy, industries and interests.

Saskatchewan is growing at its fastest pace in more than a century, and our government is committed to building and protecting it for generations to come. With nation-leading economic growth, strong job creation and maintaining our reputation as the most affordable place to live in Canada, Saskatchewan is showing no signs of slowing down.

During this fall sitting, the Legislative Assembly unanimously passed The SaskEnergy (Carbon Tax Fairness for Families) Amendment Act. This legislation builds on our government's previous announcement that SaskEnergy will stop collecting the carbon tax on natural gas bills for residential customers. To ensure fairness for families, our government also recently announced SaskPower will stop collecting the federal carbon tax on electrical home heating.



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These decisions come in response to the federal government's removal of the carbon tax from home heating oil earlier this fall. Our government's policies will help protect Saskatchewan families from the harmful impacts of the federal government's unfair and unaffordable carbon tax. While we continue to call on the federal government to remove the carbon tax on everything for everyone, Saskatchewan now have measures in place to ensure affordability for families to heat their homes this winter.

To further assist families with affordability, a new employment incentive introduced by our government will make life more affordable for

working families with low incomes. To assist with the affordability and availability of housing, a new Provincial Sales Tax Rebate for New Home Construction and Secondary Suite Incentive were created. These programs will provide up to 42 per cent of PST paid on a newly constructed home, and 35 per cent of the cost to build a secondary suite within the owners' primary residence.

During this session, our government also focused on assisting Saskatchewan's most vulnerable. A new provincial approach to homelessness will create 155 new supportive housing spaces, 120 new permanent emergency shelter spaces, and 30 new complex needs emergency shelter spaces. Five hundred new addictions treatment spaces, along with a new central intake system, were allocated to help those struggling with addictions to be able to access treatment.

In our health care system, significant progress is being made to address staffing challenges and ensure people have access to the health care they need. The Saskatch-

ewan Health Authority has hired 877 new nursing graduates since December 2022 and nearly 80 applications have been approved for the enhanced Rural Physician Incentive Program. From April 1 to Sept. 30, Saskatchewan's surgical system performed 47,748 procedures, the most ever recorded for the first six months of the year. To ensure patients have access to urgent breast cancer diagnostic procedures, while ongoing work continues to improve current service levels closer to home, patients on an urgent wait list will now be able to receive procedures out-of-province at a private medical facility in Calgary.

Our government continues to support students pursuing careers in health care with several programs and initiatives. The Student Loan Forgiveness Program for Nurses and Nurse Practitioners for rural and remote communities is being expanded to five additional mid-sized communities to help retain graduates to stay and work in Saskatchewan, and a new physician assistant training program



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jharrisonmla@sasktel.net

was announced to train physician assistants. These investments in our health care system are key to not only strengthening the system, but also ensuring that Saskatchewan people can receive the care they need.

In education, a new Provincial Education Plan was released to guide the sector's work. Mandatory Holocaust education was announced and will become a provincial graduation requirement. A new K-12 school was opened in Blaine Lake, a new joint-use school was opened in Regina, and ground was officially broken on another new joint-use school in Regina, as well as several other ongoing renovations and new school projects across the province.

These investments are made possible by our strong and growing pro-

vincial economy. Saskatchewan has recently seen nation-leading GDP growth of 6.0 per cent, retail trade up 3.0 per cent year-over-year, the second-lowest unemployment rate in the nation at 5.1 per cent, and an increase of 19,300 jobs over last year. Mining world leader BHP recently announced a \$6.4 billion investment in stage two of the Jansen potash project; with a total investment of nearly \$15 billion, this project is the largest private sector investment in Saskatchewan's history.

To maintain this momentum, Premier Scott Moe has led a delegation to the Council of Parties COP28 conference in Dubai. Joined by over 55 companies and organizations, the delegation is sharing Saskatchewan's story on sustainability, innovations in environmental stewardship, and most importantly, how Saskatchewan has the food, fuel, fertilizer, and critical minerals to supply a growing world.

With the fall session now complete, I will be back at events and gatherings in the constituency and look forward to connecting with constituents. As always, if you have any questions, comments, or concerns, you are welcome to reach out to my constituency office.

A Saskatchewan wish list

As Saskatchewan people celebrate the holidays it is a time of excitement, reflection, and hope.

In sixteen years as MLA for Saskatchewan Rivers, I have learned that essentially, people of all cultures want the same thing; a robust, secure society in which to live, work and raise our families. Recently, this was reaffirmed by responses I received to a survey I sent out this fall.

They wish for healthy schools, where every child can learn to their potential and teachers have the resources they need to set a standard of excellence in complex classrooms.

Post-secondary education policies that prioritize Saskatchewan students who care about their



**NADINE WILSON
MLA**
~
Saskatchewan
Rivers
306-787-0615
saskrivers@sasktel.net

province and communities.

A healthcare system that is accessible and patient-oriented, allowing doctors and other medical professionals to make patient care their first priority in an environment where they feel valued and want to practice here.

An effective safety net for seniors, the disabled and other vulnerable people that allows them to live outside of poverty with dignity.

Crown corporations that work for their owners, Saskatchewan citizens, with an emphasis on service.

A business environment where even small entrepreneurs can succeed without excessive regula-

tion and red tape that dissuades investment.

Rural and urban policing systems designed to proactively protect people, allowing them to live without fear in their homes and communities.

My personal Christmas wish for Saskatchewan and her people, is for love, infused with respect, to grow.

Love between family and friends, especially those who may be estranged. Respect and a spirit of cooperation between those who may see life issues differently, so we may work toward real, common-sense solutions. My hope is for everyone to become united in our vision for a prosperous province.

Most of all, if I may cite the ancient text, "Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace, toward men of good will."



**CHECK
IT OUT!**

Shellbrook Chronicle Website
www.shellbrookchronicle.com

Spiritwood Herald Website
www.spiritwoodherald.com

SALE BY TENDER

R.M. of Canwood No. 494

- Under the provisions of *The Tax Enforcement Act*, the R.M. of Canwood No. 494 offers for sale the following property:
SW 07-50-04 W3 Ext 0
(Surface Parcel Number 133181164)
- Tender packages are available by request through the Municipal Office or on the municipal website www.rmofcanwood.ca. The tender packages contain the required form(s) to be completed as part of a valid tender submission.
- Tenders must be submitted in a sealed envelope marked "Property Tender" and can be submitted to:
The Rural Municipality of Canwood No. 494
Box 10, Canwood, Sask., S0J 0K0
- Tenders must be postmarked by 4:00 p.m. on Wednesday, January 10, 2024.
- A certified cheque to the Municipality for 10% of the amount of the tender must accompany the tender. Tenders submitted without certified funds will not be considered.
- Highest, or any tender, not necessarily accepted.
- The successful bidder will have 45 days to provide the balance of cash to complete the purchase. The deposit will be forfeited if the successful bidder does not finalize the agreement for sale within the required time.
- All legal costs, title transfer fees and applicable taxes are the responsibility of the purchaser and are in addition to the bid price.

Dated this 21st day of November, 2023.

Lorna Benson, Chief Administrative Officer

SHS Toy Bingo delivers early Christmas

By **BEVRA FEE**
Spiritwood Herald Reporter

The gymnasium at Spiritwood High School was a festive venue for the annual Toy Bingo on the evening of Dec. 4. The classic event is held as a gradu-

ation fundraiser and has been popular for families each December for over 20 years.

Prizes are purchased and donated to the fundraiser, while the graduands sell tickets on a food hamper – that ticket comes with one Bonanza card

– as an added attraction. The bulk of the event’s work is carried out by the Grade 12 class, with help from parents.

Students brought the Christmas vibe by dressing as various seasonal characters, most notably elves and reindeer. Seating was prepared for 343 players and the goal was close to being met, according to Principal Su-

san Fry.

“The 2024 grad class raised a total of \$5,500 dollars all told on the evening,” commented Fry.

Expenses such as the graduation day photographer, keepsakes and decorations will be offset by the fundraiser.

The prizes ranged from Lego sets and Play-Doh to a remote-control truck, gift cards, Nerf gun, snow toys, lake toys, wireless earbuds, and much more. All age ranges were covered in the prize selection, nearly reflecting the range in age of players.

Twelve games of bingo were played in all, the final two of those being blackouts for the ‘Share the Wealth’ cash prize as well as the final game for the 65-inch TV grand prize. The major prize of the evening went home with Jennifer Soucy, while the food hamper was won by Freda Sakebow. The bingo callers took the opportunity at intermission to recognize graduand Amber Mudrak for selling a whopping 57 books of tickets on the food hamper – breaking last year’s record for most books sold.



Families pre-stamp their Bonanza cards.



Cody Salisbury enters tickets into food hamper draw.



It was a full house for Spiritwood High School’s Toy Bingo fundraiser.



Bingo callers for the evening, from left to right: Karstin Soucy, Tori Darbyshire, and Jayden Davin.

**Shellbrook Chronicle
Spiritwood Herald**
Office will be closed from
December 21/23
@ Noon
to
January 1/24

Regular office hours
will resume on
January 2, 2024.

**Advertising
Deadline is
Friday, Dec. 15/23**
for December 21st, 28th &
January 4th papers.

**Wishing You Health, Lots of Laughter
And A Newsworthy Season**

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lasting memories for you and your loved ones.
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for your continued support.

Main Street, Shellbrook 306-747-2442



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

Saskatchewan Breaks Surgical Volumes Record

Saskatchewan’s surgical system achieved the highest volumes ever recorded from April to September 2023, with a total of 47,748 procedures performed. This is an increase of 10.4 per cent over the same period last year. Our government continues to provide needed supports so the health system can maximize capacity and everyone can get the care they need, when they need it.



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

Ag's future promises excitement

So, the Toronto Blue Jays didn't sign Shohei Ohtani.

Oops that isn't ag related all is it, although I expect a lot of farmers follow sports – I know my dad listened to Roughrider games as soon as a radio was available in the tractor cab.

It is funny to think that I am old enough to recall the days of tractors before cabs were standard fare. I know my hair has thinned considerably and my beard is snow white but, although I am not that old, the farm

tractor has changed so dramatically in my lifetime.

I also recognize that this is hardly a unique situation. My grandfather cleared almost every acre of his homestead with an axe and a horse and lived into the 1970s, so he saw crazy changes.

My father quit school after Grade 8, so he could stay home to work his much-loved horses in the field, and farmed into the late 1980s. Imagine for a moment the changes in farming he saw.



CALVIN DANIELS

I suppose such thoughts are popping through my mind as I look at the last days of 2023 draining away. But I can't help but wonder what a youngster on a Saskatchewan farm will

see in their lifetime.

There are so many technologies which are still in the emergent stage that it is of course impossible to imagine where the science and technology will take it.

And therein lies the greatest optimism for farming, and for all of us who need food production.

The biggest question that is likely to impact what comes down the pipe in the years ahead is what regulations governments impose as they try to appease the perceived

wants of consumers.

There is of course a fine line between what consumers might believe is best – goodness knows the line between good science and social media babble is increasingly blurred – and what will be needed to feed a growing population.

Does that mean ever-larger implements, or a devolution to smaller autonomous units likely powered by non-fossil fuel energy?

Do we continue to turn to crop protection products, or find alternatives

which still allow for high yield production?

Even the crops which are produced are likely to change – in part forced to change as the climate changes – you decide if the change is normal, or due to human impact – and by what crops produce the best as populations grow.

The one constant from before my grandfather's time through to the old age years of my children and beyond will be change, and that promises exciting times ahead for farmers.

Sask., Bayer partner on ag-tech to lower emissions

At COP28 Premier Scott Moe and Bayer Crop Science announced a new memorandum of understanding (MOU). The MOU will see the province and the global life science company, partner on exploring sustainable agriculture technologies, with an ultimate goal of lowering greenhouse gas emissions in farming. This will include work in digital farming, smart farming and precision farming.

"This announcement is very exciting for our ag-tech sectors, and will help build and protect our farming communities," Premier Scott Moe said in a statement. "We're very pleased that Bayer is interested in exploring Saskatchewan's innovation capabilities. Together, we can help create new solutions for global food security and sustainability."

Bayer is an enterprise with core competencies in the life science fields of health care and nutrition and one of the largest agricultural companies in the world. This partnership will focus on mutual goals of agriculture sustainability measures, research, and innovation for the global food supply chain.

"Climate change, increasingly stressed ecosystems, and a growing world population call for a transformation of agriculture to become regenerative. We need to produce more with less while restoring more," Head of Strategy and Sustainability of Bayer's Crop Science division Frank Terhorst said in a statement. "Innovation and technology are key to achieving this and we are delighted to partner with Saskatchewan to shape an agricultural future that will benefit growers and

the environment."

As the global population grows, so does the global demand for food. Together, Bayer and Saskatchewan hope to explore innovations that increase Canada's agricultural productivity while decreasing environmental impacts. They also hope to create new opportunities for economic growth. The MOU begins immediately and will last five years. While Bayer has signed similar agreements with various partners in Europe, this marks their first

major signing for these technologies in Canada.

Saskatchewan has a long history of pioneering sustainable agricultural practices. In 2021 alone, farmers sequestered about 15 million tonnes of carbon in their land, thanks to strategies such as increasing crop production and zero-till practices. The province's net carbon footprint for canola and wheat production is over 60 per cent lower than comparable competitors.

Five generations



Back row, left to right: mother Star Gatkey, baby Monte Gatkey, and grandmother Brandy Martin. Front row, left to right: great-grandmother Karen Martin and great-great-grandmother Dorothy Eliason.

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 12 pm - 5 pm

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

BIG RIVER: Wapiti Library - Tuesday 11:30am - 4:30pm; 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 2pm - 6pm; Friday 1:30pm - 5pm. 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 2pm - 8pm; Wednesday 2pm - 8pm; Thursday 12pm - 6pm; Friday 10 am - 5pm (Story Time 10:30am - 11:30am); Saturday 10am - 4pm.

SHELLBROOK: SFHL presents Prince Albert U18 AA Foxes vs Northwest Sharks – Saturday, December 16, Puck drop 5pm @ Richardson Pioneer Rec Centre, Shellbrook. Guaranteed \$500 50/50 Jackpot sponsored by Tait Insurance Group. We will be accepting non-perishable donations for local schools at this time of giving. Free Admission! Come out and watch some great female hockey!

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RCMP charts success of multi-unit response

By **JORDAN TWISS**
Shellbrook Chronicle Reporter

As 2023 comes to a close, the Saskatchewan RCMP has issued a three-month update on its multi-unit response initiative, highlighting the early successes of the partnership between the Prince Albert, Ahtahkakoop-Shellbrook, and Waskesiu/Montreal Lake RCMP Detachments.

The multi-unit response initiative was launched on Sept. 15, in response to violent and property crimes in the Ahtahkakoop-Shellbrook, Prince Albert, and Waskesiu-Montreal Lake detachment areas, some of which were determined to be gang-related.

Also involved in the initiative are the Prince Albert, North Battleford, La Ronge and Meadow Lake Crime Reduction Teams (CRT), the Prince Albert Warrant Enforcement and Suppression Team (WEST), Combined Traffic Ser-

vices Saskatchewan, and the Prince Albert General Investigation Section.

"Keeping Saskatchewan's communities safe takes intelligence-led, borderless enforcement. That's why Saskatchewan RCMP is uniquely able to successfully execute targeted, multi-unit enforcement efforts like we saw in the Prince Albert, Ahtahkakoop and Montreal Lake areas this fall," said S/Sgt. Ryan How, the Saskatchewan Enforcement Response Team (SERT)'s North Manager, in a statement.

"I'm proud of the strategic, hard work of all the Saskatchewan RCMP officers involved."

The multi-unit response initiative yielded almost immediate results, leading the arrest of Craig McDonald, who was wanted by Prince Albert RCMP for charges including aggravated assault and robbery with a firearm, on Sept. 22.

Four days later, police were able to

seize 28 grams of crack cocaine, three long guns, and a hand gun from a residence in Holbein, and arrest 32-year-old Jon Jonasson on four counts of unauthorized possession of a weapon and one count of possession of a restricted weapon.

Through October, the initiative also resulted in the seizure of 244 grams of methamphetamine and three firearms, as well as the arrests of 22-year-old Lexis Storoschuk and 43-year-old Kevin Ackegan, during a traffic stop on the Ahtahkakoop Cree Nation on Oct. 3.

And on Oct. 18, police arrested Ian Felix, who was wanted by Prince Albert RCMP for charges including aggravated assault and robbery with a firearm, and officers located and seized eight restricted firearms from the residence he was arrested in.

Other high-profile arrests included Jared Naytowhow, who was wanted by Prince Albert RCMP for charges

including aggravated assault and robbery with a firearm, and Wesley Naytowhow, who has been charged with second-degree murder in relation to an August 2023 homicide.

"Community safety is the number one priority of our frontline detachment police officers. They work hard at maintaining it every day. This fall, officers from Prince Albert, Ahtahkakoop-Shellbrook and Waskesiu/Montreal Lake RCMP demonstrated their commitment to community safety as they worked with specialized SERT units to remove wanted people, drugs and firearms from our streets," said S/Sgt. Eric Desfosses, from Saskatchewan RCMP's North District Management Team, which oversees the Prince Albert, Ahtahkakoop/Shellbrook and Waskesiu/Montreal Lake detachments.

"Together, we'll continue working to eradicate any risk to the safety of our communities."

SaskEnergy, SaskPower introduce new rebate

SaskEnergy and SaskPower are launching a new rebate to help customers improve their home's efficiency.

The Home Efficiency Retrofit Rebate (HERR) provides eligible homeowners with rebates to be used towards upgrading their home's insulation, air-sealing, windows, and doors.

"Through their energy efficiency programs, SaskEnergy and SaskPower are helping customers reduce the cost to heat their homes," said Dustin Duncan, Minister Responsible for SaskEnergy, in a statement. "By mini-

mizing energy usage, our utilities are helping customers reduce both their emissions and their monthly bills."

To be eligible for the HERR, homeowners must first apply for the Canada Greener Homes Grant (CGHG), which provides rebates up to \$5,000 for home retrofits and \$600 to put toward home energy audits.

The HERR offers customers additional rebates up to \$1,800 towards optimizing their home's energy use. An additional \$200 is available to subsidize the cost of having an

EnerGuide advisor evaluate the home before and after the upgrades are installed – a requirement of the CGHG.

"SaskEnergy's energy efficiency programming is an important part of our commitment to affordability and sustainability," said Kevin Adair, SaskEnergy's executive vice president of customer service operations, in a statement. "The Home Efficiency Retrofit Rebate will assist the people of Saskatchewan in lowering their energy costs and support them in making sustainable energy choices."

"The HERR is another example of SaskPower striving to enable energy efficiency and sustainability in Saskatchewan," said Rhea Brown, SaskPower Vice-President of Customer Experience and Procurement, in a statement.

"Making your home

as efficient as possible is one of the most effective ways to save money on your utility bills, and SaskPower is pleased to work with SaskEnergy to make these improvements easier."

You can learn more about the HERR, including details on eligibility and how to apply,

at <https://www.saskenergy.com/ways-save/home-efficiency-retrofit-rebate>.

For more information on how you can make your home more efficient and save money on your utility bill, visit saskpower.com/efficiency-and-saskenergy.com/ways-save.

PRAISE & WORSHIP

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

LUTHERAN CHURCH

Zion - Canwood
Sunday School,
Worship Sunday, 11 a.m.
St. John's - Shellbrook
Sunday School,
Live-stream worship
service on Facebook,
Worship Sunday, 9 a.m.
Rev. Emmanuel Aristide

PENTECOSTAL CHURCH

Parkside
10:30 a.m. Worship
Pastor Lorne Valuck
306-747-3572
Shellbrook
Adult Study
9:30 a.m.
Sun., 10:30 a.m. - Worship
Pastor David Bodvarson
306-747-7235
Canwood

Summer: 10 a.m. - Worship
Pastor Bob Wrench
306-468-2138

Leask Gospel Tabernacle
Sunday 11 a.m.
Pastor Josh
1-780-690-2100

PRESBYTERIAN

Mistawasis
Sunday worship
11:00 a.m.
Rev. Stewart Foster

ANGLICAN CHURCH

Leask - All Saint's
Sunday Service - 9 a.m.
St. Andrew's - Shellbrook
Sunday, 11 a.m. Service
Canwood - Christ Church
Sunday, 2 p.m. - Service
Rev. Canon David Butorac
306-961-1634
Minister's Warden:
306-922-5159

H.C. Service with Rev.
Butorac - 2nd Sunday of the
month

MENNONITE BRETHREN CHURCH
Blaine Lake Gospel Chapel
109 Railway Ave. W.
Blaine Lake
306-497-3316
Sunday, 10:30 a.m.
Worship

EVANGELICAL FREE

Big River
11:00 a.m. - Worship
Bible Classes 9:45 a.m.
Summer: 10:30 a.m. - 12
306-469-2258

Youth Nite: Fridays
Mont Nebo
Sun. Worship - 11:00 a.m.
(10:30 a.m. June - August)
306-468-2525

IMMANUEL LUTHERAN

Parkside
11 a.m. - Worship

UNITED CHURCH

Big River
Sundays
11 a.m. - Worship
at Anglican Church
Rev. Dave Whalley
306-747-2804

CATHOLIC CHURCH

Debden
Sun. Mass - 9:30 a.m.
Fr. Mariusz Zajac
Big River - Sacred Heart
Sun., 11:30 a.m. - Mass
Whitefish
Sun., 2:30 p.m. - Mass.
Victoire
Sat., 7:30 p.m. - Mass.
Fr. Mariusz Zajac
St. Agatha's - Shellbrook
Mass - Sunday 9 a.m.
St. Henry's - Leask
Mass - Sunday 11 a.m.
Mistawasis
1st & 3rd Sundays 1:30 p.m.
Fr. Tuan Doan

SEVENTH DAY ADVENTIST

407-2nd Ave E, Shellbrook
Sat., 9:45 a.m. - Sabbath
School
Sat., 11:00 am -Worship
Pastor Myshan Irving
306-747-3398

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PRAISE & WORSHIP

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

PARTNERS IN FAITH

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

UNITED /ANGLICAN

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

CATHOLIC

SUNDAY
Leoville - 9:30 a.m.
Spiritwood - 11:15 a.m.
Shell Lake - 2:00 p.m.
SATURDAY
Medstead - 6:00 p.m.
Everyone Welcome
Fr. Ramel Macapala

COWBOY CHURCH

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

LAKELAND COMMUNITY CHURCH

(Corner of 1st Ave. and 4th
St., Spiritwood)
Sun., 11 am - Worship
Service & Sunday School
Pastor Michael Kluthe
306-883-2380

FIELDS OF HOPE (HOFFNUNGSFELDER) MENNONITE CHURCH

Glenbush
Worship - 11:00 am

BETHEL

Medstead
2nd Sunday, 10 am -
Worship
Pastor David Jensen
4th Sunday, 10 am -
Worship
Pastor David Jensen

MENNONITE BRETHREN

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

Gideons International of Canada

Battlefords Camp
Phone Art Martynes
(306) 389-4633

SEVENTH DAY ADVENTIST

407 - 2nd Ave. E,
Shellbrook
Sat., 9:45 am -
Sabbath School
Sat., 11:00 am - Worship
Broadcast on
VOAR 92.1 FM
Pastor Liviu Tilihoi
306-747-3398

BELBUTTE FULL GOSPEL

11 am Worship Service

PARTNERS IN WORSHIP

Shell Lake
Worship Services
Sunday 9:00 a.m.
Pastor Sarah Urano
306-841-7333

Shellbrook Library November highlights

By **LORRAINE THIBEAULT**
Assistant Librarian

Linda Mason and Sarah McComas were the lucky names drawn from the ballot box for the Shellbrook Public Library's October Dessert of the Month draw. Both winners received a pumpkin pie, generously made and donated by Isabelle Dalpe of Shellbrook.

To obtain a ballot to participate in the draw, adult patrons must check out a book or participate in one of the many programs the library has to offer. Patrons are allowed one ballot per day.

The Dessert of the Month was adopted to encourage patrons to drop into the library, to get to know the librarians and to check out the many services offered by the library.

November Activities

During the month of November, the Shellbrook Public Library hosted a variety of events. Lego Club featured staircases on Nov. 14, dinosaurs on Nov. 21, and construction equipment

on Nov. 28. Lego Club allows our participating youth to follow basic instructions and to be creative.

On Nov. 14, representatives from Affinity Credit Union presented on the topic of 'investing.' Thomas Seiden-thal, wealth specialist, and Crystal

Schmitz, advisor team lead, shared information on RRSPs, TFSAs, Registered Education Savings Plans, and First Home Savings Accounts.

Questions were posed and answered. The evening proved to be very informative. Financial presentations

increase our literacy with financial terms and ideas.

Jennifer Thiel was the winner of the library's November Dessert of the Month draw. The dessert was a chocolate pumpkin loaf and a banana loaf baked by Laurel Jensen.



Kareem created a camouflage dinosaur at the Nov. 21 Lego Club.



Rayden built a unique staircase at the Nov. 14 Lego Club.



Raelynn shows off her digger at the Nov. 28 Lego Club.

Leask Gospel Tabernacle hosts holiday activities



On Sunday, Dec. 10, the Leask Gospel Tabernacle hosted activities to ring in the holiday season. The fun included a bonfire, a Christmas carol singalong, goodies, hot chocolate and wagon rides for both kids and adults.

Submitted by DEB ANDERSON



Jennifer Thiel was the winner of November's Dessert of the Month Draw.



Sarah McComas was one lucky winner of the library's October Dessert of the Month draw.

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Minutes of a Spiritwood Town Council meeting

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

The regular meeting of the Council of the Town of Spiritwood was held in the Council Chambers at the Spiritwood Town Office, 212 Main Street, on Oct. 23, 2023, at 7 p.m.

In attendance were, Mayor Gary von Holwede, Councillor Jim Bedi, Councillor George Pretli, Councillor Bryan Wingerter, Councillor Mark Corfield, Councillor Ragnar Latus, Councillor Shane Colley, and CAO Rhonda Saam.

A quorum being present, Mayor Von Holwede called the meeting to order at 7 p.m.

Pretli: That the agenda be adopted as presented. Carried

Bedi: That the minutes of the regular meeting on Sept. 26, 2023, be approved as presented. Carried

Delegations:

Marie Gervais - 7:30 p.m.

Marie Gervais, Sheila Allchurch, & Debbie Tipton entered the council meeting at 7:30 p.m.

Marie, Sheila, & Debbie discussed concerns regarding a property in town.

Marie, Sheila, & Debbie left the council meeting at 7:55 p.m.

Richard Beaulac - 8:15 p.m.

Richard Beaulac entered the council meeting at 8:15 p.m.

Richard discussed the order to remedy he received on his properties in town.

Richard left the council meeting at 8:38 p.m.

Wingerter: That the correspondence be filed as presented. Carried

Bedi: That the Accounts for Ratification, Cheque No. 32829 to 32841 and payments #1447 to 1476 in the amount of

\$74,472.55, be approved as presented. Carried

Wingerter: That the Accounts for Approval, Cheque No. 32842 to 32865 and payments #1477 to 1481 in the amount of \$77,330.24, be approved as presented. Carried

Corfield: That the Bank Reconciliation for the month of September 2023 be approved as presented. Carried

Bedi: That the Financial Statement for the month of September 2023 be approved as presented. Carried

Latus: That the reports be filed as presented. Carried

Wingerter: That we charge the Festival of Treats committee for 50% of the Civic Centre hall rental rate to cover the caretaker wages and utility costs for their annual Festival of Treats Fundraiser taking place on Dec. 9, 2023; and,

That the damage deposit amount equal to the regular rental rate of \$750 be paid in full by the Festival of Treats committee. Carried

Wingerter: That we donate the Civic Centre rental fees requested by the Spiritwood Lions Club for the Seniors Appreciation Supper on Nov. 18, 2023, and Councillor Bryan Wingerter will attend and bring greetings as the town council representative; and,

That the damage deposit amount equal to the regular rental rate of \$450 be paid in full by the Spiritwood Lions Club. Carried

Latus: That we hire Sue Kahl as Full-Time Economic Development Officer, effective Jan. 1, 2024, at a wage rate of \$21/hr, including the employer portions for both pension and group benefits. Carried

Wingerter: That the town office will be closed to the public for 2023 Year End & 2024 New Year Processing on Jan. 2 and 3, 2024. Carried

Bedi: That as a 2023 Christmas gift, we provide gift certificates in the amount of \$200 for full-time town employees and \$100 for part-time/casual town employees. Carried

Wingerter: That we set the council meeting in December 2023 to be on Wednesday Dec. 20 at 7 p.m., and this will be the only council meeting held in December 2023. Carried

Wingerter: That we approve Kristen Klassen to take the Advanced Certificate in Local Government Administration offered through UofR and the Town pays for the LGA course expenses. Carried

Latus: That this meeting be adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

What happened to Saskatchewan's surpluses?

By GAGE HAUBRICH
CTF Prairie Director

Back on track. That was the slogan for Saskatchewan's last balanced budget in 2022.

Now in 2023, things are off the rails.

In March 2023, Finance Minister Donna Harpauer stood up in the legislature and announced Saskatchewan would have a \$1 billion surplus in 2023-24.

Two balanced budgets in a row! That hadn't happened since the three consecutive surpluses of 2012 to 2014.

The Riders last won a Grey Cup in 2013. That's a lifetime ago in both football and budget terms.

Saskatchewan was truly back on track.

And now, eight months later, the government has turned the projected \$1 billion surplus into a \$250 million deficit.

What happened, Saskatchewan?

This deficit isn't due to tax cuts, the government is expecting to rake in \$414 million more in taxes than it projected when it presented the budget. In fact, the government of Saskatchewan was one of the only provinces to not provide any tax relief last year during budget season.

A drier growing season means the government is spending about \$850 million more on crop insurance payouts. The government is also blaming a decrease in revenues on declining natural resource prices.

However, the government also plans to spend about \$450 million more compared to the budget in other departments.

The government can't pin the blame on spending it can't control when it didn't do anything about the spending it can control.

Those farmers who are receiving crop insurance payouts are cancelling their vacations to Mexico and switching to no-name ketchup for the rest of the year. They are not walking into the bank and taking out loans to buy brand-new equipment.

The government must show the same discipline.

Former premier Brad Wall dreamed of a debt-free Saskatchewan and every time the government fails to balance the budget that dream gets further and further away from reality.

When the government goes back into deficit, more taxpayer money is wasted

on interest payments on the debt. Over the last five years, the government has spent \$2.4 billion on interest payments on the debt. That's enough money to cut the Provincial Sales Tax by one point for each of those five years.

This is extremely poor performance compared to Saskatchewan's neighbours. The government of Alberta, who is also notoriously reliant on resource revenues, is now on track for five years of consecutive surpluses, while promising to lower income taxes.

The NDP government of Manitoba is cutting its gas tax to save drivers money, a move that will save families \$500 over the course of a year. The Saskatchewan NDP is also calling for a gas tax cut.

While our neighbours get balanced budgets and tax relief, Saskatchewanians get nothing.

This is frustrating because Saskatchewan has all the makings of a fiscal powerhouse – it shouldn't be in this position.

Saskatchewanians have the third highest average income in Canada, only beat out by Albertans and Ontarians. Saskatchewan's unemployment rate is second lowest in the country – only Manito-

ba currently has fewer people looking for work. Saskatchewan also led the country in economic growth last year at six per cent.

A good, innovative, place for the government to start to solve this fiscal problem is to create a natural resources heritage fund to save and invest provincial resource revenues. If the government had started a heritage fund a decade ago, it would now contain more than \$3.3 billion and generate \$164 million every year in interest dividends.

With that interest revenue, the government would only have to find \$86 million in savings, or less than half a per cent of total spending, to get back to balance this year.

Hindsight is always 20-20, but this just shows that the government needs to start moving on a heritage fund now, so it doesn't waste another decade of opportunity.

Saskatchewanians are innovative and hard working and the economic stats say just as much. The government needs to learn from the people it leads and apply a little ingenuity and elbow grease to get the budget back to balance.

COP28 Conference a major success for Sask.

Premier Scott Moe has returned to the province following a successful mission to the United Arab Emirates for the COP28 conference. Saskatchewan shared its

story with leaders across the globe in agriculture, mining, and energy sustainability.

"At COP28, I was proud to see the inclusion of some of our most valued

industries like energy, mining and agriculture," Premier Moe said in a statement. "It is imperative they are part of the sustainability discussion, and this year they were. It

truly was a one-stop shop where the sole focus was all things Saskatchewan. Engagement and connections made at COP28 help attract investment and mean more opportunities in our province."

While at the conference, Saskatchewan hosted more than 50 panel discussions and events at its pavilion.

Some panel topics included:

- Carbon capture utilization and storage
- Sustainable oil policies
- Powering the future with Saskatchewan uranium
- Sustainable critical mineral supply chain
- Small modular reac-

tors

- Energy innovation
- Sustainable food production
- Saskatchewan potash sustainably feeding the world
- Alternative proteins in the agriculture sector

Approximately 60 Saskatchewan businesses, institutions and organizations joined the delegation to share their stories.

The mission also offered an opportunity to announce many opportunities for collaboration with new and existing international partners. Some of the new partnerships announced include:

- A Letter of Intent

on clean energy between the University of Regina, Petroleum Technology Research Centre, and Khalifa University.

- A Letter of Intent on nuclear cooperation between the Saskatchewan Research Council and Khalifa University.

- An MOU on energy innovation between the University of Regina, University of Saskatchewan and Saskatchewan Polytechnic.

- A Partnership on regenerative agriculture between the Government of Saskatchewan and Bayer.



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Canadian NHL teams: two distinct groups

Observations at the quarter pole of the 2023-24 National Hockey League season about the highs and lows of the seven Canadian teams:

— Two distinct divisions are emerging. The 'haves' are the surprising Vancouver Canucks, who were playing at a .660 clip through 25 games; the Winnipeg Jets, a solid third in the Central Division; and Toronto Maple Leafs, playing .636 hockey in a tough Atlantic Division. The 'have-nots' are three of the usual suspects — Montreal, Ottawa and Calgary — and one surprise, the Edmonton Oilers, who were one of the pre-season favourites to contend for the Stanley Cup

— Despite languishing between 60th and 70th in the scoring race through the first month, Connor McDavid erupted for 14 points in five games to move into the top 10 and will, in all likelihood, win the Art Ross trophy for most points for the sixth time in eight years.

— Bright spots? Start

on the west coast, where defenceman Quinn Hughes is making a case for being the best Hughes in the league, and that's something considering one of his brothers, Jack, was a 99-point man last year for New Jersey.

Vancouver's Quinn, second in the league in assists, is surrounded by MVP and top-defenceman chatter. His teammate, Brock Boeser, leads the league in goals after scoring only 18 last season.

In Toronto, William Nylander has emerged as the best Leaf, shining brighter than Auston Matthews and Mitch Marner, after putting together a 17-game points streak to start the year.

In Calgary, the Flames could boast scoring balance, with 10 players at four goals or better through 24 games. Elias Lindholm, however, was the team leader with only seven.

The two Connors were largely responsible for the Jets' early success. Kyle Connor was lighting it up, with 14 goals



BRUCE
PENTON

after 23 games, and goalie Connor Hellebuyck was back to his dominant self.

The talent is thin in Montreal, but Cole Caufield, Nick Suzuki, and Alex Newhook were tied for the team lead in goals with seven. Newhook suffered a serious ankle injury, though, and will be out until late January.

— Disappointments? Shoddy goaltending in Edmonton and a scoring slump by McDavid led to the Oilers' early downfall. Goalie Jack Campbell, in year two of a five-year, \$25 million contract, was dispatched to the minors for a couple of weeks. Coach Jay Woodcroft

was fired. The Oilers were battling it out with the woeful San Jose Sharks for last place in the Pacific Division.

The Calgary Flames are still waiting for Jonathan Huberdeau to become the prolific scorer he was in Florida, where he racked up 115 points in 2021-22 before being dealt to the Flames. Huberdeau was on a 51-point pace at the quarter pole and a team-worst minus 11.

The potential in Ottawa was yet to pay dividends. Top talent such as Tim Stutzle, Claude Giroux, Brady Tkachuk, Vladimir Tarasenko and Jake Sanderson should have led the Sens to better than a 9-10 record through 19 games.

• From the Canadian parody website The Beaverton: "Hockey world in shock after NHL star marries brunette."

• A followup from The Beaverton, quoting analyst Kelly Hruddy: "All championship squads, the Lightning, the Penguins, when the camera pans into their family seats, you get perfect

blonde uniformity."

• Super 70s Sports, on X, joking about the old age of an Atlanta Braves' pitcher: "Phil Niekro enjoyed a solid 1979 season when his 21 wins matched the number of kills he scored during the Civil War."

• Vic Tafur of the Athletic, suggesting Bill Belichick of the Patriots delays his choice of starting QB just because he wants to put it off as long as possible: "It's like choosing to down a pint of prune juice or watch a Hallmark movie."

• Bob Molinaro of pilotonline.com (Hampden, Va.) "The 2023 college football season, it's reported, has been the most watched ever across all networks. Which means there's a lot of leaves that still need raking."

• Super 70s Sports, on X: "Maybe men do like sports too much but I'd rather watch the Patriots play the Panthers five times in a row than watch five minutes of The Bachelor."

• Comedy writer Alex

Kaseberg: "Michael Irvin was on 'The Jimmy Kimmel Show.' It was part of their 'Let's invite six-time sexual assault charged, cocaine-addict guest' week."

• Headline on The Beaverton: "Ottawa radio station still waiting for first caller to claim free Sens tickets."

• Mike Bianchi of the Orlando Sentinel: "Now that Sports Illustrated has been busted for using A.I.-generated stories, here is my updated to five list of greatest S.I. writers of all time: (5) Frank DeFord, (4) Gary Smith, (3) Dan Jenkins, (2) Rick Reilly, (1) R2-D2."

• Jack Finarelli at his sportscurmudgeon.com website, on the poor play of New England's quarterbacks: "Mac Jones and Bailey Zappe would have to improve by 100 per cent to qualify as a dumpster fire."

• Headline at fark.com: "Luis Severino to sign a one-year deal on the Mets' disabled list."

Care to comment? Email brucepenton2003@yahoo.ca

Senior Elks win two, U18 Elks lose one

By JORDAN TWISS

Shellbrook Chronicle Reporter

The Shellbrook Elks senior hockey club found its stride over the weekend, skating away with a win on the road against the Waldheim Warriors on Saturday, Dec. 9, and an upset victory over the Dalmeny Sabres on home ice on Sunday, Dec. 10.

Elks (7) vs Warriors (4)

Travelling to Waldheim on Friday night, the senior Elks got off to a less than promising start, as sloppy play on the man advantage allowed Grayson Hanley to score a shorthanded goal to put the Warriors up 1-0. Owen Tallmadge assisted on the goal.

After this early misstep, however, the Elks found their skates and responded with two quickfire goals less than 50 seconds apart. Devin Dicus struck first, on an assist from Parker Turner, and Sam Miller scored second, earning an assist from Rylan Moe. And as the Elks continued to pile on the shots throughout the remainder of the opening period, Braidon Turner gave them a 3-1 stranglehold on the game on a late goal assisted by Brendon Canaday.

When the action moved to the second period, the Elks continued to pour on the pressure, and the power play was able to redeem itself with a goal from Ethan Beaulac, assisted by Tyler Rock and Matthew Flodell.

The Warriors had an answer, as Tallmadge narrowed the gap to 4-2 with an assist from Mesele Klasen, but the Elks fired back just 20 seconds later, as Flodell scored on assists from Moe and Miller to restore Shellbrook's three-goal lead.

In a back and forth third period, the Warriors started off the scoring on a goal from Connor McKay, assisted by Nate Daku. But as was the case throughout the game, the Elks responded with a goal from Shayden Smith, assisted by Ethan Skauge.

Late in the frame, Parker Turner got some revenge

on behalf of the Elks penalty kill by scoring an unassisted shorthanded goal. But the Warriors had one more goal left in them, with Parker Block scoring on an assist from Tanner Baht to secure a 7-4 win for the Elks.

Elks (3) vs Sabres (1)

With less than 24 hours of rest, the Elks returned to Shellbrook on Sunday afternoon to host the Dalmeny Sabres at the Richardson Pioneer Recreation Centre.

When the teams met in Dalmeny the weekend prior, the Sabres dominated the Elks en route to an 8-4 victory. But this time around, the Elks found a way to dull the Sabres' offensive edge, coming out on the right side of the scoreboard in what was a low-scoring affair.

In contrast to the teams' first meeting, where they combined for six goals in the first period, the opening frame of Sunday afternoon's match saw just one goal scored. It was the Sabres who drew first blood, when Dawson Rowley scored on an assist from Kyle Martin.

The story was similar in the second period. Only this time, it was the Elks who tallied the lone goal. Devin Dicus struck less than a minute into the period, scoring on assists from Tavis Galloway and Tanner Moar.

With the help of a power play near the midway point of the third period, the Elks were able to score the go-ahead goal. Matthew Flodell scored, with assists from Rylan Moe and Brendon Beaulac.

As time continued to tick down in the third period, the Elks clung to their lead with the help of some rock-solid goaltending from Todd Bazley. And in the end, Moe was able to secure the team's 3-1 win with an empty netter on an assist from Matthew Kutnikoff.

With the wins, the Elks now sit at 4-4-0-1 on the season. Their next home game is a rematch against the Waldheim Warriors at 8 p.m. on Friday, Dec. 15.

U18 Elks (0) vs Broncos (2)

The Parkland U18 AA Elks had a laidback weekend,

with their only action being a road game against the Humboldt Broncos on Friday, Dec. 8.

In the teams' first meeting back in October, the Broncos stampeded the Elks to the tune of a 6-2 victory. And in their second meeting, they continued to have the Elks' number, shutting them out with a 2-0 win.

In Friday night's match-up, penalty troubles proved to be a death sentence for the Elks, allowing the Broncos to tally twice in the second period and clinch their victory just 40 minutes into the game. Landin Frank scored both power play goals, with Lukas Tuplin earning the lone assist on both.

With the loss, the Elks now sit at 5-10-2-0 on the season.

This weekend sees the team return home for a pair of games. On Saturday, Dec. 16, the Elks host the West Central Wheat Kings at 8 p.m. Then, on Sunday, they welcome the Saskatoon Screaming Eagles at 4 p.m.

When social media blocks your access to the news, turn to your local newspaper.

OBITUARIES

Edna Georgina Augusta

Edna Georgina Augusta
Sept. 5, 1931 - Nov. 12,
2023

Edna Augusta passed away peacefully at the Hafford Special Care Centre in Hafford, SK at the age of 92 years. Edna was born in Shellbrook,

SK as the youngest child of Fred and Martha Augusta. She attended Pleasantville and Shellbrook Schools. She moved off the farm to Shellbrook with her parents in 1948. After completing school she remained at home and was employed in local businesses in Shellbrook. In her mid 40's Edna enrolled in the secretarial course in Prince Albert Business College, graduating with honors. After her parents passed away Edna moved to Prince Albert. There she worked for Northern Indian Affairs until her retirement. Edna remained in

Prince Albert until her care needs required her to move to the nursing home in Hafford in May, 2023 to also be closer to her niece Wendy. Edna was predeceased by her parents Fred and Martha Augusta, brothers Bert Augusta, Gerald Augusta (infancy), sister Phyllis Oakenfold, nephew Murray Oakenfold. Survived by Bert's daughters and their families: Audrey (Ken) Hansen of Williams Lake, BC, Shirley (Bob) Magnus of Coldstream, BC, and Phyllis's daughters and their families: Wendy (Bill) Sherlock of Maymont, SK, Patty (Chris)

McEwen of Comox, BC, Emmy (Ron) Slade of Gabriola Island, BC, plus special cousin Ellen Kjolberg of Calgary, AB.

At Edna's request there will be no funeral. Interment will take place at a later date in the Shellbrook Cemetery.

Anyone wishing to make a memorial donation please give consideration to giving to the "Patient Recreational Department" at the Hafford Special Care Centre and Primary Care Site, Box 130, Hafford, SK, SoJ 1A0 or Camp Christopher at Christopher Lake, SK. In operation by the Presbyterian Church.

Alvin Gordon Cronk

Alvin Gordon Cronk
late of Prince Albert, SK
passed away on Thursday,
November 30, 2023
in Prince Albert, SK. He
was born on April 19,
1936, in Big River, SK.

Alvin will be lovingly remembered by his daughter, Corinna (Walter) Smith; Phill (Agnes) Tsikira), Cinderell (Nic) Northey, and their children, Laykin, Taetym; his son, Gordon Cronk (Rosanna Decker), Erica (Mike), Maximilian (Oceane), and their son, Colton; sister, Alice Fisher; brothers, Ed

Cronk, Norman Cronk; and numerous other relatives.

Alvin was predeceased by his wife, Karen; parents, Louis and Jessie Cronk; brothers, Robbie, Bernard and Albert.

Funeral Service was held at 11:00 a.m. on Wednesday, December 6, 2023, at Living Hope Church, 2650 6th Ave E, Prince Albert, SK. Interment followed at South Hill Cemetery, Prince Albert, SK. Memorial donations in Alvin's memory may be directed to the Salvation Army and/or any other charity that helps support the homeless. Family and friends wishing to send online condolences are welcome to visit www.beaulacfuneralhome.com. Arrangements have been entrusted to the care of Beau "Lac" Funeral Home and Crematorium, Marianne Turcotte Funeral Director, Prince Albert, SK 306-763-3322.

GOOD NEWS

MISTAKES ARE REDEEMABLE

By DAVE BODVARSON

Shellbrook Pentecostal Assembly

There is a song that is based on Isaiah 61:3. It goes, "He gave me beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness, that we might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that He might be glorified."

I have always liked studying the life of King David in the Bible. He certainly had some great achievements, starting with killing Goliath. The one that interests me is King David's desire to move the Ark of the Covenant to Jerusalem.

The Ark symbolized the glorious throne of God. It was absent for over 75 years from the sanctuary at Shiloh. We read in the Bible that the Philistines captured the Ark when Eli was High Priest. They decided to send it back to Israel because God brought judgement upon them. The Ark of the Covenant ended up being guarded by the house of Abinadab. It wasn't very far from Jerusalem. King David had a heart for worship, and he knew the rightful place for the Ark of the Covenant was in Jerusalem.

Here is the thing. I know this seems almost incredible, but King David didn't seem to consult God in this matter. First mistake.

Second mistake: King David had the Ark of the Covenant set on a 'new cart.'

We read about this in 2 Samuel 6, and the Book of Chronicles, which was written from a priestly point of view, gives more information. As the procession was headed to Jerusalem with the Ark of the Covenant on the new cart, we read that Uzzah, who wasn't a Levite, put out his hand to steady the Ark as the cart began to totter. 2 Samuel 6 :6-7 tells us, "Uzzah put out his hand to the ark of God and took hold of it, for the oxen stumbled."

Uzzah would or should have known better, and his life was taken. The procession halted. King David was stunned and angry. The Ark of Covenant was then taken carefully and placed in the house of Obed-Edom for three months.

In my preaching on this, I concluded that it is possible to want to do the right thing but it is also important to do it the right way.

Mistakes are redeemable. King David didn't give up,

but went back and found out how the Ark of the Covenant was to be moved. The Levities were the ones who were to carry the Ark. King David sent the Levities on a 10 mile or 16 kilometres trip to the house of Obed-Edom. They brought the Ark to Jerusalem on their shoulders.

Read 2 Samuel 6:12-13. One could read it a couple ways. The Levities paused after six steps and then they offered a bull and fattened calf. Some actually read it this way. After every six paces the Levities stopped and offered an ox and fatling!

One preacher pointed out, "The procession left in its wake a trail of blood... as far as the eye could see. It was not a pretty picture. No wonder David was dancing with all his might when he finally made it through the gates!"

Things done God's way will bring God's blessings.

Ode to the poinsettia – Part I

By PATRICIA HANBIDGE

As the holiday season approaches, the garden centres and other retail outlets are ablaze with holiday plants. The most traditional holiday plant is of course the poinsettia. It is simply amazing to see these plants we associate with Christmas merrily blooming in climates known for their sand and sun. In their natural form they are a large, leggy shrub that is adorned with the lovely red "blooms" on the ends of the branches.

The Christmas poinsettia is a member of the large group of plants known as Euphorbias. The group displays extreme variability in growth habit, from succulent types so cactus-like in appearance that one member of the group was given the botanical name *Euphorbia pseudocactus* to leafy spurge (*Euphorbia esula*) which is considered a noxious weed. However, the Christmas poinsettia (*Euphorbia pulcherrima*) is the most famous member of this diverse group of relatives. The species name *pulcherrima* means "most beautiful" and market sales support that we as consumers agree.

Poinsettias say Christmas everywhere and 70% of the poinsettias grown are sold in regions that never get snow.

Poinsettias are native to southern Mexico and Central America. Although red is still the best-selling poinsettia, plant breeders have produced many different cultivars that are a variety of shapes and colours. Joel R. Poinsett is the man given credit for introducing this plant into the United States when he was the first ambassador to Mexico from 1825 to 1829. As he was a scientist and a botanist, he noticed these shrubs growing wild in the hills around Taxco and sent a few of these plants home to South Carolina for his personal collection. He began



propagating them in his greenhouse and giving them to friends and to botanical gardens. It was only a few years later that poinsettias were being sold at Christmas time in and around New York and Philadelphia. It is the Ecke family whose name is most often associated with growing poinsettias as they did much selection and breeding work to produce smaller plants that were longer-lasting and vigorous in growth. The 'Oak Leaf' cultivar was the first of the poinsettias to retain some of its leaves while in bloom as earlier cultivars would have colourful bracts on leggy, leafless stems. Since the 1960's most of our poinsettias are hybrids and the result of even more improved selections.

The common feature linking all these plants together is their very distinct flowers. The red "flowers" of a poinsettia plant are not actually flowers at all, but merely bright red leaves arranged in star-like clusters at the ends of the branches. The bright bracts are designed to draw pollinating insects toward the inconspicuous but true flowers of yellowish hue in their centre. The word "bract"

is a botanical term for any leaf that has lost its normal photosynthetic role to take on a more specialized role. If you observe any poinsettia "flower" carefully, you'll find at least a couple of leaves that are partially green and partially coloured. These were caught mid-way when the plant switched into "flowering mode" and began changing new developing leaves into coloured bracts. A short-day plant, poinsettias initiate flowering after exposure to an eight-week period where nights are at least 14 hours long. Commercial growers bringing them into flower for Christmas are therefore careful to assure the plants experience nights of at least this length.

This Ode to the Poinsettia will continue for two more pieces that are devoted to this amazing plant. We hope that you are enjoying a poinsettia in your home and that perhaps you will gift a plant to some of the special people in your life.

Hanbidge is the Lead Horticulturist with Orchid Horticulture. Find us at www.orchidhort.com; by email at info@orchidhort.com; on facebook @orchidhort and on instagram at #orchidhort.

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The family of the late Doris Person would like to thank friends & family for their kind words, phone calls, support & memorial donations in Doris' memory. Thank you to Sandra Willner for leading the memorial service, Glenda Wilson for the reading from the Royal Purple, and the Royal Purple Ladies for the delicious lunch following the service.

Many thanks to Beau "Lac" Funeral Home for their services, support & compassion. We are also eternally grateful to the staff & support staff at WPP for the love and outstanding care that they gave to our Mom during the past four years. Your care & professionalism is second to none! Everyone's kindness is appreciated more than we can express. Thank you!

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Minutes of an R.M. of Blaine Lake meeting

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

The Minutes of the regular meeting of the Council of the Rural Municipality of Blaine Lake #434 which was held in the RM's Municipal Office on Tuesday, Oct. 17, 2023.

Present Council Members and Administration attended as follows: Gerry Strelieff - Reeve, Michael Chudskov - Division 1, Lee Dolezal - Division 2, Alan Lavoie - Division 4, Tim Stupnikoff - Division 5, Glenn Lamontagne - Division 6, Assistant Administrator Alan Tanchak, and Administrator Linda Klimm.

Absent: Courtney Swystun - Division 3.

The meeting was called to order by Reeve Gerry Strelieff at 7:02 a.m.

Assistant Administrator Alan Tanchak arrived at 7:05 a.m.

Lavoie: That the Council of the RM of Blaine Lake #434 approves the Sept. 19, 2023, Regular Meeting minutes as presented. Carried

Lamontagne: That the Council of the RM of Blaine Lake #434 approves the Oct. 10, 2023, Special Meeting minutes as presented. Carried

Lamontagne: That the Council of the RM of Blaine Lake #434 accept the September 2023 Statement of Financial Activities, Income Statement, Budgetary Control, Chequing Account Statement and Bank Reconciliation as presented. Carried

Lamontagne: That the Council of the RM of Blaine Lake #434 approves the List of Accounts for Approval, including cheques #6527 to #6556 with the total payable amount being \$329,587.46. Carried

Strelieff: That the Council of the RM of Blaine Lake #434 approves the Additional Accounts for payment as presented by the Administration in the amount of \$2,075.08: Ag Health and Safety Network \$625.40, GMA Consulting \$1,449.68. Carried

Lavoie: That the Council of the RM of Blaine Lake #434 approves the presented Council indemnity totaling \$6,315.70. Carried

Chudskov: That the Council of the RM of Blaine Lake #434 acknowledge receipt of the signed Memorandum of Agreement for Settlement of the Collective Bargaining Agreement between the RM of Blaine Lake No. 434 and IUOE Local 870. Carried

Lamontagne: That the Council of the RM of Blaine Lake #434 acknowledge receipt of the Public Disclosure Statement from Councillor Michael Chudskov. Carried

Lamontagne: That the Council of the RM of Blaine Lake #434 approves the sale of used culverts to Dennis Leask at 1/2 the cost plus the price of a coupler at cost. Carried

Chudskov: That Bylaw 07-2023 being A Bylaw to Establish the Blaine Lake and District Fire Department, be read a third time, signed, sealed and that it form a part of these minutes. Carried

Lavoie: That Bylaw 08-2023 being A Bylaw

to Recover Protective Services Costs, be read a third time, signed, sealed and that it form a part of these minutes. Carried

Lavoie: That Bylaw 09-2023 being The Sign Bylaw, be read a first time. Carried

Chudskov: That Bylaw 09-2023 be given a second reading at this meeting. Carried

Strelieff: That the Council of the RM of Blaine Lake #434 appoints Alan Tanchak to the TSS Steering Committee for the development of an emergency management plan. Carried

Lavoie: That the Council of the RM of Blaine Lake #434 acknowledge receipt of the Certificate of Approval for the subdivision of SW 16-44-07 W3. Carried

Councillor Alan Lavoie declared a Conflict of Interest and left Council Chambers at 7:52 a.m.

Lamontagne: That the Council of the RM of Blaine Lake #434 approve of the proposed parcel tie removal & creation for the North Half (1/2) Section 16-44-07 W3, that the proposed parcel tie removal & creation is compliant with the Zoning Bylaw, that Council is not aware of any land uses in the vicinity that are incompatible with the intended of the proposed sites being agricultural uses or any site conditions that would make the land unsuitable for its intended agricultural use, and that Council is not aware of any facilities that could be affected by the proposed development. Carried

Councillor Alan Lavoie returned to Council Chambers at 8:03 a.m.

Dolezal: That the Council of the RM of Blaine Lake #434 grant permission to Aubrey Reban to directional drill TWP#430, and if impractical or impossible, to cut the road itself. Carried

Lamontagne: That the Council of the RM of Blaine Lake #434 authorize payment on invoice #182268 received from MGB Trucking Ltd. for culvert installation in Division 6 at SW 29-45-07 W3 in the amount of \$2,730.60. Carried

Lamontagne: That the Council of the RM of Blaine Lake #434 acknowledge receipt from 102051721 Sask Ltd. of invoices #087551, #254191 to #254198, and authorize payment in the amount of \$40,207.75. Carried

Chudskov: That the Council of the RM of Blaine Lake #434 acknowledge receipt from Gerald Fehr Construction of invoice #7218, and authorize payment in the amount of \$12,654. Carried

Lamontagne: That the Council of the RM of Blaine Lake #434 acknowledge receipt from Lynden Butler of an invoice dated Sept. 27, 2023, and authorize payment in the amount of \$93,909.38. Carried

Lamontagne: That the Council of the RM of Blaine Lake #434 acknowledge receipt from Administration of the Road Maintenance Agreement for Riverbend Hutterian, and that the Reeve and the Administrator be authorized to sign the agreement on behalf of

the municipality. Carried

Chudskov: That the Council of the RM of Blaine Lake #434 acknowledge receipt from Nick Krill of a bill of sale receipt for replacement of a damaged gate at NW 23-44-05 W3, and authorize payment in the amount of \$1,194.68. Carried

Lavoie: That the Council of the RM of Blaine Lake #434 authorizes the payment of ratepayer refunds due to over payment on their taxes in the amount of \$1,447.01. Carried

Strelieff: That the Council of the RM of Blaine Lake #434 authorizes a deposit of \$500 to our ISC account for tax enforcement purposes. Carried

Dolezal: That the Council of the RM of Blaine Lake #434 authorizes the purchase of pest control supplies of \$750. Carried

Lavoie: That the Council of the RM of Blaine Lake #434 authorizes a \$100 donation to the Blaine Lake Senior Citizens' Centre for their turkey bingo being held on Nov. 5, 2023. Carried

Lavoie: That the Council of the RM of Blaine Lake #434 move in camera to discuss Personnel Matters, compliant with s. 120(2) of The Municipalities Act, and on the basis that the discussions that take place during the meeting apply to s. 16(1)(b) and (d) of The Local Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, the time being 8:40 a.m. Carried

Lavoie: That the Council of the RM of Blaine Lake #434 move out of camera, the time being 8:45 a.m.

Lamontagne: That the Council of the RM of Blaine Lake #434 move in camera to discuss Legal Matters compliant with s. 120(2) of The Municipalities Act, and on the basis that the discussions that take place during the meeting apply to s. 22 of The Local Authority Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, the time being 8:45 a.m.

Lamontagne: That the Council of the RM of Blaine Lake #434 move out of camera, the time being 8:50 a.m. Carried

Lavoie: That the Council of the RM of Blaine Lake #434 direct Administration to conduct further research into the legal matter. Carried

Councillor Michael Chudskov declared a Conflict of Interest and left Council Chambers at 8:50 AM.

Triant Steuart and his delegation made their presentation to Council from 8:50 to 8:55 a.m.

John Perret made his presentation to Council from 9:03 to 9:08 a.m.

Reeve Gerry Strelieff left the meeting at 9:15 a.m. and Deputy Reeve Alan Lavoie chaired the remainder of the meeting.

Gerald Dagenais made his presentation to Council from 9:20 to 9:48 a.m.

Lamontagne: That the Council of the RM of Blaine Lake #434 adjourn, the time being 10 a.m.

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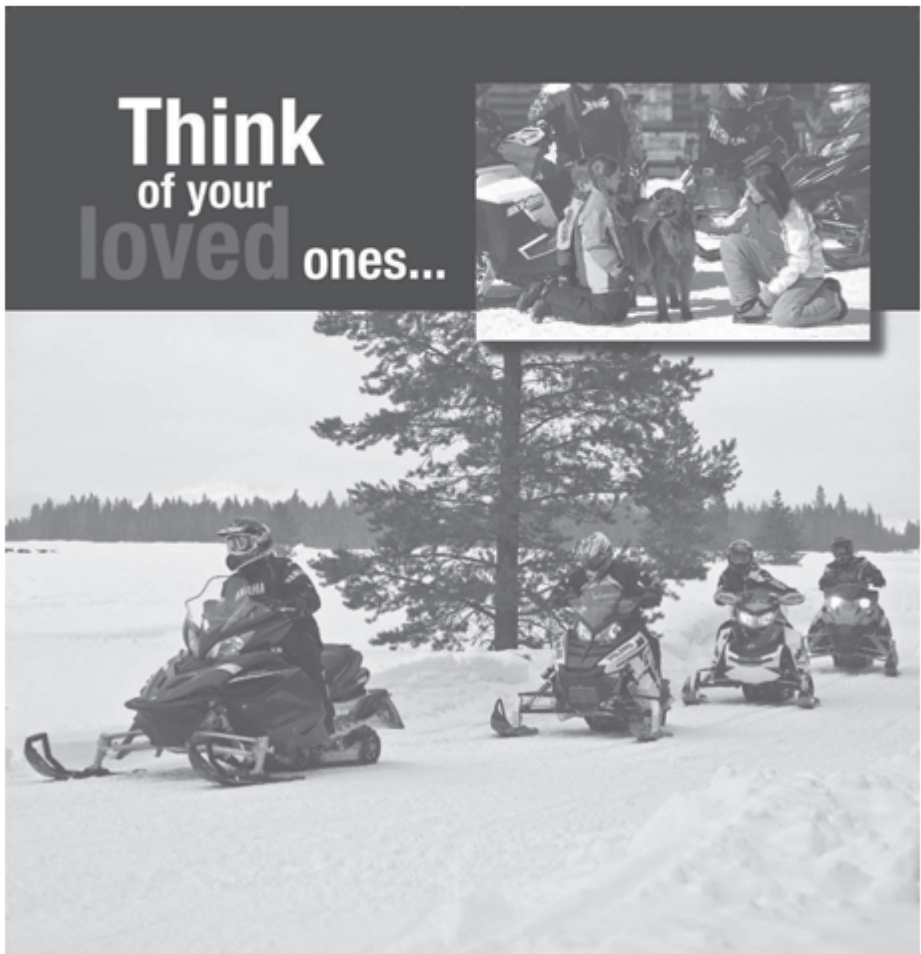
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Fun books to read to children this holiday season

The holiday season is a special time of year for people of all ages, but children might be the most enthusiastic celebrants come December. Children spend much of the holiday season anticipating the arrival of the man in the red suit, and that enthusiasm can be contagious.

Families have their own unique traditions during the holiday season, but one popular way to harness kids' enthusiasm between Thanksgiving and Christmas Day is to read them holiday stories. There's no shortage of great holiday books for kids, but here are a handful that kids may remember well into adulthood.

• "The Polar Express," by Chris Van Allsburg: The beloved tale is the story of a young boy who boards a mysterious train bound for the North Pole.

• "The Littlest Elf," by Brandi Dougherty: Part of a series, this story focuses on a tiny elf named Oliver and a series of misadventures as he navigates his way through Santa's workshop.

• "Olive, the Other Reindeer," by Vivian Walsh: Olive is no ordinary reindeer. In fact, Olive is a dog who heads

to the North Pole believing she is a reindeer. Her decision to join Santa's team ultimately benefits the big man and his trusty reindeer.

• "The Miracle of the First Poinsettia: A Mexican Christmas Story," by Joanne Oppenheim: A little girl named Juanita is the star of this retelling of a traditional Mexican tale with a valuable lesson.

• "Gingerbread Mouse: A Christmas Holiday Book for Kids," by Katy Bratun: A fallen tree branch almost ruins Christmas for Mouse, whose determination and resourcefulness mixed in with a little Christmas magic ensures she finds a place to call home in time for the holidays.

• "A Night in Santa's Great Big Bag," by Kristin Kladstrup: Santa saves the day in this tale starring a young boy's favorite stuffed animal, whose excitement for Christmas compels him to climb into Santa's big bag of presents on Christmas Eve.

• "Santa Claus and the Three Bears," by Maria Modugno: This twist on the popular tale "Goldilocks and the Three



Bears" finds three unsuspecting bears encountering a familiar fellow in a red suit upon returning home after a nighttime walk.

• "Twas the Night Before Christmas: Edited by Santa Claus for the Benefit of Children of the 21st Century," by Clement C. Moore: Parents will appreciate this updated version of the popular tale that, among other things, has removed the reference to Santa smoking.

• "How the Grinch Stole Christmas!" by Dr. Seuss: Children can join gener-

ations of fans that came before them as they hear the redemption story of the Grinch who was once determined to ruin Christmas for the happy people of Who-ville.

• "The Nutcracker," by the New York City Ballet: The classic story is retold based on famed choreographer George Balanchine's production.

The holiday season is steeped in tradition. Reading new and classic holiday stories to children is one tradition any family can embrace.

Travelling can be a stressful experience, from catching flights to getting around in new environments. If you live with a chronic health condition or an autoimmune disease like arthritis, there might be added pain, fatigue and discomfort to worry about. These tips can help you prepare for travel over the holidays:

1. Shoes wisely

Choose shoes that provide a firm grip for your heel. If the back of the shoe is too wide or too soft, your foot will slip, causing instability and soreness. Look for shoes with great arch support, or that can be worn with orthotic supports. Lack of arch support can cause your foot to flatten and can affect

knee, hip and back pain.

2. Bag it up

It's easier on your body to carry a bag with an across-the-shoulder strap (or a backpack), than to carry a handbag. Additionally, suitcases, backpacks and briefcases with wheels reduce the physical stress maneuvering luggage can have on your body.

3. Drive smart

When preparing your car for a trip or when choosing a rental car, consider adjustable components like the steering wheel and seatback. Bring a beaded or vinyl seat cover to make it easier to get in and out of the car and

Six tips to reduce holiday travel stress

look for extra features like a swivel seat and wheel grips.

4. Keep meds handy

Your medication should be at the top of your packing list for any trip. Be sure to pack medication in your carry-on luggage, as checked luggage could go missing. When booking your stay for a trip, ask for a mini fridge in your room to store medication that requires staying cool.

5. Pack a snack

Travelling often means you can't always control what – or even when – you will eat, so make sure you pack a snack before you head off. While you're travelling, try to eat fish, skinless poultry and meatless proteins more often than red meat, and opt for vegetables, fruits and whole grains when possible. Keep water with you and sip throughout the day – when you're well hydrated, your body functions better, your joints feel better and you have more energy. To reduce the risk of

inflammation, limit your intake of alcohol, caffeine and sugary drinks.

6. Get moving

Your joints may be sore after a long flight or drive, so it's essential to get moving by walking or doing simple stretches. If your trip involves a lot of walking, remember to take some breaks, and consider bringing a mobility-assisting tool, such as a cane to help you stay active on your trip.

Find more travel tips at arthritis.ca.

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Christian holiday season traditions

Many adjectives can be used to describe the holiday season, including festive, jolly and religious. Another word that may come to mind is tradition. Traditions factor heavily into holiday celebrations of faith and family.

According to The Public Religion Research Institute's "2020 Census of American Religion," 70 percent of Americans identify as Christian. Data from the Pew Research Center indicates that 55 percent of Canadians identified as Christians in 2018. Millions of Christians will be celebrating Christmas this year, and many of those celebrations will feature cherished traditions. Here are some popular Christian traditions during the holiday season.

Advent calendars and wreaths

The word "Advent" is derived from Latin and means "coming forward." Advent is the four-week period preceding the Christmas celebration. Advent wreaths and calendars typically are part of Christmas in Christian households. Advent calendars are sold in stores or can be made as craft projects. Most of them contain small prizes like chocolate treats or other trinkets behind each date on the calendar. Advent wreaths have four candles (three purple and one pink). One is lit each Sunday of Advent. The evergreen wreath signifies continuous life.

Nativity scene

Another popular religious tradition is setting up a nativity scene. A na-

tivity scene places the focus on Jesus Christ. One tradition involves moving nativity figurines closer to the manger leading up to Christmas, and placing the infant Jesus in the manger on Christmas Day.

Some churches and towns also put on living nativity scenes, in which adults and children dress up, and together with live animals, depict the manger scene.

Christmas caroling

Caroling has a long history and was originally tied to winter solstice celebrations. Christians started singing carols to celebrate the birth of Jesus. Many of the songs carolers sing are traditional religious hymns. During Advent, carols will herald the coming of Jesus. After Christmas, carols are even more joy-



ous in nature.

The three masses

Midnight Mass is a special celebration that takes place in the late hours of the evening on Christmas Eve. It is the first liturgy of Christmas that begins at midnight. It originated in 430 AD under Pope Sixtus III in the Basilica of St. Mary Major. The popularity of Midnight Mass grew by the 12th century, when the celebration of three

Masses on Christmas day was granted to all priests. Midnight Mass is treated as a solemn High Mass, which involves singing and praying by the light of candles. A Mass at dawn is the second Christmas mass, followed by Mass of the Day, which is the midmorning Mass of the Christmas celebration.

Christmas is steeped in tradition. While the secular traditions are well known, Christians also embrace various religious traditions at this time of year.

Did you know?

The majority of people hear Christmas and naturally think of December 24 and 25. For millions of Christians, these two dates mark Christmas Eve and Christmas Day, respectively, which is when Christians commemorate the birth of Jesus Christ. In fact, the word Christmas comes from the phrase

"Mass of Christ." However, there are certain faithful who will not be celebrating Christmas on December 25. These are namely those who belong to Orthodox, Greek Orthodox and Coptic Orthodox churches, among others. These churches primarily trace their origins to Eastern Europe and portions of Asia and Africa, including Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, Serbia, Greece, Armenia, and Ethiopia. The churches utilize the former Julian calendar for religious observations. This

places Christmas on January 7. It also is believed that 12 days after Jesus was born, three magi visited him to shower him with blessings and gifts, an event known as the Epiphany. Some recognize Christmas as occurring on this day, which is January 6. In fact, the "true" Christmas holiday takes place between Christ's birth and the Epiphany, or the 12 days of Christmas. Candlemas, which comes 40 days after Christmas, also is considered the official end of the Christmas season for some.

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Tips to pick the perfect Christmas tree

Christmas trees are among the most recognizable symbols of the holiday season, and the popularity of trees is undeniable. According to the National Christmas Tree Association, approximately 25 to 30 million real Christmas trees are sold in the United States each year. Christmas trees also are big business in Canada, where Statistics Canada notes cash receipts from Canadian Christmas tree producers totaled nearly \$163.5 million in 2022.

Annual spending on Christmas trees underscores how important they are to holiday decor. Christmas trees serve as the centerpiece in millions of holiday

home decor schemes, so it's important to pick a tree that can shine in that role. This holiday season, celebrants can consider these tips as they look for the perfect Christmas tree.

· Measure the area where the tree will be placed. A large tree can be awe-inspiring, but also can stick out like a sore thumb if it takes up too much space. There should be enough room around the tree for families and their guests to sit around it. The home interior experts at Better Homes & Gardens recommend leaving a minimum of six inches between the top of the tree and the ceiling. If a tree topper will be added,

make sure the top of the tree is at least 12 inches from the ceiling. Measure the area before leaving to buy a tree so it can fit nicely into the room and the surrounding decor.

· Try the shake test. Anyone who has purchased a fresh-cut Christmas tree is undoubtedly familiar with the shake test, which remains an effective way to measure the dryness of the tree. A slight shake will produce some fallen needles. If the needles are brown and few and far between, then the tree likely is not overly dry. However, a lot of falling green needles indicates the tree is already drying out, which means it could shed quite a bit and lose its looks before Christmas Day.

· Pick a tree with a symmetrical look. Trees are living things, so it's unlikely that buyers will find a perfectly symmetrical tree. However, a tree that's misshapen or already has some

sagging branches won't make for an awe-inspiring addition to a home decor scheme.

· Find the trunk (if you can). A trunk that's visible through the branches indicates the tree does not have dense branches, which will be necessary if homeowners want to dress the tree with ornaments. If it's hard to find the trunk because of all the thick branches and green needles, then the tree is likely pretty healthy.

· Test the needles. The home improvement experts at Lowes note that needles should be flexible but still snap when bent sharply. Avoid trees with needles that are already losing their color and can easily be pulled off.

A Christmas tree garners a lot of attention come the holiday season, which only underscores the significance of finding a tree worthy of being the centerpiece of holiday decor.



Where to find mental health support this holiday season

Few things fill the heart like the knowledge that someone else cares about how you're feeling and doing. But many of us feel our stress and anxiety intensify during the holiday season. Some of us have experienced loss that is magnified this time of year, or we come to this season exhausted or dreading the busyness ahead.

During this often pressure-filled time, how can we guard our own mental health, while looking out for others?

Here are five suggestions:

1. Get your steps in.

While exercise may be the last thing you feel like doing, just 15 minutes of aerobic exercise is said to have a profound effect on your mood.

2. Find the right support.

211 is the Government of Canada's 24/7 hotline that provides free access to a mental-health professional. It can also connect you with resources in your community.

3. Confide in someone.

Trust a friend, neighbour, co-worker or family member with how you're doing. Let them know you would welcome an invite for coffee or a chat on Zoom, on the phone or in person.

4. Help others.

Doing

something for others in need can help us feel like we're making a purposeful difference – especially when it comes to children. The World Vision gift catalogue is a way to help provide children struggling in conflict zones or due to climate disasters with access to safe spaces, psychosocial support and other resources to support their mental health.

5. Lean into gratitude.

Even in the darkest times, we can find things and people to be thankful for that help us keep going. Bringing loved ones together and thanking them for kind gestures can improve the mental health and well-being of everyone.

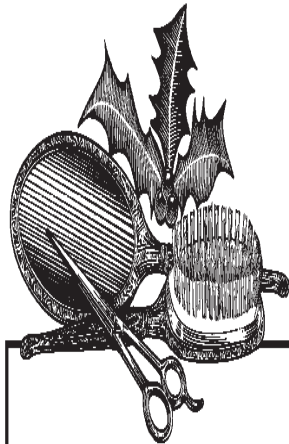
www.newscanada.com

With Gratitude
Please accept our best wishes for a blessed and beautiful Christmas season!
Thank you for the gift of your patronage.

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To Our
Cherished
Clients & Friends

Folks like you are really a cut above!

Happy Holidays and heartfelt thanks.

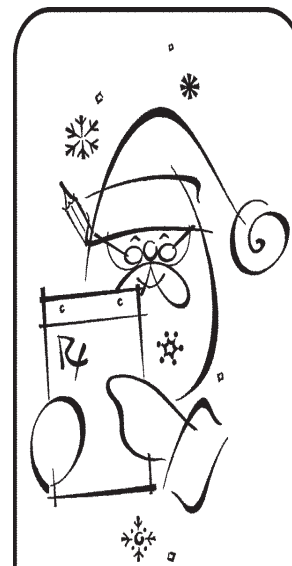
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Spiritwood

Call or text to make an appointment



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Enjoy a happy and healthy holiday. We appreciate your patronage.

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Happy Holidays!
Wishing you health and happiness during the holidays and glad tidings for the New Year!

Town Administration,
Public Works Staff
& Town Council

Town of Spiritwood
306-883-2161

Have a jolly holly day!
Wishing you a holiday Filled with merriment and mirth Plus lots of love and laughter With joy and peace on earth!
With our thanks for your patronage.

Spiritwood Confectionery & Laundromat
Don and staff
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Season's Greetings

With our best wishes and gratitude. Thank you for doing business with us & we look forward to seeing you in 2024.

soul therapy
WELLNESS SPA
Lise & Megan: 306-883-2946 Spiritwood

HAPPY HOLIDAYS

Home hardware building centre

FROM OUR HOUSE TO YOURS

In the spirit of the season, we wish you and your family a happy, healthy holiday filled with lots of good food, good friends and good news.
We feel fortunate to have such good neighbors like you.

Spiritwood Home Hardware Building Centre
Dennis, Melody & Staff
306-883-2255, Spiritwood

Holiday wreath dos and don'ts

No greenery is more recognized during the holiday season than Christmas trees. However, wreaths likely take a close second to towering evergreens when it comes to green holiday decor.

It is important to treat wreaths with care in order to maximize their longevity and beauty. The following tips can help ensure wreaths remain fresh and festive throughout the month of December.

• **Choose the right design.** Select a wreath that is not too busy nor too boring. It is important to strike the right balance. A good wreath has a focal point, which may be a festive bow or another decorative piece. Keep in mind this is a wreath which should have lots of greenery on display, rather than flowers that characterize other seasonal wreaths.

• **Weigh your wreath.** Take a moment to ask a salesman how heavy the wreath is when you purchase it. Knowing the weight of the wreath will help you identify the proper hanging mech-

anism, as hooks are generally characterized by the weight they can hold. A less than sturdy hook can increase the chances the wreath falls down and ends up damaged.

• **Determine your hanging method.** Once you know the weight of the wreath, you can figure out how to secure it to a door or window without having to drill holes into any structures. Removable adhesive strips are one option, provided you attach something like cardboard or another material to the back of the wreath upon which the adhesive strips can be stuck. Otherwise, over-the-door wreath hangers are wise investments that can support large, heavy wreaths.

• **Consider the safety of pets.** When decorating with plant material, it is important to know what is safe for pets in the household. According to the Virginia-Maryland College of Veterinary Medicine, most holiday plants cause irritation of the mouth. Pine trees produce oils that can cause gastrointes-



tinal issues.

• **Exercise caution with storm doors.** If you hang a wreath between a glass storm door and your front door, the air around the wreath will heat up and cause the wreath to turn brown.

• **Choose a cool spot.** In addition to avoiding heat that builds up between doors, you should select a cool spot out of the hot sun. Many pine trees, like balsam fir, react more favorably to cooler

temperatures and will keep their vibrant green color and fragrance more readily.

• **Go artificial.** If you want to hang a wreath indoors, opt for an artificial one. Prolonged warm temperatures inside may prematurely dry out a fresh wreath, ultimately turning it into a fire hazard.

A few pointers can ensure wreaths remain a beautiful component of holiday decor throughout the season.

The holiday season is here again, which means that the time for shopping lists and gift-buying has returned as well. Shoppers long have relied on Black Friday deals to save some money and streamline shopping excursions. But now Thanksgiving Day sales and additional retail holidays like Plaid Friday, Small Business Saturday and Cyber Monday have made it easier than ever to score holiday deals. The following tips can make holiday shopping more fruitful.

Know your prices

Shoppers who would do well on TV's "The Price is Right" can save money. It's important to have a general idea of what items cost, especially those that will be on holiday lists. Shoppers can set up price alert notifications on the gifts they plan to buy to compare prices in advance of holiday sales. This way they will have a better idea if the Black Friday/Cyber Monday "deal" is just a markdown on an exaggerated price or if it's a legitimate bargain.

Consider price-matching

Before shoppers run all over to a dozen stores in the name of saving a few bucks, learn about stores' price-matching policies. For example, Best Buy may be willing to give the same price on a printer if you can prove that Staples is offering it for \$30 cheaper. Keep in mind that many stores are even willing to match Amazon's prices.

Utilize a shopping app or coupon aggregator

Online shopping is here to stay, and one way retailers provide deals is with coupon codes. Shopping applications can help shoppers save money and time. Some, like Rakuten, offer cash-back and instant discount opportunities, particularly during the holiday season. Others, like Honey, for example, are apps as well as browser extensions that

Holiday shopping strategies to save time and money

will automatically search for and apply coupon codes on retailers' sites to ensure a shopper is getting the lowest price.

Shop ahead and pick up

Be aware of retailers who offer a lower online price for merchandise than what the same item sells for in store. For example, a six-pack of socks may be \$9.99 when purchased online, or \$13.99 in store. If the store offers free pickup for online orders shipped to the store, then consumers can use this option to get the discount but avoid shipping fees. Plus, pickup kiosks generally are less crowded than waiting for the checkout registers.

Buy now, resize later

Shoppers who can't find their needed size or color in clothing or merchandise can buy any size or color on sale

day at the discounted price, then exchange a few days later for the item they need.

Think beyond the usual retailers

Lowe's, Home Depot and even pharmacies have lesser-known, but advantageous deals as well. Don't overlook these retailers for holiday decor or stocking stuffers.

Holiday sales shopping is more budget-friendly with some simple saving strategies.

Festive films for holiday movie nights

A family movie night makes for a great way for families to bond and enjoy some relaxing time together. Such nights are a tradition in households across the globe, and they can even become a fun way for extended families to celebrate the holiday days together. When hosting overnight guests this holiday season, hosts can plan a family movie night and line up any of these family-friendly holiday movies.

• “A Christmas Story” (1983): This beloved classic based on the writings

of author Jean Shepherd focuses on young Ralphie Parker and his humorous family. That family includes his father, played to much laughs by legendary actor Darren McGavin. All Ralphie wants for Christmas is a coveted Red Ryder air rifle, and generations of fans have enjoyed watching this film to see if Ralphie’s dream comes true.

• “Home Alone” (1990): Not unlike “A Christmas Story,” this instant classic devotes much of its story to a young boy. Eight-year-old Kevin McAllister (Macaulay Culkin) awakens to an empty house after his parents forgetfully leave him behind as they depart on a holiday trip to Paris with their extended family. That proves to be bad news for bungling burglars Harry (Joe Pesci) and Marv (Daniel Stern), who are outwitted by Kevin at every turn.

• Elf (2003): Middle-aged Buddy (Will Ferrell) grew up in the North Pole believing he is

an elf, despite being significantly larger than the kind-hearted elves who raised him. Upon learning he is not an actual elf, Buddy is determined to reunite with the father (James Caan) he’s never known. Hilarity ensues as the innocent Buddy ends up in the big city in search of his father.

• “It’s a Wonderful Life” (1946): Among the most beloved holiday movies ever made, this classic stars Jimmy Stewart as George Bailey, a devoted family man who set aside his own big-city dreams to save the family business and, ultimately, his small hometown of Bedford Falls. Lamenting some bad luck that leaves him on the cusp of financial ruin, George wishes he’d never been born, only to be shown by an especially kind and patient angel-in-training (Henry Travers) how much worse off Bedford Falls and its residents might have been had George Bailey never existed.

• “Jingle All the Way” (1996): Featuring a future Governor of California in the lead role, this hijinks-filled holiday classic follows the efforts of Howard Langston (Arnold Schwarzenegger) as he tries to secure the must-have gift of the season for his son, Jamie (Jake Lloyd). Howard soon finds himself competing against a father (Sinbad) who’s equally devoted to find the coveted Turbo-Man action figure.

A holiday movie night makes for a fun, family-friendly evening when hosting overnight guests during this special time of year.



Holiday bucket list

- 🔴 Decorate the tree
- 🔴 Mail a letter to Santa
- 🔴 Decorate a Ginger Bread house
- 🔴 Go sledding
- 🔴 Read a Christmas book before bed
- 🔴 Sip on hot chocolate
- 🔴 Watch a Christmas movie curled up under a blanket
- 🔴 Drive around and look at Christmas lights
- 🔴 Sit on Santa’s lap
- 🔴 Watch “Elf”
- 🔴 Bake and decorate cookies
- 🔴 Give a gift to someone in need
- 🔴 Send Holiday cards to friends and family
- 🔴 Make a snowman
- 🔴 Watch “Home Alone”
- 🔴 Wrap Christmas gifts
- 🔴 Deliver gifts to friends and neighbors
- 🔴 Cuddle by the fire
- 🔴 Make cinnamon rolls and stay in PJ’s all day
- 🔴 Decide on a New Year’s resolution
- 🔴 Watch “The Polar Express”
- 🔴 Light a scented Christmas candle
- 🔴 Start a new family tradition
- 🔴 Play a board game
- 🔴 Go for a winter walk
- 🔴 Do a Random Act of Kindness
- 🔴 Wear matching pajamas on Christmas morning
- 🔴 Make a Christmas craft
- 🔴 Kiss under the mistletoe
- 🔴 Read a new book by the fire
- 🔴 Donate money to the Salvation Army bell ringing
- 🔴 Attend a local Holiday event
- 🔴 Go Christmas shopping with a family member or friend



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Treat Serving
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Merry Christmas
and many thanks
to the best bunch
of people
- our customers!

The Lark
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Shell Lake



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Merry Christmas
& *Season’s Greetings*
FROM US TO ALL OF YOU.

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With Warm Regards At The Holiday Season

It’s a privilege to
serve you and
we thank you
for your valued
business.



From
Dennis Simonar
& Staff

**Simonar’s Refrigeration
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Christmas Greetings

From the Reeve, Councillors &

Staff of the

RM of Medstead #497

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This Christmas,

create wonderful memories that you will cherish forever. May your heart be filled with warmth and your home with joy. **Merry Christmas!**

Tracie & Staff at
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www.glaslynagencies.ca

**Weighing In
With Our Best**

We’re stocking up with cheer; to
thank you all for shopping here!
Season’s Greetings

HOMETOWN GROCERY

Medstead

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HAPPY HOLIDAYS

We appreciate your support & look forward to serving you in the New Year.

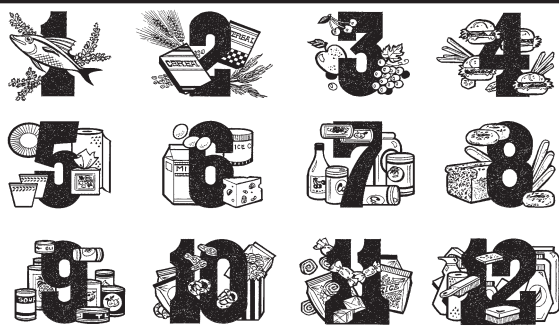


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Desmen, Michelle, Gavin
& Payton Boyd

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**WISHING YOU TWELVE
“SPECIAL” DAYS**

May each and every day be filled with goodness.
Thank you for choosing us for all your daily needs.

Thank you for your support!

From Joy, Greg and Staff of

Shell Lake General Store 306-427-2044

Christmas stocking decorating tips

Hangings Christmas stockings is just one of the many traditions that fill the days leading up to Christmas. One theory regarding the origins of stockings says the tradition began when a poor widower who had three daughters worried over having enough money for their wedding dowries to help secure the daughters' futures. The women, who had hung their stockings by the fireplace to dry, woke up to find solid gold spheres inside. This legend suggests kindly St. Nicholas visited the home in the night and left the presents, helping ensure the daughters could marry well, after all.

Christmas stockings were the first places where gifts were stowed, before under the boughs of Christmas trees became the primary spot for placing gifts. Then stockings were secondary vessels reserved for small trinkets. Today stockings are largely Christmas decorations rather than places to place gifts. Still, they're a key component of holiday magic.



When including stockings in holiday festivities, follow these tips for whimsy and more.

- Utilize stocking holders. Stocking holders are either metal or wooden devices that are placed on mantels. Hooks on the holders suspend the stockings. Just be sure the holders are sturdy enough to handle the weight of a stuffed stocking if you plan on filling it with goodies.

- Determine your style. There are Christmas stockings that coordinate to just about any interior design style. From farmhouse to modern to traditional, choose one that fits with your aesthetic. That isn't to

say you can't mix and match stockings if you prefer a more eclectic, homespun feel.

- Enhance your stocking look. If stockings are strictly decorative, enhance their look with a few tricks. First, use tissue paper or balled up shopping bags to stuff the stockings and give them shape. Fill a small baggie with sand or florist glass and place in the heel of the stocking to balance it out and prevent the stocking from blowing around in the breeze.

- No fireplace; no problem. Stockings are traditionally hung from the fireplace mantel, but if you don't have a fireplace there is no need to fret. Simply use ribbons to hang them from the banister of a staircase, or hang stockings right on walls with removable hooks, or from sturdy shelves. You also can think creatively and hang larger stockings on a door like you might a wreath.

Whether they're decorative or functional, stockings can be an integral component of holiday decor in a home.

Gatherings with family and friends are an integral component of the holiday season. Certain rooms in the house are on display more than others, with kitchens, dining rooms and living areas serving as popular places to congregate. Of course, fireplaces also serve as popular gathering spots in homes that feature them.

Lighting a fire in the hearth can make any space more cozy, but doing so comes with some hazards. Consider these fireplace safety tips in advance of the holiday entertaining season.

- Have the fireplace inspected and swept professionally. Prior to lighting the first fire of the season, ensure that a professional inspects the fireplace, chimney and venting to ensure everything is in good condition. The chimney also should be swept to remove excess debris and buildup that could pose a fire hazard.

- Keep items away from the fireplace. Wrapping paper, rugs, clothing, magazines, and the like should be kept at least three feet away from the flames, suggests the American Red Cross. Also, make sure decorations are hung securely and a safe distance away

from the fire.

- Check your smoke alarms. Be sure the home has working smoke alarms on every level of the house. And keep a fire extinguisher close to the fireplace.

- Never burn wrapping paper. Wrapping paper contains additives, like dyes, that make it burn extremely hot. Do not think of discarding wrapping paper by burning it in the fireplace.

- Keep the tree a safe distance away. Although it makes for the perfect Christmas photo backdrop, Christmas trees and fireplaces should not be near each other. Also, the Christmas tree is not safe to burn in the fireplace after the season, as the wood has not been properly dried or

seasoned.

- Use a screen on the fireplace. Make sure the fireplace is properly covered by a screen to stop embers from escaping when the wood pops and sparks. The screen also can help keep decorations and other objects from falling into the fire.

- Keep the fireplace clean. Promptly remove any ash and debris from the fireplace after it has cooled to improve indoor air quality and provide greater control over the next fire when it is burned, advises the American Society of Home Inspectors.

Fireplaces bring warmth and add ambiance to a home, particularly during the holidays. But safety must prevail when lighting fireplaces.



With Tidings of
Comfort & Joy
May the coming season
bring, peace & joy
and all good things!



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blainelake@lakeviewinsurance.com

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Christmas!

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'GO GREEN,
RECYCLE'



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Wishing you much
harmony and joy
at Christmas

Reeve and Council
R.M. of Leask
#464



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everyone

Peace & Good Will
at Christmas

Mayor and Council
Village of Leask



Have a
Very Merry Christmas
and Happy New Year
Town of Blaine Lake

306.497.2531
Blaine Lake



Rejoice!

With joy in our hearts, we wish you all a truly miraculous holiday season.

Staff and Management of

**Blaine Lake
Ambulance Care**

Keith & Diana Woytiuk

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The
Word!

Here's
hoping that your
holiday brings,

Peace and
joy and all
good things

Plus a
load of fun and
laughter

To create
warm memories
forever after!

Village of
Canwood
Council
& Staff

Happy
Holidays

All the best to
our friends and
neighbours this
Holiday Season.

R.M. of
Canwood #494
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Festive facts about fruitcake

Certain sights and sounds are ingrained in the holiday season, from twinkling lights to carols piping over retailers' sound systems. Amid the shelves of holiday wares and delicacies, fruitcake makes its annual appearance.

Fruitcake, sometimes referred to as plum cake or Christmas cake, can be prepared in various ways. However, a dense bundt-type cake dotted with dried, candied fruit and often soaked in rum or brandy has become the standard. Loathed or loved, seldom anything in between, fruitcake is typically mocked as the ultimate regift. But just like Charlie Brown's scant Christmas tree, which was initially mocked, it's time to see fruitcake in a new light. Consider these fruitcake fun facts.

- The texture of fruitcake can vary from cake-like to more of a sweet bread like brioche. Italians dig into panettone, Germans delight with stollen and Jamaicans serve black cake.

- The first fruitcakes weren't eaten. According to historians, fruitcakes were initially made by ancient Egyptians, who tucked the desserts into the tombs with their dead so a sweet treat could be enjoyed in the afterlife.

- Fruitcake gained popularity as military rations, as everyone from Roman soldiers to Crusaders found fruitcake provided a diverse array of nutrients and an energy boost in battle. Fruitcake

also stores well, which can be beneficial for military personnel in battle.

- Fruitcake seemingly is indestructible. While it likely cannot last forever, Tastemade says if a fruitcake is kept in an airtight container and stored in a dark, cool place, it could be reheated years after being baked. Starch crystals and dried fruit in the cake will release stored water when warmed, rehydrating the cake.

- Historical accounts indicate Romans were among the first people to eat fruitcake, which they might have enjoyed as early as 100 A.D. A version called "satura" was made by mixing stale bread with pine nuts, pomegranate seeds, raisins, and then soaking it in a barley mash and an alcoholic beverage brewed from honey.

- Fruitcake became a popular dish to serve at British royals' weddings. Queen Victoria, Princess Diana and Prince William served fruitcake at their receptions.

- The Smithsonian Air and Space Museum in Washington, D.C. has a fruitcake on display. It traveled into space on Apollo 11 in 1969, but was never eaten.

- Seth Greenberg, who worked in his family's New York City bakery, attests that fruitcake is delicious when made with the right ingredients. The neon-colored, dry and overly sweet fruit that many bakers use is the problem with poor cakes. But proper ingredients like brandy, glace cherries, apricots, figs, and dates can make for a delicious fruitcake.

- The average fruitcake weighs between two and three pounds. However, the heaviest fruitcake on record, according to "The Guinness Book of World Records," came in at 9,596 pounds. Despite the hefty weight of this cake, it's only around 92 to 160 calories per serving.

Regardless of its unfavorable reputation, fruitcake remains an unwavering holiday tradition. The website Serious Eats reports that more than two million fruitcakes are sold each year.




*Greetings at Christmas
With best wishes to
you and yours
this holiday season!*

Village of Debden
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Debden, SK

*Season's Greetings
Thank you
for your patronage!*

Victoire General Store
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Willow
Insurance Corp.

*With best wishes to one and all
for a merry and bright holiday season.*

**THANKS
For Your Patronage**

Shell Lake, SK Debden, SK
306-427-2255 306-724-2012



SANTA

*Especially
For you...*

We'd like to join jolly old Saint Nick in sending warm wishes to you and your loved ones this holiday season. We appreciate your goodwill and trust in us, and thank you for your business.

Merry Christmas!

*From Management
and Staff of*

**Lamplight
Cuisine**

A number of things can be expected during the holiday season. Children will anxiously await visits from Santa and travelers recognize there is bound to be traffic on the roadways and crowds at the airport. And if you're opening your home to guests, those visitors will be expecting some delicious food.

Meals are a big component of holiday entertaining, so much so that holiday hosts may spend weeks pondering what to serve guests. These guidelines can help simplify cooking for a crowd.

Plan make-ahead dishes

Simplifying holiday cooking comes down to spending less time in the kitchen on the day of the festivities. Make-ahead dishes that can be reheated or set in chafing dishes for buffet meals are preferable. There's lots of dishes to choose from, including casseroles, stews, soups, and baked pasta dishes. Avoid fresh pasta offerings, like spaghetti and meatballs, for example. Leftover noodles will get mushy and will not reheat very well.

Ham is a good choice

Ham is a forgiving dish that is quite popular for holiday gatherings. Many hams come pre-cooked and pre-sliced, so producing a flavorful main course may be just a matter of dressing it up with seasonings or even using the glaze that often comes with such products.

Cater a meal

There's certainly pride that comes with offering guests a table full of home-cooked foods. But the expense, effort and time that goes into creating a masterful menu can be taxing. If a lot of people are coming for the holidays, hosts can find out which area businesses offer holiday catering packages and consider them. This frees up more time for

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Glad Tidings**

**May your holiday be
brimming with
good times and
glad tidings!**



It's been a pleasure
serving you so
far ...thanks!

**Wensley
Metalworks Ltd.**
306-941-8624 ~ Debden

Holiday cooking for a crowd made easy



mingling with guests. And food establishments often have experience knowing just how much food to have per person, reducing waste and helping hosts avoid having a refrigerator full of leftovers they may or may not eat.

Delegate some tasks

It's alright to ask guests to bring something to the holiday dinner. In fact, they may be eager to pitch in. If someone brings a salad, another an appetizer and others some desserts, then it is just up to the host to provide the main course and maybe a side or two. This removes a lot of the pressure.

Select familiar foods

Hosts may be tempted to try all of the delicious recipes featured in magazines or online around the holidays. However, sticking with familiar dishes that you have made before reduces the chances for error. Recipes that can be whipped up by rote will make holiday cooking tasks easier and quicker.

Cooking for a holiday crowd doesn't have to be difficult, especially when hosts employ a few strategies to simplify meal creation.

*Merry Christmas
& Happy New
Year!*



*We wish everyone a
Happy & Safe Holiday!*

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Cory & Kerri

**BIG RIVER
AUTOBODY**

**HAPPY, HAPPY,
HAPPY, HAPPY,
HAPPY, HAPPY,
HOLLY DAYS**

*Wishing all of you
a very joyful
holiday season.*

Thanks.

**Ritchie
Construction
Ltd.**
*George, Arlene
and staff*



**Now Serving:
Our Best Wishes**

Here's hoping your holiday season is just the way you like it. It's always a pleasure to serve folks like you and we sincerely appreciate your dining with us this past year

Wanda and Staff

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& Main
and
Thelma &
Louise's
Lounge**

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306-469-4488
Big River

Inspiring ideas for last-minute holiday shoppers

It's unlikely that anyone aspires to be a last-minute holiday shopper. Putting off holiday shopping until the last minute can make for a stressful home stretch to the season, and there's no guarantee store shelves won't already be picked clean or that gifts purchased online will arrive on time.

Despite how unappealing last-minute shopping can be, it's still a fact of life for millions of holiday shoppers. As the clock winds down this holiday season, shoppers can look to these ideas for inspiration.

• **Gift cards:** Gift cards may never earn a distinction as the most sentimental item to give a loved one during the holiday season, but they are surprisingly sought-after. In fact, a survey from the National Retail Federation found that 54 percent of participants identified gift cards as the most-wanted gift of the 2022 holiday season. Chain retailers, small businesses and restaurants

are among the many establishments that sell gift cards, so shoppers are bound to find a card to please anyone on their shopping list.

• **Food/beverage:** The holiday season is a popular time to indulge in some great food and wash it down with a favorite wine or another adult beverage. That makes food and beverages a great holiday gift. Shoppers can take a loved one out to a favorite restaurant, prepare a homemade treat or purchase a favorite dish from a local specialty grocery store or eatery. Pair the food with an appropriate beverage and this accessible last-minute gift idea is sure to be a hit.

• **Tickets:** Tickets to a movie, sporting event, live theater performance, or concert are another gift idea that likely won't be gobbled up by early bird shoppers. People of all ages enjoy experiences, and a 2022 survey from the travel booking platform GetYourGuide found that 50 percent of survey respondents



indicated they would enjoy tickets to a concert or show.

• **Books:** Books make an ideal holiday gift for everyone from young kids to grandparents. Traditional print books are small enough that they can likely arrive on time even if they're purchased just a few days before Christmas. E-book sellers enable gift givers to pick the perfect time to notify loved ones

they have received an electronic book. Audiobooks, which can be downloaded to a smartphone or given as a CD, make an ideal gift for loved ones who spend a lot of time behind the wheel.

Last-minute holiday shopping can be stressful. However, various sought-after items can be secured at the last minute, ensuring gift givers' loved ones have a happy holiday season.

Hosting is a significant part of the holiday season. From late November until New Year's Day, millions of people across North America welcome friends and family into their homes. Whether you're hosting a small gathering with locally based

loved ones or welcoming distant relatives into your home for several days, the following are some planning pointers to ensure your home is ready and guests feel welcome this holiday season.

• **Hire a local cleaning service.** The holiday season can be hectic. Holiday functions at school, office parties, community events, and more fill up social schedules between late November and early January. Busy social schedules leave little time for house cleaning, which is a must before welcoming guests into a home. A local cleaning service can clean the whole house for hosts welcoming overnight guests or focus on a few popular entertaining areas if party guests will be going home at the end of the night.

• **Get an early head count.** Ask party invitees and prospective overnight guests to RSVP early enough to ensure you can accommodate everyone's needs. Additional seating may be required for holiday parties, while hosts may need to arrange for extra bedding for overnight guests. The earlier you know who's coming, and potentially staying, the more time you have to ensure you can accommodate everyone.

• **Rent items from a local party supply store.** When hosting large gatherings, a local party supply store can be the place to go for decorations, seating, food trays and utensils, and more. Such establishments also may rent specialty supplies like outdoor heat lamps for cold weather par-

ties or tents and outdoor tables and chairs in areas where the weather is warm during the holiday season. Hosts can typically rent everything they need to host the party, saving them the expense of buying items that may just sit in storage the rest of the year.

• **Arrange for transportation.** Whether

guests are flying in from distant lands or local friends, relatives or neighbors stopping in for the night, hosts can arrange for transportation to and from their homes to ensure everyone arrives safely and makes it home without incident. Pick overnight guests up at the airport so they see a friendly face upon arriv-

al. When hosting gatherings with local family and friends, encourage others to share how they intend to get home and recruit designated drivers if you intend to serve alcohol.

Hosts can take heed of these planning pointers so guests feel welcome and have a good time this holiday season.

Planning pointers for holiday hosts



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Tasty tidbits about eggnog

Eggnog is a rich and delicious beverage that has become synonymous with the most festive time of year. This milk- and egg-based concoction is tasty on its own, or it can be dressed up with other flavors and spiked with a favourite spirit when celebrating the holiday season with other adult partygoers.

December is National Eggnog Month, and Dec. 24 is National Eggnog Day. There is no more perfect time of year to learn everything you can about eggnog - all the while sipping a cup of this creamy concoction. Indulge in these festive facts about the beverage, courtesy of Mental Floss, The Fact Site and Tastemade.

- Eggnog likely originated in the medieval period and was known as “posset,” a hot, milk-based drink made of spices and wine. Even though posset could be a cocktail, it also was used as a remedy for colds and flu for its soothing properties.

- Milk, eggs and sherry used in the early recipes were difficult to come by, so when eggnog first appeared it was a drink only the wealthy could enjoy. That changed when eggnog was popularized in the American colonies, where dairy products and liquor were more readily available.

- Entymologists believe “eggnog” stems from the

word “noggin,” which refers to small wooden mugs often used to serve strong ale, known by the slang word “nog.”

- In the Medieval period, it was risky to drink milk straight because it wasn't pasteurized. Eggnog contained alcohol so that it would kill off any harmful bacteria in the milk.

- A typical homemade version of eggnog has roughly one egg per serving. However, commercial eggnog is regulated by the FDA and can only contain 1 per-

cent of the product's final weight in egg yolk solids. That stems from fear of raw egg and salmonella.

- President George Washington apparently enjoyed serving eggnog at Christmas, and even had his own special recipe (see below), according to the Old Farmer's Almanac.

- There is no right or wrong alcohol to use when preparing eggnog. Distilled spirits like rum, sherry, cognac, and whiskey all have produced suitable eggnogs.

- Puerto Rican coquito is a traditional drink that is very similar to eggnog.

- Individuals concerned about eggs or milk in eggnog can enjoy a vegan recipe made from nut milk instead. Commercially produced vegan eggnog offerings are now more widely available.

- One of the more notable flavors in eggnog comes from the use of nutmeg. Nutmeg is a fragrant spice made from grinding the seed of the nutmeg tree.

Now that you've learned about eggnog, whip up a batch of George Washington's original recipe this holiday season.

Eggnog

(George Washington's original interpretation)

- 1 quart cream
- 1 quart milk
- 1 dozen tablespoons sugar
- 1 pint brandy
- 1/2 pint rye whiskey
- 1/2 pint Jamaican rum
- 1/4 pint sherry

Eggs (Washington forgot to include the number of eggs, so home chefs can improvise or use six, which seems to be the standard in traditional recipes)

Mix liquor first, then separate yolks and whites of eggs, add sugar to beaten yolks, mix well. Add milk and cream, slowly beating. Beat whites of eggs until stiff and fold slowly into mixture. Let sit in cool place for several

days. Taste frequently.

Tip: Today's recipe makers may want to set the eggnog in the refrigerator as the “cool place” of choice.



Thanks & Best Wishes All Around

It's friends and customers like all of you who make our season bright!

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S&I Motor License Issuer

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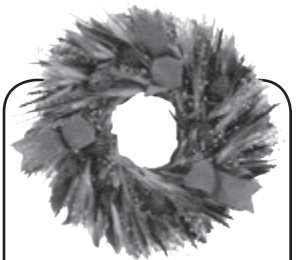
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Seven ways to organize and store holiday decorations

Decorating a home for holidays is quite popular. A survey from the National Retail Federation found that 53 percent of respondents said they were planning to decorate their home or yard for Halloween in 2023. Lombardo Homes polled 1,000 Americans in 2021 and 94 percent said they celebrate Christmas in at least some way, and 84 percent said they decorate. According to Time2Play, which surveyed 1,000 Canadians about their holiday decorating habits, Manitoba puts up Christmas decor earlier than any other province, with these residents taking out decorations 4.3 weeks ahead of Christmas Day on average.

With so many avid holiday decorators, individuals will need to find ways to organize and store their seasonal items. Holiday decor comes in many different sizes - from the smallest tree ornaments to illuminated statues for the yard or inflatable items. Figuring out a storage plan can take a little effort. These seven tips can help.

1. Purchase clear, similarly sized storage

bins and shelving racks, hanging them where you plan to keep the decorations. Most people prefer an out-of-the-way spot, such as in the garage, attic or basement. Label each bin by holiday and put the bins in chronological order to make finding items more convenient. Uniform bin sizes make it easier to stack and store.

2. Store smaller items inside larger decor items. Decorative baskets or wrapped boxes brought out for Christmas or Chanukah are ideal places to keep smaller tchotchkes like ceramics, dreidels, candlestick holders, or mantel hooks. Delicate items can be tucked into Christmas stockings or wrapped and stored in a fluffy tree skirt. Egg cartons can be used to keep small items safe as well.

3. Label everything so you will not need to dig through boxes or bins to know what is inside. This might be a good year to ask for a label maker for the holidays!

4. Use overhead or wall storage for holiday decor. Overhead spaces in the garage or basement walls can be good spaces to keep



holiday decorations. Always keep bins and boxes off the floor so they are not vulnerable to damage related to leaks or floods.

5. Garment bags can protect larger decorations, such as wreaths, artificial trees or signs. If you have a large number of mechanical, illuminated or inflatable lawn ornaments, consider investing in a small shed where these items can be safely kept. Wrap the extension cords and any bracing stakes or strings used with the decorations so it's easy to find.

6. Utilize pieces of cardboard as well as toilet paper or paper towel tubes to keep lights and wires tidy. Tuck cords into the toilet paper tubes, and wrap lights around the cardboard to avoid tangles.

7. Each year, take inventory of your decoration collection and toss out anything that is damaged or has seen better days.

Storing holiday decorations will take some time, but once you establish a system, things will be simple year after year.

The holidays are meant to be a time of joy and merriment for many of us. Whatever you celebrate, from Hannukah, to Christmas, to the Winter Solstice, here are some tips to help you enjoy them to the fullest.

1. Embrace the spirit of the season

Even if you're more of a natural grinch than one of Santa's elves, leaning into the festive season can help you appreciate small joys - which in turn could improve your mental health. Getting involved with your family and your neighbourhood can help you feel more connected to others too. By building a gingerbread house with the grandkids, spearheading a secret Santa gift exchange at work or doing a charity clothing drive, you can warm hearts at home and in your community.

2. Choose a go-to outfit you feel great in

Uncomfortable clothing can quickly ruin what should be a good time. Instead of scrambling to find a decent fit right before the occasion, go through your closet a few weeks beforehand and put together at least one look you feel confident in. This could be like something of a uniform for seasonal celebrations to come - knowing you've got this look in your back pocket can eliminate a major source of stress and leave you feeling great even at a last-minute event.

3. Be kind to yourself

It's easy to overextend yourself with parties, festive dinners, gift shopping, children's recitals and more all demanding attention at this time of year. So, make sure you set aside time to let your mind and body rest and recharge in positive ways. Try reading a book, playing with your dog or talking to a friend. Don't give yourself too hard a time if things don't go quite according to plan.

4. Aim for moderation

The holiday season can be extra hectic, making it easy to let your otherwise average or healthy eating habits slide and then feel sluggish or moody as a result. But, even if we indulge in more sweet treats than usual, it's always a good idea to strive

for balance. So don't forget about your fruits and veggies and try to keep a short-list of easy, pantry-based meals on hand for nights when you're at risk of chowing down on cookies, chocolates and chips for dinner - your body will thank you later.

5. Quit smoking

If you smoke cigarettes, quitting is the best thing you can do for your health and well-being. Health Canada says that your blood pressure can start to improve within twenty minutes of your last cigarette, your risk of heart attack begins to drop in 24 hours and you can breathe more easily about two weeks later. While you may face withdrawal symptoms for a few weeks, the benefits and stress-relief of no longer smoking can last much longer.

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Five tips to look and feel your best this holiday season

There are many methods when it comes to quitting smoking, from going cold turkey, to using nicotine replacement therapy or trying group counselling. There are also other ways to quit you may not have considered. Overall, setting a date and making a plan can make the whole thing easier to follow through with.

Find information, tools and other support to help you be smoke-free at canada.ca/quit-smoking.
www.newscanada.com

Wishing You a Holiday Rich in Blessings

Love, friendship, health, happiness, peace, goodwill and contentment... we hope your holiday season is filled with all the things that matter most.

Serving you has been our pleasure. Merry Christmas!

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Paul & Kelly Bourgeault, Paul Beaulieu,
Gavin Holcomb & Jo-Ann Maagad

Warmest holiday wishes from our families to yours.

Merry Christmas!

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Becky ~ Tiffany ~ Allesha ~ Kolbie

How to create a holiday budget you will stick to

The holidays are supposed to be the most wonderful time of the year. But worrying about your finances can put a damper on the joy, particularly if you're stressing out about looming bill payments that will be due early in the New Year. Here are six ways to create a holiday budget you'll stick to.

Create individual spending plans

The only way to effectively stay on track with your budget is to create one in the first place. Start by making a list of everyone you'd like to buy a gift for. Then, think about any other holiday-related expenses, such as cocktail parties and travel. Figure out how much you can actually afford to spend and pare back as necessary.

Propose a gifting group

Rather than buying individual gifts for all your friends, colleagues and family members, why not encourage each group to hold a Secret Santa gift exchange? That way you cut down on the number



of gifts everyone needs to buy – and the stress of finding the perfect item for everyone on your list.

Plan a potluck

Going out for dinner and/or drinks with multiple different groups of people can quickly break the bank. Cut back on costs by hosting a potluck and asking everyone to bring their favourite dish and beverage. Ideally, you

can make this an annual tradition with hosting duties rotating through the group.

Take advantage of sales

You don't have to wait until Boxing Day to get the best deals. Today, most retailers offer steep discounts on purchases well before the holidays actually roll around. There are also two big sales events that have become mini celebrations of their own: Black Friday and Cyber Monday.

Get crafty

Whether your hobby is knitting, baking or arranging flowers, a homemade gift is one that comes from the heart. It

can also save you some money over store-bought gifts. Consider creating gifts that tie into the season, such as decorations that can be used year after year, or some tasty holiday cookies.

Book early

If you're going to be travelling for the holidays, it's best to book any flights or accommodations as soon as you can. Not only will you avoid missing out, prices for flights and hotels generally rise the closer to the date of departure.

Learn more about how to create and stick to a budget, year-round, at abcmoneymatters.ca.

www.newscanada.com

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In The Holiday
SPiRiT

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Smile...It's Christmas!

Wishing a very happy holiday season to all our patients and their families.

Dr. Denise Koeberlin
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Denise, Maddie, Tessa, Cher & Raeleen

Thanks Friends!

With Season's Greetings to you and your kin, We're really grateful for you droppin' in!

Dave, Heather & Staff

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Day trips to entertain holiday guests

Travel tends to heat up as the weather begins to chill around the holiday season. With friends and family to see and holiday cheer to spread, it's no wonder why millions of people take to the roads, railways and friendly skies to travel during the holiday season.

It's not uncommon for holiday hosts to open their homes to loved ones for days at a time. Holiday hosts who want to ensure that visitors enjoy their stay can plan certain excursions to make the most of their time together.

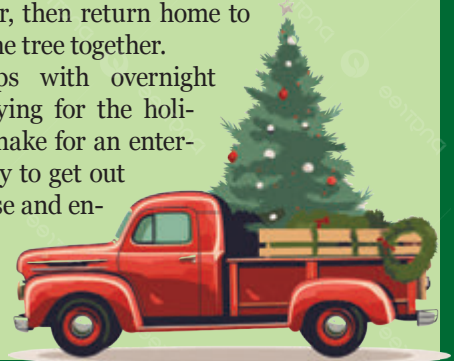
- Go see the lights. Holiday lighting displays are popular across the country. Treat guests to a visit to a nearby attraction. That could be an amusement park that drapes the center of the park in lights, Main Street storefronts and town centers that put on tree lighting ceremonies, urban centers where department stores showcase impressive windows, or other attractions where lights take center stage.

- See a show. From productions of "A Christmas Carol" to other holiday favorites, it's not difficult to find entertainment that showcases some holiday spirit. Dance troupes may be showcasing "The Nutcracker" or a choral ensemble may be putting on a concert of Christmas carols. Enjoy a night or day out at one of these events.

- Visit a cathedral or temple. The holiday season brings many individuals closer to their faiths. Travelers may want to visit a house of worship during their stay. Many churches are dressed up for Christmas and some may even have live animals in their living nativity scenes.

- Cut down a Christmas tree. Save the tree cutting and trimming for when guests arrive. This way everyone can enjoy a day out at the tree farm as families select the perfect evergreen. Partake in refreshments such as hot chocolate or warm cider, then return home to decorate the tree together.

Day trips with overnight guests staying for the holidays can make for an entertaining way to get out of the house and enjoy time together.



Is it Happy or Merry Christmas?

By **DAVE BODVARSON**
Shellbrook Pentecostal
Assembly

Some expressions I heard are rather interesting. When I was growing up in the north, I distinctly remember a gentleman shout out as you met him on the steps of the post office "hay in the barn, straw is cheap, grass is free."

That gentleman had an unusual greeting. Maybe he was trying to teach thriftiness?

I worked on the Canadian Coast Guard ship the Nahidik. I understand Nahidik is an Inuit word which means passage finder. As a 19-year-old I got to

see places like Cambridge Bay and Coppermine, and spent most of July in Tuktoyaktuk. The chief engineer on the ship was fond of saying "no sweat in the arctic." He might have been referring to the temperature in Tuktoyaktuk, which is a balmy 16 Celsius (or about 60 Fahrenheit) in July. No sweat meant no problem.

It is interesting; in the season we are now celebrating, the expression we use as we greet one another is Merry Christmas. I understand a lot of people in England use the expression Happy Christmas, but here our preference is Merry Christmas. When we say Merry Christmas,

we are expressing our desire to the other person to be joyful, wishing them a wonderful Christmas season.

Christmas is a wonderful season. I have many cherished memories of Christmas in the north. Thoughts go back to selecting the tree. Eventually we did buy an artificial one, but before that I would go out and look for one. We would walk in the bush looking for that perfect tree. I never was completely happy with the one I cut down and took home.

Our mom got pretty creative; she placed that tree in a corner. One side of the tree was usually nice, but the other side was a little scruffy with not many branches. Mom took

care in decorating it, and that tree looked a lot better.

I read this and still love it: "There are many reasons God saves you: to bring glory to Himself, to ap-

pease His justice, to demonstrate His sovereignty. But one of the sweetest reasons God saved you is because He is fond of you. He likes having you around. He thinks you are the best thing to come down the pike in quite a while. If God had a refrigerator, your picture would be on it. If He had a wallet, your photo would be in it. He sends you flowers every spring and a sunrise every morning. Whenever you want to talk, He'll listen. He can live anywhere in the universe, and He chose your heart. And the Christmas gift He sent you in Bethlehem? Face it, friend. He's crazy about you!"

I guess for some it is a Happy Christmas, but for me it is still Merry Christmas.



The promise of Christmas

By **RANDALL MCLEOD**
Immanuel Lutheran, Parkside

The promise of Christmas is our blessed hope, life in God's Eternal Kingdom.

The Eternal Kingdom only comes after Christ's 1000-year reign.

The 1,000-year reign only comes after The Second Coming, the Conquering King.

The Conquering King only comes after the bridegroom catches away His bride, the church.

The Church only comes because of Pentecost.

Pentecost only comes because of the Resurrection, Easter.

Easter only comes because of Good Friday, the Crucifixion.

The Crucifixion only comes because of the Triumphant Entry, Palm Sunday.

The Triumphant Entry only comes because of healings and miracles.

Healings and miracles only come because of Jesus' Baptism.

Jesus' Baptism only comes because He came to Nazareth from Egypt.

Coming from Egypt only comes because of the Epiphany, the wise men from the east.

The wise men only come after the shepherds.

The Shepherds only come because of the Angels.

The angels only came because of The Incarnation, the virgin birth, when God became man, as a helpless baby in a manger, so that we sinners could once again become united with God.

That is the promise of Christmas, eternal life, united with God, in God's Eternal Kingdom.

A joyous promise indeed!

So, Merry Christmas to all, and to all a good night.

Peace in our time

By **DAVE WHALLEY**
Big River First United

Advent is a time of waiting, waiting for the incarnation of God. We meet the Creator in many different ways in our individual lives. We sense the presence of the Great Spirit when we least expect it. We, as a people, find it difficult to accept and realize that God is always present with us in our earthly lives.

This Christmas season, may the hope of a meaningful and fulfilled life be with all of us by faith in a Higher Power. May God bring the love that is promised in the Bible, and may we let the Spirit work with us and through us as we travel this highway of life.

I pray that all of us will remember

those who are less fortunate than ourselves or have suffered a loss this year and hold them up in prayer. Christmas can be a difficult time for many people in our community.

We need to hold the people of the Ukraine in our prayers for peace. They have been dealing with the horrors of war for almost two years now. Also, we need to pray for peace in the Middle East, as there are many individuals losing their lives and freedom.

On behalf of all of us at Big River First United Church, we wish everyone a very blessed Christmas season, filled with the gifts that are given to us by God, especially the gifts of peace, hope, love, and joy. All we have to do to receive these gifts is live by faith in God, worship our Creator, and treat our neighbours as we would want to be treated ourselves.

This Christmas, we need to pray for peace in our world, in God's world. May the blessing of God be with you, now and forever, as we wait for Christmas and the New Year!



... And thanks to you, our customers, for your loyal support. We feel blessed to have you as our friends & neighbours. Have a wonderful holiday.

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Here's to the greatest bunch of people we know ... our customers! Merry Christmas and sincere thanks.

Brad & Staff

Merry Christmas
with many thanks,
and I'd like to extend to each one of you ...my very best wishes and gratitude too!

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Run to the Father

By JOHN SLEMMING

Pastor, Shellbrook Pentecostal Assembly

“The word became a human being and lived with us, and we saw His glory, the glory of the father’s only son, full of grace (tender mercy) and truth.” John 1:14

It was a cold, snowy night outside, the man had decided not to go with his wife and children to the Christmas concert despite their pleadings... He had seen the nativity play many times before and with the weather being what it was tonight, thought it would be much more relaxing sitting in his recliner with the fire in the fireplace burning while he sipped on a nice, hot drink and read a book. He had just gotten nicely settled in his spot, had enjoyed a few sips of his drink and was reading when a noise and then some movement over at the window by the door broke the peaceful silence of the room.

As he looked to see what was happening, he watched as a young cat, he supposed from the neighbourhood, settled into place on the window ledge and pressed itself up against the glass trying to absorb any heat that may come through the window since it was toasty warm inside... The man had an idea. Perhaps this cat would like some warm milk on this cold, dark night. He got up out of his chair and went about getting the warm milk in a small bowl for his guest on the window ledge. A few minutes later as he, with anticipation, car-

ried the warm milk to the door, expecting that the cat would gladly enjoy the hospitality he was offering, was surprised and saddened that when he gently opened the door, the cat jumped off the ledge and ran off into the cold, lonely, dark night... As the man watched the cat run off into the night he thought, if only I could become a cat, just for a moment, so I could let it know that what was being offered was safe and warm and good... As he closed the door on the dark, cold night and headed back to his chair, he heard the church bells chime, as he listened, it all became crystal clear now... We people are like the cat, living in a cold, dark world. However, unlike the man in this story who could not become a cat, God in his tender love and compassion did become human, was born as a human, lived with human limitations and showed us that we have a safe and loving heavenly father that wants us to come out of the cold, dark, lonely, sinful world we live in and enjoy friendship with Him through asking Jesus Christ to forgive our sins and take us into the warm and loving relationship that He has offered us.

Even though God came in human skin through His son Jesus Christ as a baby in a manger and lived as a man to show us the way to live, to give us light and abundant life as the bible clearly states. Many, like the cat, are still running off into the dark, cold, lonely night, still choosing to run from God rather than towards Him. My hope in writing this article is that today you will take your first of many steps toward Him so that you can receive all that father God so desires to give you and be to you. He truly is a good, good father.

May you all have a wonderful holiday season!!

Serving the Lord with gladness.

Pastor John Slemming
Shellbrook Pentecostal
Assembly

Consider Jesus this Christmas

By LORNE VALUCK

Parkside Pentecostal Church

Mary and Joseph had received big news from God. Mary, a virgin, was going to give birth to a Son called Jesus (The Lord saves) and Immanuel (God with us).

How does one react to news like that?

Luke 1:38, according to the New Living Translation, says, “Mary responded, ‘I am the Lord’s servant. May everything you have said about me come true.’”

Meanwhile, Matthew 1:24 tells us, “When Joseph woke up, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded and took Mary as his wife.”

Acceptance and obedience. They got it right.

This Christmas season please consider your response to Jesus’ coming, and may you experience a special awareness of His presence in your life.

Merry Christmas!

Thanks for visiting and we look forward to serving you in 2024.

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—CHEVROLET • BUICK • GMC—

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Shellbrook



WITH THANKS

Here's hoping this holiday delivers your fill of special surprises.



Merry Christmas to you and yours!

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Season's Greetings

From all of us at Scotiabank it has been our pleasure to serve fine folks like you.

Scotiabank

Shellbrook, SK

Thank you for choosing us.
Merry Christmas!

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With thanks for your patronage, we wish you & yours a wonderful holiday season!

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IT'S THE MOST WONDERFUL TIME OF THE YEAR!

And we loved every minute of serving you all year long!

Merry Christmas

Mayor, Council and Staff
Town of Shellbrook



TO OUR CHERISHED CUSTOMERS

We wish you tidings of comfort and joy as we thank you for making us feel so at home here.

Triple S Transport & Green Earth Road Spraying

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Darin, Tina & Staff



We'd like to give you our well wishes for a happy and healthy holiday season. We feel deeply honored to have your friendship and trust. **Thanks!**

Grant, Heather, Daryl, Tamara, Mark, Karen, Taylor, Wendy, Marlene, Cathy, Patty, Gwen M., Lorraine, Jeremy, Ale, Gwen P., & Carla

Woodland Pharmacy

Shellbrook, Canwood, Leask

No room for Jesus

By EMMANUEL ARISTIDE
St. John's Lutheran & Zion's Lutheran

Merry Christmas! It is hard to believe that 2023 is almost over. This whole year felt like it flew by in a blink of an eye.

As 2023 comes to a close, some of us may take the time to reflect on what has been achieved throughout this year until today: countless hours meeting with coworkers online or in person; countless hours in the car commuting from place to place; getting ready for seeding and harvest; attending your kids' or grandkids' sporting events; hearing earth-shattering health diagnoses; caring for loved ones who were sick and suffering; going to countless doctors' appointments; holding the hands of a loved one as they breathed their last; overcoming the hardships of a broken relationship; struggling to start a new life in a new country, getting a new job, starting a new business, etc.

When you look back, it feels like we had a pile of things we had to do and a laundry list of things we wish we had more time to do. Sometimes, we wish we just had more time, or even made a little more room to squeeze in some more exciting things to do in our lives. What a rush of a year!

For some of you, 2023 was a long, draining, and painful year. For others, it was a blur, filled with joy and blessings, or something in between. Either way, here we are! You made it!

In our Gospel text of the day, Luke the Evangelist wrote that Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. Everyone had to go back to their hometown to register. This was the first of several censuses the Roman Emperor ordered to be made.

Joseph and Mary lived in a northern village called Nazareth, in the province of Galilee. However, Joseph was originally from a southern village called Bethlehem in the province of Judea, so they had to rush there as soon as possible to be registered. This was a long trip, especially for a pregnant woman.

There was a distance of 157 km (or 97 miles) from Nazareth to Bethlehem, and it would have taken them around 4-5 days to walk from one place to the next, assuming they travelled for about 8 hours/day at an average of 4km/h or 2.5mph. At this point, Mary was in the final days of her pregnancy and was just about to give birth.

After 4-5 days of

travel, you would think that this couple would have been exhausted. Mary was ready to give birth when they arrived, so they needed a place to stay and rest to welcome baby Jesus while they were in Bethlehem.

They looked into all the inns in town, packed! No vacancy! They looked into all the guest rooms in town, packed! No vacancy! The Saviour of the World was about to be born in Bethlehem, and nobody had room to welcome him.

Finally, someone, probably an innkeeper, suggested that Joseph and Mary could stay overnight at a stable and maybe deliver their baby there, with the animals living in it. Can you imagine? The King of kings was not born in a palace, nor was he born in a fancy hospital, an inn, or a guest room, but rather in a stable surrounded by animals and his parents.

The Lord of Lords was not welcomed by kings, queens, and other dignitaries, but rather by a group of Shepherds who witnessed the proclamation of the Angels while they were looking after their herds in the field that night. Amid the rush to find a safe place to welcome their child, Mary and Joseph finally found this stable and were able to recenter their whole attention to their newborn, Jesus.

As we celebrate Christmas, we are also invited to take the time to pause from the rush and the busyness of our lives, of our world, and of the season. Today, we take the time to pause from the long list of demands and expectations weighing on our shoulders, as we host our family Christmas supper, or as we are invited to a relative's house for the meal. Today, we take the time to pause and reflect on the true meaning of Christmas.

Every year, I like to invite all of you to reflect on three important questions: What is Christmas all about in your family? What is the true meaning of Christmas? What does THIS Christmas mean to YOU, today?

Christ Jesus, our Lord, born in Bethlehem is our true gift from God. Christ Jesus, our Saviour, born in Bethlehem is the reason for the season. Christ Jesus, our Prince of Peace born in Bethlehem, brings peace between you and God, and between one another.

Why am I insisting that Jesus was born in Bethlehem? The name Bethlehem in Hebrew is "Beit-lechem" which means: "the house of bread."

How is that related to the Christmas story or Jesus' life and ministry? A few years later, Jesus proclaimed that he was the "bread of life": "For the bread of God is the bread that comes down from heaven and gives life to the world... I am the bread of life. Whoever comes

to me will never go hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty. But

as I told you, you have seen me

and still you do not believe. All

those the Father gives me

will come to me, and whoever

comes to me I will

never drive away. For I

have come down from

heaven not to do my

will but to do the will

of him who sent me.



Season's Greetings...

...to the best people we know,
Our Customers!

Diesel Injection

306-764-2622
Prince Albert, Sask

Merry Christmas!

From our families to yours, we wish you a safe and happy holiday season.

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PRINCE ALBERT

We Care For You



Answering the call to care during the holidays and all year round.

We are the College of Registered Nurses of Saskatchewan.

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Thank you for your trust in us and we wish you all the best in 2024!

First General
Property Restoration Specialists

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Prince Albert, Sask

To all my clients and friends,

I thank you very much for your patronage and hope you have a Very Merry Christmas.

FLAMAN
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Barney Bartley
Flaman Sales and Rentals
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barney.bartley@flaman.com
Prince Albert, Sask.

Start Your Engines...Christmas Is Coming!

As we gear up for another holiday season, we'd like to send you our best wishes for a very Merry Christmas.

Thank you for your patronage!

TBS COLLISION

492 South Industrial Drive
Prince Albert
306-922-2040

And this is the will of him who sent me, that I shall lose none of all those he has given me, but raise them up at the last day. For my Father's will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in him shall have eternal life, and I will raise them up at the last day." John 6:33, 35-40.

The purpose of Jesus' birth is to become the bread of life, broken and given to all of us, so whoever comes to him will have life, and Jesus brings life to the whole world. God wants to come closer to you and strengthen your relationship with him. He wants you to fully trust in his beloved Son Jesus above all things because, through his sacrifice on the cross and your faith in him, you were given forgiveness of all your sins, and life everlasting.

God intends to provide salvation to all of you, and today he wants you to know, that he loves you! Perhaps you love him already, or you are still wavering, or even you are not convinced of his love, today Jesus is telling you that he loves you and he loved you first. He is hoping you will learn to love him back and trust in him.

Dear brothers and sisters in life, life can be very busy, and very overwhelming at times. Sometimes we rush and run after all kinds of things, and we barely have time for God or for the church. We have no problem filling our bodies with nutritious food, but our souls are starving. Some of us barely have time to feed ourselves spiritually with the Word of God and with the bread from heaven given to us on Sundays at the Lord's table.

Beloved, remember those inns and guest rooms that were too busy? They did not have room to welcome the one and only person that mattered the most, Jesus Christ our Lord. Today, God is knocking at the doors of your hearts, asking you to dedicate more time to spend with him from this moment forward. God is asking you to dedicate more time to regularly feed yourself with the word of God both at home and here at your church on regular Sundays, not just on Christmas and Easter. God is longing for your presence, and he is hoping you will make room in your busy schedules for Jesus in your life going forward.

I would like to end my message with this quote from Jesus: "Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with that person, and they with me." Revelation 3:20.

The Lord is calling you; he would love to spend more time with you, so please don't leave him hanging.

Thanks be to God. Amen.

You're On Our A-List!

From all of us to all of you go our heartfelt thanks for making this a very bright year for us. With best wishes for a truly memorable holiday season.

Medallion Mfg. Homes Inc.
Highway 2 South
Prince Albert
306-764-2121

We Know You've Been Good... Especially To Us!

Merry Christmas to all

P.A. Autobody thanks you for your patronage and looks forward to serving you in the New Year.

P.A. AUTOBODY
"Where We Meet By Accident"

250 - 15th Street East, Prince Albert, Sask.
Phone 306-764-4967 ~ www.paaautobody.ca



*As we turn the page to another holiday season,
we'd like to take a moment to thank you,
our patrons, for your trust and support.
We hope this Christmas delivers all the
good news you've been hoping for and more.*

**Shellbrook Chronicle
Spiritwood Herald**