

Shellbrook Chronicle & Spiritwood Herald

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www.shellbrookchronicle.com | www.spiritwoodherald.com

Looking back on the year that was 2023



A small crew of Shellbrook and Area Ministerial Food Bank members was on-hand just before Christmas 2022, helping distribute 44 food hampers. Back row, from left to right: Pastor Lorne and Donna Valuck, Lorette Palm, Linda Lundy, and Pastor David Bodvarson. Front row: Pastor David and Leslee Whalley.

JANUARY

Over the 2022 holiday season, the Shellbrook Area Ministerial Food Bank stuffed 44 hampers full of all the essentials for a Christmas dinner, as well as enough food staples to last most recipients at least a couple of weeks. With a large number of families seeking food bank assistance, those Christmas hampers provided about 120 people with a Christmas meal.

Where it once seemed like it was full steam ahead for the Town of Shellbrook's partnership with the Prince Albert Rural Water Utility (PARWU) on a water treatment plant and inter-municipal water pipeline, council for the town of Shellbrook now appears to be waiting to see how the cards land.

This new philosophy to solving the town's problems with water was outlined in the Town of Shellbrook's Water Improvement Strategy, which was

approved in late 2022 and lays out two potential paths for the town to pursue: its partnership with PARWU, or its original \$7.8 million plan to upgrade the town's water treatment plant.

The spirit of the season was on prominent display in the lead-up to Christmas, as Prince Albert MP Randy Hoback hosted a festive celebration for 36 Ukrainian families that have settled in the community since the province began taking in refugees from the conflict with Russia.

Though he couldn't attend the 2022 Canadian Western Agribition (his first absence since 2003), Canwood-area bison producer Roger Provencher was sure to tune into the livestream of the awards show.

Not too long into the presentation speech for the Canadian Bison Association's Myrt Lenton Memorial Award, given by his cousin Gilbert

Provencher, Roger figured out he'd not only been nominated but had actually won the award.

While most of us were spending our Christmas holidays relaxing and enjoying time with family, Marcail Philp was busy cross country skiing her way to the top spot on Team Saskatchewan for the Canada Winter Games in Prince Edward Island.

The 14-year-old from Shellbrook entered the qualifier tournament, held at River Ridge Nordic in Langham, Sask., with the modest goal of placing sixth and claiming the final spot on Team Saskatchewan.

Instead, with second place finishes in each of the three qualifier races, she finished first overall.

The Shellbrook Senior's Association invited the community to ring in the new year with it, when it hosted its Welcome 2023 Tea at the Shellbrook

Senior Citizen's Centre on Saturday, Jan. 14.

The event was a brand-new idea for the local club, which is hoping to shake things up with new fundraisers and get back on solid financial footing after two years of COVID-19 pandemic restrictions left it struggling to cover the costs associated with operating and maintaining the senior's centre.

On Saturday, Jan. 14, the Shellbrook Pentecostal Assembly turned its charitable gaze beyond the community by hosting a concert to support North Battleford's Life Church (formerly known as Emmanuel Pentecostal Assembly) in its quest to purchase or build a new church for its fellowship, by hosting a variety night and silent auction fundraiser.

Between donations offered and the silent auction, the show raised \$5,569.75.

Continued on page 2



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Looking back on the year that was 2023

JANUARY Cont'd

The Spiritwood High School Junior Drama crew presented two short comedies as part of a show entitled Friday the 13th Freaky Flashback to Christmas 2022 on Jan. 13. The show was held at the Spiritwood Civic Centre at 7 p.m., with desserts and beverages served during the event.

On Saturday, Jan. 14, the Northern Spirit 4-H sent five members to compete in District 33 Senior Curling in Biggar.

The District 33 team, consisting of skip Avarie Conacher, third Peyton Smith, second Jessie Allchurch, lead Raef De Bruijn, and alternate Winston De Bruijn, was able to earn a spot in

Provincials.

The end of the line arrived for Shellbrook's CN Station, which once housed the collection of the Shellbrook and District Heritage Museum, and the Rayside School building.

In January it was announced that both town-owned buildings would be sold in an online auction. While the fate of the CN Station had already been decided, the Rayside School was only added to the list of items to be auctioned off alongside the museum's collection at a Shellbrook Town Council meeting held on Jan. 16.

FEBRUARY

Debden's Leslie Bilodeau fondly remembers the 1980s, and the days



Parkland Pool Committee chair Mark Klaassen (left) accepts a \$40,000 cheque from Parkside Community Club president Jory Segberg at a fundraiser hosted by the committee on Jan. 27. The donation will help with plans to build a new pool in Shellbrook.



Debden's Leslie Bilodeau was one of four recipients of a Sask Sport Volunteer Dedication Award. He was fêted with fellow recipients at a celebration in Saskatoon on Thursday, Jan. 26.

Photo Credit: Sask Sport/Brayden Elliott

when he'd accompany his parents to the rink, just like most children in the community, and watch them play broomball.

Nearly 40 years later, his name has become synonymous with the sport in the village of 327 people, meaning it was a surprise to no one but him when he was presented with one of four 2022 Sask Sport Volunteer Dedication Awards.

In conjunction with National Addiction Awareness Week, Witchekan Lake First Nation attempted to lift the spirits of the community by hosting a series of activities during the third week of January.

The centrepiece of the activities, however, was the "Miss Witchekan" men's beauty pageant, which took place in the Kisikohk Gym on Jan. 19 from 6 p.m. to 10 p.m.



The participants in Miss Witchekan, from left to right: Paul Thomas, Justice Starblanket, Leon Thomas, Lyle Thomas, Brian "Fudge" Scott, Fred Wapass, and Gary Fineday (kneeling).

The Shellbrook Curling Club dialed the fun up to 11, when it hosted its first-ever Ladies Funspiel on Jan. 20 and 21.

Including one team that had three members make the trip from Saskatoon, six teams of ladies took to the sheets, sporting creative names

like the Office Nerds, the Coco-Nuts Luau Ladies, the Sweeping Beauties, the Baby Broomers, the Denim Divas, and Read 'em and Sweep.

More than two years after he died under suspicious circumstances in Shellbrook, three more men were arrested and charged in the death of 20-year-old Wesley Custer.

The individuals arrested were Curtis Ledoux, Evan Ledoux, and Tyson Lachance. All three were already in correctional facilities for other offences.

Spiritwood's inaugural Derryk Franson Memorial Funspiel was hosted at the Spiritwood & District Recreation Centre on Jan. 27 and 28, bringing the community together to com-

memorate a young man who was beloved in the community.

Funds raised through the bonspiel were to be dedicated to youth curling.

The Parkland Pool Project Committee took its first big dive into fundraising on Friday, Jan. 27, hosting an evening of entertainment at the Shellbrook Community Hall.

In addition to the money raised through the event, the Parkland Pool Project Committee also received a \$40,000 donation from the Parkside Community Club — the largest single donation in the club's long history of community service — bringing the total raised on the evening closer to \$60,000.

Continued on page 3



From left to right: Lacey Gallinger, Taylor Olson, Dyllan Franson (Derryk's brother), and Garrett Reddekopp were winners of the inaugural Derryk Franson Memorial Funspiel, held Jan. 27 and 28 in Spiritwood.

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

Nadine Wilson MLA
Saskatchewan Rivers

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by putting

People before Politics

306-763-0615
www.nadinewilson.ca
saskrivers@sasktel.net

WITCHEKAN WILDLIFE FEDERATION INC.
ANNUAL BANQUET & AWARDS NIGHT
Saturday, January 20, 2024
Spiritwood Civic Center

Cocktails - 5 p.m.; Supper - 6 p.m.
Adults \$30; 12 & Under \$15; Preschool Free

For tickets call:
Lyla 306-841-8284; Pearl & Eric 306-883-2835; Al 306-883-9231

Photo Contest - Categories include: Scenery, Hunting, Fishing & Wildlife. Pictures must be printed on 8x10 Kodak paper & can be submitted the day of banquet.

Looking back on the year that was 2023

FEBRUARY Cont'd

The second annual Wolf Country Ski and Snowshoe was held on Feb. 4 at the Spiritwood Golf Course.

This year, the event also served as a fundraiser, with proceeds totalling \$150 earmarked for the Northern Lakes Health Committee.

The investigation into a 2018 armed robbery at Amanda's Pizza in Shellbrook is back to square one, after the second of two men arrested for the crime had the charges against him stayed in Prince Albert Provincial Court on Jan. 27.

Crown lawyer Shawn Blackman said the Crown had no choice but to stay the charges against 33-year-old Matt Lafond, because the evidence that Lafond was at Amanda's Pizza at the time of the robbery was inadequate to secure a conviction beyond a reasonable doubt.

The Village of Shell Lake's plans to rebuild the community's curling rink received a significant boost from the provincial and federal governments.

The \$2.3 million project was one of 25 selected to receive joint grant funding through the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program (ICIP). Per the agreement, which was finalized by the Village of Shell Lake and both governments at the end of January, the federal government will contribute \$912,674 to the project while the provincial government will pony up \$760,485.

This leaves Shell Lake on the hook for \$608,525 of the estimated \$2.3 million price tag.

Not quite a full-fledged police officer, but more than a bylaw enforcement officer, long-time Shellbrook resident Craig Young began active duty as the town's Community Safety Officer (CSO) in February, giving him the authority to enforce parts of the criminal code, traffic laws, and municipal bylaws.

In a blow that's sure to be felt in the community, Affinity Credit Union announced in February that it would be closing its Advice Centre branch in the Village of Canwood in June.

In a release issued Feb. 9, Affinity Credit Union's CEO, Mark Lane, said the decision came about after a lengthy review, and reflected changes in the way customers are banking.

Spiritwood's Megan Allard was crowned the winner of the Saskatchewan Down Syndrome Society's t-shirt design contest, which ran from Jan. 15 to Feb. 1. Her winning design was made available for purchase as part of the celebration of World Down Syndrome Day.

Kelsey Fitch's Neoma Wellness hosted its inaugural Evoke Conference at Elk Ridge Resort Jan. 27 and 28, offering women access to speakers, workshops, tools, and resources to help them with their own mental health challenges.

Senior high school curlers from across the district descended upon the Spiritwood & District Recreation Centre on Tuesday Feb. 14, to compete in boy's, girl's, and mixed District playoffs and hopefully sweep their way through to Regionals and Provincials.



After 30 years with Canada Post (23 of them at the Spiritwood Post Office) Diane Allchurch celebrated her last day of work on Feb. 25. Pictured, left to right: Paula Lessmeister (Diane's replacement), Diane Allchurch, and Colette Cooper.



NDP Healthcare critics Vicki Mowat and Matt Love spoke with Shellbrook healthcare workers during a March 3 stop on their provincial healthcare solutions tour.

The boy's team, featuring Deon Laventure as skip, Jayden Dauvin as third, Bohdan Booth as second, and Noah Dauvin as lead, won the gold, while the girl's team, consisting of skip Ava Beaulac, third Alea Beaulac, second Avarie Conacher, and lead Danica Laventure, finished its season with a bronze.

Due to commitments at the Canada Winter Games, the boy's team was unable to advance any further.

The Shellbrook Skating Club kept the Richardson Pioneer Recreation Centre busy on Feb. 11 and 12, when it hosted the 2023 Region 12 figure skating competition.

Including six members of the Shellbrook Skating Club, about 185 young skaters descended on the rink over the course of the two-day competition.

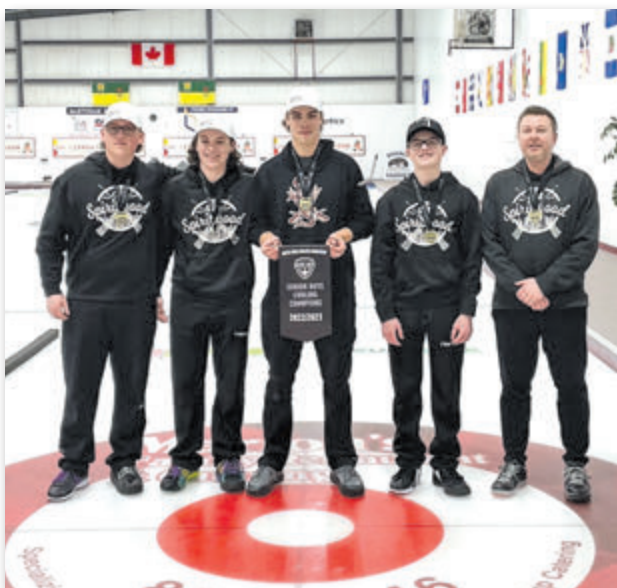
On Sunday, Feb. 22, the Shellbrook Kinsmen and Kinettes celebrated the community by hosting their sixth annual Day of KINDness at the Richardson Pioneer Recreation Centre, offering kids a day of free skating and goodies.

MARCH

With cost-of-living struggles top of mind for many families, the Shellbrook Curling Club and the Town of Shellbrook's Recreation Department ran beginner curling and hockey programs throughout January and February that allowed kids to get active and learn whether the sports are for them without breaking the bank of mom and dad.

After 30 years, Diane Allchurch retired from Canada Post. Her last day at the Spiritwood Post Office was Feb. 25, 2023.

Following a nearly year-long investigation, the Ahtakakoop-Shellbrook RCMP Detachment arrested a 41-year-old Shellbrook man in connection with



Spiritwood High School's senior boy's curling team won gold at Districts in Spiritwood on Feb. 14. Pictured, left to right: Skip - Deon Laventure, Third - Jayden Dauvin, Second - Bohdan Booth, Lead - Noah Dauvin, and Coach - Brad Nemish.

the theft of \$100,000 worth of Wayne Gretzky hockey memorabilia and a number of other items.

Derek Herzog from Shellbrook was charged with possession of stolen property obtained by crime over \$5,000.

The Witchekan Wildlife Federation celebrated its 50th annual awards banquet on Saturday, Feb. 25, at the Spiritwood Civic Centre. Cocktails and socializing started around 5 p.m., with supper following at 6 p.m.

NDP healthcare critics Vicki Mowat and Matt Love paid a visit to Shellbrook on March 3 to meet with local healthcare workers and listen to their concerns about the challenges Saskatchewan's healthcare system is facing.

The stop was part of a province-wide tour for the pair, who are looking to bring what they learn as they travel from community to community back to the table, to pressure the Sask. Party government to take urgent action on healthcare reform.

Continued on page 4



The Shellbrook Skating Club's ice show, held March 19, closed with a high-flying pairs performance by Julia Shindle and her partner Stefan Lotz.

R.M. OF MEDSTEAD NO. 497

SEASONAL MAINTENANCE/EQUIPMENT OPERATOR POSITION

The R.M. of Medstead No. 497 invites applications for an experienced full time Seasonal Maintenance/Equipment Operator. The Seasonal Maintenance/Equipment Operator will be responsible for mowing this municipality's ditches, rock picking, mulching in conjunction with the grader operators, installing and repairing signs and other jobs as directed by the Reeve. Opportunity may be present in the future to move into a grader operator position. Pay rates depending on experience.

The R.M. of Medstead No. 497 is located in central Saskatchewan located approximately forty five minutes north of North Battleford.

Applicants must possess a valid Class 5 driver's license and have skill and experience in maintenance and operation of equipment including tractor, mower, rock picker and mulcher.

Submit written resumes stating experience, expected wage, two references and a current driver's abstract. Deadline closes once the position is filled. All resumes shall be marked "Seasonal Maintenance/Equipment Operator Position" and dropped off at the RM Office, mailed to the address below or emailed to rm497@sasktel.net.

R.M. of Medstead No. 497
Box 12
Medstead, SK S0M 1W0

Council thanks all applicants for their interest in this position but only persons selected for interviews will be contacted.

The R.M. of Medstead No. 497 reserves the right to reject and refuse any or all expressions of interest.

Looking back on the year that was 2023

MARCH Cont'd

Crick Clark of Shellbrook area had a pleasant surprise at the Saskatchewan Wildlife Federation (SWF) banquet during the provincial SWF Convention in Estevan on Feb. 25, 2023.

Crick won the nomination for the prestigious SWF Bill McDonald award, which is presented to a youth who, by thought, effort, or deed, is considered to have contributed the most towards the conservation and enjoyment of Saskatchewan's renewable natural resources.

The Spiritwood Spirited Players delighted the crowd on three consecutive nights with performances of *Scrambled*, a comedy written by Pat Cook, at the Spiritwood Civic Center on March 2, 3 and 4.

The production was directed by Cari Cross.

Three months after it was registered as a provincial political party with Saskatchewan Rivers MLA Nadine Wilson as its leader, the fledgling Saskatchewan United Party held its official launch event at Saskatoon's Prairieland Park on Tuesday, Feb. 28.

It wasn't quite the record year of fundraising that Telemiracle 46's \$8,002,722 haul was, but Telemiracle 47's fundraising total of \$5,519,229 will ensure it goes down in the history books as another strong year of doing good for communities across Saskatchewan.

The community of Shellbrook contributed its fair share, donating



Shellbrook's CN Station was buzzing with activity for perhaps the last time in its 113-year history on March 13, as visitors picked up items purchased at the town's auction of the building and the museum's artifact collection.

\$14,474 to Telemiracle.

After nearly three years in purgatory, Shellbrook's CN Station reached the end of the line.

The building, which served for many years as the Shellbrook & District Heritage Museum, was auctioned off by the Town of Shellbrook on March 12, along with the train station shed, the old Rayside School building, and all the items remaining in the Shellbrook Museum's Collection.

The CN Station itself sold for a final bid of \$300, while the train station shed hauled in \$2,000. The Rayside School failed to attract a bidder.

With rural crime and safety ever a concern among Saskatchewan residents, the R.M. of Spiritwood has become the latest municipality in the area to look to a Community Safety Officer (CSO) to bolster existing law enforcement services.

With the era of publicly-owned liquor stores coming to an end in Saskatchewan, the future of the Big River Liquor Store is now in the hands of Lake Country Co-op's Wine, Spirits, and Beer business unit. The company announced it had purchased the store from its private owners in March.

On March 7, ladies from the Shellbrook Kinettes visited with Parkland Integrated Health Centre's long-term care residents for a paint night led by local artist Tammy Smart.

The Shellbrook Community Hall played host to the Queen Elizabeth II Platinum Jubilee Medal presentations for the Rosthern-Shellbrook constituency on Friday, March 17, and a plethora of local volunteers, healthcare workers, public officials, and businesspeople were among the honorees.

The Shellbrook Theatre came alive on Saturday March 11, when the dancers of Studio 747 took the stage for their first performance in front of a live audience in the 2022-2023 dance year.

Though billed as a mini showcase, the evening's program packed 27 solo, duet, and small group numbers, in varying styles of dance, into a thrilling two-hour package.

The Blaine Lake Curling Rink played host to four days of curling action from March 9 to 12, when the

community hosted its 25th annual Farmer's Bonspiel.

The Spiritwood Skating Club hosted its annual skating event, with this year's theme "Back to the 80s" on Sunday, March 19, at the Spiritwood Arena.

Each and every performer was dressed in a colourful and creative costume with an 80s vibe, and they were supported and encouraged by a large and enthusiastic crowd.

Despite a petition campaign undertaken by the community of Canwood to halt the closure of the village's Affinity Credit Union Advice Centre at the end of June, the company's decision on the matter is final.

The revelation came directly from Affinity Credit Union CEO Mark Lane, who was questioned about the chances of the closure being reversed near the end of a nearly 90-minute public membership meeting at the Canwood Elks Hall on Wednesday, March 22.

The 16th annual Student Cordwood Curling Bonspiel was hosted at the Spiritwood and District Recreation Centre by the Spiritwood Lions on Saturday, March 25.

The event attracted a record of 76 student curlers ranging in school age from Kindergarten to Grade 6, allowing the Lions to divide the kids into 19 teams.

On Sunday, March 19, Blaine Lake and surrounding area supporters gathered for a delicious Ukrainian supper at Blaine Lake Composite School to support children and mothers in Ukraine and provide medical supplies to the people of Ukraine as a result of the war.

A total of \$8,000 was raised.

The skaters of the Shellbrook Skating Club took spectators on a journey through the four seasons for their year-end ice show on Sunday, March 19, as they entertained a large crowd at the Richardson Pioneer Recreation Centre to wrap up their first restriction-free season since 2020.

Another curling season in Shellbrook was swept into the history books on March 17 and 18, when the Shellbrook Curling Club hosted its Year-End Funspiel.

With no shortage of fun to be had over the two-day event, including prizes for the best dressed team, a turkey shoot, a doubles board, and a free drink for each player, a full complement of 16 teams was already registered well before the deadline to enter, and three teams were left on the waiting list.



Shellbrook had three representatives at the 2023 Canada Winter Games in PEI from Feb. 18 to March 5. From left to right: Marcail Philp (cross-country skiing), Tasje Sharron (figure skating coach), and Julia Shindle (figure skating).

Shellbrook Chronicle

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Spiritwood Herald

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR: In the interest of readers of this newspaper, we will publish opinions of our readers. Letters To The Editor are most welcome; however, they must be signed and include writer's contact information and will only be published with the writer's name on it. Letters should be limited in length and be typed or clearly written. We reserve the right to edit letters depending on available space.

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Looking back on the year that was 2023

APRIL

After a three-year hiatus, the Spiritwood Grand Ole Opry finally returned to the stage to offer a live country music show.

Hosted at the Spiritwood Civic Centre on March 31 and April 1, the Opry featured a variety of talent. The performers were accompanied by the supporting band Misdeal, composed of Dennis Adams, Dean Kushneryk, Mick Gratias, and Boyd Faulconer.

In 2022, the U20 Debden Roadrunners broomball team made history when it became the first women's team from Saskatchewan to win gold at Nationals.

Playing Nationals in their own backyard at Saskatoon's Merlis Belsher Place at the end of March, the Roadrunners made history yet again by becoming the first Saskatchewan women's broomball team to win back-to-back national championships.

Students from WP Sandin High School got the opportunity to broaden their global horizons, when they participated in the 2023 Model United Nations Assembly (MUNA) in Prince Albert on Tuesday, March 28.

Joining students from Carleton Comprehensive High School, St. Mary's High School, and Martensville High School, the WP Sandin contingent of nine students acted as representatives of three United Nations countries.

On Thursday, March 30, the Sask.



On April 3, Big River First Nation CEO Derek Klein was named as one of three finalists for The Willie O'Ree Community Hero Award, one of the NHL's top community service-based honours.



Rick Martin performs at the Spiritwood Grand Ole Opry on Friday, March 31. The concert marked a return after a three-year COVID hiatus.

Party government introduced new legislation to fill the gaps in care with licensed physician assistants to help address the province's shortages of family doctors and frontline health-care workers.

Physician assistants are health professionals who have taken additional advanced training at one of the recognized programs in Canada. They practice medicine under the supervision of a licensed physician, often within a multidisciplinary health team.

Many long years without having easy dental access in Spiritwood have finally come to an end, as the town welcomed the new Spiritwood Dental Clinic at its soft opening on March 29.

Patients looking for a teeth cleaning, tooth extractions, and other dental services will see a new face in Spiritwood, as Dr. Javed Khan gets started meeting people in his new location at 107 Main Street.

Move over lightning strikes and shark attacks; there's a brand-new quantifier for rarity in town.

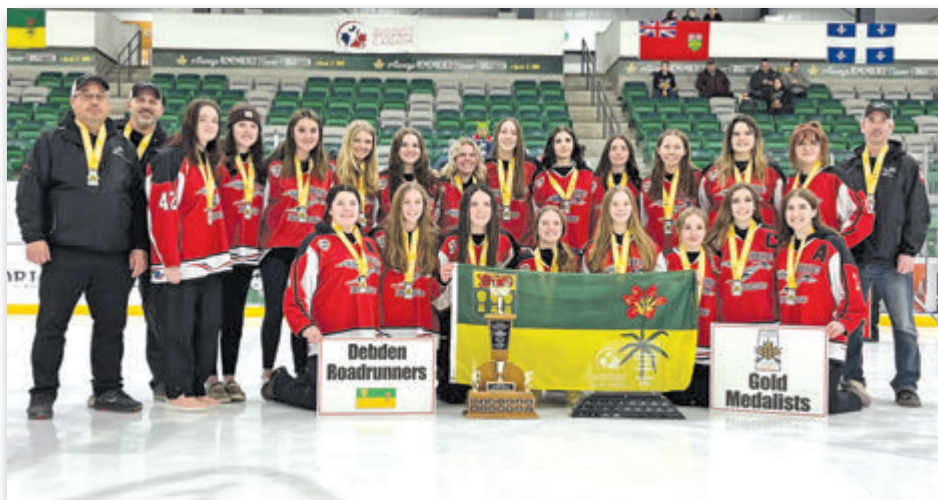
Thanks to Candace Wolfe's "Super-doe" named Party, we can now say "That's as rare as a female goat having sextuplets."

Party, Wolfe's five-year-old, tricolored Nigerian dwarf cross with flashy blue eyes, successfully delivered six live kids on March 30, putting her just shy of the world record of seven.

The era of mandatory masking officially ended in Saskatchewan.



Spiritwood's new dentist, Dr. Javed Khan (right), and his staff greeted the community at a soft opening on March 29.



The Debden U20 Roadrunners became two-time national broomball champions at the end of March. Back row, left to right: Rocky Gaudry, Justin Duret, Ayla Peterson, Jasmine Lamotte, Marieka Thomas, Elizabeth Jean, Kara Thiessen, Ava Ledding, Brooklyn Amundson, Alyssa Kaspick, Shelby Woytiuk, Aidyn Duret, Presley Neufeldt, Grace Heisler, and Dean Demers. Front row, left to right: Faith Lamotte, Rhyann Amundson, Lucy Lockhart, Emry Price, Marissa Skavlebo, Kassie Wagman, Kenzie Demers, and Gracie Cyr.

On April 4, the province moved to eliminate the requirement for health-care workers, patients, and guests to wear masks in Saskatchewan Health Authority (SHA) facilities, and returned to routine infection prevention and control protocols.

After being nominated by a fellow member of his leadership team, Big River First Nation CEO Derek Klein was named one of three Canadian finalists for The Willie O'Ree Community Hero Award.

Named in honour of Canadian former NHLer Willie Eldon O'Ree, who was the first black player in the NHL, the award recognizes an individual who has "worked to make a positive impact on his or her culture, community, or society through hockey."

The Spiritwood Seniors held their Senior Bonspiel on March 20 and 21, with eight teams competing. There

were two teams from Debden and the other six teams were made up of players from Shell Lake and Spiritwood drawn at random.

The first event was won by the Dave Jensen team, featuring Edna Koetse as third, Armand Smith as second, and Corrie Rush-Battersby as lead.

The governments of Saskatchewan and New Brunswick have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to enhance cooperation on the development of small modular reactor (SMR) technologies in both provinces.

The MOU provides the ability for the two provinces and their utility Crowns, SaskPower and New Brunswick Power, to formally share experiences, knowledge, and successes on deployment plans, supply chain development, Indigenous relations, labour market development, regulations, and other areas.

Continued on page 6

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Looking back on the year that was 2023

APRIL Cont'd

Mistawasis Nêhiyawak is tapping into modern technology to help community members stay connected with each other and up to date on everything that's happening within the community.

In mid April, the First Nation announced the launch of the Mistawasis Nêhiyawak app. Available for both Android and iOS devices, the app will provide updates on different things like community events, job postings, and more.

Band Councillor Colby Daniels, who spearheaded the initiative, says the app could also be used in emergency situations.

It's not every day you receive a phone call from the premier's office.

But when the call came for Tim and Cindy Oleksyn, it was with nothing but good news. Tim was to be one of just over 70 individuals from the Rosethorn-Shellbrook constituency to be honoured with a Queen Elizabeth II Platinum Jubilee Medal.

The man who bought Shellbrook's CN Station at an auction of the Shellbrook & District Heritage Museum's collection in March is still considering options for the building's future.

Initially, Ken Hamilton had planned to move it out to his family's old property, restore it, and have it continue its life as a museum for people to come and visit. Since buying it, however, he says he's heard from more than a few people who would like it to remain where it is.

(Plans to keep it on-site never came to fruition, and the building was moved later in the year.)

The community of Leask and representatives from the Prairie Spirit School Division gathered on April 4 to celebrate the beginning of Leask Community School's \$6.5 million revitalization project.

The renovation includes the demolition of two older wings of the building, upgrading HVAC infrastructure, completing structural upgrades, modernizing the building, enhancing land-based learning opportunities, developing play spaces, and supporting programming opportunities.

MAY

Three months after it actually opened its doors to customers, Lake Country Co-op's brand-new, state-of-the-art Shellbrook Agro Centre has officially been declared open.

The completion of the major project, which was first announced in 2019, was celebrated in a day-long grand opening extravaganza on Monday, April 24.

Ratepayers in the Town of Shellbrook were given the opportunity to let Council hear their questions and concerns, when the Town hosted a public meeting at the Shellbrook Theatre on Thursday, April 27.

Mayor Amund Otterson led the nearly two-hour presentation, touching on the town's strategic plan and budget, the Community Safety Officer (CSO), the proposed PARWU water pipeline, land development on the west side of



Lake Country Co-op representatives, local dignitaries, and special guests took part in the ribbon cutting to mark the grand opening of Lake Country Co-op's Shellbrook Agro Centre.

town, and more.

With the 2023-2024 budget finalized, Otterson highlighted some of the town's top priorities for the next fiscal year, starting with the bad news of a 6 per cent increase to the mill rate. The base tax, which was implemented to even out the tax burden on ratepayers, remained at \$1,250 for the year.

Medical First Responders were among the many volunteers recognized during National Volunteer Appreciation Week, which ran from April 16 to 22.

Prior to this special shoutout, however, local and area first responders from Shellbrook, Spiritwood, Canwood, and the Ahtahkakoop Cree Nation gathered in Spiritwood for an appreciation breakfast, the presentation of annual recognition awards, and an afternoon of training.

The day was a special one for Shellbrook's medical first responders, Al Dion and Allison Irvine, who were presented with the 2022 Group of the Year award. Dion also received the 2022 Medical First Responder of the Year Award.

When Doreen Kemp moved from Saskatoon to establish a rural, off-grid eco community on Lac La Peche Grid Road, she thought crime was more of a city problem. Five years later, she says she feels like barely a day goes by without hearing of a break-in at a neighbour's property.

With the RCMP overstretched and understaffed, and no relief in sight, Kemp decided to take matters into her own hands and organize a public meeting on April 21. The meeting was attended by about 20 people.

Parkside's Joan Sommerfeld and Shellbrook's Dave Bodvarson were in esteemed company, when Prince Albert MP Randy Hoback hosted a



Bob Hryniuk (middle) accepts his Meritorious Service Award from Minister of Government Relations Don McMorris (left) and SUMA president Randy Goulden at a ceremony held on May 9.

Queen Elizabeth II Platinum Jubilee Medal ceremony at the E.A. Rawlinson Centre for the Arts on April 21.

The Shellbrook Theatre came alive with the music of Kerri English's students, when they took to the stage for their spring recital on April 30.

With proud parents and loved ones cheering them on from the full theatre house, 28 of English's students bowed, plucked, picked, and strummed their way through 32 numbers, including solos and larger ensemble pieces.

The Canwood Elks Club, with help from the Canwood Royal Purple Elks, held a Fish Fry supper on April 30 to raise funds for the Canwood Elks Community Centre.

With the help of a \$7,500 donation from the Canwood Regional Park Authority, which held a successful supper and silent auction fundraiser earlier in the year, the actual grand total for the evening climbed to about \$9,500.

After a four-year hiatus due to the COVID-19 pandemic, community history was alive and accessible once more in Spiritwood, when the Spiritwood & District Museum announced plans to re-open its doors to the public over the summer.

Another dance season came to an exciting close in Shellbrook, when Studio 747 hosted its year-end dance recital at the Shellbrook Theatre on May 5 and 6.

Called "At the Disco", this year's dance show saw every dancer take the stage in front of an enthusiastic sold-out crowd, performing a diverse selection of 24 routines in ballet, jazz, hip hop, tap, and many more styles, to raucous cheers and thunderous applause.

When Bob Hryniuk moved to Leask in 1969 to begin his first job as a schoolteacher, he and his wife believed they'd be lucky if they managed to stay in the village of less than 500 people for a year (he grew up in Prince Albert, while she was raised in Saskatoon).

Fifty-four years later, Hryniuk and his wife still call Leask home, and his legacy of serving the community as a volunteer firefighter and village councillor earned him the Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association's (SUMA) Meritorious Service Award.

Hryniuk was recognized during a ceremony held on May 9.

Continued on page 7



From left to right: local medical first responders Allison Irvine (Shellbrook), Darla Ahenakew (Ahtahkakoop), Jennifer Epp (Spiritwood), Denley Regier (first responder coordinator), Al Dion (Shellbrook), Lorna Benson (Canwood), Opal Johnson (Canwood), and Terry Isbister (Ahtahkakoop) were celebrated at an appreciation breakfast and recognition awards ceremony in March.



Representatives from the Prairie Spirit School Division, PCL Construction, Kindrachuk Agrey Architecture and Leask Community School took part in a ceremony to kick off the school's \$6.5 million revitalization project on April 4.

Looking back on the year that was 2023

MAY Cont'd

The Town of Spiritwood was named one of the beneficiaries of a \$1.15 billion SaskPower investment in 2023-2024 to “modernize, grow and sustain the provincial electricity system.”

The planned work included transmission line upgrades for the substations in Spiritwood and Hudson Bay, rural powerline rebuilds and wood pole replacements, and investments in new natural gas plants such as the Great Plains Power Station and the Aspen Power Station to be located near Lanigan.

What began as a project of the Spiritwood & District Chamber of Commerce in the mid 1990s and evolved into part of the Town of Spiritwood’s identity, has run its course. The Tourist Information Booth has been sold and removed from the site, and the wolf monument now stands alone on the ‘white buffalo’ rock.

Growing up in Shellbrook, Ashton Fester learned early on in life what success at the hockey rink looks like by watching his dad, Drew, play for the Shellbrook Elks, and he knew almost immediately he wanted the same thing for himself.

In May, the 20-year-old forward got his first taste of the Memorial Cup while playing with the WHL’s Kamloops Blazers.

Randall Johnson, owner of Shellbrook’s TJ Disposals, is eyeing a zero-waste future. To get there, he’s hoping to employ Carbotura’s Recyclotron technology, which converts waste into reusable materials, including fuels, electricity, minerals like graphite and graphene, and much more.

In the face of changing provincial regulations, The Rural Municipality of Spiritwood No. 496 is working on establishing an enhanced fire protection plan for the community, which includes hiring a paid half-time fire chief to head up Spiritwood Volunteer Fire Department #1.

JUNE

From picking out first clothes, to choosing a name, to coming home for the first time, the birth of a child is meant to be filled with excitement and joy, and provide a sense of purpose to prospective parents.

But there’s more to parenthood than the big moments and milestones. In the day-to-day routine of feedings, diaper changes, and sleepless nights, parents can often find themselves feeling isolated and overwhelmed without adequate support and resources to lighten the burden.

To help local mothers with this, Canwood’s Sarah Johnson and Tani Hamborg launched Little Red Hens, a free monthly delivery service that provides a box of diapers, wipes, and diaper cream to subscribed parents.

The Spiritwood & District Lions Club has hosted its annual event in all kinds of weather – rain, snow, sun – but Sunday, May 28, was ideal for the Pet Valu Walk For Dog Guides. The 2023 walk was the 17th hosted in Spiritwood, and Lion George Pretli announced that, including this year’s \$3,175.25, the Club has raised a grand total a little in excess of \$41,000.

After a four-year hiatus, the Pine Derby Car Grand Prix raced through St. John’s Lutheran Church in Shell-



Thanks to the work of Spiritwood’s Ball Diamond Restoration Committee, the ball diamonds at SADSAC park now have a washroom facility with running water.

brook for the second time as the church held its year-end carnival day for its children’s program on Sunday, May 28.

A busy season of highway construction in the area got into full swing in June. For the third consecutive year, this meant improvements being made on Highway 24 from Spiritwood to Leoville, and from Leoville to Chitek Lake.

The fourth version of the beer category in the Spiritwood Area Recreation Committee’s “Survivor” series was a tidy money-maker, while also being a session of entertainment if you attended or watched the live feed on June 3.

The announcement of this year’s profit of \$6,523.77 was welcome news for the Spiritwood Rec Centre’s bean counters.

Though he was optimistic, Shellbrook’s Randall Johnson had no idea what to expect when he got into the garbage business by starting TJ Disposals.

As the company celebrated 15 years of taking out the trash with a community barbecue on June 2, Johnson’s expectations have been eclipsed by a country mile.

His small-town business now provides 750 bins to customers from Radisson, to Christopher Lake, to Meeting Lake, to east of Prince Albert – and that’s just the front loaders. In addition to this, TJ Disposals, and its team of about 10 people, also offers side-arm services and more than 60 roll off bins.

For one day only, on Saturday, June 10, the population of Shellbrook doubled, as an estimated 1,500 people poured into the Shellbrook Sports Grounds for Ballapalooza 2023.

While the event’s name puts baseball and softball front and centre, and teams came from as far away as Meadow Lake, Battleford, and Warman to compete against the local squads and each other, ball was just the beginning of what was on offer throughout the day.

The students of Canwood Commu-



Jugglers Joel (left) and Eli (right) get help from brave volunteers Myla, Ben, and Carmen for one of their tricks during their evening show at Shellbrook’s Ballapalooza on Saturday, June 10.



From left to right: TJ Disposals’ Kelsey Segberg, Randall Johnson, and Jory Segberg with the 15th anniversary cake. Photo courtesy of Kelsey Segberg

nity School showcased their talents to a standing room-only crowd in the school’s auditorium on Thursday, June 8, as the school played host to its first-ever Variety Show.

The idea for the show was brought forward by EA Tani Hamborg, who took inspiration from the many events put on by her youngest child’s school in Rosthern and the sense of community these events build.

Just a few short years ago, the ball diamonds at Spiritwood’s SADSAC park were in a dire state.

Upgrades hadn’t been done for a

number of years, there were no dug-outs, the fences were falling in, and there was no proper bathroom facility. Add into this drainage issues caused by the park’s marshy landscape, and the ball diamonds were unusable after a little bit of rain, and unsuitable for hosting major events like minor ball league playoffs and tournaments.

Formed in 2017, the Spiritwood Ball Diamond Restoration Committee has overseen \$200,000 worth of upgrades, including its most recent project, the installation of a bathroom with running water.

Continued on page 8

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

SPIRITWOOD: Wapiti Regional Library - Tuesday 9am - 5pm; Wednesday 9am - 5pm; Friday 9am - 5pm
LEOVILLE: Wapiti Regional Library - Wednesday 10am - 4pm; Thursday 10am - 3pm
SHELL LAKE: Wapiti Regional Library - Tuesday 11am - 4pm; Wednesday 12pm - 5pm

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

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.

SPIRITWOOD: Witchekan Wildlife Federation Inc. Annual Banquet & Awards Night – Saturday, January 20, 2024, Spiritwood Civic Centre. Cocktails 5pm; Supper 6pm. Adults \$30; 12 & Under \$15; Preschool Free. For tickets call: Lyla 306-841-8284; Pearl & Eric 306-883-2835; Al 306-883-9231. Photo Contest – Categories include: Scenery, Hunting, Fishing & Wildlife. Pictures must be printed on 8x10 Kodak paper & can be submitted the day of banquet.

TRIPLE YOUR ADVERTISING

We’ll advertise your important community event in our Community Calendar FREE for two weeks prior to the event with purchase of a 2 column x 2” Display ad for only:

\$60.00 plus G.S.T. - A savings of over 30%

Available to Non-Profit & Community Organizations Only

Call Now For Further Details

“Don’t miss out on letting your Community and others know of your event!”

Shellbrook Chronicle & Spiritwood Herald

Box 10, Shellbrook, SK S0J 2E0

Ph: 306-747-2442 • Fax: 306-747-3000 • Email: chads@sbchron.com

Looking back on the year that was 2023

JUNE Continued

The students of Shellbrook's WP Sandin High School took their audience on a trip through Greek mythology on Thursday, June 8, as the curtain rose on their second annual Evening of the Arts.

Playing to a large crowd at the Shellbrook Theatre, the students staged their own take on *The Hysterical History of the Trojan War* by playwright D. M. Larson.

École Debden Public School held its graduation ceremony on Friday, June 9.

École Debden Public School's class of 2023 was: Brooklyn Amundson, Aiden Beaulieu, Kyan Bilodeau, Kaiden Couture, Gracie Cyr, Kezia Delorme, Derian Demers, Elizabeth Jean, Karlee Molzan, Desireé Pott, and Kayce Vaadeland.

The 20 graduates in WP Sandin High School's Class of 2023 were honoured with a graduation ceremony that blended old and new traditions on Friday, June 16.

WP Sandin High School's class of 2023 was: Beau Ahenakew, Dylan Anderson, Tomas Beam, Brooke Cadrain, Megan Cameron, Justin Collins, Kassie Ferster, Christiaan Greyling, Grace Kolodychuk, Carson Ledding, Courtney Lens, Mason Mamchur, Connor Musgrave, Brayden Payette, Adam Schatkoske, Lacey Schira, Adam Shakul, Jessica Sharron, Noah Verbonac, and Shelby Woytiuk.

The Village of Medstead and members of the community celebrated the official grand opening of the community's more than \$105,000 playground project on Sunday, June 18. The day's festivities included a ribbon cutting, a BBQ lunch with cake, and lots of play time for the children.

In May, Shellbrook teen Sunny Schutte became provincial royalty by winning the Saskatchewan High School Rodeo Association's (SHSRA) Rodeo Queen crown.



WP Sandin High School's class of 2023. Back row, left to right: Beau Ahenakew, Adam Shakul, Connor Musgrave, Carson Ledding, Tomas Beam, Mason Mamchur, Adam Schatkoske, Dylan Anderson, Brayden Payette, Noah Verbonac, and Justin Collins. Front row, left to right: Megan Cameron, Courtney Lens, Lacey Schira, Jessica Sharron, Shelby Woytiuk, Brooke Cadrain, and Kassie Ferster. Missing: Christiaan Greyling & Grace Kolodychuk.

Photo courtesy of Taya M Photo

The Withekan Wildlife Federation held its annual Gun & Hobby Show at the Spiritwood Rec Centre on the weekend of June 17 and 18. With new and returning vendors in the house, the gamut was run from new guns to hand-crafted doll clothes.

The Spiritwood & District Lions Club held its summer windup barbecue at the home of Lions Torben and Sonja Nielsen on June 18.

The highlight of the afternoon was the induction of seven new members, which was kicked off by Lion George Pretli acknowledging that the Club was formed on May 15, 1963.

The 17th Annual Bourdages & Cameron Memorial Golf Tournament was held at the Spiritwood Golf Course on June 19. The popular gathering saw 56 golfers enjoy a full day of golf with a Texas Scramble format.

A very special presentation saw Withekan Lake First Nation donating a quilt to the Spiritwood RCMP Detach-

ment to be raffled, with funds directed to the enhancement of the Memorial Park in Spiritwood.

Shellbrook Fire & Rescue is now better equipped than ever to respond to accidents, thanks to SGI and the Saskatchewan Public Safety Agency's (SPSA) Transportation Rescue Extrication (TRESX) Program.

On Thursday, June 22, members of the local volunteer fire department accepted delivery of roughly \$93,000 worth of state-of-the-art cutters, rams, spreaders, and other equipment, all of it battery-powered rather than hydraulic like the department's existing tools.

The eight graduates in Canwood Community School's class of 2023 received a stylish send off Friday, June 23, as school staff, parents, family, and friends gathered for their graduation ceremony.

Canwood Community School's class of 2023 was: Kaylee-Anne Bloom, Wesley Charbonneau, Kierra Dee, Josie Hoeflicher, Zander Hounsell, Caleb McLean, Cooper Taylor, and Cresson Thomas.

The rain stayed away, and it was the perfect day for the three 4-H Clubs taking part in the District 33 4-H Show and Sale on June 2 and 3.

The Big River 4-H Club hosted the show at the Ladder Valley Hall near Big River.

JULY

Under normal circumstances, most of us go out of our way to avoid a trip to the doctor.

But on Wednesday, June 28, the Shellbrook Primary Health Care Clinic was packed, as physicians, staff, patients, and community members gathered and mingled to celebrate the facility's grand re-opening.

The evening of June 30 saw the inaugural event dubbed Live Music at the Gazebo draw a large crowd of several hundred people on a beautiful kickoff to summer holidays.

Offering fun and food for everyone, with face painting and Filipino fare, the pre-show activity provided the backdrop for attendees getting set up for the main event – music by the Brothers G.

Continued on page 9

PRAISE & WORSHIP

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

LUTHERAN CHURCH

Zion - Canwood
Sunday School,
Worship Sunday, 9 a.m.
(in-person only)
St. John's - Shellbrook
Sunday School,
Worship Sunday, 11 a.m.
(in-person and online
via Facebook live)
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



Canwood Community School's class of 2023, from left to right: Cooper Taylor, Josie Hoeflicher, Caleb McLean, Kierra Dee, Cresson Thomas, Kaylee-Anne Bloom, and Wesley Charbonneau. Missing: Zander Hounsell.



Back row, left to right: Karlee Molzan, Kayce Vaadeland, Elizabeth Jean, Desireé Pott, Gracie Cyr, Brooklyn Amundson, and Kezia Delorme. Front row, left to right: Aiden Beaulieu, Kaiden Couture, Derian Demers, and Kyan Bilodeau.

Looking back on the year that was 2023

JULY Cont'd

With another school year at an end, the staff and students of WP Sandin High School set aside their lesson plans and notebooks for an afternoon and blew off some steam with a year-end fun day on Tuesday, June 27.

The 23 graduates in Spiritwood High School's class of 2023 received a warm send off at their graduation ceremony on Friday, June 30.

Spiritwood High School's Class of 2023 is: Caitlyn Armstrong, Mason Bachelder, Kylee Balazsi, Cody Bear, Bohdan Booth, Lane Darbyshire, Phoenix Day, Brooklin Fry, Caleb Giesbrecht, Morgan Gray, Lexie Jones, Nithyan Kurup, Lauralee Lafond, Deon Laventure, Dreyson Lewis, Jenaya Patton, Ehva Scott, Evan Scott, Elias Thomas, Carmen Tipewan, Anthony Watson-Tipewan, Sadie White, and Amy Wright.

While Canada Day celebrations are rare in Shellbrook, as residents often choose to take off to the lake rather than stay in town, the Shellbrook Ministerial Association celebrated Canada Day in the most Canadian way possible: helping people in need by hosting a breakfast and silent auction.

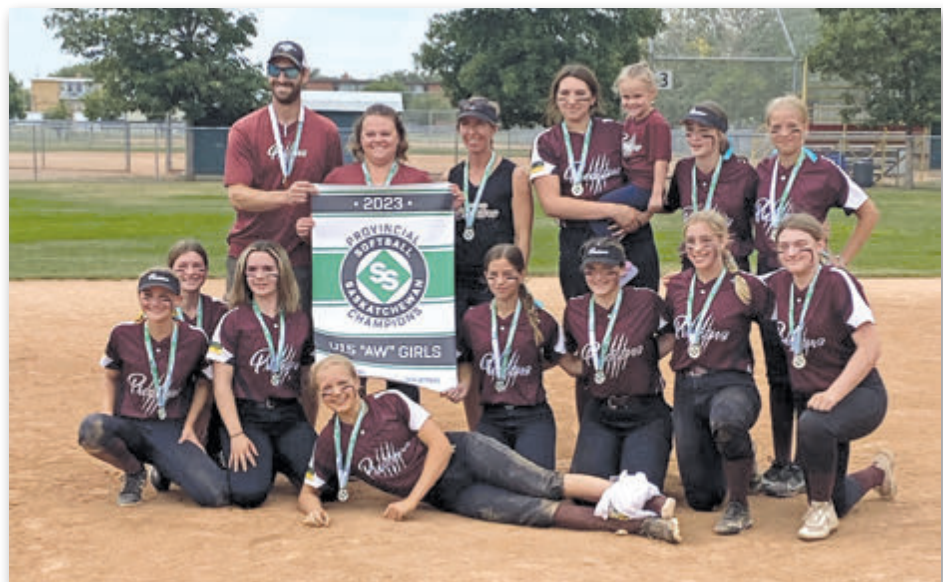
All told, donations for breakfast totalled \$964.30, while the silent auction raised \$707, bringing the total raised on the day to \$1,671.30.

The Spiritwood & District Museum returned after a four-year hiatus with an open house on July 1. From 10 a.m. until 4 p.m., visitors were treated to popcorn, ice cream, coffee, and cupcakes.

Cultures were in the spotlight at the Doukhobor Dugout House site near Blaine Lake on Canada Day, when visitors dropped in for the 2023 grand opening on July 1.



Horseback riders trot along during the 40th annual Shell Lake Hey Days parade on Saturday, July 15.



Predators: The Parkland Predators became U15 AW Provincials gold medalists on July 16. Back row, left to right: head coach Dillan Simonar, assistant coaches Allison Simonar and Nicole Philp, Peyton Turner holding Islah Simonar, Ayli Schatkoske, and Brielle Nahorniak. Front row, left to right: Emeri Simonar, Emmy Ledding, Hayden Peterson, Marcahil Philp, Kendall Skauge, Avery Cyr, Sarah McNabb, and Emily King.



Spiritwood High School's Class of 2023: Back row, from left to right: Evan Scott, Lexie Jones, Anthony Watson-Tipewan, Dreyson Lewis, Cody Bear, Deon Laventure, Lane Darbyshire, Nithyan Kurup, Bohdan Booth, Mason Bachelder, Caleb Giesbrecht, Ehva Scott, Elias Thomas, and Morgan Gray. Front Row, left to right: Jenaya Patton, Phoenix Day, Amy Wright, Kylee Balazsi, Carmen Tipewan, Caitlyn Armstrong, Sadie White, Brooklin Fry, and Lauralee Lafond. Photo courtesy of Shyhorses Photography

The Shellbrook Theatre came alive on Thursday, July 6, for an evening that was part concert, part comedy show, and part reunion, as Freddie and Sheila Pelletier, Leroy and Donna Anderson (of The Tommy Hunter Show fame), and Donny Parenteau took the stage.

Seventeen years on from the incident that left two RCMP officers mortally wounded in the line of duty, the memory of their sacrifice remains strong in the community of Spiritwood. Constable Marc Bourdages and Constable Robin Cameron made the ultimate sacrifice, when they both succumbed to the injuries they sustained on July 7, 2006.

At the memorial park named in their honour, a large crowd of local citizens and a contingent from the RCMP's F Division showed up on July 7 to pay tribute to the fallen officers and to commemorate 150 years of the RCMP.

The Town of Shellbrook officially has a new Community Safety Officer (CSO).

Not quite a full-fledged police officer, but more than a bylaw enforcement officer, Jon Bohmann has been on active duty since June 28, with the authority to enforce parts of the criminal code, traffic laws, and municipal bylaws.

For most of us, the closest we'll ever come to receiving guidance from a professional baseball player is watching them live on TV or at an MLB stadium.

Thanks to a familial connection,

however, the 22 players on the U13 and U15 Shellbrook Knights baseball teams got this experience in person at the Shellbrook Sports Grounds, during a pitching clinic put on by Canadian Baseball Hall of Fame inductee, and former MLB pitcher Andrew Albers on July 12.

The 40th Annual Shell Lake Home-steader Hey Days turned in the largest crowd in recent memory. The weekend event spanned July 14, 15, and 16, with something for everyone young and old.

It was a golden weekend for Shellbrook and area ball teams and players, as U15 Provincials were played in boys and girls softball, and boys baseball from July 14 to 16.

In the U15 AW girls Provincials, the Parkland Predators claimed gold medals and advanced to Westerns in B.C. Meanwhile, in the U15 boys Provincials, the Valley Vikings and the Prince Albert Astros both boasted rosters with local talent and scored a one-two finish.

Perfect weather made for a perfect day to get out and see the colours of summer, when Honeywood Heritage Nursery invited guests in for its annual Lilies in Bloom event on Sunday, July 16.



Sgt. Andrews of the Spiritwood RCMP Detachment (second from right) with officers from F Division at Spiritwood's celebration of the RCMP's 150th anniversary.

The Town of Shellbrook is hoping to work with the Ministry of Highways to improve pedestrian safety at the intersection of Highway 3, Highway 55, and Main Street.

Shellbrook Mayor Amund Otterson says the town recently approached the ministry to see if it would conduct another study of the intersection. In an email reply, the ministry said it believed a controlled crosswalk is warranted.

The sport of disc golf has been gaining in popularity over recent years, a fact not unnoticed by the volunteer board of Spiritwood Area Recreation, Culture & Sport (SARCS).

Disc golf discussion has been hitting the board table for the past two years, so when an opportunity for grant funding to help establish the sport in Spiritwood became available, Sue Kahl, SARCS's events & facility assistant, pursued the dollars. With a grant from 2023 Framework in Action (Sask Parks & Rec), five disc golf holes and four sets of discs were purchased and installed at SADSAC Park.

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 /ANGELICAN
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 Riek 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

Looking back on the year that was 2023

AUGUST

Five years after they chose to join Shellbrook's schools in providing a healthy start to students' days, the Shellbrook Kinettes' enthusiasm for supporting the school snack programs has only grown. To this end, the 2022-2023 school year saw the community group expand its support to include the breakfast program offered by Wild Rose School.

The Kinettes provided \$500 to support the school's program.

The Pages in the Park initiative made its second visit of the summer to Spiritwood's Rivier Elementary School on July 26. Planned as a "pop up tent" for literacy, the backup plan was enacted when weather prohibited outside enjoyment.

The 2023 North American Indigenous Games were held in Halifax, N.S., from July 15 to 23, and not only did a number of local athletes represent Team Saskatchewan, they also brought home some serious hardware with their performances.

In U16 male softball, Shellbrook's Kamden Shewchuk started as short-stop for Team Saskatchewan and came home with a gold medal (the gold medal game was unfortunately cancelled due to inclement weather).

In U16 female softball, Maddison Nelson was representing Leask on the diamonds and came home with a bronze medal (again, the game was cancelled due to weather).

It was a milestone year, filled with nostalgia and all the customary automotive mayhem, when the Village of Parkside welcomed about 3,300 people for the 40th annual Parkside Demolition Derby on Saturday, July 29.

This year, Brad Toth and Thunder Ridge Farms showed their generosity, purchasing the charity car for \$15,000 — with the proceeds going to Big Brothers Big Sisters organizations in Saskatchewan.

Meanwhile, after the smoke settled on the final hit of the evening, Landon Peeteetuce was crowned the 2023 champion, leaving Mark Nykiforuk to take second place, and Darrel Gatzke in third.

With hockey season just around the corner, the Parkland U18 AA Elks will be taking the ice with a familiar face calling the plays from behind the bench.

Shellbrook's Curtis Olsen, who served as the team's assistant coach

for a successful 2022-2023 season, has been named the team's head coach, stepping into the role in place of fellow hometown coach Sheldon Moe.

Residents of Spiritwood, and those passing through the town, will soon have two new quick serve meal options to satisfy their appetites.

Lake Country Co-op has announced plans to bring TJ's Pizza and Chester's Chicken to the community. The two restaurants will be owned and operated by Lake Country Co-op, and located in the C-Store attached to its gas station along Highway 3.

The restaurants were expected to open in the fall and employ between five and ten people.

Though worries about small-town and rural crime have been commonplace for years in Saskatchewan, a new dialogue about the issue was started Aug. 9 in response to a Facebook post made by the Town of Shellbrook.

In the post, the town urged residents to "help make Shellbrook a safe space" by reporting all suspicious activities to the RCMP detachments in Shellbrook or Ahtahkakoop.

The Facebook post drew 29 comments and was shared 20 times (a rarity for small-town Facebook posts), with commenters repeating many of the oft-heard refrains about the lack of police presence in the community creating a climate for more criminal activity to occur.

Meta, the parent company of Facebook, Instagram, and fledgling Twitter rival Threads, made good on its promise to completely remove all Canadian news content from its social media platforms in response to the federal government's Bill C-18, The Online News Act.

The *Shellbrook Chronicle & Spiritwood Herald* was hit by the company's news ban on Thursday, Aug. 10.

The Derryk Franson Funspiel was established this past January to generate a fund in memory of an avid Spiritwood curler.

Thanks to its success, four awards were given to local youth who were registered for the 2023 Kevin Martin Curling Camp from Aug. 25 to 27, helping to cover their entry fees of \$675.

The recipients were Danica Laventure, Alea Beaulac, Avarie Conacher, and JessieLynn Allchurch.

The Spiritwood Horticulture Society hosted its annual show on Tuesday,

Aug. 15, with entries up significantly over last year. Roberta Wasden, president of the local horticulture society, noted that the increase was largely due to the increase in junior category participants.

Veteran green thumbs, bakers, crafters, and hobbyists packed into the Shellbrook Community Hall on Aug. 17, when the Walter Willoughby Horticultural Society hosted its 60th annual Horticulture Show.

Compared to last year's outing with just 225 entries, the show saw a strong rebound to 373 exhibits. WWHS member Judy Harley said this brought the show's participation closer to a normal year.

Brittany Caffet remembers being in Grade 4 or 5 when she first learned about the incident now known as the "Shell Lake murders".

In the early morning on Aug. 15, 1967, James and Evelyn Peterson, along with seven of their children, were shot and killed in their farmhouse located near Shell Lake in what became Canada's worst random mass murder incident.

Hoping to put an end to more than five decades of speculation about the killings, Caffet created The Shell Lake Massacre, a six-part podcast produced by Rawlco Radio that released throughout August and September.

When spectators started rolling into the 14th annual MX Games, which were organized and hosted by the Marcelin Events Committee on Saturday, Aug. 12, committee member Jade Bowering was pleasantly surprised when she didn't recognize anyone.

Along with the drivers coming from far and wide to compete in the games, the audience of 650 people (a record for the event) also came from all over to take them in, making the day an unqualified success.

Given that they started as a fundraiser for the fire department, proceeds raised through the MX Games are always donated to local causes.

Shellbrook's Town Council met for a



After a day filled with smashing, Landon Peeteetuce accepted the 2023 Parkside Derby trophy from Parkside Community Club president Jory Segberg on Saturday, July 29.

special meeting on Tuesday, Aug. 22, in hopes of finding clarity on whether to pursue a partnership with the Prince Albert Rural Water Utility (PARWU) on a water pipeline, or chart its own course. After nearly three hours of presentations and discussion, little progress was made towards a final decision.

Trent Bruner received both a warm welcome home and an enthusiastic send-off, when he hosted and performed in the Canadian Grand Masters Send-off Fiddle Show And Dry Dance at the Canwood Elks Community Hall on Aug. 21.

The concert, organized with the help of the Canwood Public Library, served as a showcase and a warm-up for the Saskatchewan musicians who were bound for the Canadian Grand Masters Fiddling Competition in Truro, N.S., on Aug. 25 and 26.

After a generous donation from community member Bob Demers, and fundraising efforts supported by the community, residents of Canwood's Whispering Pine Place can now travel in style in the special care home's wheelchair accessible van.

The van, which is maintained and paid for by the Canwood and District Bus Association alongside a wheelchair accessible bus, now has a BRUNO lift chair in the front passenger seat. Controlled by remote, the chair turns and lowers almost to the ground, allowing for easy transfers from wheelchairs to the van for residents who are more mobile.



Grand Aggregate of the Spiritwood Horticulture Show, held Aug. 15, was won by Glen Caffet (right) and presented by Lion Gilles Ouellette.



Canwood and District Bus Association member Hugh Otterson (right) shows off the new BRUNO chair in Whispering Pine Place's wheelchair accessible van alongside donor Bob Demers.



Toni Sommerfeld (right) accepts the grand aggregate award from Beryl Peake at the Walter Willoughby Horticulture Society's 60th annual show, held Aug. 17.

Looking back on the year that was 2023

SEPTEMBER

The ruins of the old curling rink are a memory, now that ground has been broken on the Village of Shell Lake's new facility project.

More than 100 supporters of the project were on hand Saturday, Sept. 2, for the official groundbreaking ceremony, which saw local fundraising leaders, the mayor of Shell Lake, and Saskatchewan Premier Scott Moe come together to celebrate the new era of winter recreation in the small community.

Since they opened the doors of the Bee & Thistle Winery near Debden in 2020, Peter MacInnis and his team have applied the MacInnis family motto of "From work comes pleasure" to their products, earning the winery countless awards and accolades in its first three years.

This year, MacInnis himself was recognized for his innovative and entrepreneurial spirit, by being named a finalist in the 2023 Canada Innovation & Entrepreneurship Awards (CANIE Awards) in the Prince's Trust Canada Veteran Entrepreneur Award category.

After eight years of tireless fundraising and dedication, the vision for the Rose Garden Hospice has finally blossomed.

On Tuesday, Aug. 29, board members and long-time supporters of the standalone palliative care facility were joined in Prince Albert by dignitaries and special guests to officially cut the ribbon on the hospice and celebrate its opening.



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

A proud hockey legacy in Shellbrook is being revived for the 2023-2024 hockey season, as the Shellbrook Elks senior hockey team will be taking the ice for the first time since 2016.

The senior Elks folded ahead of the 2016-2017 hockey season. At the time, then-manager Shaun Kerber said it was getting too expensive to put together a team that could compete at the highest levels of senior hockey, because the game had shifted away from the days when dedicated local players just played "for the love of the game."

This year marked the 23rd anniversary of a classic event in Big River: the Eddie Krienke Memorial Golf Tournament, which was played Aug. 10 to 12.

Over the span of 23 years, this event has donated over \$200,000 to the community of Big River for the construction of the Community Centre and the revival of the Golf Course, plus support to Ukrainian families, Ski Timber Ridge, CARRES, and more.

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

Though Hoare couldn't comment in any further detail on the internal human resources issue, she noted in her correspondence that the role and expectations of the manager of recreation and community development



Author Charlotte Sloan reads from *Dot on The Prairie*, the first book in her *Wandering Back to Saskatchewan Series*, during an author session at the Canwood Library on Sept. 5.



Farm Docs staff at the Sept. 15 grand opening in Spiritwood, from left to right: Tess, Dr. Justin Hodgson, Hanna, Oreo the goat, and Amber.



Ground was broken on the new Shell Lake Curling Rink on Sept. 2. Pictured, from left to right: Councillor Joe Delisle, Curling Board Member Richard Urano, Premier Scott Moe, Mayor Anita Weiers, Councillor Al Sulymka, Councillor Dillan Simonar, and Councillor Greg Ardagh.

recreation and community development position have changed many times over the years, and that role has never met the needs and expectation of user groups.

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

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

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

Residents of Shellbrook and the surrounding area no longer need to travel to Prince Albert or other larger urban centres for ultrasound services.

A wide array of ultrasound scans can now be performed at Shellbrook's Primary Health Care Complex, in space being rented from the Shellbrook Pharmacy by Alberta-based ultrasound provider Wosler Diagnostics.

Wosler officially began providing

services on Aug. 23.

On Sept. 15, 2023, Farm Docs Animal Health Services held its grand opening in Spiritwood. Along with Dr. Justin Hodgson, the veterinary practice includes a full staff of one full-time veterinarian, one part-time veterinarian, two vet assistants, one vet tech, and one office manager.

The Hidden Hills of Shellbrook Golf Course was taken over by high school golf action on Friday, Sept. 15, as 40 student golfers teed off in the North Central District Athletic Association Golf Championships. On the line for the top four boys and top four girls was a trip to Provincials.

The Parkland Pool Project Committee and its community partners capped off a strong season of fundraising on Tuesday, Sept. 19, as Lake Country Co-op hosted its annual Fuel Good Days event and staff members of Affinity Credit Union served up chili to help contribute to the cause.

After food and supplies were paid for, the lunch brought in \$865, lifting the total raised for the project over the summer to more than \$10,000.

When Honeywood Heritage Nursery ended its season on Sunday, Sept. 17, with its annual A Touch of Autumn event, the fall colours were putting on a vibrant show in spite of the summery weather.

Guests trickled in throughout the afternoon, and all told, 218 people paid at the gate to tour the grounds by foot and by wagon, and enjoy time to visit with old and new friends alike.



Prince Albert's Rose Garden Hospice officially opened its doors, after a grand opening ceremony and ribbon cutting on Aug. 29.

Looking back on the year that was 2023

OCTOBER

One day ahead of the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, Witchekan Lake First Nation staged its annual walk to remember and honour the children who attended residential schools.

The Sept. 29 public commemoration of the loss of those children who did not survive residential schools, and those who survived to live with the family and personal trauma, was very well-attended by local participants, including the WLFN band representatives, Agency Chiefs Tribal Council leaders, survivor families, RCMP officers, Catholic School educators, and many others who simply wished to express support.

With nearly a month of the school year already in the history books, the brand-new Blaine Lake Composite School celebrated its grand opening on Tuesday, Sept. 26. In attendance were Premier Scott Moe, Education Minister Jeremy Cockrill, MLA Ken Cheveldayoff, Muskeg Lake Cree Nation Chief Kelly Wolfe, Prairie Spirit School Division (PSSD) representatives, and school staff, students, and community members.

Though they may not have their own personal connections to residential schools or the Sixties Scoop, Nicole Erb and her team at Evergreen Oasis Counselling and Consulting deal with their legacy and impacts every single day.

So, when the idea of hosting Shellbrook's first honour walk for the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation was brought up by team member Kelsey Clark, who works on the Big River First Nation, the Evergreen Oasis team sprang into action. Working on short notice, they liaised with Shellbrook's schools, the business community, the Ahtahkakoop-Shellbrook RCMP Detachment, and community members to make it happen on Friday, Sept. 29.

Saskatchewan Premier Scott Moe has asked the Speaker of the Legislature to recall MLAs to legislative assembly on Oct. 10, two weeks ahead of schedule, so his government can invoke the notwithstanding clause to pass legislation to make its parental inclusion and consent policy into law.

The request was made Thursday, Sept. 28, after Court of King's Bench judge Michael Megaw granted an injunction to halt the policy's implementation until its legitimacy can be ruled upon by the courts.



A large crowd turned out to take part in the Witchekan Lake First Nation's Truth and Reconciliation walk on Sept. 29, putting on an impressive display of orange.

The former Shell Lake school is seeing a new life, continuing its history as a local educational facility. On Oct. 6, the grand opening of the Ahtahkakoop Training and Employment Centre took place within the refreshed and re-purposed school.

Following the closure of the village's school in 2010, there have been attempts to resurrect portions of the building for other ventures, but the circle was completed with the decision of Ahtahkakoop First Nation leadership to purchase the property to address their education capacity shortfall.

As people in communities across Saskatchewan return to their local rinks for another season of hockey and skating, the Blaine Lake Community Association (BLCA) and its community partners are working to ensure the Blaine Lake Skating Rink will continue to serve the town's residents for many years to come.

To this end, the organization has undertaken a \$60,000 renovation project to modernize the facility. The project includes installation of new flooring and demolition of the old flooring, demolition of some walls to build a new seating area in the lobby, construction of a bar and ticket sales area, replacement of the arena lighting, and boiler upgrades and maintenance.

After nearly 80 years, a well-travelled jacket has finally made its way back home to the Mistawasis First Nation where it rightfully belongs.

The jacket was returned to the family of its creator, Suzette Pechawis,

by Cami Ryan whose grandmother, Barbara Thompson, received it as a gift from Pechawis sometime around 1945.

Using Mont Nebo community member Sherry Mezzo as a liaison, Cami and Leslie Pechawis (Suzette's grandson) arranged for the jacket to be delivered to the Mont Nebo General Store and sent home to the Pechawis family.

On Thursday, Oct. 12, Stephanie Gosselin and Crystal Schmitz, representing Affinity Credit Union – North West Division, presented a ceremonial cheque for \$1,520 to Brian Hagel, Shellbrook Seniors' Club president.

The grant money is being used to help defray the cost of the live band, which performs for the Old-time Dance, and to help with the purchase of exercise videos and equipment to enhance the health of the citizens of Shellbrook and surrounding areas.

Also on Oct. 12, Randy Hoback, MP for the Prince Albert constituency, representing the Government of Canada and United Way Centraide Canada, presented a ceremonial cheque for \$10,000 to Brian Hagel, Shellbrook Seniors' Club President.

This grant money, from the Community Services Recovery Fund, is being used to update information technology to better serve the members of the club and the citizens of Shellbrook and surrounding areas.

The annual Liquor Survivor elimination draw has become a solid fundraiser for Spiritwood Area Recreation, Culture & Sport (SARCS).

This year's iteration, held at the Rec



Katie Pechawis wears a jacket made by her mother, Suzette Pechawis, about 80 years ago. The jacket was returned home to the Pechawis family in 2023.

Centre Mezzanine on Oct. 14, raised \$4,700 for the Spiritwood ball diamonds restoration project.

Agency Chiefs Child and Family Services (ACCFS) held the grand opening ceremony for their newly constructed Prevention Building on Oct. 17 at Witchekan Lake First Nation. The centre will provide activities, programming, and support for families – for both caregivers and children – in an effort to eliminate apprehension.

According to Witchekan Lake Prevention Supervisor, Sarah Scott, "This space that is solely for the purpose of supporting families and providing programming for men and women will help our community to keep children out of protective care."

Following 40 hours of emergency debate, the Government of Saskatchewan officially passed the "Parents' Bill of Rights" on Friday, Oct. 20, and invoked the notwithstanding clause of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms to safeguard it against potential legal challenges.

The bill outlines the rights of parents to be the primary decision-maker with respect to their children's education and ensures parents must provide consent if a child under the age of 16 wants to change their name or gender identification in school.

Thirty-four people attended Paint Night on Oct. 21 at the Mezzanine in Spiritwood's Rec Centre. Talented artist Joanne Marchildon guided the participants through the steps of creating their own masterpiece over the course of a couple of fun hours.



Premier Scott Moe and Education Minister Jeremy Cockrill chat during the grand opening of Blaine Lake Composite School.



The ribbon cutting for the Ahtahkakoop Training and Employment Centre took place on Oct. 6, with Ahtahkakoop Elder Sheila Reimer and Shell Lake Mayor Anita Weiers doing the honours (centre).

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Looking back on the year that was 2023

NOVEMBER

A supportive and appreciative crowd gathered on Oct. 19 to celebrate and congratulate the Canwood Public Library Branch of Wapiti Regional Library on 65 years of service to the community.

It was a joyous occasion of reminiscing, admiring pictures, guessing interesting trivia, and enjoying cake and ice cream.

The newly resurrected Shellbrook Elks Senior Hockey Club unofficially kicked off its inaugural hockey season with a Steak Night fundraiser, held at the Shellbrook Community Hall on Saturday, Oct. 21.

Partnering with the Shellbrook Kinettes for the event, which included a DJ'ed dance after the supper, the Elks played host to about 170 guests on the evening, raising \$6,200 to cover the team's expenses for the hockey season.

Shellbrook and area residents concerned about the state of rural crime gathered at the Shellbrook Theatre for a Rural Crime Watch presentation on Tuesday, Oct. 24.

Put together by Evan Davis and Jay Ferster, who manage the informal Shellbrook RM Rural Crime group on Whatsapp, the evening also saw representatives from the Ahtakakoop-Shellbrook RCMP Detachment and the RCMP's Saskatchewan Enforcement Response Team (SERT) make presentations to the audience of about 110 people.

Once the RCMP's presentations finished, the floor was opened to questions and the meeting concluded with the next step being for the community to organize and take the steps required to establish a formal Rural Crime Watch group.

On the evening of Friday, Oct. 20, the Mont Nebo Hall rang with the powerful voice and masterful 12-string guitar playing of Philip Miller.

Originally from Shellbrook, Miller treated the crowd to country and rock classics from the '50s through the '90s, each sounding amazingly true to the original and delivered with gusto.

Four students from WP Sandin Public High School, Taylor Henderson, Madison Nelson, Alison LaMotte, Payten Keyowski, attended the Canadian Student Leadership Conference (CSLC) in Saint John, New Brunswick from Oct. 10 to 15 along with SLC advisor Rhonda Berezowski.

The theme of the conference was Harboring Leadership, and students participated in a number of workshops and spirit groups, organized a Relay for Life (that raised \$15,000 in 24 hours), and listened to keynote speakers that focused on developing leadership skills, resiliency, forgiveness, and empowerment.



Alex Taylor lays a wreath on behalf of Shellbrook Elementary School at the local schools' Remembrance Day ceremony on Nov. 9.

cy, forgiveness, and empowerment.

Those accustomed to doing their in-person banking at the Scotiabank branch in Spiritwood will soon have to travel much further to conduct their business.

After 96 years of serving the community, the branch will be closing permanently in July of 2024. Community members and clients began learning of the impending closure, which was decided upon by Scotiabank's head office in Toronto, in early November.

Ghouls and goblins, tricks and treats, and fun and games. All the hallmarks of some good Halloween fun were present in abundance, when WP Sandin High School's students and staff hosted the annual Quarter Carnival on the evening of Monday, Oct. 30.

The WP Sandin High School gymnasium was filled with all the sounds of volleyball on Saturday, Nov. 4, when the school's senior girl's volleyball team hosted five other squads for the 3A Conference tournament.

After a day filled with competitive action, WP Sandin won out in the gold medal game to punch its ticket to Regionals.

Courage and sacrifice were honoured in Shellbrook on Nov. 10 and 11, as members of the Shellbrook Legion, local schools, and the entire community, found ways to come together to observe Remembrance Day.

Maintaining a new tradition that started in 2022, the staff and students of both Shellbrook Elementary School and WP Sandin High School united for a joint Remembrance Day ceremony on Friday, Nov. 10, filling the high school's gymnasium with the spirit of remembrance.

Meanwhile, with the return to the

Shellbrook Theatre, the community-wide Remembrance Day ceremony on Nov. 11 was observed with all its traditional pomp and circumstance.

Spiritwood's Remembrance Day service made its way back to being a fully open public service on Nov. 11, 2023. The evolution post-pandemic saw a half-hour service hosted in the Legion Hall, with memorials set up for veterans and service people, including not only wreaths, but photos of those who saw active duty and peace-time duty.

WP Sandin High School's gymnasium was the home of high-stakes volleyball action, as the school played host to the 3A senior girl's volleyball regionals tournament on Friday, Nov. 10.

WP Sandin managed a second-place finish, earning a spot at Provincials.

When she first started her lifestyle blog and podcast five years ago, after reading an article about blogging, Norma Galambos had no actual experience as a writer, and didn't know what to expect.

Now, her work has garnered the attention of Heritage Saskatchewan, which named her blog, podcast, and short story collection, a 2023 Heritage Saskatchewan award recipient.

With the countdown to Christmas officially on, shoppers from Shellbrook and the surrounding area had an opportunity to get their hands on some one-of-a-kind gifts for their loved ones on Nov. 18, when the Shellbrook & District Arts Council's Christmas Craft Sale returned to the Shellbrook Community Hall alongside the Shellbrook Kinettes' Winter Market at the Shellbrook Senior Citizen's Centre.

As a small-town entrepreneur and



Canwood Library board member Gerda Bruner assists former long-time librarian Hildegard Butz with cutting the commemorative cake at the library's 65th anniversary celebration on Oct. 19.

owner of Shell Lake's Willow Insurance, kindness is at the heart of everything Rose Freeman does.

So, when the Make-A-Wish Foundation approached her in the spring to join 20 other Saskatchewan women for its Women for Wishes campaign and raise \$10,000 to grant the wish of a child in Saskatchewan, she leapt at the opportunity and easily exceeded the goal.

In a poetic end to the 114 years it spent at the south end of Shellbrook's Main Street, the Shellbrook CN Station made its final journey on Tuesday, Nov. 14, leaving the community on the old railroad track that once bore so many trains to it.

Helped by a small team, and a Saskatchewan Power crew to move power lines out of the way, the station's owner, Ken Hamilton, hauled the building to his rural property, located just one mile west and two miles south of Shellbrook.

When Tasha Cyr arrived at the Shellbrook Community Hall for the Shellbrook Kinettes' November meeting, she was expecting to discuss the club's regular business and take part in a fun murder mystery party with her fellow club members.

Little did she know, the Kinettes had nominated her for a Kin Canada lifetime membership — the organization's highest honour, which is presented only to members who have served their club for at least 10 years, and who have made outstanding contributions to their clubs and communities.

The Canwood & District Bus Association got \$5,000 closer to its goal of raising \$20,000 to fund the construction of a garage to store its wheelchair accessible van in November, thanks to a donation from Canwood Cargill.



Community members came out to watch and snap pictures, as Shellbrook's CN Station was hauled to its new location on owner Ken Hamilton's rural property near Shellbrook on Tuesday, Nov. 14.



Blogger, podcaster, and writer Norma Galambos accepts her 2023 Heritage Saskatchewan Award from Saskatchewan Lt. Gov. Russ Mirasty.



Long-time Shellbrook Kinettes Tasha Cyr was recognized by fellow club members on Nov. 15 with a Kin Canada lifetime membership, the organization's highest honour for members.