

## Grand Finale for Grand Ole Opry



Marlene Rumak (left) and Brenda Gaudry backed each other's performances for harmony during Spiritwood's final Grand Ole Opry.

By BEVRA FEE

Spiritwood Herald Reporter

What has become a perennial spring-time anchor event in Spiritwood drew two nights of large crowds once more on April 5 and 6. The Grand Ole Opry showcases local and semi-local amateur talent and draws an audience from a large portion of the Spiritwood region and beyond.

Friday evening's show opened with a message from committee member and co-emcee, Tanis Franson, who then introduced Pastor Rick Martin to lead the audience in sending up get well wishes for local entertainer John Roth. Mr. Roth was to be on the slate for both nights but was waylaid by a health emergency. Sharing the emcee duties was novice Danielle Orange, who capably managed the podium and led the performers and audience through the lineup with short biographies and intro-

ductions of each act.

Kicking off the Friday entertainment was Debden's Layton Ferster, easing the crowd into the evening with a George Jones classic before kicking up the energy with his second selection, "Sold," and the crowd was primed for the following acts. One of the evening's younger performers at 21 years of age, Ferster opened like a pro and appeared very comfortable interacting with the house band and the audience alike.

Following were numbers by Glenn & Cathy Cherry of Meeting Lake, who offered a very rousing Elvis medley, and T. D. Christopher, a seasoned Saskatchewan music veteran who sang two classics, including a great rendition of "Everything That Glitters." Peggy Haryung lent her clear and melodic voice to a couple of well-chosen numbers, particularly nailing "Blue Bayou."

Rick Martin, Pastor of Spiritwood's

weekly Cowboy Church, was rock solid with his rendition of Hank Williams' "Jambalaya," followed by a country gospel selection. No stranger to the Grand Ole Opry, Ruby Larson was in the house to deliver her rendition of "Coalminer's Daughter," teasing that although her dad, the late Gilbert Chamakese, was not a coalminer she wished to dedicate the song to him. Following Larson was Muriel Huskins of Cold Lake, Alta., who finished out the first set by belting out "Coat of Many Colours" and "Country Roads."

Once everyone had secured their 50/50 tickets, visited friends and neighbours, and enjoyed the bar and the snack counter, the evening headed into the second half with entertainment by old timer (80-year-old timer!) Elmer Lammadee, who spent time telling amusing stories and getting the audience back into listening mode before singing his two selections.

"It's been a good show so far, but I guess I'm here to wreck that," he said.

One of Lammadee's Stompin' Tom selections was switched up due to John Roth not being in attendance to provide the fiddle backup, but the audience appreciated his 'Hockey Game' substitution.

Pamella Page of Shell Lake sang two nicely done classics before a 21-year-old by the name of Morgan McNabb took to the stage – his first time at the Opry – and wowed the audience with "Memphis Tennessee" and "Ramblin Fever."

Veteran Opry entertainer Wayne Derksen delivered a Marilyn Monroe version of "Happy Birthday" to audience member Roland Beauchesne before rendering his classic country selections. Up next, Jennifer Epp crooned an Ann Murray anthem, followed by "When Will I Be Loved" before turning the stage over to the closing act.

*Continued on page 2*



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# Grand Finale for Grand Ole Opry

**Continued from 1**

Jeff Hujber took to the stage with his fun and absolutely stellar versions of "Brown Eyed Girl" and "Come on Let's Go." Hujber, along with many of the acts over the night, thanked the house band for providing the background vocals and musical accompaniment for all the acts on the evening.

The four-piece band, known as Misdeal and comprised of Dennis Adams, Dean Kushneryk, Mick Gratiias and Boyd Faulconer, worked with the singers to learn their musical selections, and together with Tri Sonic Sound they produced all the musical backing for the evening.

Prior to closing out the Friday evening show, committee members Debbie Derksen, Sherry Roth, Sharon Goller, and Elaine Norbury gathered

at the podium to thank the sponsors for the Grand Ole Opry and to announce that this would be the last year, ending a run of 20 events that has seen around \$51,000 of the money raised put back into community groups such as SARCS, the Health Complex, and the Library, among the many.

The committee also commended Spiritwood's ESL (English as a second language) group for setting up the hall and the Resolute Club for volunteering to work the bar and the canteen.

"To all those who helped us with everything from printing the programs, our emcees, our sponsors, musical entertainers, and for everyone who has come out to support us, we could not have done any of this without you," commented

Derksen.

The Friday evening 50/50 pot of \$645 was won by Rhonda Ash. Very fitting, as Ash was the original mastermind behind establishing Spiritwood's Grand Ole Opry and led it for the years before the current committee carried it forward from 2014.

Saturday evening was more of the same great country music with an all-new lineup, featuring Rick Hinson, Tara Welsh, Harlen Smith, Brenda Gaudry, Patty Heisler (welcomed to the stage by a tiny voice yelling "Hi Grandma!"), Marlene Rummak, and Patrick Laughlin.

Morgan McNabb returned with two new songs, filling in for two scratches in John Roth and Jennifer Bamba. Dallas Schira and Landon Franson, two well-known hometown musicians, closed out the performances, once again backed by Misdeal.



Dallas Schira with a lively version of Runaround Sue.



Jeff Hujber closed out the Friday evening show with two fun country rock numbers.



Glenn and Cathy Cherry deliver a rousing Elvis medley.



Layton Ferster performs the opening act on Friday evening.



Elmer Lammadee entertained comically as well as musically.

## TOWN OF BIG RIVER NOTICE OF PREPARATION OF ASSESSMENT ROLL

Notice is hereby given that the assessment roll of the Town of Big River for the year 2024 has been prepared and is open to inspection at the office of the assessor from 8:30 a.m. to noon and 1:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. on the following days: Monday to Friday, April 12, 2024 to May 13, 2024.

A bylaw pursuant to section 214 of *The Municipalities Act* has been passed and the assessment notices have been sent as required.

Any person wishing to discuss the notice of assessment or potential appeal may contact the assessor at the Town of Big River, Box 220, Big River, SK S0J 0E0. A notice of appeal, accompanied by a \$100 appeal fee which will be returned if the appeal is successful, must be filed with the Secretary of the Board of Revision, Kristen Tokaryk, Western Municipal Consulting Ltd., Box 149, Meota, SK S0M 1X0, by the 13<sup>th</sup> day of May, 2024.

Dated at Big River, Saskatchewan this 12<sup>th</sup> day of April, 2024.

Noreen Olsen  
Assessor

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## VILLAGE OF CANWOOD NOTICE OF ASSESSMENT ROLL

Notice is hereby given that the assessment roll for the Village of Canwood for the year 2024 has been prepared and is open to inspection in the office of the Assessor from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., Tuesday to Thursday from April 12, 2024, until May 13, 2024.

A bylaw pursuant to section 214 of *The Municipalities Act* has been passed and the assessment notices have been sent as required.

Any person wishing to discuss the notice of assessment or potential appeal may contact the Assessor at 306-468-2016 (Village of Canwood) or 1-306-446-7660 (SAMA).

Any person who wishes to appeal against his or her assessment is required to file a notice of appeal to the Board of Revision, by May 13, 2024 with Mike Ligtermoet, Secretary to the Board of Revision, 642 Agnew Street, Prince Albert, Saskatchewan S6V 2P1 with the applicable fee of \$100.00, made payable to the Village of Canwood, which will be returned if the appeal is successful.

Dated at Canwood, Saskatchewan this 4<sup>th</sup> day of April, 2024

Carmen Jean, Assessor  
 Village of Canwood  
 Box 172, 641 Main Street  
 Canwood, SK

## Auction Notice Retail Liquor Store Permits

A Retail Store Permit (RSP) allows a business to sell beer, wine and spirits in closed containers for off-site consumption.

SLGA permits are being made available through a public online auction beginning April 15 and ending on April 24 in the following municipalities:

- RM of Biggar
- RM of Canwood (2)
- RM of Cupar
- RM of Estevan (2)
- RM of Fertile Belt
- RM of Francis
- RM of Longlaketon (2)
- RM of McKillop
- RM of Moose Jaw
- RM of Saltcoats
- RM of Swift Current (2)
- Warman (2)
- Weyburn
- White City (3)

Please note that the auctions are for the interest in the permit only. There are no physical buildings or assets. Successful bidders will be required to meet SLGA's licensing requirements before receiving the permit.

Further details are available at: [www.slga.com](http://www.slga.com).

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# Shellbrook Council sets stage for water rate hike

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

Shellbrook's ratepayers can expect to see their monthly utility bills increase by a significant margin at some point later this year. At its April 1 meeting, council gave municipal administration the green light to begin drafting a new water rate bylaw using a framework agreed upon by the majority of council.

The town's current water consumption rate is 31 cents per cubic metre (1,000 litres), with a separate sewer consumption rate of 26 cents per cubic metre. Under the framework, the water and sewer consumption rates will be rolled together with a combined consumption rate of \$2.00 per cubic metre.

Elsewhere, the monthly infrastructure fee, which currently sits at \$23.84, will be replaced by a \$10 infrastructure fee devoted specifically to sewer infrastructure, and a

\$50 capital fee that had been floated around by council before the end of 2023. This makes for a total increase of \$36.16.

At the current rate, a household that consumes 23 cubic metres of water each month (a high-end estimate, Shellbrook Mayor Amund Otterson says) pays a monthly utility bill of \$117.37. Under the new regime, thanks to token annual increases to water and sewer service fees and garbage and recycle bin fees, this will increase to \$188.38 — a difference of \$71.01.

In addition to the rate increases this year, council is also considering increasing consumption rates by 15 per cent annually going forward.

"It's an increase that's overdue [because] we weren't charging enough," Mayor Otterson said, adding that he sympathizes with ratepayers.

"It's a hit, but it's part of inflation. The cost of producing the water is not going down, so

our former bylaw wasn't keeping up with the costs."

While ratepayers are likely to be shocked and dismayed by the increases to their utility bills, Mayor Otterson cautions that they aren't yet set in stone, and that changes could be made before the new water rate bylaw is finalized and adopted by council. He adds, however, that he doesn't expect council would be in favour of pushing the rates any higher than what it agreed upon for the foundation of the bylaw.

Currently, there's no set timeline for when the bylaw will be finalized and adopted, but Mayor Otterson notes that the town is continuing to bill at 2023 rates in the meantime, meaning it's falling further and further behind in properly funding municipal water and sewer infrastructure.

This talk of rate increases comes as council is working towards finalizing plans for a project to upgrade the water treatment plant, improve wa-

ter quality, and increase water storage capacity.

At its Feb. 5 meeting, council tasked the Public Works Committee with reviewing options for the project and coming up with a recommendation by April 22, and gave the Finance Committee until Feb. 29 to review and develop a plan to address financial implications (i.e. water rates) and funding for the project.

Once everything is put together, council will decide, no later than June 10, on proceeding with public engagement on the plans for the project at a town hall meeting.

The \$50 capital fee being added to monthly utility bills is part and parcel of financing the project. But, where council had at one point considered removing the fee once the project was completed and paid off, Mayor Otterson says it's now of two minds.

"This covers this project, but in 25 years, we're going to be in the same position again," he

said.

Otterson notes the town currently has some reserves in place to help fund the upcoming project. However, he adds that this hasn't always been the case and says it's important for the town to maintain its solid financial footing now and into the future.

"If we do have a savings plan, we'll be ahead of any place we've been in before, where we've always had to come up with cash for a project at the time."

Equally unlikely, Mayor Otterson says, are the odds of rates going down if the town can secure grant funding for the project. That's because the rates already reflect the assumption that grant funding will be obtained.

"We're not going to go ahead with a major water treatment plant upgrade without external funding. We've been advised by our MLA, advisory services, and our administration that it's just not feasible."

## Sask. NDP renews call for fuel tax cut

The Saskatchewan NDP is once again calling for fuel tax relief from the Sask. Party government, after the Manitoba government announced another fuel tax holiday extension in the latest provincial budget.

"Saving fifteen to twenty bucks on the weekly visit to the pumps would help a lot of families right now. It all adds up," said Official Opposition Leader Carla Beck in a statement. "The Premier has

a chance to show that he gets the challenges families are facing. He could suspend his fuel tax today with the stroke of a pen."

The Manitoba NDP government announced yesterday that their fuel tax holiday will be ex-

tended for three more months. Fuel tax relief was originally slated to last until June 30. The move comes as nearly half of Canadian provinces suspend provincial fuel taxes.

"Folks are breaking the bank just to fill the

tank," said Affordability Critic Trent Wotherpoon in a statement. "It's just not right for this provincial government to sit on their hands after they made the cost of living worse with their added costs and taxes, especially with so many


families facing serious financial stress."

Saskatchewan's 15-cent-a-litre gas tax is the third highest provincial gas tax in Canada, surpassed only by Nova Scotia and Quebec. Manitoba normally collects 14 cents per litre

on gas and Alberta collects 9. Premiers in both Prairie provinces have delivered gas-tax relief.

Suspending Saskatchewan's 15-cent-a-litre tax on gas and diesel for six months would save households approximately \$356.

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## Sask. Party knows better, chooses to do worse

Policymaking is much like writing a novel.

Unless the author of the policy (or novel) is some unprecedented virtuoso, it's almost guaranteed their first draft will be a dud.

But, more often than not, if one puts in the work, a first draft can become something truly great.

For authors, this means rounds and rounds of editing and rewriting.

And for policymakers, this means weeks and weeks of consulting with experts and stakeholders, and then revising and rewriting.

If policymakers and authors put in this necessary work, they will inevitably end up with something far superior to their first draft... Unless, of course, we're talking about the Sask. Party government and its infamous parental inclusion and consent policy.

For those who may have forgotten, the policy was introduced by former Education Minister Dustin Duncan on Aug. 22, and requires schools to seek parental consent to use the preferred name and pronouns of students who are under the age of 16.

At the time, it was believed to be a knee-jerk reaction to an incident in which planned parenthood brought age-inappropriate materials into a Lumsden classroom (the policy also indefinitely bans third party organizations from presenting sex education materials).

But conveniently, when backlash to the policy grew to a fever pitch, and it became clear the Lumsden incident wasn't considered a good enough justification for the policy, current Education Minister Jeremy Cockrill found another reason.

Namely, a Regina Public Schools' policy which prohibits staff from disclosing a student's sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression unless the student gives permission or if there's an impending safety concern. Never mind that the policy had been introduced in June 2022, and the Ministry of Education hadn't flagged it as an issue prior to the introduction of the parental inclusion and consent policy.

In the months following its introduction, the Sask. Party's parental inclusion and consent policy was con-



JORDAN TWISS  
~  
News Editor

demned by medical experts and independent bodies like the province's child advocate and human rights commission (which was summarily dismissed earlier this year and repopulated with at least two Sask. Party loyalists).

It's also the subject of an ongoing legal challenge filed by the UR Pride Centre for Sexuality and Gender Diversity, and has had its legality called into question by the courts.

Of course, none of this stopped the Sask. Party government from steam-rolling right ahead. Indeed, so urgent was the policy's implementation, that Premier Scott Moe reconvened the Legislature early in the fall to pre-emptively force it into law by way of the notwithstanding clause.

All the while, it's continued to argue the policy is necessary to protect the "rights of parents" to be involved in their children's education (there is no enshrined right, nor are there any real barriers to parents being involved if they choose to be).

Simultaneously, it's defended the policy as reflecting the will of the people of Saskatchewan... or at least the 18 people who wrote letters to the government on the matter, and the thousands of people (or is it hundreds?) Mr. Cockrill said the government heard from.

Meanwhile, in the days following the policy's implementation, the government received 75 letters, with 51 of them expressing opposition to it.

Through all the criticism and backlash, the Sask. Party government has only dug its heels in deeper on the "parental rights" line, refusing to budge or entertain possible improvements to the policy that could make it less harmful to vulnerable youth who may not feel safe sharing their gender identity with their parents.

We shouldn't be surprised. From the day the Ministry of Education was instructed to craft the policy on Aug. 9 (just 13 days prior to the unveiling of the bill), it didn't follow a single principle of good policymaking.

What is shocking and bizarre, however, is the recent revelation that the Ministry of Education's earlier drafts of the policy were actually less wrong than its final draft.



Last week, through documents made public by the Canadian Press, we learned an earlier draft of the policy included a provision which said when gaining parental consent is not in the best interest of a child or could result in physical, mental, or emotional harm, "the director of education or designate may choose to accept the consent of students under the age of 16, if they believe that the student is sufficiently mature to understand and explain their rationale for the decision, as well as the impact and implications of their decision."

Days later, this provision was revised to say schools would work with at-risk students to "develop a plan to speak to their parents."

In other words, the Sask. Party government knew better, and could have chosen to do better, but instead it decided to do worse by blatantly trampling over the rights of some of the province's most vulnerable children.

While most opponents of the parental inclusion and consent policy would likely prefer to see the policy rescinded altogether, a provision to add a layer of protection for those students who don't feel safe coming out to their parents could have eased a lot of worries and made the policy a little easier to swallow.

Instead, the Sask. Party government has ignored those calling for this very protection by disingenuously arguing that opponents to the policy are trying to override the rights of parents, as if

it had never even considered including the protection in an earlier draft of the policy.

Based on its record of late, "knowing better, doing worse" could be the Sask. Party government's new slogan.

When it comes to affordability, it knows it could do better by temporarily suspending the provincial fuel tax like so many other provinces have.

Instead, it's done worse, continuing its ideological crusade against the federal carbon tax by refusing to collect and remit the tax on home heating, prompting threats from the feds to withhold the tax rebate from Saskatchewan residents.

On education, it's known from the beginning it could cement a new contract with the provinces' educators by bargaining in good faith on class size and complexity and holding itself and school divisions accountable.

Instead, it chose worse, wasting months (and hundreds of thousands of dollars) publicly smearing educators as money-hungry control freaks, only to turn around and make a separate deal on class size and complexity with the Saskatchewan School Boards' Association behind educators' backs.

Critics of this Sask. Party government often accuse it of putting politics before people.

With the Sask. Party's parental inclusion and consent policy, and so much else in recent months, we're getting a glimpse of exactly what this looks like.

### Shellbrook Chronicle

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### Spiritwood Herald

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## Report from the Legislature

The 2024-25 provincial budget delivers the largest-ever increase in health care funding. This investment will expand patient care and services, increase access to primary care, support health professionals, and fund key infrastructure projects like new hospitals and long-term care homes across Saskatchewan.

This year's Ministry of Health budget is \$7.59 billion, an increase of \$726.4 million, or 10.6 per cent, over last year. The Saskatchewan Health Authority will receive an increase of \$248.3 million, or 5.6 per cent, for a total highest-ever budget of \$4.68 billion – another record investment.

This budget will increase patient access to primary and community-based care, supporting Saskatchewan residents in receiving care closer to home and alleviating

pressures on the acute care system through investments totaling \$59.4 million.

The budget includes an increase of \$5.1 million for specialized medical imaging services to add essential CT and MRI capacity in the province. This expansion will help increase access and reduce waitlists for these important diagnostic procedures.

A \$16.0 million total in-

crease will be distributed across several primary, public health and community care initiatives, including increasing access to nurse practitioners and other allied health professionals through integration into primary care teams, funding to support Healthline 811 and added supports for Chronic Pain Clinics in Regina and Saskatoon.

An investment of \$71.4 million focuses on increasing the capacity of the acute care system. This includes \$30 million for the Saskatoon and Regina Capacity Pressures Action Plans, as well as an increase of nearly \$10 million for the Regina Urgent Care Centre. Funding is also directed to continuing to reduce the surgical waitlist, working to achieve a three-month wait time target years ahead of schedule.

The budget includes an increase of \$29.2 million

for the Health Human Resources Action Plan to recruit, train, incentivize and retain health care professionals in the province. This includes \$11.6 million to fully fund the commitment to add 250 new or enhanced permanent full-time positions in rural and remote locations. A \$6.7 million investment for the Rural and Remote Recruitment Incentive will fund existing recipients of the program and extend this initiative for another year.

This year's budget includes \$214 million for the recent Saskatchewan Medical Association contract agreement, including increased physician compensation and new programs to support the province's efforts to recruit and retain physicians.

A record budget of \$574 million will be invested into mental health and addictions programs



HON. SCOTT MOE,  
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screening includes technology enhancements and new diagnostic imaging equipment, as well as the establishment of a Breast Health Centre in Regina. A continued investment of \$1.0 million will be designated for important ongoing ovarian cancer research.

Targeted seniors' care initiatives will receive a \$43.4 million increase to stabilize services and programming so seniors can live safely and comfortably in their home communities for as long as possible.

To provide high-quality care, meet the needs of a growing province and ensure our health professionals have the appropriate facilities to provide care to the people of Saskatchewan, the budget invests a record \$516.8 million in health infrastructure, such as new hospitals and health care centres. This is an increase of \$179.3 million from last year.

Our government is committed to continuing to make investments that improve health care. As we continue this work, please feel free to reach out to my office with your questions, concerns or comments.

and services, which represents more than seven per cent of total health care funding. This includes an increase of \$34 million to expand access to targeted initiatives focused on children and youth, addictions and vulnerable populations across the province.

The Saskatchewan Cancer Agency will see an increase of \$26.1 million for a total record budget of \$248.9 million to ensure patients can access the most effective and cutting-edge treatment options.

The budget includes investments to deliver timely, exceptional cancer care services for Saskatchewan women. A \$3.5 million increase for breast cancer care and

## Shellbrook Public Library March activities

By **EDDIE HOEHN**  
Assistant librarian

In March, the Shellbrook Public Library hosted storytime where participants interacted with paper bag puppets based on elephant and St. Patrick's Day themes.

Lindsay Baker from the Wapiti Head Office came to Shellbrook on Friday, March 8, to present storytime about jungle animals. The kids particularly enjoyed throwing balls into a cardboard Easter bunny for Easter storytime.

March also saw the Lego Club participants demonstrate their creative ability by building animals from the cat, dog, and horse families for the weekly challenges. The kids especially enjoyed building Lego bunnies or rabbits just before Easter.

Be sure to check out their weekly creations on display while visiting the library.



Tiree built a Lego forest scene with an animal from the dog family.



Raelynn showcases her tropical Lego tiger.

### VILLAGE OF CANWOOD PUBLIC NOTICE

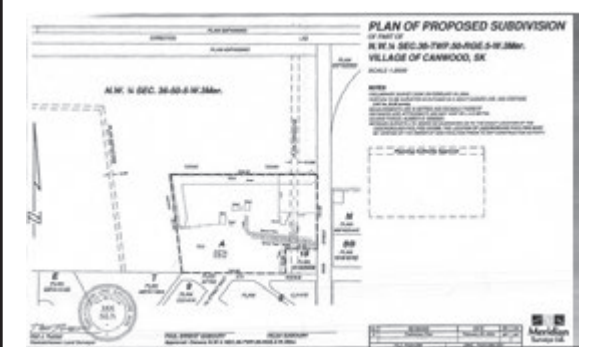
Public Notice is hereby given that the Council for the Village of Canwood intends to adopt a bylaw under *The Planning and Development Act, 2007* to amend Bylaw No# 2-1993 known as the **Zoning Bylaw**.

**Intent**

The proposed bylaw will amend Section 5 by rezoning FD - Future Development District to R - Residential District all the land shown within the bold line in the attached plan.

**Affected Land**

The affected land is legally described as part of N.W. ¼ Section 36-TWP.50-Rge-5-W.3mer. shown on a plan of proposed subdivision dated February 29, 2024 and signed by Matt Rustad, Saskatchewan Land Surveyor as shown on the following map.



**Reason**

The reason for the amendment is to provide for the sale of the surrounding agriculture land.

**Public Inspection**

Any person may inspect the Bylaw at the municipal office at 571 Main Street between 9:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. Tuesday to Thursday, excluding statutory holidays. Copies are available at cost.

**Public Hearing**

Council will hold a public hearing on Monday April 22, 2024 at 6:30 p.m. at the Village of Canwood Municipal Office at 571 Main Street. Council will also consider written comments received at the hearing or delivered to the undersigned at the municipal office before the meeting.

Issued at Village of Canwood March 26, 2024  
Carmen Jean - Administrator

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**We thank all candidates for their interest; only those selected to continue in the recruitment process will be contacted**



# Highlights of a Shellbrook Town Council meeting

By **JORDAN TWISS**

Shellbrook Chronicle Reporter

(The following council highlights are not the approved minutes of council for April 1.)

Shellbrook's Town Council met for its regular meeting in person and via teleconference on Monday, April 1.

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

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Otterson, and council began with its customary Treaty 6 land acknowledgement in recognition of Truth and Reconciliation. Then, it approved the meeting's agenda, adopted the minutes of its March 18 meeting, and moved on to reports.

Up first, Councillor Anderson provided a brief update on the latest PARWU Board meeting, noting that although the town is no longer involved with the board, the door has been left open for future collaboration. This prompted both Councillor Anderson and Councillor Miller to question whether council should make a formal motion to say it is abandoning the prospect of PARWU's intermunicipal pipeline in favour of pursuing its own project to make the town's position clear.

Mayor Otterson suggested this wasn't necessary, as motions had already been made to this effect at council's Feb. 5 meeting.

Moving on to the Hospital and Clinics report, Mayor Otterson shared highlights of a recent Physician Recruitment and Retention Committee, at which existing bursaries and soft-landing assistance programs were discussed.

While these offerings will stay in place to help attract healthcare workers to the community, there was much discussion about the challenges of keeping these employees once the return-for-service portion of the programs expire.

This prompted Councillor Miller to wonder if the town couldn't offer a new program in which it supports a local graduate through their post-secondary education in return for them coming to work in the community. While he called the suggestion a good

one, Mayor Otterson questioned the cost of it.

Rounding out the reports, CAO Hoare reported on a recent emergency measures meeting at which concerns about the upcoming fire season were discussed (given dry conditions in the area), and also informed council that the Shellbrook Library Board has finally been filled. Meanwhile, Councillor Anderson told council all Shellbrook Housing Authority units are occupied, with no wait list.

In its first item of new business, council discussed water, with a view to establishing a framework for a new bylaw that will set water rates for this year and beyond.

The framework sets the combined water and sewer consumption rate at \$2.00 per cubic metre (1,000 litres), an increase from the current rate of 57 cents per cubic metre. It also introduces a \$50 capital fee, but sees the monthly infrastructure fee reduced to \$10 from the current charge of \$23.84 (a net increase of \$36.16 on monthly bills).

Finally, the framework chosen by council calls for consumption rates to be increased by 15 per cent annually.

Combined with annual increases to water and

sewer service fees, and garbage and recycling bin fees, ratepayers' monthly utility bills are set to climb substantially. Based on household usage of 23 cubic metres per month (a highball figure for most households, Mayor Otterson says), a household's monthly utility bill would climb to \$188.38 from \$117.37, an increase of \$71.01.

Council says the rate increases are necessary, as the town has been undercharging for water for years and now needs to save up for upgrades to the town's water treatment plant and water storage capacity.

Though divided over the issue — with Councillor Nording expressing concerns about the increases being too much to put on ratepayers — council ultimately voted in favour of proceeding with this framework as the basis for the future bylaw, noting that changes could still be made before the bylaw is finalized and adopted.

Concluding its new business, council gave third reading to and adopted Bylaw 2024-03, the Garbage and Recycle Bylaw, and carried a motion to designate Centennial Park properly in anticipation of it being the future home of Shellbrook's new swimming pool.

## New system set to improve EMS response times

Saskatchewan will soon pilot an emergency medical services (EMS) triage system in Regina and Saskatoon to help improve patient flow and reduce ambulance offload delays within emergency departments (ED).

A new triage software support system to be introduced this June will utilize a Registered Nurse (RN) to evaluate calls processed by an Emergency Medical Dispatcher and deemed non-emergent. The RN will be able to direct the patients to an alternative, appropriate health care option if it is determined they do not require an ambulance.

"We are grateful for the work done by our EMS providers, and we have heard from them the need to address pressures caused by unnecessary EMS transfers to hospital emergency departments," Health Minister Everett Hindley said. "This new support system will streamline services for our EMS providers and help ensure that patients are seeing the right health care provider in the right location at the right time."

A significant number of patients calling 911 are transported to a provincial ED, which is not always the most appropriate facility to address their health

care needs. Upon arrival, urban and rural EMS responders may encounter offload delays as responders are required to remain at the hospital until care of the patient can be transferred. This ties up needed EMS resources as they are prevented from returning to their home communities to respond to other emergencies. This new system will direct 911 callers who do not need an ambulance to an alternative point of care.

A dedicated RN will be available 12 hours a day within each of the Regina and Saskatoon Medical Communication and Coordination Centres (MCCCs) operated by the Saskatchewan Health Authority (SHA) and Medavie Health Services West.

"Ensuring that our ambulances are available to assist those in need is a priority for the SHA," SHA Provincial Clinical and Support Services - Community Care Executive Director Rod MacKenzie said. "Providing appropriate care to all patients in the most suitable setting is the best way to ensure individual care needs are being met and that our ambulances are available for the next response. This additional layer of assessment will help improve patient care and avoid overwhelming emergency departments."

Medavie Health Services West provides emergency paramedic and dispatch services under contract with the SHA to the City of Saskatoon and surrounding rural communities as well as regional dispatch services.

"Our purpose is to make a meaningful difference in the lives of our patients and their families through the delivery of high-quality care," Medavie Health Services-West Chief Operating Officer Gerry Schriemer said. "Developing and identifying appropriate health tools to best suit the changing needs of our communities is vital to the evolution of care. Adding secondary triage with Registered Nurses, as an enhancement to the Medical Priority Dispatch System used in MCCCs, will provide our region with additional care options when transport may not be the most appropriate option. This is another exciting advancement on providing the right care, in the right place, at the right time."

The 2024-25 Budget includes a \$7.5 million increase in annual funding to enhance EMS across the province, which will support EMS and community paramedicine positions in Saskatoon and other locations, including rural and northern communities.

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## Provincial Budget | 2024-2025 \$248.9 million for the Saskatchewan Cancer Agency

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

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



## New research could vindicate cows

If you are in the agriculture sector, you have no doubt heard or read about cows being an environmental villain because they pass gas — a significant amount, admittedly.

How can a cow be a villain in a world of coal fired furnaces belching smoke, hundreds of jet planes crisscrossing the sky daily, and cruise ships burning tonnes of fuel just for pleasure cruises?

One would likely wonder why it's the grass-munching cow drawing headlines.

But what if the cow can also be part of a greener energy future?

Now that is an interesting prospect indeed.

There is certainly interest in acres of farmland perhaps being turned into solar energy farms, with row upon row of solar panels installed to collect energy from sunlight.

Some see the trend as a threat to crop production, although the difference between solar panels collecting energy or growing grain for ethanol or oilseeds for bio-diesel seems to be splitting a



CALVIN DANIELS

rather fine hair.

That said, when solar panels are installed, there is the potential to grow other things on the land beneath and between the rows.

Grain crops aren't realistic of course. Nor is

using chem fallow. It would really run counter to greener energy ideas to then use chemicals to control growth beneath panels — especially as a better answer is so obvious.

Grow pasture in solar panel fields and graze the pasture with sheep, or maybe the forementioned "villainous" cow?

One of the best reasons for cattle production to be supported is the animal's ability to utilize fringe land acres — places not well-suited to cultivation and cereal/oilseed production.

There are thousands of acres that are far better suited to growing grass than anything else. Certainly, in numerous cases, farmers pull the air seeder over some of these acres and harvest a crop — but long-term positive returns over cost-of-production is certainly less assured.

The acres are best suited to grass in many cases, and then cattle, sheep, bison, can roam contentedly and convert that grass into food for human consumption.

So it is definitely a positive for the cow and ag-

riculture to read at [www.producer.com](http://www.producer.com) that "an agrivoltaics research park to be built this summer in Alberta is designed to explore how beef producers can maximize profits and improve pastures by using their land for both ranching and solar power generation."

It seems like a very natural combination which satisfies the growing demand for renewable green energy, and still keeps the land in food production.

And it tilts the needle a bit to show cows are not all that bad for our world.

## Golden HOST brings laughter to PIHC residents

By JORDAN TWISS

Shellbrook Chronicle Reporter

It happened almost entirely by coincidence.

In part due to some health issues, and in part due to the COVID-19 pandemic, it had been nearly five and a half years since Shellbrook's Golden HOST Players had graced the stage and made the community laugh with one of their productions.

Then, says executive member Pat Grayston, Affinity Credit Union called to ask what the group would like to do with the money it kept in a bank account to pay for play books and royalties.

The question brought the executive together for a meeting, at which two possibilities were discussed: donate the money to a local cause, or try to revive the group and put on another production.

For Grayston, the answer was obvious.

"I've been so ill; it's only in the last nine months that I've been able to go out and buy my own medication. I felt that I wanted to get out of the house and do something different, live a little bit," she said, noting that she was pleased when the rest of the executive agreed to give it another go.

Once the group had settled on staging another production, the logistics all needed to be figured out: what play to put on, where to stage it, and who would be interested in being part of the cast and crew.

Hoping to keep costs low while delivering top notch laughs, the group started looking into old radio plays, which can be put on without paying royalties, and landed on the classic George Burns and Gracie Allen radio play *Gracie for President* — a fitting choice, Grayston said, given that it's

an election year in Saskatchewan.

The question of casting also sort-of itself out fairly easily. Along with Grayston, who juggled both acting and directing duties, Merle Roberts and John Hein returned to the stage as Gracie and George, and Marj Bradley, Marlene Fellows, Wilbur Grayston, and Sharon Buckingham rounded out the cast and crew.

Finally, as for the stage, the group had the novel idea of approaching Trina Chamberlain, recreation coordinator for Parkland Integrated Health Centre's (PIHC) long-term care home, about using space at the facility.

Chamberlain was ecstatic about the idea of the production being rehearsed and performed in the Great Hall at PIHC. And, given this positive response, Grayston says the decision was made to stage the performance in the afternoon, so the residents could not only take in the show but also take part in it.

That's exactly what happened the afternoon of Wednesday, April 3, as the residents and Golden HOST Players invited the community out for what was billed a "Fun-raiser" for the long-term care home.

The show opened with a brief tone chime performance by a group of residents. Chamberlain says the group has been delighted to make music again after a long hiatus caused by the pandemic, and couldn't have had the opportunity without volunteers like Marj Bradley (who led the choir and was presented a bouquet of flowers) and Lorraine Young.

"During the pandemic, many opportunities were halted, including the tone chimes. It has just been since mid-January that we resumed practicing," Chamberlain said. "Elders have said they look forward to practice, learning new songs, and the socializ-

ing that occurs."

The Golden HOST Players' production of *Gracie for President* followed immediately after the tone chime performance, and Grayston believes it couldn't have gone better.

Following a successful (and fun) return to the stage for the group, Grayston says it will meet in the near future and decide what comes next. For her part, she believes it's important to continue staging productions, and for

more people to come out and both enjoy and participate in theatre.

"Culturally, I believe it's important to have a wide range of things in the community," she said, calling Golden HOST a fun and supportive community.

As for the "fun-raising" aspect of the afternoon, Chamberlain says a total of \$195 was donated and that it will be used to put on another "fun-raiser" at some point in the future.



Sleazy campaign manager Frank (Marj Bradley, centre) talks strategy with Gracie Allen (Merle Roberts, left) as a disapproving George Burns (John Hein) looks on, during the Golden HOST Players' production of *Gracie for President*.



Tone chime performers, Front row, left to right: Pearl Evans, Dot Holmes, Rita Brad, and Doris Skibiki. Back row, left to right: Lorraine Young (SHA associate volunteer), Jerry Clark, Lloyd Button, Delores Thorpe, Janelle Mason (SHA recreation worker), Margaret Jonasson, and Donna Lecorre.



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## Major sports being stung by gambling

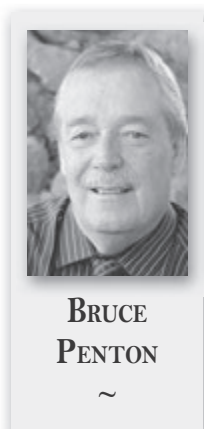
Widespread legalized gambling on sports events in North America is only a few years old, yet its dark side has bubbled to the surface. How bad will it get before authorities step in?

Gambling and sports have gone together like peanut butter and jam for centuries. Illegal bets were probably made during the Roman chariot races in ancient times. In the modern era, the 1919 Chicago White Sox (later named the 'Black Sox' for obvious reasons), got involved with gamblers and threw the World Series to the Cincinnati Reds, pocketing hundreds of dollars in payoffs for their unscrupulous tactics. More recently, Pete Rose was banned for life from baseball for alleged gambling on games in which he participated.

Now, gambling opportunities are ubiquitous through sites like Draft Kings and FanDuel. Evidently, but sad to say, 100 per cent of today's athletes are not morally strong enough to remain uninvolved.

The National Football League was stung with Calvin Ridley of the Atlanta Falcons being suspended for a full year for gambling. The Ottawa Senators' Shane Pinto got the National Hockey League involved, with a half-season suspension issued as a result of 'activities related to sports wagering.' Baseball's Shohei Ohtani fired his interpreter when it was revealed Ohtani paid a bookmaker \$4.5 million for gambling debts incurred by the interpreter. Now, a backup for the Toronto Raptors, Jontay Porter, is facing allegations of cavorting with gamblers to bring in a few bucks to pad his \$450,000 annual salary.

The Porter story alleges suspicious 'prop' bets. One of them was that Porter would make fewer than 0.5 three-pointers in a particular game (in other words, zero three-pointers). Another was that he would grab fewer than 1.5 rebounds in a game played six weeks later. In both cases, Porter left the game early with minor injuries,



BRUCE PENTON

and his minimal playing time guaranteed that he would finish 'under' the prop lines. In both cases, Draft Kings reported, the bets on Porter props had the highest payouts of the day among NBA games, strengthening suspicion and guaranteeing an investigation.

Golf hasn't yet been hit by a gambling scandal, but a recent Fried Egg Golf story suggested the sport was ripe for it. Player X shoots 80 on Thursday, eliminating any hope of making the cut. But on Friday, a matchup prop has him going head-to-head against Player Y. The gambler says to Player X, 'You're going to miss the

cut and make nothing. I'll give you \$10,000 to lose to Player Y.' The gambler than places huge bets on Player Y.

The gambling horse is out of the barn and there's not much professional sports administrators can do except continue to educate their players, step up enforcement and make penalties so penal that players, already among the highest-paid members of society, wouldn't want to risk killing the goose that laid the golden egg.

Phil Mushnick of the New York Post: "Chris Simon, who traded bare-fisted punches to the head for seven NHL teams ... last week committed suicide at age 52. His family believes he was afflicted by on-the-job brain damage, CTE. Given his past response to CTE revelations, Gary Bettman, I suspect, thinks Simon died of media hysteresis."

Fried Egg Golf, after Peter Malnati, who plays a yellow ball, won the Valspar Championship: "Of course the guy playing yellow balls won the event sponsored by a paint com-

pany."

Scott Ostler of the San Francisco Chronicle, replying to a tweet from novelist Rick Reilly, who wrote a book called 'Commander in Cheat' and who mocked Donald Trump for bragging about winning the club championship and senior club championship at his golf club: "C'mon @reillyRick, give the man his due! He's so modest he didn't brag about how he also won the 16-and-under, and the ladies' flight. By a landslide!"

Janice Hough of leftcoastsportsbabe.com: "MLB commissioner on baseball's Ohtani investigation — 'I hope [it's] short, but I just don't know.' Translation, as soon as we can figure out a way to accept enough of Shohei's most recent story to keep him playing."

Flashback quip from former Notre Dame coach Dan Devine: "There are two kinds of people in the world, Notre Dame lovers and Notre Dame haters. And, quite frankly, they're both a pain in the (behind)."

Retired tennis star John McEnroe, who recently turned 65: "The older you get, the better you used to be."

Comedy guy Torben Rolfsen of Vancouver, on a March Madness upset: "Yale over Auburn. I never thought I'd see that in anything other than College Jeopardy."

RJ Currie of sports-deke.com: "Team Canada beat Team Switzerland to win the women's curling championship. Just for the day, they should change the national anthem to 'O Canada, our Homan native land.'"

Headline at fark.com, after Russell Wilson sold his Denver home for \$3.5 million less than what he paid for it: "Russell Wilson isn't done losing in Denver."

fark.com again: The April 8 "total eclipse is going to hit in the middle of a day game at Yankee Stadium. Place your bets as to who will drop the ball: Yankees or the Miami Marlins."

Care to comment? Email brucepenton2003@yahoo.ca

## Fish Derby held on Cowan Lake

By MAISIE KRIENKE

On Saturday, March 23, the Big River & District Recreation Improvement Association hosted its annual ice fishing derby on Cowan Lake.

Advertising for the event began in January, giving fishermen the opportunity to get in on the 'early bird' prizes. The Fishin' Hole in Saskatoon, Timberlost Outdoors and Surplus in Big River, and Kathy, our telephone service, promoted the event by selling holes.

The day began with registration and a pancake breakfast at the Community Centre. Natalie and her crew issued the tickets, while Doug and Mandy prepared breakfast. By 11 a.m., they had everyone prepped to head down

off the end of Main Street, then a kilometre north to choose their favourite hole. Justin and his gang had drilled about 800 holes for them to choose from.

Fishing proved to be a challenge, as no spies appeared to be hungry. Fishing rods were bouncing steadily.

The fish may not have been hungry. However, the fishermen were. There was a continuous line at Doug and Mandy's concession. Once their hunger was satisfied, they quickly returned to holes, determined to hook the big one... or any sized one for that matter.

However, after three hours of jiggling and trying multiple hooks, the weigh scale went unused.

So, then it was back to

the Community Centre for a visit to Paige's bar, the Panter family pizza canteen, and an opportunity to check out more than 100 prizes. Lines were quickly formed at May and Diana's 50/50 table and Leanne and Natalie's "Alibi" offer. This very unique Jackfish raffle was a real "Alibi," which was donated by Backroads Spirits.

Meanwhile, Arlene and Maisie were on fire displaying more than 100 prizes which would all be awarded by random draw, including a cheque for \$10,000.

This array of prizes was made possible by more than 40 donors. Stars were displayed on the walls to recognize the gold sponsors, which contributed \$500 or

more in cash or product. This included: Len's Trucking, BRAB, KPP, Os-Arc, CKBI, MNP, Panter Agencies, CJWW, Timberland Motel, BR Hotel, CJVR, Diamond North Credit Union, Prescription Works Pharmacy, BR Lake Country Co-op, Rally Motorsports, Lakeshore RV Properties, Poplar Point Resort, Scrimshaw Galleries, Carrier Lumber, and The Fishin' Hole.

Prize presentation got under way with the \$10,000 cheque. A great community supporter, even though he's perhaps not a die-hard fisherman, was thrilled to know his name was in for a chance to win. Then, it happened. Craig Campbell, a new resident of the community, was

called to the stage to receive his \$10,000 cheque.

Following the excitement, the random draws for another 118 prizes were made. The winner of \$2,082.50 from the 50/50 was Aarik Glasrud, and Richard Turriff went home with the Alibi.

Once again, the Recreation Improvement Association is proud to report the success of this annual project, which will have a profit of nearly \$20,000.

President Arlene Gilbert took the opportunity to thank her board members for their hard work in convening the various areas; the others who stepped up to assist the board members, and all the generous folks who donated prizes to make the event rock.



Arlene Gilbert presents the \$10,000 cheque to Craig Campbell.



Natalie Wideen presents the 128 oz "Alibi" to Richard Turriff.



Aarik Glasrud, winner of the 50/50.



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## NOTICE TO CREDITORS

### NOTICE TO CREDITORS

IN THE ESTATE OF VALERIE BERTHA WONDERHAM, LATE OF SHELLBROOK, SK, DECEASED. All claims against the above estate, duly verified by statutory declaration and with particulars and valuation of security held, if any, must be sent to the undersigned before April 25<sup>th</sup>, 2024:  
Hilla Krogh Law Office  
149 - 15<sup>th</sup> St. E.  
Prince Albert, SK S6V 1G1  
2-15

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GARAGE SALE (tools, household items) Friday & Sat-urday, April 12 & 13, 9am - 5pm, 209 1st Ave E, Shellbrook.

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## WANTED

### WANTED

Coins, Coin Collection, Old Jewelry, Bullion +!



Cash paid for silver coins, gold coins, rare coins, old coins & paper \$, Olympic coins, Royal Canadian Mint Coins, Franklin Mint, US Mint etc, unwanted jewelry, old Rolex & Omega watches, nuggets, sterling silver, Bullion, all Gold & Silver!

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## OBITUARIES

## Norah Anderson



**ANDERSON – Norah**  
The family of Norah Margaret Anderson sadly announces her passing on March 25, 2024, in Shellbrook, Saskatchewan at the age of 89 years.

Norah will be lovingly missed by her children: Bruce (Clive Rahe), Robert (Susan), Steven (Karen), Jeffery (Deb), Scott (Silke), Roy (Kim), Shelley Johnson (John); her grandchildren: Brian, Michael, Shauna, Matthew, Christopher, Shawn, Jessica, Andrew, Daniel, Tony, James, Jackie, Samantha & Amanda; her 23 great grandchildren / great-great grandchild as well as numerous nieces, nephews, and friends.

Norah was predeceased by her husband Bruce, her parents, Richard & Norah Duncan; her sisters, Sarah & Eileen

and granddaughter Taylor.

Norah was born June 10, 1934, in Chemainus, British Columbia to Richard & Norah Duncan. She had three siblings Sarah, Eileen & Wayne. While her dad served in WWII they lived in Ladysmith, Nanaimo and finally North Vancouver. After Richard was discharged, they bought property and moved to the island around Chemainus. Her schooling was in different places. One year in a convent and later years 11-15 years old were in Ladysmith and in Grade 10 she decided school was no longer for her.

She worked as a waitress, B.C. Tel as a telephone operator and was a member of The Glee Club who travelled from town to town singing and performing skits.

Norah met, fell in love and married the love of her life, Bruce. Being a military family, they moved a lot. Niagara Falls, Petawawa Ontario, Brandon Manitoba, Chilliwack B.C., Regina and finally retired in Big River in 1979. She worked for a few years as the children grew up. Some of the many places Norah worked were; The orchard, summer relief @ The Brandon Daily Sun

Newspaper Office, York Farms Canning Factory in Sardis, B.C. and Telephone Duty Answering Service in Regina, Sask. She worked at the Big River Library for 15 years as an assistant Librarian and later as Librarian. She was involved in many organizations throughout her life such as, Cubs, Scouts, Venturers, Girl Guides, Civitan etc. She was a member of the Lakewood Lodge Steering Committee. She loved reading and was a perfectionist with grammar.

There will be a Celebration of Life held for Norah on Monday, June

10, 2024, in the Big River Community Hall. In lieu of tributes, memorial donations may be made in memory of Norah to either the Lung Sask (2308 Arlington Ave, Saskatoon, SK S7J 3L3) or to the Big River Library (Box 154 Big River, SK S0J 0E0).

Family and friends wishing to send online condolences are welcome to visit [www.beaulacfuneralhome.com](http://www.beaulacfuneralhome.com) Arrangements have been entrusted to the care of Beau "Lac" Funeral Home & Crematorium, Tammy Smart, Funeral Director, Big River, SK. 306-469-2277.

## Donald "Don" William Colby



**Donald "Don" William Colby**

September 17, 1948 – March 24, 2024

It is with great sadness that the family share the news of Don's sudden passing on March

24, 2024, at the age of 75. Don was born September 17, 1948, to Carl and Grace Colby. He was the 3rd child of 8. Don had 2 sons, Carl Jr., and Roland. Don was predeceased by his son Carl Jr., his parents Carl & Grace, and his brother Lyn.

Don is survived by his son Roland, stepson Wilson Coutts, siblings Ruth Scott (Don), Laverne Rawlick (Pat), Marina Dahl (Avill), Leah Scriven (Dan), Beth Lindskog (Clif), Collin Colby (Cayla) as well as numerous nieces and nephews.

A Memorial Service was held on Saturday

March 30, 2024, at 1:00pm in the Big River Legion Hall, Big River, SK. In lieu of other tributes, donations in memory of Don may be made to the Heart & Stroke Foundation, 1200-2300 Yonge St, Box 2414 Toronto, ON, M4P 1E4, or a charity of the donor's choice.

Family and friends wishing to send online condolences are welcome to visit [www.beaulacfuneralhome.com](http://www.beaulacfuneralhome.com). Arrangements have been entrusted to the care of Beau "Lac" Funeral Home and Crematorium, R. Mark Muir Funeral Director, Big River, SK (306) 469-2277.



**FARTHING – Norman James**

Norman James Farthing, late of Shellbrook, SK, passed away on Tuesday, March 26, 2024, at the Rose Garden Hospice in Prince Albert, SK at the age of 54. Norm was born on July 13, 1969, in Comox, B.C. He moved

## Norman James Farthing

to Drayton Valley, AB in 1986, this is where he met his wife, Barb.

Norm will be lovingly remembered by his wife, Barb of 38 years; son, Eric (Sheree) Farthing; 2 granddaughters, 2 grandsons and 1 great grandson; his brother-in-law, Dean (Angela) Duvall, his aunt; Cindy Howe, and 2 nieces.

Norm will be missed by his best friend Ken (Megin) Piper. Norm was an only child but had numerous friends to make up for that.

Norm is predeceased by his mother, Leona Hook; his uncle, Fred Poole; and his grandparents, Mari-

lyn and Joseph Poole.

Norm's passion was working on vehicles, so he pursued a career in the automobile industry.

A Private Family Interment will be held. Memorial donations may be made in memory of Norman to the Rose Garden Hospice (PO Box 2092, Prince Albert, SK S6V 1E0).

Family and friends wishing to send online condolences are welcome to visit [www.beaulacfuneralhome.com](http://www.beaulacfuneralhome.com) Arrangements have been entrusted to the care of Beau "Lac" Funeral Home & Crematorium, Shellbrook, SK. 306-747-2828.

## GOOD NEWS

## REACT AND RESPOND

By **LORNE VALUCK**  
*Parkside Pentecostal Church*

A few weeks ago was Palm Sunday, a day we celebrate Jesus' arrival at Jerusalem, setting the stage for His death on the cross, and His resurrection.

It's a great story, and it's found in all four of the gospels. Matthew's version is found in Chapter 21, verses 1-17.

Now when they drew near to Jerusalem and came to Bethphage, to the Mount of Olives, then Jesus sent two disciples, saying to them, "Go into the village in front of you, and immediately you will find a donkey tied, and a colt with her. Untie them and bring them to me. If anyone says anything to you, you shall say, 'The Lord needs them,' and he will send them at once."

This took place to fulfill what was spoken by the prophet, saying, "Say to the daughter of Zion, 'Behold, your king is coming to you, humble, and mounted on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a beast of burden.'"

The disciples went and did as Jesus had directed them. They brought the donkey and the colt and put on them their cloaks, and he sat on them. Most

of the crowd spread their cloaks on the road, and others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. And the crowds that went before him and that followed him were shouting, "Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!" And when he entered Jerusalem, the whole city was stirred up, saying, "Who is this?" And the crowds said, "This is the prophet Jesus, from Nazareth of Galilee."

And Jesus entered the temple and drove out all who sold and bought in the temple, and he overturned the tables of the money-changers and the seats of those who sold pigeons. He said to them, "It is written, 'My house shall be called a house of prayer,' but you make it a den of robbers."

And the blind and the lame came to him in the temple, and he healed them. 15 But when the chief priests and the scribes saw the wonderful things that he did, and the children crying out in the temple, "Hosanna to the Son of David!" they were indignant, and they said to him, "Do you hear what these are saying?" And Jesus said to them,

"Yes; have you never read, 'Out of the mouth of infants and nursing babies you have prepared praise?'"

And leaving them, he went out of the city to Bethany and lodged there. (ESV)

We see some interesting reactions from people when Jesus enters the picture.

The disciples: "I think this guy we've been hanging around with for the last three years is a little, no, a lot more than we thought."

The Crowds: "This is who we've been waiting for! This is great! I'm all in!"

Some had it right — the Messiah, The Way, The Truth, The Life — The One who would bring spiritual salvation to men and women.

Some had it wrong — The Messiah who would lead them to freedom from Roman rule with military and political strength.

We eventually see both sides were fickle.

The General Population of Jerusalem: "What's going on here? What's all the fuss about? What's with all the people, the traffic? This guy Jesus is an inconvenience!"

Money Changers and Sacrifice Sellers: "Hey! All these people are in town. Let's make some money."

The Blind and the Lame: "Hey this guy's for real. He's got the answer. I've got a need. I'm not too proud to admit

that."

The Children: Awww. Children — no agenda, no baggage, no power struggle, not worried about protocol or process. "We love this guy, and we're gonna say it!"

The Religious Leaders — major agenda, plenty of baggage, definitely in a power struggle. They're all about protocol and process. "We hate this guy, but we're going to careful what and where we say it cause this crowd loves Him."

Real story, real people, real reactions and response to a real Jesus.

The scriptures actually refer to Him as an offense, because we have to respond to Him whether we want to or not.

In Revelation 3:20 Jesus says to us, "Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with me." (ESV) — a clear, simple, wonderful offer.

What's our reaction, our response to these words of Jesus?

I suppose it's good news and bad news.

Good news for those who are thankful it's so simple.

Bad news for those who reject it because it's too simple.

Take some time to read this story in the Gospels again, and consider your reaction and response to Jesus.