



Lake Country Co-op celebrates 'Shellbrook Corner' opening



During a day-long celebration, Lake Country Co-op cut the ribbon on its new Shellbrook C-Store and gas station at the junction of Highway 3 and Highway 55.

By **JORDAN TWISS**
Shellbrook Chronicle Reporter

Lake Country Co-op leadership, contractors, customers, and community members gathered at what is being dubbed the "Shellbrook Corner" on Wednesday, June 24, to cut the ribbon on the revitalized C-store and gas station at the junction of Highway 3 and Highway 55.

The day-long grand opening of the new 10,000 square-foot location marks what Lake Country Co-op CEO Tim Keller calls an approximately \$9.5 million investment in Shellbrook — the second largest investment it's made in any community in the past 20 years.

To commemorate the occasion, the location was decked out in Co-op's signature red and white, and special offers and give-

aways were up for grabs throughout the day.

"It's always an exciting day when we have another grand opening at Lake Country Co-op. There's more to come in other areas," said Rick Kindrachuk, president of the Lake Country Co-op Board of Directors, during the ribbon cutting ceremony.

"We try to focus, as a board, on the needs of the community to enhance the offerings. This facility is just another example of our commitment to Shellbrook and area."

As Brittney Rosenberg, Lake Country Co-op's director of marketing and community relations, explains, the expansion of the Shellbrook location was certainly driven by need.

"Shellbrook and the surrounding area have seen consistent growth over the

years, and our location at the junction has always reflected that — it's one of our busiest sites," she said.

"The original location served the community well for a long time, but it was clear it was no longer keeping pace with the demand we were seeing."

While last Wednesday marked the grand opening, the new location has been serving customers since the spring and Rosenberg says the feedback has been overwhelmingly positive.

With construction complete, she says the focus is on adding a few finishing touches to the new facility.

First announced in September 2024, the expansion of the Shellbrook location doubled the number of fuel pumps to eight from four. And specifically for cardlock customers, the location now boasts 24/7

access to restrooms and showers, providing comfort and convenience for travellers.

Meanwhile, the wine, spirit, and beer portion of the convenience store received a massive expansion to a full-scale 3,000 square foot retail outlet, complete with a walk-in cooler, and is offering a mix of local products, craft beer, and limited-edition products.

And for those who've worked up an appetite during their road trips, the Subway that was once in the C-store has moved to its own more spacious building, and been joined by Tim Hortons.

The expansion led to the hiring of 14 new employees, bringing the total team at the location to 42 members.

At this time, Lake Country Co-op says it's not planning any further development of the location.



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Debden ball teams bring home league banners

By **JORDAN TWISS**
Shellbrook Chronicle
Reporter

Under normal circumstances, a baseball team has at least nine players to cover all positions. But as U13 Debden Expos coach Norm Poirier learned from his players this season, it can be more fun to do things a little differently.

From start to finish Poirier's U13 Expos had a roster of just seven players for the 2026 ball season. While this would seem like a disadvantage, the players made the most of it.

"We brought up kids to play one game, and [the kids said] they'd rather have a small bench because then they bat more and it's more of a chal-

lenge on the field," Poirier said.

With a "strong core" of athletic players, the U13 Expos proved themselves up to the challenge, going undefeated the whole season to claim the Parkland Minor Ball League's championship banner.

Poirier credits the team's success to the players' consistent willingness to show up for every prac-

tice and game, have fun, and play their hardest.

"Everybody contributed, so it was a successful season," Poirier said. "We talked about not being able to win games without being on the bat. Whether the ball's placed perfect in the strike zone or not, you're swinging."

While the U13 Expos played the season down two players, the U18 Debden Expos started the 2026 ball season without coaches until Dyan and Josh Nordquist stepped into the roles.

From the beginning, Dyan says they saw potential and an eagerness to play in the team.

"They got out on that field and always strategized to make good plays. They were very encouraging to each other," Dyan said, noting that the roster mixed kids who don't play ball regularly with kids who play provincial ball.

"Right from the beginning, we didn't expect them to win it all, but we saw that they had great growth and potential to get there."



The U13 Debden Expos are league champions. Pictured, left to right: Coach Shanna Dumais, Kaleb Poirier (front left), Carson Dumais (front right), Gabe Cyr, Kael Bick, Ford Cyr, Levi Jonasson, Princessca Constant, and coach Norm Poirier.



The U18 Debden Expos are league champions. Back row, left to right: Coach Dyan Nordquist, Kade Bailey, Noah Poirier, Alex Poirier, Carter Lafond, Jaxon Demers, Kaleb Gareau, Jacob Jean, Rebecca Schutte, Gianna Jean, and coach Josh Nordquist. Front: "Little Mascot" Jens Nordquist, Brooke Nordquist, Avery Cyr, Hunter Anderson, Hayden Peterson, and Jocelyn Lajeunesse.

Where a lot of small-town ball teams consist of kids who've played together most of their lives, the U18 Expos were made up of kids from Debden and Canwood who didn't necessarily know each other well.

But by week three of the season, Dyan says, the players started to click and communicate and learned to play as a

team. Buoyed by a duo of "outstanding" pitchers, the team found its way to the Parkland Minor Ball League finals and claimed the championship banner.

"We were very proud of them," Dyan said. "One of our kids [Carter Lafond] hit a grand slam way out of the park, and he'd been struggling all season to get a hit on. It was absolutely amazing."

Knot wins SHSAA Merit Award

By **JORDAN TWISS**
Shellbrook Chronicle Reporter

Raised in Medstead, Greg Knot wasn't sure what he wanted to do after he completed Grade 12 and headed off to the University of Saskatchewan. But thanks to a number of strong teachers and a sister who pursued a career in education, he eventually settled on teaching.

"I like working with the kids and helping them out," Knot said. "I'm really into athletics, and I find that carries over into the building. The more you work with them on the weekend, the easier it is to work with them during the week and build those relationships."

Knot's career path briefly led him overseas to teach in South Korea, before bringing him back to his hometown of Medstead. He taught at Medstead Central School for seven years before becoming its vice principal in 2018, and then principal later on.

Through these years, his passion for athletics hasn't

dampened, as he watched what his own children gained through their involvement with sports.

"We travelled everywhere from Disney World for cheer to out in B.C. for freestyle skiing to all over the place for volleyball. I saw my kids get all of these opportunities, and I figured everybody's kids deserves those opportunities," Knot said, noting that he and the school's students have been supported by the school's staff.

"People step up here when it's time. I don't know if that's true everywhere... but once you find it, you don't really want to leave it."

While Knot considers it a whole school effort, his own contributions to athletics at Medstead Central School attracted the notice of his colleagues and the Saskatchewan High School Athletics Association (SHSAA), earning him the Merit Award — the organization's highest honour.

The SHSAA Merit Award goes to individuals who display outstanding leadership and service to the SHSAA and to the promotion of high school athletics in Saskatchewan, and have made outstanding contributions to the total program of the SHSAA over a period of time.

Celebrating Knot's achievement in a Facebook post, the school recognized his hours spent working with students as a coach, as well as his work behind the scenes to build facilities and raise funds for things like

a van to transport students safely.

Though Knot had an inkling he was in the running for the award, due to his involvement with the SHSAA board, he calls it a great honour to be recognized alongside the past Merit Award winners who contributed so much to high school athletics before him.

As he looks forward to the future and the end of his career, Knot says his hope is that no one notices when he's gone.

"If you're missed so much, it means you didn't build anything when you were there," he said. "Can you build leaders? Can you build people who follow in what you've [created]? If that's the case, you've done a good job. That's the plan; that's the hope."



Medstead Central School principal Greg Knot accepts the SHSAA Merit Award.

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SBH Public Consultation

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826 57th St. E, Saskatoon, SK S7K 5Z1

Kisikohk School honours Grade 8 grads

By **BEVRA FEE**
Spiritwood Herald
Reporter

June 24 was a day of celebration at Witchekan Lake First Nation as 12 students were celebrated as they prepare to leave the K to 8 school and continue their education at a public high school in the fall.

Opening with a grand march, the ceremony saw the students drummed in by their school's drum group and led through the

gloriously-decorated gymnasium by three traditional dancers. Once the students were seated on the stage, Elder Barney Tipewan offered an opening prayer before Chief Raymon Harris took the lead for the day's program.

Emceeding the graduation bumped Chief Harris' business duties for the day, "I was supposed to be in a meeting today, but I felt it more important to be part of this celebration of learning for our youth."

Helping to get the acknowledgements underway was Viola Thomas, who holds the WLFN Band's Education Portfolio. Following remarks by Thomas, the Grade 8 teacher took over to comment on the group as a class and to highlight some of the moments and achievements of the group. Emphasizing the theme, "Stand by Me," Lauren Joseph spoke about the students' respect, kindness and care for others.

"There is no comparison to Kisikohk School. We have Elders who lead not only in the community but also in our school," she said.

Joseph also thanked all those who helped throughout the year and those who helped to set up for graduation and prepare the celebration dinner.

Elder George Jim then spoke to the students with inspirational words about the future, and emphasized his belief in living a life with sobriety and courage in order to realize a bright path forward.

Valedictorian Kallen



Traditional dancers led the students through the grand march.



Grade 8 teacher Lauren Joseph presents the Perfect Attendance and Diligence Awards to Harvey Chamakese.



Grade 8 teacher Lauren Joseph presents Kallen Witchekan with the Academics Award, while Chief Raymon Harris announces students.



RCMP officer Carlin Thiessen presents the RCMP Award to Kenyon Sakebow.

Witchekan said, "We have learned that success is not about being perfect, it is about showing up. The lessons we have learned here — kindness, perseverance, responsibility and respect — will guide us wherever we go."

When asked about his feelings on leaving Kisikohk School, Witchekan noted that he is excited to move on to high school, "I have been happy here, but I can't wait to see where I am going to go!"



Elder George Jim addresses the students.

Witchekan plans a future in animation, but for the time being he is focused on "having fun with my friends."

When the time came for awards to be handed out, Harvey Chamakese received awards for Perfect Attendance and for Diligence, while Kallen Witchekan received the Academics Award. Kenyon Sakebow was the recipient of the RCMP Award, presented by Carlin Thiessen of the Spiritwood Detachment.

The students presented gifts to their parents, which was followed by a popular slide show of memories of all 12 students through the years. Once the students were drummed in, the atmosphere relaxed only long enough

for a full-course turkey and ham dinner to be rolled out for everyone on hand.

Among the guests was Doug Drover from the Living Sky School Division, who was attending to show support for the families who will be sending their Grade 8 students into Spiritwood High School for Grade 9 in the beginning of the 2026/27 school year.

Kisikohk School's Class of 2026 is: Rashaun Bird, Myracle Brass, Harvey Chamakese, Kasha Chamakese, Steven Jr. Gamble, Kobe Lachance, Gabriella Morin, Ezerla Sakebow, Kenyon Sakebow, Shaylee Sakebow, Trinity Scott, and Kallen Witchekan.

VILLAGE OF LEVILLE CALL FOR BIDS: MORIN CRES SERVICING

The Village of Leville is accepting bids on extending sewer and water services on lots on Morin Crescent on the north end of Leville, SK. Six (6) of the lots receive sewer servicing and two (2) of the lots receive water services as outlined in the Water Security Agency (WSA) Permit to Construct.

The Work generally consists of:

- Extension of water service line 51.63 meters with 1 hydrant, 2 water tie-ins and 2 isolation valves;
- Extension of sewer service line 166.15 meters with 2 manholes, and 6 sewer tie-ins;
- The work must be done to Provincial Engineering Standards and according to the WSA Permits to Construct;
- Returning the site to its original state and seeding grass on the boulevards is required.

There will be an onsite viewing on Monday, July 6th at 1:00 PM CST to meet with the Foreman and ask questions. If you cannot make the onsite meeting, questions may be submitted to: leville@sasktel.net by July 9th, 2026 at 12:00 Noon. A written response will be sent to all those who sent in submissions.

Submit electronic PDF copies of Bids with the subject line "BID-Morin Cres Servicing-Leville" in the subject line to: leville@sasktel.net by July 24, 2026 at 12:00 NOON CST. Bids must include three (3) references from similar type construction projects. Hardcopy bids are also accepted at the following address:

The Village of Leville
Attn: Norma Stumborg, Chief Administrative Officer
Box 280-22 Main Street
Leville, Saskatchewan
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Deadline for Bids: July 24th, 2026 at 12:00 NOON CST

Lowest tender not necessarily accepted.

Norma Stumborg, CAO

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Sask Party can't duck wildfire accountability

Last week, for the second time in the month of June, the Sask Party government was taken to task over its handling of the 2025 wildfires that partially destroyed the northern village of Denare Beach and led to the evacuation of more than 10,000 people from their communities.



JORDAN TWISS

~
News Editor

The 2025 wildfire season was the second worst on record for the province, as 514 fires burned through 2.9 million hectares (an area a bit smaller than Vancouver Island).

Though the cool, wet start to summer means this year's wildfire situation is unlikely to reach such catastrophic levels, it's also far from the norm in the last five years.

Rather than welcoming this summer as a reprieve and becoming complacent, it's vital for the Sask Party government to take the opportunity to ensure its agencies, including the Saskatchewan Public Safety Agency (SPSA), are properly prepared for when (not if) the next serious wildfire season strikes.

Criticism to the Sask Party government's response to the 2025 wildfires is nothing new.

The government's slow, flat-footed response to the wildfires earned it rebukes from all sides, who noted that those impacted by the fires that ravaged northern Saskatchewan were often left without adequate supports or clear communication.

In addition to leaving wildfire evacuees in the lurch, the SPSA faced questions about why half of its air tanker fleet was grounded at times, and why it hadn't even made use of its new air tanker.

For its part, the government attributed these shortfalls to unexpected maintenance, and shortages of qualified pilots and qualified and experienced aircraft maintenance engineers.

Over the course of two investigations into the government's response to last year's wildfires and evacuations, Saskatchewan Ombudsman

Sharon Pratchler says her office received more than 380 complaints.

In a report published in April, Ms. Pratchler ultimately found that the SPSA failed to respond in a timely fashion to many wildfire evacuees, leaving many without supports to buy food or pay for shelter.

While this is well known and documented, the two reports published in June – an independent review conducted by MNP and an investigation by Provincial Auditor Tara Clemett – add to the existing body of evidence with the benefit of objectivity and hindsight.

The picture these reports paint is far from positive.

Between Oct. 28, 2025, and March 24, 2026, at the behest of the SPSA, MNP received 1,388 responses to a public survey and 145 responses to an SPSA staff survey, held 23 focus groups, and conducted 66 interviews to get the full picture of the 2025 wildfire crisis.

Through this engagement, MNP identified significant gaps in the SPSA's prevention and mitigation strategy and its overall wildfire and emergency preparedness.

MNP also found limited evidence to suggest the SPSA's response and evacuation assessment aligned with its established procedures, and noted that the agency didn't have a provincial recovery strategy in place at the start of the season.

Based on this, MNP made 11 recommendations for the province to improve its wildfire response, including: "clarifying mandates and governance, enhancing coordination and capability across communities and government, modernizing tools and processes, and supporting workforce wellbeing."

Corroborating and building upon MNP's findings, the provincial auditor found that the SPSA "has not determined optimal requirements ahead of each wildfire season, increasing costs and reliance on contracted resources,"



and that it "neither assesses costs nor consistently tracks when contracted resources are requested and received."

Based on her findings, the auditor recommends the SPSA develop robust resource plans for wildfire response, prepare its budget based on these plans and include all expected costs (since 2023, the SPSA has exceeded its budget by \$70 million), and work with at-risk communities to ensure they have wildfire preparedness plans in place.

For its part, the Sask Party government has already promised immediate action on MNP's 11 recommendations.

This includes establishing a FireSmart Grant Program that gives communities up to \$40,000 to obtain their FireSmart designation, reviewing the SPSA's structure, enhancing inventory management systems, and improving internal communication as well as communication and collaboration with local communities.

"We've answered the MNP report, and I think those answers very strongly address many of the concerns that were brought forward by the auditor with respect to the SPSA," Premier Scott Moe said in a scrum with reporters last week.

"The fact that we need to do better in organizing, the SPSA needs to do better in organizing for each and ev-

ery fire season. They need to do better when it comes to communicating and working shoulder to shoulder with communities in keeping our homes safe."

On the surface, this sounds like the type of accountability and change Mr. Moe promised after his government won another mandate in the 2024 provincial election.

But suggesting it's just the SPSA that needs to "regroup and do better with organization and communication going into wildfire seasons," as if the SPSA is an agency completely separate from government, feels a bit like passing the buck.

The SPSA is not an independent organization or a private entity.

As a Treasury Board Crown Corporation, it's governed by provincial legislation and its board is chaired by the Minister of Community Safety and entirely made up of government cabinet ministers.

In short, Mr. Moe's government has no excuse for not knowing everything going on at the SPSA, and for failing to ensure it's adequately equipped and funded.

Devastating wildfire seasons should no longer be a surprise to anyone in Saskatchewan. Responsibility for handling them, and keeping people and communities safe, begins at the top.

Shellbrook Chronicle

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Spiritwood Herald

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Blaine Lake toasts Class of 2026

By **JORDAN TWISS**
Shellbrook Chronicle
Reporter

With another school year coming to a close, proud parents, siblings, teachers, and community members gathered at Blaine Lake Composite School on Friday, June 19, to celebrate the 10 graduates in the school's Class of 2026.

Though this year's graduating class didn't settle on a traditional theme, principal Jessica Barrington says the overall tone of the ceremony was about living each day, learning as much as possible, and being true to yourself.

"All of our grads are coming from different places and heading in different directions," Barrington said. "Each one of those journeys is as valid as the next."

Mced by teachers



Blaine Lake's Class of 2026. From left to right: Ryker Painchaud, Atticus Caplette, Denelle Greyeyes, Dakota Skwark, Taylin Carifelle, Dalyn Wuttunee, Kale Roberts, Khylin Pinay-Ledoux, Felicia Arcand, and Grady Coates.

Chenille Brandt and Stephen Fritz, the graduation ceremony kicked off with a land acknowledgement from graduate Kale Roberts and O Canada sung by Tanys Sherstobetoff.

After this it was time

for speeches, with words from Prairie Spirit School Division trustees Kimberly Greyeyes (also a proud grandparent of a graduate) and Wendy Friesen, principal Barrington, valedictorian Kale Roberts, and the class's special guest speaker, educational assistant

Lindsay Chmil, who has known some of the graduates since their preschool days.

"She also has children in the school, so she knows them as a staff member but also as a community member," Barrington said. "That closeness of community and tight bonds and re-

lationships was a really nice theme throughout the speeches."

The ceremony also included the traditional presentation of scrolls and awarding of bursaries, including the Bison Adversity Bursary, and the Bison Business and Innovation Bursary, both of which are exclusive to Blaine Lake Composite School and are worth \$2,500. The adversity bursary went to Kale Roberts, while the business and innovation bursary was awarded to Dakota Skwark.

New to this year's ceremony was a segment called Little Dreams Big Dreams, during which each of the grads took a moment to stand up with the mic and share what they dreamed of being when they were

little, and their current dreams as they're graduating.

Each of the grads also shared a few words of gratitude to the school's staff and their families.

As the Class of 2026 readies for its next chapter, Barrington says she'll remember this year's graduates for their unique and distinct personalities.

"When we have students who come from different places, who believe different things, or walk different paths in life, that makes us a stronger school."

Quoting Michael J. Fox's *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Future*, Barrington urges the graduates not to lose who they are and enjoy the ride.

"As you leave BLCS, and begin this important transition, try not to focus on losing yourselves, or finding yourselves - just enjoy yourselves and, as often as you can, learn something. Wherever you go, bring your curiosity, your kindness, your resilience, your sense of humour. Just bring yourself!"

Blaine Lake's Class of 2026 is: Felicia Arcand, Atticus Caplette, Taylin Carifelle, Grady Coates, Denelle Greyeyes, Ryker Painchaud, Khylin Pinay-Ledoux, Kale Roberts, Dakota Skwark, and Dalyn Wuttunee.



Principal Jessica Barrington visits with graduate Dalyn Wuttunee.



Graduate Taylin Carifelle visits with special guest speaker Lindsay Chmil.

Affinity supports Leask seniors



On Wednesday, June 24, Affinity Credit Union's Crystal Schmitz and Brittney Autet presented a \$2,000 cheque to the Leask Happy Homesteaders at their wind-up BBQ supper. The funds will be used to complete floor maintenance at the Leask Senior's Centre. The floor looks fabulous. The supper was a great success and enjoyed by all.
By **MARGIE MONUS**, Submitted



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Spiritwood Lions support high school track & field

By **BEVRA FEE**
Spiritwood Herald Reporter

The Spiritwood & District Lions Club has selected their most recent winner of \$800 awarded from their Sask Lotteries account. As a Participating Non-Profit Community Group (PNPCG), the Spiritwood Lions receive funding from Sask Lotteries for

disbursement to a worthy applicant in the community. This money is allocated twice per year based on open submissions as advertised locally.

At their summer windup, the panel of guests and Lions were tasked with narrowing down the field from seven submissions received to the one winner — Spiritwood High School's track & field rehabilitation project.

The upgrades to the track and the jumping pit were outlined in the application from Spiritwood High School's student leadership council, "We are grateful to have received this generous grant from the Lions Club. The money will be used to restore our school's track and jumping pits.

"These improvements will provide a safer and higher-quality facility for students, athletes, and the community. The restored track and field ar-

reas will enhance physical education classes, training, and competitions while encouraging more students to stay active and participate in athletics. We sincerely appreciate the Lions Club's support and investment in our school and community. We have already started working on our jumping pits by digging out the old sand and fill, and reboxing the pits. We levelled and belted the runways as well. Next up is the track," reports Brock Fry.



The Spiritwood Lions recently donated \$800 to Spiritwood High School's track & field project. Pictured, left to right: Liv Slater, Lion Megan Alard, Mikayla Tkachuk, and Drew Haggarty.

Sask. partners on Prince Albert urgent care centre

By **MINISTRY OF HEALTH**
Submitted

The Government of Saskatchewan has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Big River First Nation (BRFN) and Montreal Lake Cree Nation (MLCN) to advance the development of a new Urgent Care Centre (UCC) in Prince Albert. This UCC will offer residents of Prince Albert and the northern part of our province an alternative to emergency departments for illnesses and urgent injuries that are not life threatening, as well as mental health supports.

"We are very pleased to enter into this partnership with Big River First Nation and Montreal Lake Cree Nation to advance planning for the new Urgent Care Centre in Prince Albert," Health Minister Jeremy Cockrill said. "We are proud to work with our Indigenous partners to put patients first by enhancing access to healthcare services for patients and families in Prince Albert and northern Saskatchewan."

"This is a milestone for our Nation — we are proud to partner in building better health care in Prince Albert and advancing BRFN and advancing BRFN EDC's economic sovereignty," Big River First Nation Chief and Big River First Nation's Economic Development Corporation President Jonathan Bear said. "Owning the land and facility secures lasting benefits for our people while supporting the province's Patients First program — a true win-

win. We are honoured by this partnership and excited for the innovation and lasting benefits it will bring."

Under the MOU, the government and BRFN and MLCN will collaborate on the next steps for the delivery of the UCC in Prince Albert.

"This Memorandum of Understanding represents an important step forward in delivering modern, accessible health infrastructure for Prince Albert and northern Saskatchewan," SaskBuilds and Procurement Minister Sean Wilson said. "Through collaboration with Big River First Nation and Montreal Lake Cree Nation, this agreement is an important milestone in the planning and development process."

The MOU is a first step in establishing the partnership. As the project planning progresses, subsequent partnership agreements may be negotiated between government, BRFN and MLCN.

"This initiative is about improving access to care and creating better outcomes for people throughout the Prince Albert region, particularly in the areas of mental health and addictions," Montreal Lake Cree Nation Chief Joyce McLeod said. "Montreal Lake Cree Nation is proud to be a partner in a project that will bring essential health care services closer to our communities while creating long-term economic opportunities for our Nation. By working together, we are building a stronger, healthier future and ensuring that individuals

and families have access to the support they need, when they need it most."

When complete, the UCC will provide enhanced access for residents of Prince Albert and the northern part of our province to quality patient care for an illness or injury that requires urgent attention. The centre will offer treatment for minor illness, injuries, mental health and addiction supports, that are non-life-threatening but typically require urgent same day treatment.

"The Saskatchewan Health Authority looks forward to collaborating in partnership with the Government of Saskatchewan, Big River First Nation and Montreal Lake Cree Nation to advance this key project," Saskatchewan Health Authority (SHA) Integrated Northern Health Vice President Julia Pemberton said. "Once open, an Urgent Care Centre will provide residents of Prince Albert and northern Saskatchewan with another option for timely, appropriate same-day care from multi-disciplinary teams in one location."

The Prince Albert UCC is one of five centres advancing in planning as part of the government's \$4.3 billion 2026-27 Capital Plan, with additional centres in Saskatoon, Regina, Moose Jaw and North Battleford also progressing to expand access to non-emergency, same-day health services across the province. The Regina UCC opened in July 2024, while construction continues on the Saskatoon UCC.

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The Chronicle & Herald will still be picked up from community pick-up bins as usual and will remain free for non-subscribers.

**Shellbrook Chronicle
& Spiritwood Herald**



CUSMA negotiations shrouded in uncertainty

CUSMA, the trilateral free trade agreement, has been the guiding document for trade between Canada, the U.S., and Mexico since it came into force on July 1, 2020, officially replacing the 26-year-old North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA).

The long-standing agreement basically serves as the economic foundation of North American trade, enabling tariff-free movement of qualifying goods between the three nations.

While not without its challenges, CUSMA has worked relatively well

to smooth trade relations.

But that does not mean the upcoming review will be smooth.

In fact, the negotiations are likely to be contentious at best, disruptive for sure, and any deal that is reached might be a shadow of the current deal, and that will all be thanks to the most disruptive force on the continent and probably the world today, U.S. president Donald Trump.

When it comes to trade, Trump might best be described as a “playground bully” who tosses tariffs like they are dodgeballs, not re-



CALVIN DANIELS

ally caring what damage they do, but relishing in the act of being the meanest kid on the block.

That in itself is bad enough, but Trump is also a short-sighted bully, and he lost his glasses. He really doesn't see – or perhaps more accurately he doesn't

care – that in terms of trade, tariffs are hurting Americans too.

Not surprisingly, Trump is already stirring the pot.

According to a repeated Reuters report, Trump said recently, “I'd rather not have the agreement, but I may sign it.”

“We do better as a country if we don't have an agreement.”

Of course, Trump's track record in terms of business acumen is spotty at best. Looking across any portfolio you wish during his term in the oval office shows presidential decisions which seem to make

sense only to him.

That said, Trump will influence the CUSMA review discussions if not directly at the table, certainly through the rhetoric he will offer in sound bites and social media rants, and that means choppy waters for the three nations to negotiate.

It does seem like many American economic sectors appreciate the benefits of CUSMA. Usually big business has influence in most things it takes an interest in, so that suggests more reasonable heads than the president will ultimately win out in the re-negotiation.

If that does transpire, a version of CUSMA will emerge.

However, it may not be as good a deal for Canada and Mexico as we have today.

The issue with the three-nation deal from Canadian and Mexican perspectives has always been getting into a trade deal with a giant. When the giant rolls over they tend to hog the blankets.

Now with Trump in the mix, he wants not just the blankets but believes if he forces his partners to sleep on the street it will be good for his ego, if not his nation.

Crop Report: June 16 to 22

By **MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE**
Submitted

Seeding in Saskatchewan is nearly finished with 99 per cent completed. Attention has shifted to in season activities, including haying operations, herbicide applications and monitoring for pests and diseases.

Over the past week, most regions in the province received significant rainfall. While these rains were welcomed in some areas, excessive precipitation in others has led to saturated fields. Combined with periodic high winds, these conditions have delayed in-crop spraying operations in several regions.

The Foam Lake area recorded the highest rainfall at 110 millimetres (mm), followed by Hillsborough with 77 mm. Both Elfros and Lacadena reported 68 mm of rainfall.

Rainfall significantly increased topsoil moisture, with surplus conditions increasing in most areas.

Cool and cloudy conditions slowed crop development. While most crops are reported to be developing at a normal pace, a notable portion is behind the expected stages of development for this time of year.

Provincially, three per cent of normally-seeded acreage went unseeded this spring due to excess moisture. Of the seeded acres this spring, three per cent is flooded and unlikely to produce a crop. Similarly, three per cent of forage crops have excess moisture and are unlikely to produce a crop while two per cent of pastureland is not accessible or is unusable. In areas experiencing reduced moisture, two per cent of the seeded acreage this spring in the province is affected. Five per cent of the forage crops may have yields significantly impacted, while five per cent of pas-

tures may have reduced carrying capacity.

For producers with a Crop Insurance contract, acres which remained unseeded as of June 20 due to excessive spring moisture may be eligible for an Unseeded Acreage claim, with considerations for the following crucial deadlines and information:

- July 3 or later: No longer eligible to submit Unseeded Acreage claims.
- Acres seeded to an uninsured crop after June 20 do not affect Unseeded Acreage claims.
- No liability is accepted for crops seeded after June 20. Greenfeed is an exception, with a seeding deadline of June 30.
- Acres seeded between June 20 to June 30 to an insured greenfeed crop are insured as greenfeed and are not eligible for an Unseeded Acreage claim.

More information can be found on Saskatchewan Crop Insurance Corporation's website. If you have questions, call SCIC at 1-888-935-0000.

The significant rainfall received across most areas of the province has been beneficial for livestock water supplies. Provincially, four per cent of livestock water sources are currently rated as moderately short. Meanwhile, nine per cent are anticipated to become short over the next couple of months, while the majority, 87 per cent, are expected to remain adequate for the foreseeable future.

Various causes of crop damage were reported over the past week. Excess moisture remains the primary concern and is causing minor to moderate damage in most regions, with a few localized areas reporting severe impacts. In addition, moderate to severe damage from gophers and strong winds has been noted. Hail caused minor to moderate dam-

age in some isolated areas. Flea beetles continue to persist, with moderate levels of damage reported, while minor damage from cutworms has also been observed.

In the coming weeks, producers are hoping for favourable weather conditions to support crop growth and allow for the completion of spraying

operations.

Producers are reminded to keep safety top of mind while working. For any crop or livestock questions, producers can call the Agriculture Knowledge Centre, toll free at 1-866-457-2377.

A complete, printable version of the Crop Report is available online.

TOWN OF SHELLBROOK PUBLIC NOTICE


Public notice is hereby given that the Council of the Town of Shellbrook intends to adopt bylaws under *The Planning and Development Act, 2007* to amend Bylaw No. 2012-06 known as the Official Community Plan and Bylaw No. 2018-01 known as the Zoning Bylaw.

INTENT
The proposed bylaws will:


- Redesignate lands described below and shown on Maps A & B from Commercial to Residential;
- Rezone lands described below and shown on Map A from C1 – Downtown Commercial to R1 – Low Density Residential;
- Rezone lands described below and shown on Map B from C1 – Downtown Commercial to R2 – Medium Density Residential; and
- Rezone lands described below and shown on Map C from M – Industrial and C2 – Highway Commercial to M – Industrial.

AFFECTED LAND
The affected land is legally described as follows:

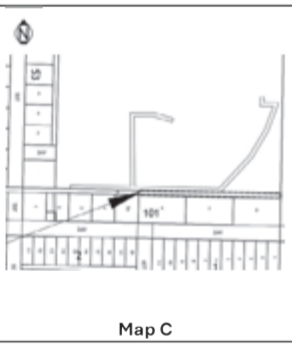
- Lot 1A, Block 13, Plan No. 102478743 as shown within the bold dashed line on Map A;
- Lot 5, Block 13, Plan No. U390 as shown within the bold dashed line on Map B; and
- A portion of Parcel L1, Plan No. 10227945 as shown within the bold dashed line on Map C.



Map A



Map B



Map C

REASON
The reasons for the amendments are:

- To provide for the development of medium density residential;
- To correct a zoning error;
- To provide for the development of a closed lane.

PUBLIC INSPECTION
Any person may inspect the bylaw at the municipal office located at 71 Main Street, Shellbrook, SK, Monday to Friday between the hours of 8:30 am and 4:00 pm, excluding statutory holidays. Copies are available at a cost.

PUBLIC HEARING
Council will hold a public hearing on July 13th, 2026 at 5:00 pm at the town office located at 71 Main Street, Shellbrook, SK to hear any person or group that wants to comment on the proposed bylaw. Council will also consider written comments received at the hearing or delivered to the undersigned at the municipal office before the hearing.

Issued at the Town of Shellbrook this 12th Day of June, 2026
Signed: *Sigourney O'Halligan*

Academic achievement recognized at W.P. Sandin

By **JORDAN TWISS**
Shellbrook Chronicle
Reporter

The staff, students, and proud parents of W.P. Sandin High School gathered in the school's gymnasium on Monday, June 22, for the presentation of the winners of this year's academic awards and scholarships.

Mced by students Emmy Ledding and Marie-Annette Aghedo, the celebration of the academic achievements of the Grades 6 through 12 students began with the presentation of individual course awards and recognition of students who made the honour roll (an average between 80 and 89), honour roll with distinction (an average between 90 and 94), and honour roll with great distinction (an average of 95+).

Keeping the focus on more than just test scores, the awards presentations also included the return of the heart and grit awards, which were first introduced for students from Grade 6 through Grade 12 in 2020.

The Heart awards are presented to students who demonstrate kindness, respect, and empathy for their peers and teachers. Meanwhile, the Grit awards are given to students who show per-



Students who attained the honour roll with great distinction (95+ average). From left to right: Emmy Ledding, Kayla Klaassen, June Robin, Kendall Skauge, Brooklyn Klaassen, Adison Kyliuk, and Sara Verbonac.

severance and determination, and approach school with a positive attitude. Meanwhile, on the academic side, there were the standard awards for each subject from Grade 9 upwards, as well as proficiency awards for the student in Grades 6 through 12 with the highest academic average.

The Grade 6 heart, grit, and proficiency awards, started off the evening. Meadow Williams received the Heart Award, while Claire Lauder earned the Grit Award, and Aubrielle Booth and Everly Brown were presented with the Proficiency Award.

The Grade 7 presentation saw Amaya Archibald receive the Heart Award, Kenisee Nahorniak earn the Grit Award, and Tayler Cameron awarded the Proficiency Award.

Up next, the Grade 8 Heart, Grit, and Proficiency Awards went to Emma Lauder, Addy Knaus, and Marie-Annette Aghedo and Gwyn Phan, respectively.

At the Grade 9 level, the Heart Award went to Kyra Parsons, the Grit Award was won by Gavin Smart, and Kayla Klaassen earned the Proficiency award.

Among Grade 10s, the Heart Award went to Weston Nelson, the Grit Award to Josh Collins, and the Proficiency Award to June Robin.

For Grade 11 students, the Heart Award was presented to Kendall Skauge, the Grit Award went to Kroft Stieb, and the Proficiency Award to Emmy Ledding.

Finally, the Grade 12 Heart Award went to Alex Kartes, the Grit Award was presented to Emersyn Nahorniak and Sara Verbonac, and Adison Kyliuk won the Proficiency Award, also called the Marie Nesdoly Memorial Trophy.

In addition to these unique honours, the school also names a junior and senior student of the year. Marie-Annette Aghedo received the junior honour, with the senior award going to Ayli Schatkoske.

Aside from the academic awards, W.P. Sandin's students were also the recipients of scholarships, bursaries, and other awards. These were presented as follows:

- Heart of the Community: Airionna McQuillan
- Affinity For Community: Kyleigh Schmalz
- PAATA Scholarship: Matt Muller
- Opening Doors to Tomorrow Bursary: Brooklyn Klaassen
- Sask. Youth Apprenticeship Scholarship: Ayston Aiken, Dustin Lamontagne
- Billy Simington Scholarship: Wyatt Henderson
- Grant Sommerfeld Scholarship: Xander Dupuis
- Darrel Martin Scholarship: Lane Keyowski
- Vance Tait Scholarship: Aiden Tait
- Royal Purple Scholarship: Hayley Van Hereweghe
- Lake Country Co-op Scholarship: Sara Verbonac
- Governor General 2025: Marcail Philp
- Governor General 2026: Adison Kyliuk



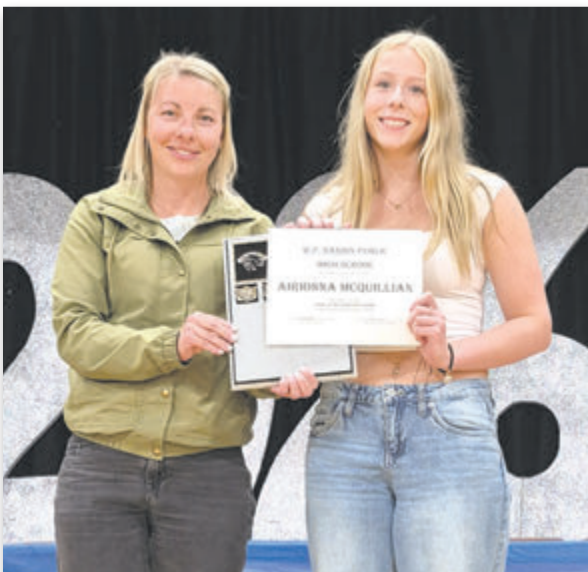
Principal Tyler Kuzma presents the Senior Student of the Year Award to Ayli Schatkoske.



Principal Tyler Kuzma presents the Junior Student of the Year Award to Marie-Annette Aghedo.



Bill Simington presents the 40th annual Billy Simington Memorial Scholarship to Wyatt Henderson.



Melissa Moe presents the Heart of the Community Award to Airionna McQuillan.



Scott Galloway presents the Vance Tait Memorial Scholarship to Aiden Tait.



Principal Tyler Kuzma presents the 2026 Governor General Award to Adison Kyliuk.

W.P. Sandin honours athletic achievement

By **JORDAN TWISS**
Shellbrook Chronicle
Reporter

Capping off a 2024-2025 school year in which its student athletes won championship banners and medals in multiple sports and at many levels of competition, W.P. Sandin High School celebrated the extracurricular feats of its students at an athletics awards ceremony held in the jam-packed school gym on Monday, June 22.

The ceremony, MCed by students Emmy Ledding and Marie-Annette Aghedo, saw more than 40 awards and recognitions handed out to students across different sporting categories, including golf, volleyball, cross-country, basketball, curling, badminton, track and field, and football.

There were also awards for clubs — such as Model UN, drama — and the Aardvark Awards, as well as girls' and boys' athlete of the year awards at both the junior and senior levels.

Cross-country got the awards presentation started, with MVP awards going to Madisyn Verbonac for junior girls and Harrison Shindle for junior boys.

Golf was up next, and the senior girls MVP award went to Emmy Ledding, while Matt Muller and Dalen Thiel shared



Weston Nelson (second from left) and Zander Archibald accept the senior Aardvark award from Rhonda Berezowski and Kelly Herndier.

the senior boys award.

In the football awards, Matt Muller was recognized as the Most Versatile Player, while Hunter Smith was named Lineman of the Year, and Axel Nordquist and Carson Nordin shared Rookie of the Year honours. Additionally, Davin Schmitz earned the Heart and Soul award, and quarterback Aiden Tait was named team MVP.

For volleyball awards, Amaya Archibald got things started with the Grade 6/7 girls MVP award, followed by Jayden Nelson receiving the Grade 7/8

girls MVP award, and Oscar Lavoie earning the Grade 6/7/8 MVP award.

Elsewhere, Brooklyn Anderson was the Grade 9/10 girls MVP, Adison Kyliuk won Most Dedicated Player for the senior girls, Emersyn Nahorniak won the senior girls Leadership award, and Brooklyn Klaassen was named senior girls MVP.

On to curling, the junior girls MVP honours were shared by Jacey Keyowski and Marie-Annette Aghedo, while Jonah Summers won the junior boys honour. For senior curlers, Bella Ledding was the girls' MVP

and Zander Archibald won for the boys.

In basketball, Beckett Horricks got things started with the MVP award for the Grade 6/7 boys team, while Everly Brown was MVP for the Grade 6/7 girls team, Bohdan Dunay was named Grade 7/8 boys MVP, and Marie-Annette Aghedo was the Grade 8 girls MVP.

Among senior athletes, Ayston Aiken earned the boys' Leadership award, Xander Dupuis was named boys' MVP, Ayli Schatkoske won the girls' Leadership award, and Kyleigh Schmalz was named girls' MVP.

Flipping to badminton, Gwyn Phan and Jayden Nelsen shared junior girls MVP honours, while Dallan Kasner was the junior boys MVP. For senior athletes, Brielle Nahorniak and Samantha Kennedy were the girls' MVPs and Xander Dupuis won the boys MVP award.

Concluding the individual sports awards with track and field, Annika Horricks and Marie-Annette Aghedo shared the junior girls MVP award and Hunter Smith was the senior boys MVP.

Closing out the athletics presentations, Will Kasner was named junior boys Athlete of the Year, and Kayla Klaassen won the junior girls Athlete of the Year. Xander Dupuis was the senior boys Athlete of the Year, and Kyleigh was the senior girls Athlete of the Year.

For club awards, the junior drama MVP award was shared by Jacey Keyowski and Marie-Annette Aghedo, and the senior drama MVP award was shared by Gaia Smart and Brooklyn Klaassen. Elsewhere, the Model UN award went to Kayla Klaassen and Brody Moe.

Last but not least, Amaya Archibald won the junior Aardvark award, while Weston Nelson and Zander Archibald shared the senior Aardvark award.



Xander Dupuis accepts the senior boys Athlete of the Year award from Devon Thorpe.



Amaya Archibald accepts the junior Aardvark award from Rhonda Berezowski (left) and Kelly Herndier (right).



Kayla Klaassen accepts the junior girls Athlete of the Year award from Devon Thorpe.



Kayla Klaassen and Brody Moe accept the Model UN award from Dori Banda (left) and Jordyn Pillar (right).



Jacey Keyowski and Marie-Annette Aghedo accept the junior drama award from Jordyn Pillar (left) and Pam Boettcher.

Minutes of an RM of Big River meeting

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

The minutes of the regular council meeting of the Rural Municipality of Big River no. 555, held on May 4, 2026 at the Big River Community Centre, located at 606 First Street North, in Big River, Saskatchewan.

The meeting was called to order by Reeve Clint Panter at 9:03 a.m.

Present: Reeve Clint Panter, Councillors

Doug Panter — Division 1, Justin Sullivan — Division 2, Terence Olsen — Division 3, and Maurice Denis — Division 4, and CAO Dana Kennedy.

Olsen: That the May 4, 2026 agenda be accepted for reference purposes. Carried

Denis: That the minutes of the regular meeting of Council, held April 13, 2026, & the special meeting of Council, held April 27, 2026, be approved as presented. Carried

Sullivan: That the

Statement of Financial Activities for the month of April 2026 be accepted as presented. Carried

Olsen: That the list of accounts totaling \$59,048.98 as per attached be approved as presented. Carried

Denis: That the accounts be approved for payment and added to the next list of accounts presented to Council. Carried

Reeve Panter declared a conflict of interest as he is an employee of Len's Trucking Ltd. and

left the Council Chambers at 9:21 a.m.

Olsen: That the invoices from Len's Trucking Ltd. totaling \$2,021.25 be approved as presented. Carried

Reeve Panter returned to the Council Chambers at 9:22 a.m. and resumed the chair.

D. Panter: That Council approve the recommendation from the Big River Health Improvement Committee to proceed with the purchase of a CBC analyzer for the Big River Medical Clinic Laboratory, with funding allocated from the Health Care Fund GIC. Carried

C. Panter: That in accordance with Section 22(1) of the Tax Enforcement Act, the CAO be given authorization to proceed to request title on parcels of which the arrears of taxes have not been paid in full and the tax lien has not been withdrawn or the arrears outstanding do not exceed the 2024 levy. Carried

Sullivan: That the Rural Municipality of Big River No. 555 apply to the Saskatchewan Public Safety Agency to be designated an eligible assistance area under the Provincial Disaster Assistance Program (PDAP), which provides financial assistance for restoring essential services and property as a result of substantial damages caused by spring flooding on the dates of April 28 to May 4. Carried

C. Panter: That the Rural Municipality of Big River No. 555 apply to the Saskatchewan Public Safety Agency to be designated an eligible assistance area under the Provincial Disaster Assistance Program (PDAP), which provides financial assistance for restoring essential services and property as a result of substantial damages

caused by heavy snowfall events occurring on April 7 to 8. Carried

D. Panter: That the RM of Big River No. 555 designate WSP Engineering as the Owner's Engineer for the Town Bridge Project and authorize the Reeve and Administrator to execute the required agreements and documentation related to engineering, design, and project administration services for the project, in accordance with the Rural Integrated Roads for Growth (RIRG) Program requirements. Carried

Sullivan: That the RM of Big River No. 555 approve the 2026 Pickleball Lease Agreement between the Municipalities of the Town of Big River and the R.M. of Big River No. 555, operating as the Big River & District Recreation and Cultural Board, and the Big River Pickleball Club for the lease and use of the Rink Arena Dry Ice Surface located within the Big River Community Centre for the period of May 1, 2026 to Sept. 30, 2026, at a rate of \$285.71 plus GST per month, and further that the Reeve and Administrator be authorized to execute the agreement on behalf of the municipality. Carried

Olsen: That the RM of Big River No. 555 approve the Servicing Agreement between the Rural Municipality of Big River No. 555 and Daniel and Carmen Daley respecting the proposed subdivision of Parcel B, Plan 102208328, located in the N.W. quarter Section 02-57-08-W3, pursuant to Section 172 of The Planning and Development Act, 2007, and further that the Reeve and Administrator be authorized to execute the agreement on behalf of the municipality. Carried

pality. Carried

Denis: That the RM of Big River No. 555 approve the Servicing Agreement between the Rural Municipality of Big River No. 555 and Matthew Schauer respecting the proposed subdivision of Parcel B, located in Part N.W. quarter Section 32-57-08-W3 Ext 49, pursuant to Section 172 of The Planning and Development Act, 2007, and further that the Reeve and Administrator be authorized to execute the agreement on behalf of the municipality. Carried

Sullivan: That the Rural Municipality of Big River host the 2026 Electronic Waste Event. Carried

Denis: That we acknowledge the CAO granted SaskPower approval to install power & poles along SW 21-57-08 W3 into Parcel A Plan 101811529. Carried

Delegation: Clayton from Con-Aid Soil Stabilizer appeared before council virtually to discuss their road stabilization product. (10:00 a.m. to 10:21 a.m.)

Delegation: Jacqueline & Brian Carleton appeared before council to discuss bylaw enforcement. (10:22 a.m. to 10:36 a.m.)

C. Panter: That the RM office distribute park boat permits and issue park fishing licenses for the west side of the park. Carried

C. Panter: That the Rural Municipality of Big River donate 6 loads of gravel from the shop yard to the cemetery. Carried

Denis: That the maintenance and committee reports be acknowledged and filed. Carried

Olsen: That the correspondence be received and filed. Carried

Sullivan: That this meeting be adjourned.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

SPIRITWOOD: Wapiti Regional Library - Tuesday 10am - 5pm; Wednesday 10am - 5pm; Thursday 1pm to 5pm; Friday 10am - 5pm

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

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

BLAINE LAKE: Wapiti Library - Wednesday 1pm - 6pm; Thursday 1pm - 6pm; Friday 1pm - 6pm; Saturday 10am - 3pm. Contact us for more info 306-497-3130, www.wapitilibrary.ca.

BIG RIVER: Wapiti Library - Tuesday 11:30am - 5:30pm; Wednesday 11:30am - 4:30pm; Thursday 11:30am - 4:30pm. Phone # 306-469-2152

CANWOOD: Canwood Branch of Wapiti Regional Library Hours: Tuesday 9:30am - 4pm; Wednesday 10:30am - 5pm; Phone: 306-468-2501

DEBDEN: Wapiti Library hours: Tuesday 10am - 4pm; Wednesday 12pm - 6pm. Librarian: Aline Hannon

LEASK: Wapiti Library & Legacy Gallery Hours - Tuesday 9am - 2pm; Wednesday 2pm - 8pm; Friday 9am - 12pm

MARCELIN: Wapiti Library - Saturday 10am - 2pm; Thursday 2pm - 8pm. 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.

BIG RIVER: Alcoholics Anonymous Meeting - Every Wednesday, 7:30 pm @ Train Station in Big River (Railway Avenue)

BIG RIVER: Mark your calendar for the 20th Annual Northern Lights Bluegrass and Old Tyme Music Camp (Aug 10-14) and Festival (Aug 14-16) at beautiful Ness Creek. The Mainstage includes Virginia's New Floyd County Ramblers and local favourite Jake Vaadeland, with daytime workshops, nightly dances and campfire jams. Get ready for a magical, musical ring-dang-do, we've got 20 years of bluegrass and old time to be celebrating this Summer... Learn more at northernlights-bluegrass.com.

SHELL LAKE AREA: Follow the Blue Moons to the Thickwood Hills Studio Trail Artisan Tour - Saturday, Aug. 8 & Sunday, Aug. 9, 10am to 5pm. Find your map at www.thickwoodhillsstudio.ca or [facebook.com/thickwoodhillsstudio](https://www.facebook.com/thickwoodhillsstudio). Follow us on Facebook for chances to WIN Shopping Vouchers.

SHELL LAKE: Annual Hey Days - July 17-19, Shell Lake, SK. Food, Parade, Entertainment, Limbo Contest, Pancake Breakfast, Kids Games, Beer Gardens & More! Pick up your events pamphlet at local shops! Brought to you by the Shell Lake Events Committee.

PARKSIDE: Parkside & District Community Club - Demolition Derby - Saturday July 25, 2026. To enter derby, phone Derek Olson 306-747-9114 or 306-747-2000. Over \$17,000 in prize money! Barrel Races start @ 1pm, Derby starts @ 3pm. Mixed Slo-Pitch Tourney, Friday Evening & Saturday, July 24 & 25. Dance Saturday Night feat. live music by Stone Halo from 9pm to 2am (must be 19 yrs, ID required). Gate Admission: \$10; 6-12 yrs \$5; Under 6 Free; Dance \$10. See Facebook page for full details: [facebook.com/ParksideDemolitionDerby](https://www.facebook.com/ParksideDemolitionDerby)

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Messi the star of stars in soccer

Sports has its stars and its superstars but only a handful throughout the 21st century could be deemed megastars. The megastar list might include Wayne Gretzky, Babe Ruth, Tiger Woods, Michael Jordan and Pele, but Argentine soccer legend Lionel Messi has the credentials necessary to join that exclusive group.

For more than 20 years, Messi has starred on the world stage, playing in a record six FIFA World Cups, leading Argentina's national team whenever international competitions are held and is the leader of the Inter Miami team in Major League Soccer. But if North American sports fans were unaware of Messi's brilliance, they got a first-hand look at the megastar in action in Argentina's first World Cup game, played in Kansas City against Algeria. At the age of 38, all Messi did in his team's opener was score all three goals — his first World Cup hat trick — in a 3-0 victo-

ry, bringing his World Cup career goal total to 16. That tied him with former German striker Miroslav Klose. With five or six more games to go, Messi is almost certain to be No. 1 by the time the World Cup ends in mid-July.

Messi played in his first World Cup in 2006, when he was a fuzzy-cheeked 18-year-old with star potential written all over him. That potential manifested itself into the football legend the world knows today. He spent the first 17 years of his career with Barcelona in the top Spanish league, La Liga. He then spent two seasons with Paris and the latest four with Inter Miami. In those 23 seasons Messi accumulated 579 goals in 644 games. He was at his most prolific during his Barcelona days, averaging more than a goal a game (464 games, 474 goals).

Argentina has won three World Cup titles through the years, the latest coming in 2022 when Messi led his team to victory



BRUCE
PENTON

over France. Only two other teams have won consecutive World Cup championships and Messi would love nothing more than to help Argentina pull off a repeat title this year.

As Gretzky's 99 is the revered number in hockey, Messi's No. 10 is the most recognizable in the world of soccer. Messi nearly had four goals in Argentina's opener against Algeria, but one of No. 10's markers was disallowed due to an offside infraction.

"I'm at a loss for words about Leo," Argentina coach Lionel Scaloni told an Associated Press reporter. "What can I say? He's

incredible."

Since he'll be 42 when the next World Cup rolls around in 2030, Messi will likely be long retired. Statues in Argentina will be erected in his honour, highways will be dedicated to him and the name 'Lionel' will continue to be a favourite for Argentine parents to name their babies. And who knows, he may be the first 42-year-old to ever play in the World Cup.

"This is my sixth World Cup and I still feel like I'm in good shape," Messi told the AP.

• Toronto's Keegan Matheson, MLB.com reporter, on the troubles experienced by the Blue Jays' high-paid star Vladimir Guerrero, Jr.: "On all the baseball teams he's played on his whole life, Vladdy's used to being 'the guy.' Now, he's the problem."

• Cathal Kelly of the Globe and Mail, on the Stanley Cup winning Carolina Hurricanes: "The most anonymous good hockey team since the KGB had its own club."

• Jesse Granger in The Athletic, on John Tortorella not being retained as coach of the Golden Knights after being hired with eight games left in the regular season: "As is the case for many trips to Las Vegas, John Tortorella was there for a good time, not a long time."

• Another one from Kelly on the new Leafs' coach: "(Jim Hiller's) first order of business — make (Auston) Matthews happy. Everybody knows it. Which means that Matthews is the real coach."

• Steve Simmons of the Toronto Sun: "What I heard no one say in the past month: 'Boy, I hope Jim Hiller is the next coach of the Maple Leafs.'"

• Adam Schupak of Golfweek, after Harry Higgs wore shorts — violating the dress code — to Shinnecock Hills for the first round of the U.S. Open: "It's unclear what was foggier — the sky above Shinnecock, which was so soupy it led to a two-hour weather delay or

Higgs's mind."

• Greg Cote of the Miami Herald, on the UFC cage matches on the White House lawn to mark America's 250th birthday: "Nothing says patriotism and 'America' quite like a bunch of guys punching and kicking each other."

• Headline from fark.com: "Sorry. Rooting for Iran at World Cup is not allowed. Please cheer for only approved countries. Thank you for your time."

• Another one from Cote, on the NBA finalists' respective stars: "Imagine (Victor) Wembanyama standing next to Knicks 6-1 star Jalen Brunson. A silhouette might look like a father walking his small son to school."

• Columnist Mike Bianchi in the Orlando Sentinel: "The winning golfer in the U.S. Open won \$4.3 million. LIV Golf used to call that sort of money chump change, but now they call it next season's entire operating budget."

Care to comment? Email brucepenton2003@yahoo.ca

Health card renewals coming in fall

By **MINISTRY OF HEALTH**
Submitted

With health cards set to expire at the end of 2026, eHealth is reminding Saskatchewan residents to make sure their address and family information on file is up-to-date to ensure they receive their new health card stickers this fall.

2026 is a health card renewal year and preparations are underway. eHealth will begin mailing out renewal stickers to anyone currently eligible for Saskatchewan health coverage starting mid-September.

If your address or other personal information has changed, Health Registries needs to know. It is easy to provide updates online at ehealthsask.ca. Let eHealth know if you have had any changes in the last three years, such as:

- new address
- changes in your family (e.g. marriage, divorce, addition or removal of dependents)

If you have moved and already used Express Address and chose to update your health card, no action is required.

Renewal stickers will extend your current health card and service coverage until Dec. 31, 2029; put them on your card as soon as they arrive. If your health card expires, you could be billed for medical services.

Sask NDP releases healthcare plan

By **SASK NDP**
Submitted

The Saskatchewan NDP has released a major report and a crucial path forward to deliver big, bold change in Saskatchewan healthcare after receiving hundreds of feedback surveys and engaging in over 1,000 discussions with workers, patients, researchers, municipal leaders, organizations and Indigenous leaders.

The interim report and summary comes as part of the ongoing Your Care, Your Say project (YourCareYourSay.ca) and identifies six major themes that define the crisis in healthcare, which is worse than ever after 20 years of Sask. Party failures:

- Primary Care is Not Primary: A System Without a Front Door
- Centralization Without Results: The Loss of Accountability and Local Decision-Making Under the SHA
- In The Dark & No Seat at the Table: Exclusion, Lack of Transparency, Communication Breakdown

- Burnt Out and Shut Out: Healthcare Provider Retention Must Be The Focus
- Pressure and Declining Access: A System Responding to Crises Instead of Preventing Them
- Waste, Mismanagement, and the Rise of For-Profit Care

"People can't find a family doctor, our hospitals are overrun, workers are burning out and leaving the profession and rural emergency rooms close without warning — the system is literally crumbling all around us," Beck said. "Still, the resolve of Saskatchewan people is incredible — they know we used to lead the nation in healthcare and we can do it again."

"They believe we can fix this and deliver healthcare that is focused on patients, supports workers and that is transparent. People told us clearly — it's time for change in Saskatchewan healthcare."

The report also lays out five principles that will guide healthcare policy development in the months to come:

- Make primary care the foundation of the healthcare system.
- Put patients and communities back at the centre of decision-making.
- Support and retain healthcare workers.
- Improve transparency, accountability and access to information.
- Strengthen public healthcare through better planning and stewardship.

Beck's team will also be working further in the months ahead on solutions to address the unprecedented crisis in mental health and addictions. Saskatchewan has the longest waits for mental health services in Canada. Emergency calls for drug overdoses have skyrocketed by 800 per cent since Scott Moe became Premier.

More solutions will be released at YourCareYourSay.ca in the months ahead.

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OBITUARY

Sylva Bisson



BISSON – Sylva

Sylva Bisson passed away peacefully with family by his side on Friday, June 19, 2026, at Canwood Whispering Pine Place, at the age of 94.

Born in Debden on September 24, 1931, Sylva was the sixth of thirteen children. Raised on the family farm, he learned early the values

of hard work, perseverance, faith, and family. Farming was his way of life until the age of 44, then he moved to town and began a new chapter as the town foreman. He later managed the Canwood Golf Course and continued to lend a helping hand at Dwayne and Sylvia's farm until retirement.

Sylva shared 65 wonderful years of marriage with his beloved wife, Thérèse. Together they raised three daughters—Sylvia, Irene, and Denise. Nothing brought him greater joy than watching his family grow through the generations.

Sylva lived by example through kindness, humility, devotion, and unwavering support to those he loved. He enjoyed fishing, golfing,

and a good game of cards, where his competitive spirit and quick wit were always on display. Known for his playful sense of humor, he loved teasing his grandchildren, great-grandchildren and even the great-great grandchildren. Sylva will be remembered for the life advice he gave to everyone of "Have Fun, but Safe Fun", the way he wore his hats - always with a little tip to the side, his love for adventure - from family trips with Thérèse and daughters, then later with his grandkids, and for his country drives - where he would reminisce of who lived where and what sort of shenanigans they got into together. He will always be remembered for his cheerful disposition and

easygoing nature.

Though life brought its share of heartache, including the loss of his beloved wife in 2019 and the loss of his daughters, Sylvia and Irene, and son-in-law Dwayne in 2022, Sylva faced each challenge with strength, resilience, and grace.

Sylva was the pillar of our family. His love, compassion, and generosity will continue to guide us for generations to come. May God care for you as you cared for us! Nous savons que tu es maintenant au paradis avec Dieu. Aujourd'hui, tu te présentes au Seigneur avec amour et qu'il vienne à ta rencontre.

He leaves behind his loving daughter, Denise (Camille) Dumais; grandchildren, Chad

(Daralyn) Lepage, Jamie (Kurt Somers) Soucy, Riley (Holly Hart) Lepage, Faryn (Ed) Anderson, Robynn (Evan) Holstein, Renee (Conor) Heeney, Tyler (Candis) Dumais, Janelle (Jordan) Turgeon, Nadine (Kyle) Slobodian, and Craig (Valerie) Dumais; 23 great-grandchildren; 4 great-great-grandchildren. He will also be greatly missed by his siblings along with many extended family members and friends whose lives he touched.

A Prayer Service took place on Thursday, June 25, 2026, at St. Jean Baptiste Roman Catholic Church in Debden, Saskatchewan, led by Sr. Rita Bisson and Chantal Bisson. The Funeral Mass celebration was

held on Friday, June 26, 2026, at St. Jean Baptiste Roman Catholic Church in Debden, Saskatchewan, with Father Mariusz Zajac officiating.

"A life well lived, a man deeply loved, and a legacy that will never be forgotten."

Memorial donations may be made in memory of Sylva to the Debden Heritage Manor (Box 608 Debden, SK S0J 0S0).

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

GOOD NEWS

AN UNUSUAL BARBECUE

By DEB ANDERSON
Submitted

Shortly after being saved, I attended a friend's barbecue and was likely the only one there not "partying it up." My heart and mind were so full of the New Testament, which I had nearly finished reading. I had come across a writing of Paul that fascinated me.

He wrote to the church that all people "although not having the law (Ten Commandments and Old Testament writings) are a law to themselves, who show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and between themselves their thoughts accusing or else excusing them..." (Romans 2: 14,15).

Through conscience and the grace of God all people know right from wrong. I found that hard to believe for some reason. I put forth a challenge to those at the barbecue — "Could they list the Ten Commandments?"

After about an hour, I had heard one here and one there and, by golly, if they hadn't listed them all except one! In the end, they admitted defeat on the final one which was "Remember the sabbath day to keep it holy." I congratulated them all on such a magnificent display of recall. Most seemed relieved the "game" was over, though I must say some of the answers came from the least likely characters.

That same section of Paul's writings clarifies his case that "all have sinned, all of us, like sheep, have gone astray," and that God's provision is that we are not saved by being flawless individuals. Like Abraham, it is faith, our trust, our belief that is

noticed by God.

I highly recommend reading these pages of Paul's writings. For me, at the time, all that had happened in my soul was such a mystery. Good, but a mystery. Paul's legal terms like "justified" I found difficult to understand. Someone tried to make this easy explaining "Just as if I'd never sinned." It all seemed so deep, and how could it be?

Paul takes nine pages to explain basic concepts that unveil the mystery of the believer's standing before God because of faith in Christ's life, death and resurrection and moves on to explain how His new life puts to death (as it were) the old sin nature and lives in resurrection Spirit and power. Very helpful. So cool. Thanks Paul.

Paul intrigued me, as his conversion was so remarkable and I could relate to the sudden "about face" that he experienced. One day he was sure that killing Christians was his life's calling, and after a vision of Jesus, he did a complete 180 and devoted the rest of his life to the faith.

So remarkable, and yet very much the type of event we all testify to once understanding and conviction truly touches our hearts.

McLeod earns doctorate

By GLENN STRUBE
Submitted

Tenielle McLeod (Strube), daughter of Foxdale's Glenn Strube and McGrath, Alta.'s, Norma Beck, completed her doctorate of Education in Adult Learning from the Werklund School of Education at the University of Calgary on Nov. 19.

She officially walked across the stage on June 10, her birthday, to receive her degree.

She has worked in post-secondary education for many years, including Sask Polytech and the University of Regina. She currently holds a postdoctoral fellowship at USask in the Centre for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning.

Tenielle is also a school board trustee with Prairie South School Division. She resides in Moose Jaw with her husband, Tim, and three kids.



Tenielle McLeod (Strube) recently obtained her doctorate of Education in Adult Learning.

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W.P. Sandin ends year with fun day

By **JORDAN TWISS**
Shellbrook Chronicle
Reporter

The students and staff of W.P. Sandin High School cast aside their lesson plans and notebooks on Wednesday, June 24, to greet the end of the school year with an afternoon of fun in the sun.

Organized by the school's Student Leadership Council, the long-standing school tradition brought back the mud pit for the first time since the COVID-19 pandemic. With support from the Shellbrook Fire & Rescue team, who set up the pit and hosed kids off, students enjoyed jumping and splashing, engaging in mud fights, and competing in tug of war.



Whether they were slinging or splashing, students enjoyed the return of the mud pit.

When the students had their fill of mud, they could also play slip and slide kickball or beach volleyball, or pursue more artistic endeavours at the chalk

drawing and rock painting stations.

The afternoon also served up tasty treats, including cotton candy, popcorn, sno-cones, and

the latest beverage fad: dirty sodas.

"Students had a lot of fun with their peers and staff members outside of the classroom,"

said Rhonda Berezowski, W.P. Sandin's inclusive education coach. "There were a lot of smiling faces, and it was a great way to kick off summer holidays."



For the more artistically inclined, rock painting provided a way to unwind.



Josh Lamai slides into first base during a game of slip and slide kickball.

Debden Library celebrates Indigenous culture

By **ALINE HANNON**
Librarian

Residents were invited to gather at the Community Centre on Wednesday, June 17, for a special Indigenous People Event hosted by the Debden Library, featuring local artists, cultural demonstrations, traditional food, and live entertainment.

The event was held from 3 p.m. to 5 p.m. and offered community members an opportunity to learn about and celebrate Indigenous culture in a welcoming and family-friendly setting.

Visitors enjoyed refreshments, including bannock and jam, coffee, and tea, while exploring a variety of cultural presentations and activities.

A highlight of the afternoon was an appearance by Lucille Scott, an artist and illustrator who shared her work through a book reading

and painting lessons. Guests were given a chance to learn about Indigenous storytelling and artistic traditions firsthand.

A featured presentation by Lalayne Martel (Lady Métis SK) included a demonstration of traditional beading and Métis fingerweaving. Martel's presentation highlighted the Métis sash and its enduring cultural impor-

tance. Participants learned how the sash was historically woven by hand and used by Métis people for both everyday practical purposes and as a symbol of identity and pride. The demonstration aimed to provide insight into the rich history, artistry, and traditions of Métis culture.

Adding to the celebration, attendees enjoyed jigging by Bailee-Jo Martel and fiddler

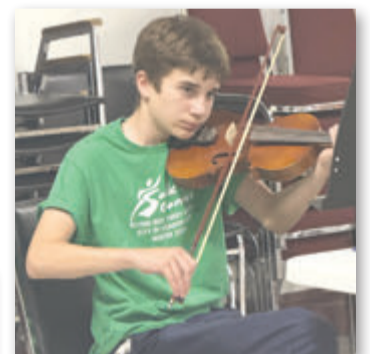
performances by Maverick Martel, offering a lively display of traditional music and dance that have long been central to Métis culture.



From left to right: Lalayne Martel, Maverick Martel, Bailee-Jo Martel, and Lucille Scott led the Debden Library's Indigenous culture event.



Lalayne Martel showcases traditional Métis beading and fingerweaving.



Maverick Martel plays traditional fiddle music.

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