

Tibetan monks bring healing to Ahtahkakoop



Ahtahkakoop’s sweat lodge was a place of visiting and healing during the week.

Photos courtesy of Anthony Masuskapoe

By **JORDAN TWISS**
Shellbrook Chronicle Reporter

A 15-year friendship became a melding of cultures, when the Ahtahkakoop Cree Nation hosted 10 Tibetan monks for a week of prayer and healing from July 18 to July 25.

Ahtahkakoop Elder Alex Ahenakew first met monk Geshe Yongdong while attending the World Indigenous Conference in Lilwit, B.C., and says he felt compelled to adopt him as his spiritual brother, as Cree culture allows.

“Geshe is a very balanced individual. He’s a monk and has practiced spirituality since he was a child. We just hit it off really well and maintained our relationship,” Ahenakew said, noting that this is the second time Yongdong has visited the community.

“We’ve become very close friends spir-

itually. The culture they practice is very similar to ours. They do a lot of ceremonies, they do a lot of fasting, they use prayer cloth and fire.”

Yongdong grew up tending a flock of 600 sheep with his uncle, before becoming a monk at the age of 13.

Though he hails from Tibet, which is considered a distinct cultural region of China, Yongdong has called Canada and Vancouver Island home for 25 years, after defecting from his home due to the poor living conditions and treatment of the Tibetan people by the Chinese government.

With their shared historical legacy of mistreatment by their respective governments, both Indigenous people and Tibetans carry trauma that spans generations.

From 1885 to 1951, the government of Canada banned a number of Indigenous ceremonies like the potlatch and the plains sun dance. And though no official

statute banned them, the Canadian government also used the Indian Act to discourage the use of Indigenous languages.

Hoping to heal the trauma created by the suppression of Indigenous culture and identity, and break cycles of addiction, mental illness, and crime in Ahtahkakoop, Ahenakew and Yongdong decided to bring their cultures together within the community through a week of prayer and healing ceremonies.

The proposed gathering even received the support of the Dalai Lama, the 91-year-old spiritual leader of the Tibetan people.

“It was a sharing of culture. It went both ways,” Ahenakew said.

“It’s healing we as First Nations need. We’re doing what we can, but by bringing another culture in, it reinforces what we have as native people: the culture, the ceremony, the healing processes.”

During their week-long visit to the Ahtahkakoop Cree Nation, the 10 Tibetan monks immersed themselves in the community, starting off most mornings with breakfast, exchanged stories, and prayer. Afternoons were reserved for ceremonies, including a healing sweat, a healing the land ceremony, an ancestral offering ceremony, and a fire offering for the living.

On Wednesday, July 22, the monks took part in the Big River First Nation Pow Wow and got to witness an array of Indigenous dances and music. The following day, the community was invited to join them for a walk.

“People really received them well,” Ahenakew said. “They brought a lot of hope and a lot of healing to our people. It was a really positive boost for our community members and the native community overall.”

More photos on page 8

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New report questions coal plan’s economics

By **JORDAN TWISS**
Shellbrook Chronicle Reporter

An independent report is raising new questions about the Sask Party government’s plan to refurbish existing coal power plants in Estevan and Coronach and run them until 2050 as a bridge to developing nuclear power.

Compiled by University of Regina associate professor of economics Brett Dolter for the C.D. Howe Institute, the report compares the long-term costs of SaskPower’s current plan to refurbish three coal-fired generating stations with an alternative that relies on new natural gas generation supported by wind and solar power.

When it first announced the plan, the government said it would spend \$900 million over four years. But the cost soon doubled to \$1.9 billion, then increased again to \$2.6 billion, and now is expected to cost \$26 billion out to 2050 (just over \$1 billion per year).

This includes \$11.4 billion for capital, \$13 billion for fuel, \$1.4 billion for transmission, and \$393 million of sustainment capital.

Dolter’s analysis arrives at a more costly conclusion.

Factoring in electricity rate impacts, resulting emissions, and SaskPower’s own timeline to transition

to nuclear power by building small modular reactors (SMRs), Dolter suggests refurbishing and running the plants could cost \$30.2 billion between 2030 and 2050.

If the province were to sign a carbon pricing agreement similar to the one Ottawa and Alberta agreed to in their pipeline MOU, the cost would increase to \$46.4 billion.

In his first alternative scenario, Dolter says SaskPower would retire all three coal plants by 2030 and build 370-megawatt natural gas combined cycle power plants, 1,200 MW of wind, and 300 MW of solar capacity.

“The natural gas plants provide dispatchable supply that is comparable to the existing coal-fired plants,” Dolter wrote. “Matching this dispatchable capacity with wind and solar capacity reduces the amount of natural gas SaskPower must purchase, which reduces CO2 equivalent emissions and exposure to carbon pricing.”

Dolter says this scenario has a cumulative cost of \$17.5 billion without carbon pricing, and \$21.6 billion with carbon pricing applied, saving ratepayers between \$608 million to \$1 billion per year on average from 2030 to 2050.

Meanwhile, emissions are 119 megatonnes lower than with SaskPower’s coal plan.

Alternatively, Dolter suggests, SaskPower could build six 250 MW natural gas simple cycle power plants, 1,500 MW of wind capacity, and 600 MW of solar capacity.

“Simple cycle power plants can ramp up and down quickly to respond to changes in load and the supply of wind and solar,” he explained. “They are less fuel efficient but allow higher levels of renewables to be integrated on the Saskatchewan grid, which again reduces natural gas usage and CO2e emissions.”

In this model, cumulative costs are \$15.6 billion without carbon pricing and \$20.1 billion with carbon pricing applied, saving ratepayers between \$696 million to \$1.1 billion per year on average from 2030 to 2050, and emissions are 116 megatonnes lower.

“The Saskatchewan coal-to-SMR plan is the highest cost option for SaskPower to pursue,” Dolter concludes. “SaskPower could achieve lower-cost power and reduce Saskatchewan’s cumulative CO2e emissions by adhering to the federal coal-fired regulations and phasing out coal before 2030.”

Dolter’s findings align with the Saskatchewan NDP’s own independent analysis of SaskPower’s plans, which, according to an internal SaskPower memo, will increase electricity rates by 20 per cent in 2030 and by 95 per cent in 2040.

Those same internal documents suggest the risk level for refurbishing the three coal plants is “extreme.”

Responding to questions posed to SaskPower, Jesse Knisley, a senior media relations officer with the Executive Council, says the government’s change of course hinges on the need to generate reliable baseload power as the province’s population continues to grow.

The best way to ensure the province’s power demands are met, he says, is by taking an all-of-the-above approach to power generation, including coal, natural gas, renewables, and eventually carbon-neutral nuclear power.

Though SaskPower has said the decision to extend the life of the existing coal-fired power plants wasn’t driven by it being the lowest-cost generation option, Knisley says it is, in fact, the most economical path forward.

“The current estimated cost for each coal unit varies, based on the age and condition of the unit. But we currently estimate it will take \$2.6 billion in capital investment to life extend about 1,500 MW of coal,” Knisley explained.

“Based on current gas plant estimates of \$2.3 billion to \$2.4 billion for a single 370 MW plant, it would cost between \$9.3 billion and \$9.7 billion to build the equivalent in gas generation.”

Leask pop-up football camp a success

By **YVETTE HAMEL**
Submitted

The Village of Leask hosted a Saskatchewan Foundation Pop Up Football Camp on July 28 at the Leask Community School grounds, drawing 15 enthusiastic young participants for an afternoon of skill building and fun.

Despite the very hot weather, the players pushed through the heat with determination, energy, and plenty of smiles. The purpose of the camp was simple: to promote the game of flag football and give kids an opportunity to enjoy the sport in a supportive, engaging environment.

The camp was led by Porter Hanson of the University of

Saskatchewan Huskies, whose exceptional coaching and positive leadership made a strong impression on everyone in attendance. His ability to connect with the youth and keep the activities fast paced and enjoyable contributed greatly to the success of the day.

The day was made possible with the co-operation of Leask Community School’s principal and the custodial staff, who provided access to the field and washroom facilities and ensured a safe and comfortable experience for all participants.

The pop up camp showcased community spirit, youth enthusiasm, and the growing interest in flag football across Saskatchewan — leaving everyone looking forward to future opportunities.





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Sask. RCMP updates most-wanted list

By **JORDAN TWISS**
Shellbrook Chronicle
Reporter

The Saskatchewan RCMP has updated its list of the province’s most wanted offenders, in hopes the public can assist it in tracking them down.

This list is not a complete list of all persons wanted by the Saskatchewan RCMP. Offenders appearing on this list are determined by a data-driven scoring system using the Crime Severity Index, a Statistics Canada measurement that looks at both the number and the relative severity of crimes. Factors such as age, gender, race, ethnicity, socio-economic status, religion, sexuality or disability are not considered in the scoring process.

The RCMP’s updated list for August includes just one wanted individual with known connections to the area.

Jonathan Bear (aliases: Jonathon Bear, Jonathan Whitefish, John Bear), is wanted for assault (x2), break and enter, possession

of prohibited weapon, pointing firearm, careless use of firearm, disguise with intent (x2), possession of weapon, and forcible confinement.

Bear is 32 years old and described as 6’2” and 174 lbs., with black hair and brown eyes. Police believe he could be in Big River First Nation, Debden, Pelican Lake, Sandy Bay, or Yorkton.

RCMP renews text scam warning

The Saskatchewan RCMP continues to receive reports of scam text messages, including recent clusters of reports in the Carnduff and Indian Head areas.



Jonathan Bear.

The messages claim that recipients have an outstanding traffic citation, and direct recipients to click a link and submit payment online, falsely identifying the sender as the Provincial Court of Saskatchewan.

Officers have noted the messages originated from a phone number using a “+21” area code. Please note that these messages are not legitimate. Saskatchewan RCMP advise the public not to click on any links provided in these messages and not to send payment or personal information.

Police encourage the public to take the following steps if they receive text messages from a scammer:

- Don’t text the scammer back.
- Block their phone number immediately.
- Don’t send them any money or gift cards.
- Keep records of the texts.

Saskatchewan RCMP continue to investigate.

If you are unsure of the legitimacy of a text message or believe you are the victim of

a fraud, please contact your local RCMP detachment at 310-RCMP. If you receive a text message that you believe to be a scam or fraudulent, you can report it to the Canadian Anti-Fraud Centre.

You can report by phone (Toll free: 1-888-495-8501) or online here: <https://www.antifraudcentre-centre-antifraude.ca/report-signalez-eng.htm>.

RCMP calls grow

The Saskatchewan RCMP says policing is becoming more complex and calls for service continue to rise across the province.

In 2025, the Saskatchewan RCMP’s Operational Call Centre (OCC) received 422,274 calls for service, an average of 1,157 calls per day. This marks a 15 per cent increase in calls for service year over year, and a 58 per cent increase over the last decade.

Of these calls, 4,801 were deemed “Priority 1,” the highest priority emergencies where police response is imperative to an individual’s, or the public’s, safety. This, the RCMP says, is slightly above

the 10-year average.

“Investigations are rarely linear. They require frequent and immediate adjustments in strategy and resources,” Superintendent Devin Pugh, the officer in charge of Saskatchewan RCMP’s Support Services, said in a statement.

“The Saskatchewan RCMP is multiple detachments, units, and teams that build one police force. This sets us apart. It means we can move resources to where they are needed. It means we are capable of protecting the communities that rely on us.”

Elsewhere, the Saskatchewan RCMP’s Police Dog Services deployed to 1,095 calls for service, the Emergency Response Team deployed to 114 calls for service, and the Crisis Negotiation Team, Tactical Medical Unit, and Containment Team each deployed to 76 calls for service.

“The ability to surge our police response within Saskatchewan is a skillset that only the RCMP has,” Superintendent Pugh said. “It’s this unique capability that helps keep Saskatchewan safe.”

Sask. touts healthcare recruitment successes

By **MINISTRY OF HEALTH**
Submitted

Saskatchewan’s Health Human Resources (HHR) Action Plan continues to strengthen the province’s health care workforce, supported by the focused efforts of the Saskatchewan Healthcare Recruitment Agency (SHRA), the Saskatchewan Health Authority (SHA) and Saskatchewan Cancer Agency.

The ongoing work of SHRA, SHA and other health partner agencies is directly advancing the province’s Patients First Health Care Plan to ensure residents have access to high quality care close to home.

Since the launch of the HHR Action Plan in 2022, Saskatchewan has made significant progress in recruiting, training, incentivizing and retaining health care professionals in a highly competitive national and global market. More than 7,500 doctors, nurses and other health care professionals have joined the provincial health care system in the past four years.

“Our government is proud to welcome these highly skilled physicians, nurses and allied health professionals from across Canada and the world to our great province,” Health Minister Jeremy Cockrill said. “I would like to thank the Saskatchewan Healthcare Recruitment Agency for all the work they have done to support our health care system. Through strong collaboration, we are steadily growing our health care workforce which puts patients first by ensuring the right care is available in the right place, at the right time.”

Saskatchewan continues to see strong physician recruitment through dedicated international recruitment efforts in the United States, Ireland and the United Kingdom. As a result, more emergency medicine, anesthesiologists, pediatrics, rehabilitation and family medicine physicians are choosing to stay in Saskatchewan.

The SHRA continues to play a role in supporting this progress, with an expanded mandate to streamline provincial recruitment and strengthen Saskatchewan’s presence in national and international markets. The agency provides a single, coordinated entry point for health care professionals interested

in building their careers in Saskatchewan.

“I am incredibly proud of what our team and partners have accomplished but just as importantly, we are clear-eyed about the work ahead,” SHRA CEO Terri Strunk said. “Working with partners across government, the health system and communities, we are strengthening the pipelines and practices that will sustain Saskatchewan’s health care workforce. This past year the SHRA expanded its reach, advancing targeted national and international recruitment, strengthening pathways for internationally educated professionals and deepening engagement with students, residents and communities across Saskatchewan.”

A significant deliverable in 2025-26 was the launch of Health Careers Saskatchewan, unifying recruitment efforts under a single, modern provincial brand and website healthcareers.sk.ca.

Recruitment efforts are also delivering strong results across a range of allied health professions. The SHA has focused their hiring on recent nursing graduates from within and outside the province.

“Saskatchewan continues to establish itself as a destination of choice for health care professionals looking to build meaningful careers and make an impact,” Saskatchewan Health Authority, Integrated Saskatoon Health, Deputy Chief Medical Officer Dr. Mark Fenton said. “The hiring success in recent months of both the SHRA and SHA, supported by Ministry of Health and other partners demonstrates the strength of a focused, provincial approach to attracting talent, supporting new team members and addressing workforce needs. Together, we are creating a stronger health system and improving access to care for Saskatchewan residents.”

Training Saskatchewan people for health care careers remains foundational to building a sustainable workforce. More than 1,000 new medical, specialist, nursing and allied health training seats have been added since 2022, along with a new Master of Physician Assistant Studies program, the first of four new health profession programs to be developed in the province.

Saskatchewan continues offering competitive

incentives to support recruitment and encourage more people to pursue careers in health care. For example, the Rural and Remote Recruitment Incentive has helped fill hundreds of hard-to-recruit positions in rural and remote communities.

Retention also remains a priority with hundreds of new and enhanced positions created to stabilize rural and northern staffing, including new emergency-focused roles in multiple communities.

As Saskatchewan continues to grow its health care workforce, the HHR Action Plan will remain a key part of supporting the Patients First Health Care Plan and improving access to care across the province.



SPIRITWOOD HORTICULTURE SOCIETY

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Only those to be interviewed will be contacted.

Sask Party keeps failing our healthcare workers

As we've learned all too well from the second presidency of Donald Trump, negotiating a deal is never an easy thing.

Sure, Mr. Trump's erratic and ever-changing whims are an extreme example of the difficulties that come with reaching an agreement.

But even rational, fair-minded parties can struggle to reach a mutually beneficial agreement that satisfies every want or need of every involved party.

In Saskatchewan, few politicians provide greater evidence of this challenge than Battlefords MLA Jeremy Cockrill (though, in fairness, he hasn't had the easiest of jobs these past few years).

In late August of 2023, Mr. Cockrill was shuffled into the role of education minister. The move was a clear attempt to ease the tensions associated with the portfolio, as the Sask Party government was in the midst of fractious collective bargaining agreement negotiations with the province's educators.

Things weren't exactly going well when Mr. Cockrill took the helm.

In the weeks prior, the Sask Party government had used taxpayer dollars to fund a media campaign that was clearly designed to imply to the public that the province's educators were only in it for the money.

While wages were certainly one of the sticking points of the contract dispute between the government and educators, their real beef was with the government's unwillingness to address concerns about class size and complexity, supports and services, and growing classroom violence within the agreement.

The Sask Party government's stance on these matters was simply, "Trust us, we'll fix it later," even as it refused to agree to an accountability framework to ensure additional funds it earmarked for school divisions would be used for the in-class supports educators were demanding.

This wasn't good enough for educators, who had been burned by this gov-



JORDAN
TWISS

~
News Editor

ernment previously.

And so, with neither side willing to budge from their positions, educators eventually voted to undertake job actions, including multiple one-day strikes.

Through it all, Mr. Cockrill continued toe the party line. Instead of working with educators, he attempted to go around them by recruiting school boards to communicate the government's position to the public.

"I am counting on trustees to help make the case to the public that this round of bargaining has been about control and not our students," he wrote at the time.

Naturally, this did little to resolve the impasse, and the government and educators sent the matter to binding arbitration, where the educators scored a decisive victory for the inclusion of class size and complexity in the collective bargaining agreement.

After his contentious stint as education minister, it might have made sense to sideline Mr. Cockrill for a time.

Instead, almost immediately after a provincial election in which Premier Scott Moe said his government would take time to reflect on how it can better serve Saskatchewanians, Mr. Cockrill was shuffled into the even more high-profile portfolio of health minister.

From the jump, it was clear that the health portfolio wasn't going to be any easier for Mr. Cockrill.

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, frontline healthcare workers were hailed as heroes, the backbone of the province. But the Sask Party government seems to have forgotten this the moment the final public health mandates were lifted.

Now, the reality for thousands of Saskatchewan healthcare workers is that they haven't seen a wage increase since 2022, and have been working without a contract since 2023 – all while their workloads and the cost of living have drastically increased.

Given the challenges it had in reaching a collective bargaining agreement

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with the province's teachers, one might have expected the Sask Party government and Mr. Cockrill to feel a sense of urgency to reach a deal with healthcare workers and bring much-needed stability to the province's fragile healthcare system.

So far, this hasn't been the case, as the Saskatchewan Health Authority is pushing for greater freedom to move employees around the province and the greater freedom to bring in contract workers.

At the same time that it doesn't seem to be pursuing a deal with healthcare workers with any haste, the Sask Party government has been all too happy to boast about the progress it's made through its Health Human Resources Action Plan.

Last week, Mr. Cockrill proudly reported that 7,500 nurses, doctors, and other healthcare professionals have joined the workforce in Saskatchewan since the plan was launched in 2022.

This seems impressive at first, except for the fact that Mr. Cockrill was unable to answer a simple follow-up question about how many healthcare workers have left the workforce in the past four years.

And it only gets worse when one realizes that this empty boasting came after CUPE Local 5430, a union representing more than 14,000 Saskatchewan healthcare workers, announced

that members will hold a vote on potential job action in September.

Barring some seismic shift in the government's approach to negotiating, it's hard to imagine a scenario in which healthcare workers don't vote in favour of going on strike.

In Saskatchewan, and nearly every other jurisdiction in the world, healthcare workers are considered essential workers – because that's exactly what they are.

This is because the consequences of not providing timely and reliable access to healthcare go far beyond health.

If someone can't find a family doctor – as is the case for 1 in 6 Saskatchewanians – or get a diagnostic scan or life-saving surgical procedure, how long will it be before they start looking for somewhere else to live?

Over the four years that they've failed to find money to give healthcare workers a raise, Sask Party MLAs have had no problems taking more for themselves. Indeed, Saskatchewan MLAs take home some of the highest salaries in North America.

If there's more for our politicians, there's certainly more for our frontline healthcare workers.

It's past time for the Sask Party to negotiate in good faith, give healthcare workers what they deserve, and treat them like the essential employees they are.

Shellbrook Chronicle

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Car show brings Canwood together

By **JORDAN TWISS**
Shellbrook Chronicle
Reporter

Canwood's Sven Johnson was only 11 or 12 years old when he helped drag a 1952 two-door Chevy home for his older brother to work on.

They'd both developed an interest in fixing up old cars thanks to their dad, who was mechanically inclined and shared his passion with them (even if being a parent meant he never got any of his own projects running).

"Growing up, we didn't have a TV," Johnson said. "When you get bored enough, you start to get creative."

When he was 12, Johnson asked his dad's permission to use his welder and got to work on building his own go-kart. A year later, he and his brother brought home a project truck for him to work on.

At 39, Johnson still owns that truck. And as a grain farmer with plenty of free time on his hands in the winter, his passion for tuning up old vehicles hasn't dimmed.

It was this, coupled with a passion for community, that inspired him to organize the Canwood Car Show.

Now in its fifth year, the car show has come a long way from its first outing, when Johnson pulled it together on a week's notice. And while its continued growth means more work, his hope is to keep making it better for the community.

"We don't typically do prizes or voting on cars. We could probably do that in the future, but the whole point of it is so that Canwood has something to do and can connect with each other," Johnson said.

"Lots of people are just visiting and getting out and getting to know different people. It's fun, because sometimes you get surprised by somebody in your community."

Johnson also hopes to keep bringing new vehicles to the car show as often as possible, and hopes other auto enthusiasts are inspired to do the same.

Last year, he showcased a motorcycle. And this year he brought a 1955 GMC 4x4 short box half-ton that he bought last November and worked on through the winter.

"I took it for its first

drive just two days before the car show. That's how down to the wire we were," Johnson said. "Even the morning of the car show, something happened and it wouldn't start, but we managed to get it running again."

Though he didn't have time to take a formal count of how many vehicles and people came out to this year's car show, Johnson believes attendance was on par with last year.

As in previous years, the Sunny Days Snack Shack was on-hand to serve up ice cream and other treats, while Ryan Peekeekoot of Ahtahkakoop's Lonesome Pine Hill Diner & Drive-in served up hot food and put on a late-night screening of Ford vs. Ferrari, giving folks even more reason to stick around and connect with the community.

"It really shows what an appetite there is for cars and people," Johnson says, admitting that he still gets nervous about people not showing up every year.

"It's exciting when it feels like something big is happening in your small town."

(Right) Saskatoon's Shifters Car Club crowned this car the best hot rod in show, due in no small part to the role late member Bob Borrowman played in building it.



Ebe Johnson's family-built bug was awarded best in show by Shifters Car Club. This was her first showing. Photos courtesy of Billy Beau



The Sunny Days Snack Shack was busy throughout the day, serving up ice cream and other treats.



A pair of motorcycles were among the vehicles to take in throughout the day.



Trucks, cars, and more custom vehicles were lined up by Canwood's elevators all day.



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SCAN ME

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 June 8, 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, Coun- cillors Doug Panter — Division 1, Justin Sullivan — Division 2, Ter- ence Olsen — Division 3, and Mau- rice Denis — Division 4, and CAO Dana Kennedy.

Delegations:

10 a.m.: Doug Olson, property ac- cess and drainage.

11 a.m.: Coby Wilson, public works report.

Denis: That the agenda for the June 8, 2026 regular Council meeting be accepted as presented. Carried

C. Panter: That the minutes of the regular meeting of Council held May 4, 2026, the special meeting of

Council held May 11, 2026, and the special meeting of Council held May 21, 2026 be approved as presented. Carried

D. Panter: That the Statement of Financial Activities for the month of May 2026 be accepted as presented. Carried

Denis: That the list of accounts to- taling \$514,768.75 as per attached be approved as presented. Carried

Sullivan: That Council indemnity and other invoices be approved for payment. Carried

C. Panter: That Council direct Ad- ministration to obtain SARM Legal Counsel review of the Final Notice of Enforcement Action regarding the camper located on Parcel (Plan 102221772 and, upon approval, send the notice by registered mail providing the owner seven (7) days to achieve compliance. Should the owner fail to comply within that timeframe, the CAO is authorized to proceed with enforcement action, including removal of the camper and any associated materials, with all costs to be recovered in accordance with The Municipalities Act. Carried

Olsen: That Council approve the awarding of the 2026 Council Bur- saries to Kathleen Zinovich and Fal- lyn Klassen, each in the amount of \$1,000, with the Rural Municipali- ty of Big River No. 555 contributing \$1,000 and the Town of Big River contributing \$1,000 toward the bur- sary program, with payment to be made upon proof of successful com- pletion of their first year of post-sec- ondary education. Carried

Sullivan: That the CAO be autho- rized to sign the Parks Fishing Per- mit Sales Agreement. Carried

C. Panter: That the Council of the RM of Big River has no objection to the current landowner making ap- plication to Information Services Corporation, within 90 days of this permission, to consolidate residen- tial Lots 01 & 02, Block 105, Plan 101926728, Shores on Cowan, and the new lot number created be 1A. Carried

D. Panter: That Council approve the approach request on SE 02-55- 07 W3 and the approach is to be built according to municipal standards according to Policy 400-29A, Ap- proach Development/Culvert Instal- lation. Carried

Olsen: That Council approve the approach request on NE 24-55-07 W3 and the approach is to be built according to municipal standards according to Policy 400-29A, Ap- proach Development/Culvert Instal- lation. Carried

Olsen: That Council approve the approach request for an extension/ second approach on Lot 05 Block 05 Plan 102054147 and the approach is to be built according to munici- pal standards according to Policy 400-29A, Approach Development/ Culvert Installation and that in the winter for snow clearing the RM may not have the ability to clear the full width of driveway. Carried

Sullivan: That we acknowledge the CAO, granted SaskPower approval to install power & poles for SaskPower File Number: 20530202. Carried

Olsen: That Council approve the purchase of 38 subdivision identifi- cation signs from ATS Traffic at a to- tal cost of \$5,860.91, including GST, as per Quotation No. 1231-50021348 dated May 21, 2026. Carried

Denis: That Council defer any de- cision regarding the Proulx Bridge until the PDAP assessment report has been received and reviewed. Further, that Administration noti- fies affected landowners of planned clearing activities within Road Al- lowance ORA 47-55-07 W3 Ext. 0 and ORA 41-55-07 W3 Ext. 0, ob- tain a survey of the road allowance prior to commencement of clearing, and authorize Coop-a-dees to under- take the clearing upon availability. The RM shall assume responsibility for any crop damage resulting from work conducted within the road al- lowance. Carried

Doug Olson appeared before coun- cil to discuss property access and gates onto to SE 20-55-07 3 Ext 15 and civil drainage issues in Phase 12 development Lakeshore RV Proper- ties. (10:05 a.m. to 10:35 a.m.)

Denis: That the Municipality pro- ceed with rig mats for the Govern- ment Dock boat launch and arrange shipment as soon as possible. Car- ried

Foreman C. Wilson met with Council to discuss operations from the previous month. (11 a.m. to 12:06 p.m.)

Olsen: That Council approve the RM of Big River No. 555 participate in the Strychnine Stewardship Pro- gram. Carried

Olsen: That J&S be hired to move the storage shed from Municipal Re- serve to the RM yard and municipal equipment be used to load it. Carried

Denis: That Zach and Oli be hired as summer students with no proba- tion period and that Coby Wilson and Dana Kennedy have authority to terminate employment in accor- dance with the employment con- tract. Carried

Reeve C. Panter declared a conflict of interest left the Council Chambers at 1:36 p.m.

Deputy Justin Sullivan assumed the chair.

Olsen: That the CAO send a letter to the violator regarding the noise complaint. Carried

Reeve C. Panter returned to the Council Chambers at 1:40 p.m. and resumed the chair.

Denis: That the donation request from the Golf Course be denied. Car- ried

Denis: That the gravel purchase re- quest be rejected as per policy 400- 10 Gravel Sales. Carried

Denis: That the Municipality pur- chase four Class C rig mats at a cost of \$300 each for the Proulx Bridge project. Carried

Denis: That an assessment be ob- tained for the land required and that a letter be sent requesting purchase of the corner. Carried

Olsen: That the maintenance, road supervision, action items and com- mittee reports be acknowledged and filed. Carried

D. Panter: That the correspon- dence be received and filed. Carried

Sullivan: That this meeting be ad- journed a 2:12 p.m.

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)

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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 blue- grass 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.thickwoodhillsstudiotrail.ca or facebook.com/thickwoodhillsstudiotrail. Follow us on Facebook for chances to WIN Shopping Vouchers.

PARKSIDE: Walter Willoughby Horticultural Society 63rd Annual Show – Thursday, August 13, 2026, Parkside Heritage Centre. Doors open 2pm; Awards at 4pm. Bring exhibits Wed. 5-8pm or Thurs. 7:30-9am. Everyone welcome! Show books available - Call 306-747-3301. Admission \$3; Coffee/Dessert \$6; Silent Auction

SPIRITWOOD: Spiritwood Horticulture Society Annual Show – Friday, Au- gust 14, 2026 @ Spiritwood Civic Centre. Doors open to the public @ 2pm; Awards Ceremony @ 5:30pm. Canteen on site. *Entries will be accepted on Thurs., Aug. 13 from 2pm - 7:30pm* For more information call Megan Wasden @ 306-883-7202.

CANWOOD: The Canadian Grand Masters “Sendoff” Fiddle Show and Dry Dance – Monday, August 24, 2026, 7p.m. – 11p.m., Canwood Elks Community Centre. Come enjoy an evening of lively music featuring Saskatchewan fiddlers & participants heading to the 2026 Canadian Grand Masters Fiddling Compe- tition. Admission: Adults: \$20.00; Children (6–15): \$5.00; Preschoolers: Free. Tickets available at the door. Coffee & dainties, Canteen, Raffle tickets, CDs, music books & fiddle wares for purchase. Made possible with the help from Canwood Public Library Board.

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Yorkton value-added sector delivers boost to Sask.

In what may well be the story of the year for Yorkton, Louis Dreyfus Company (LDC) officially opened its expanded facility on July 23.

The complex now houses a new pea protein production plant, while the existing canola processing site was broadened to more than double crushing capacity to more than two million metric tons.

Sitting through the event, this reporter could not help but cast his memory back to a day about two decades ago when word arrived at the newspaper office that Louis Dreyfus was going to build a canola

plant here. That sort of big addition to the city would be remembered on its own, but making the memory sharper was that Richardson made an announcement they would build a canola crush plant here.

The easy consensus was that one of the companies would 'blink' and opt to go elsewhere, but that was obviously not the case and the rest is happy history for Yorkton, the region, and province.

What is more interesting is that the dual canola plants and their subsequent expansions – including LDC's pea protein plant, are foundational in the devel-



CALVIN DANIELS

opment of Yorkton in terms of value-added agricultural processing.

The idea of value-added processing being important to agriculture by providing closer to home markets for farmer production has been talked about basically since this scribe picked up a pen nearly four de-

cades ago.

Marketing options are good for farmers, and they create jobs for communities. It's the epitome of a 'win-win' situation.

Locally, it's not new as a concept. Yorkton will soon see a new 'Interpretive Centre' open attached to the old brick mill in the city. That mill is an early example of value-added with many area families having stories about their grandfathers delivering wheat to the mill to be turned into flour.

The LDC plant follows the lineage.

But it's not just canola – nor peas – locally.

Grain Millers is marking its 25th year in Yorkton processing oats here in a plant that has gone through various expansions, each meaning more area oats being turned into products – your morning porridge the most recognizable of them.

Local oat milling has a longer history in Yorkton than Grain Millers though. The roots of the plant were established by Popowich Milling.

Today the Popowich family remains focused on value-added processing, operating TA Foods which crushes flaxseed for its oil.

In terms of local family efforts in the val-

ue-added 'space' the Propp family began Harvest Meats, always recognizable locally at this time of year as the purveyors of hot dogs at so many fundraisers and backyard family barbecues.

For farmers, imagine how different their businesses would be without the local market options the value-added processing in Yorkton provides.

And for Yorkton, our economy would be dramatically lessened without the aforementioned plants, as value-added does exactly what it is supposed to – make things better locally.

Crop Report: July 21 to 27

By MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE

Submitted

Hot conditions in much of the province have caused crops to rapidly progress, which benefited crops that are behind in some areas but had a negative impact on those in drier areas. Crop conditions remain variable with most crops in good condition.

Many areas experienced humid conditions which posed challenges for haying efforts, but progress was made with some producers in southern regions wrapping up. Fungicide application is winding down for later-seeded crops, and some producers are starting to shift their attention to preparing for harvest.

There was limited rainfall in the province aside from scattered thunderstorms. The Coleville area received the most precipitation with 25 mm, while the Calder area received 24 mm and the Rabbit Lake area received 22 mm. Other areas reported modest rainfall ranging from 10 to 20 mm.

The limited precipitation caused adequate topsoil moisture levels to fall last week.

Most winter cereal crops are in good to excellent

condition as they approach harvest, while most spring cereal crops are in good to excellent condition as heads fill. Oilseed crops are largely in good condition, but the high temperatures during flowering periods stressed some crops. Most oilseed crops are now out of flowering stage and in podding stage. Approximately two-thirds to three-quarters of pulse crops are in good to excellent condition. However, a notable portion are in fair condition, and some are in poor condition due to moisture stress earlier in the growing season.

Producers continued haying this week despite humid conditions slowing cutting and baling. For first cuts of hay crops, 50 per cent have been baled or silaged, 28 per cent have been cut and are in swath, while 22 per cent remain standing. A few producers have had a second cut from their hay crops, with six per cent being cut a second time and one per cent being baled or silaged. In terms of hay quality for first cuts, 29 per cent is excellent, 62 per cent is good and nine per cent is fair. Second cuts of hay are fair to good in quality.

Heat and dry soil conditions were the main caus-

es of crop stress last week. Producers in southern and western regions noted rain would help crops set seed. Minor levels of cabbage seed pod weevil, aphid and gopher damage were observed in a few areas last week. In-crop spraying took place as insecticides were sprayed where necessary and some crops in eastern and northern regions were sprayed with fungicides.

Producers are busy finishing in-crop spraying while some are starting to prepare for harvest by servicing equipment, cleaning out bins and planning desiccation. Producers are reminded to prioritize safety and exercise caution when working in the field and around farm equipment.

For any crop or livestock questions, producers are encouraged to call the Agriculture Knowledge Centre toll-free at 1-866-457-2377.

This can be a stressful time of year for producers as weather conditions can be unpredictable. The Farm Stress Line can help by providing support for producers toll free at 1-800-667-4442.

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

NDP calls for SHA executive pay freeze

By SASK NDP

Submitted

The Saskatchewan NDP is calling on Scott Moe's Health Minister to immediately use his authority under provincial law to help bring years-long healthcare contract negotiations to a conclusion and ensure frontline workers finally receive a fair deal.

The call comes in the wake of warnings last week that 14,000 healthcare workers in Regina, Yorkton, Prince Albert, Battlefords, and Weyburn will hold a strike vote in September.

In a letter sent to Jeremy Cockrill, Leader Carla Beck, Shadow Health Minister Meara Conway and Shadow Labour Minister Nathaniel Teed called on the Minister to issue a series of directives aimed at accelerating bargaining.

Specifically, the letter called on Cock-

rill to use his powers under the Provincial Health Authority Act to direct the Saskatchewan Health Authority to:

- Pause all executive, senior management and out-of-scope compensation increases, bonuses, reclassifications and other compensation adjustments until new collective agreements are reached with frontline healthcare workers.
- Approach bargaining with urgency and work toward a fair agreement without further delay.
- Establish a fair financial mandate for negotiations.
- Set a deadline of September 2026 to conclude bargaining.

"Healthcare workers have waited long enough — four years on the frontlines of our overrun hospitals and clinics with no contract and no raise," Beck said. "All the

while, we've seen raises for senior health authority executives — many of them close friends of Scott Moe. I bet freezing their pay will get things moving at the bargaining table.

"We need this action now. Healthcare workers are being forced to consider a strike which will only make the chaos in our hospitals, clinics and long-term care facilities even worse."

Healthcare workers represented by CUPE 5430, SEIU-West, and SGEU have not received a general wage increase since April 1, 2022. Their collective agreements expired more than three years ago.

"Scott Moe's government is always quick to find money for executives, consultants and advertising campaigns, but somehow healthcare workers are told to keep waiting," said Shadow Health Minister Meara Conway.

"These are the people holding together a crumbling healthcare system after 20 years of Sask. Party failures and mismanagement. These workers don't deserve hollow praise—they deserve a raise."

Teed said the government's failure to resolve bargaining is contributing to staffing shortages and worsening recruitment and retention challenges across the province.

"Healthcare workers have carried this system on their backs through staffing shortages, burnout and constant pressure," said Teed. "They've gone above and beyond every step of the way. They deserve respect, fair wages and that their legal right to collectively bargain is upheld."

"That's how we keep them doing their incredible work here in Saskatchewan and it's how we recruit more people to come here and join them on the frontlines. It's time for change."

Tibetan monks bring healing to Ahtahkakoop



Tibetan monks visited Ahtahkakoop from July 18 to 25 for a week filled with healing ceremonies and cultural exchanges.



The Tibetan monks took part in numerous prayers and ceremonies during their stay.



The gathering was hailed as a handshake between cultures.



After long days of prayer and ceremony, the monks enjoyed meals with the community.



Ahtahkakoop community members present gifts to the monks.

Shellbrook Library activity highlights

By **EDDIE HOEHN**
Branch Librarian

On Tuesday, July 21, volunteer and local library board member Samuel Schafer presented Trivia Night at the library. Participants identified children’s books by their covers, listed the most common fast food chains in Canada, identified animated movies and

stated whether or not they were made by Disney, identified which streaming platform names were real and fake from a list, and named the titles and artists for songs from the 60s, 70s, 80s, 90s, 2000s, and 2010s. There were two teams competing against each other, with Ana McBain and Tristin McBain on one team and Marj Bradley, Kim Bradley, and

Carla Katz on the other team. The team with Ana and Tristin won July’s Trivia Night. On Wednesday, July 22, Shelley Fraser came to the library to give a presentation about her book *The Morning I Walked Her Home*. Shelley’s book is based on the true story about her lifelong friendship with a Catholic sister who mentored her and helped her through challenging times in her personal life. Shelley, who was 12 or 13 years old at the time, met the sister in Debden in 1980. She temporarily lived in the convent and visited her mentor years later. In the 2000s, Shelley became a teacher and they lost contact with each other.

One of Shelley’s students informed her that her long lost friend was in the Mont St. Joseph (care) Home in Prince Albert. In 2024, Shelley was reunited with her friend for a few months until her passing. As well as writing the book, Shelley bought a memorial bench in the sister’s name as a tribute to her memory.



Author Shelley Fraser read from her book, *The Morning I Walked Her Home*, at the Shellbrook Library.



From left to right, Kim Bradley, Marj Bradley, and Carla Katz formed a team at the library’s July Trivia Night.

12-40 & Beyond Tour shines light on art

By **JORDAN TWISS**
Shellbrook Chronicle
Reporter

Few things go together hand-in-hand quite like sunny Saskatchewan summers and long, relaxing road trips. Thanks to the artists taking part in this year's 12-40 and Beyond Tour on July 25 and 26, those passing through the Leask, Marcelin, and Hafford areas had more than just scenic vistas to take in during their travels.

While she's been creating stained glass pieces, including sun catchers, lamps, and windows, for more than four decades, Deb Anderson only got involved with the tour eight years ago. For her, it was a means to get to know people and gain exposure for her work, after moving to Leask from the Lloydminster area and becoming the community's full-time postmaster.

While she's come to love the connections fostered with people and other artists during the tour, Anderson says nothing quite matches the feeling of connecting a piece with the right person.

"Somebody walks in and they see something that you have made and they latch onto it," she said. "It's such a wonderful thing when somebody else sees what you've worked on. When that one person comes in, you know it's got a good home."

Displaying in Leask along with Anderson were Phil Hamel with his wood work, Kathleen Montgomery and Bill McDonald with their denim creations, Glen Bloom with his metal gravestone plaques, and Diane Larsen with her crafts.

By driving further south to Marcelin, then heading east along rural roads, travellers could reach the workshop of Ken Nelson, who's been woodturning for more than 40 years.

And finally, at the tour's southern tip in Hafford, art enthusiasts could visit the home studios of woodturner Don Skopyk, and photographer and artist Christine Watson.

With so much to take in over the course of two busy days, Anderson says every 12-40 & Beyond Tour is filled

with interesting stories and guests.

This year, the tour brought in a guest all the way from Nigeria, who was in the area visiting her sister. It also brought out a member of the Prince Albert Spinners and Weavers Guild, fostering more connections between artists.

"It's interesting to connect with other artists," Anderson said. "She was showing her handbag, and it was just a beautiful bag made out of all recycled plastic. Stuff like that is interesting."

The tour can also be a source of unexpected smiles. "Towards the end of the tour, a couple pulled up with this huge motor home and came in. They were completely lost on their way to Ontario. Their last name was Leask, so they just took this detour to come to Leask," Anderson said.

"We had a good laugh out of that."

Noting that the tour is a way to "offer a little culture in the middle of nowhere," Anderson says she'd love to see more people showing different things on future tours.



Woodturner Ken Nelson displayed his pieces in his home east of Marcelin.



Deb Anderson showcased her stained glass works in Leask.



Glen Bloom showcased his stainless steel grave markers in Leask.



Down in Hafford, Don Skopyk's wood works blended artistry and functionality.



A guest tries on a pair of moccasin style slippers crafted by Kathleen Montgomery and Bill McDonald.



Phil Hamel had many unique wood items on display in Leask.

Minutes of a Blaine Lake Council meeting

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

Minutes of the Regular Meeting of Council for the Town of Blaine Lake held at the Blaine Lake Town Office located at 301 Main St, Blaine Lake, SK S0J 0J0 on Tuesday, June 16, 2026.

Present at the meeting were: Mayor Tom Mayer, Councillor Jack Androsoff, Councillor Melissa Johnson, Councillor Barry Glencross, Councillor Karleigh Warkentin, CAO Jim Puffalt, and Assistant CAO Louanne Roschuk.

Absent were: Councillor Milvy Sanchez and Councillor Tonya Koal.

Mayor Mayer called the meeting to order at 4 p.m.

Glencross: That the following items be added to the agenda: 8(d) Parkland Emergency Measures Organization, 9(b) 16-43 Monthly Financial Statement, 10(f) Mower Route, 10(g) Sea Cans. Carried

Glencross: That the agenda be adopted as amended.

Johnson: That the following Minutes be accepted as circulated: May 19, 2026, Regular Meeting, May 26, 2026, Special Council Meeting. Carried

Glencross: That Accounts for Ratification 2026-0042 to 2026-0053 be approved in the amount of \$24,394.82, Cheque Numbers 3702 to 3716 in the amount of \$21,381.89, Staff Payroll in the amount of \$21,704.10, Council Payroll in the amount of \$2,167.57, Utility payments in the amount of \$6,623.31, and Master Card in the amount of \$2,172.90. Carried

Mayer: That the May 2026 Financial Statement, Variance Report, Bank Reconciliation be approved. Carried

Androsoff: That XTX Corporation quote to provide sidewalk/concrete repair work dated June 3, 2026, in the amount of \$40,238.10 be accepted with town resources completing removal of concrete in areas to be replaced. In addition, that the driveway at 203 - 1st Street East be repaired by approximately 4'. Carried

Glencross: That the Town of Blaine Lake accept the proposal from the Parkland Emergency Measures Organization to contract with Infinity Core Business Solutions Corporation to provide emergency management consulting services for a one-year term in the amount of \$36,000, with the Town of Blaine Lake's share to be \$2,430.87. Carried

Koal: That the May 11, 2026, Martens Lake Regular Meeting minutes be accepted. Carried

Johnson: That Louanne Roschuk be appointed as Acting Chief Administrative Officer effective July 1, 2026, with terms and conditions as per letter dated May 21, 2025. Carried

Johnson: That the May 2026 Strategic Plan update be accepted as presented. Carried

Glencross: That the annual maintenance fee for the signing corridor be set at \$100. Carried

Glencross: That the Chief Administrative Officer report dated June 11, 2026, regarding the Ball Diamonds Complex be accepted with the repair work on the facility being tendered and the rehabilitation work on diamond #2 be completed by Town resources. Carried

Androsoff: That Rates & Charges Policy GG-006 Custom Work be amended to allow customer work with the skid-steer or road patrol at a rate of \$150 per hour with a minimum one-hour charge. Further, that any person contracting with the Town must sign a waiver of liability agreement and recognize that custom work can not interfere with the regular maintenance activities. Carried

Mayer: That Jason Weber could salvage the Jacobson mower if it was determined that there were no salvage parts for the current operational Jacobson Mower. Compensation for custom work Weber performed over winter for the Town.

Androsoff: That all correspondence be accepted. Carried

Glencross: That Bylaw 03/2026 - Extend time for Financial Statement be read a 1st time at this meeting. Carried (Editor's note: the bylaw was unanimously given three readings and enacted at the meeting.)

Glencross: That Bylaw 04/2026 to permit operating unregistered golf carts be read a 1st time at this meeting. Carried (Editor's note: the bylaw was unanimously given three readings and enacted at the meeting.)

Glencross: That Council Adjourn at 6:30 p.m.

A gardener's guide to apples: Part 4

By **PATRICIA HANBIDGE**
Orchid Horticulture

This is the last article in a four-part series that is devoted to growing apples. These last cultivars are some of my personal favourites! So read on and enjoy learning more about the apples we grow right here!

'Patterson' was released by Dr. Cecil Patterson of the University of Saskatchewan in 1960. Fruit is 6 cm, greenish yellow with orange blush. It matures in late August. Flesh is white, soft, sweet and slightly acidic. It is good for fresh eating, cooking, drying and juice. Will store well for six weeks. It is heavy yielding and must be thinned to one apple per cluster to avoid biennial bearing. Trees are hardy to zone 2a and resistant to fire blight.

'September Ruby' has 6-7 cm round and slightly flattened apples. Fruit also looks slightly ribbed. The base colour is light green with a bright red overcolour that may be solid or striped. Flesh is greenish-white and moderately acidic. It is good for fresh eating, cooking, and juice, and will store in good condition for up to four months.

Trees are semi-dwarf, upright, spreading with good branch habit. It is hardy to zone 2a and moderately susceptible to fire blight.

'Sunnybrook' fruit is 6.5 cm in diameter, round, yellow, striped with red and mature in early September. Flesh has coarse texture, is slightly acid and sweet but susceptible to water core. It is good for cooking and fresh eating and will store for about four weeks.

Late Season Apples:

Harvested late September to late October

'Collet' is 6-7.5 cm in diameter, round to cone shaped and light green striped with red. Flesh is white, fine textured, crisp, sweet and slightly acidic. It is good for fresh eating and cooking. It will store for 10 weeks. Trees are medium-sized and round to pyramidal in shape. It requires a protected site in zone 3 and 2b.

'Edith Smith' a seedling of 'McIntosh' select-

ed by Leonard Smith of Lucky Lake, Saskatchewan and introduced in 1964. Fruit is 6-7 cm in diameter, yellowish green washed with pale orange-red. The skin is somewhat tough and bitter. Flesh is greenish-white, medium texture, slightly tough and pulpy. It is fair for fresh eating and good for cooking. It will store well for up to three months. Plants are hardy to zone 2b but highly susceptible to fire blight.

'Goodland' fruit is

6-8 cm in diameter, light green washed with red. Flesh is creamy-white, fine textured and slightly acid. It is good for fresh eating and cooking and will store for up to 20 weeks. It is susceptible to chlorosis where soil pH is much higher than 7 and is only reliably hardy to 3a.

'Haralson' was released from the University of Minnesota in 1923. 'Haralson' has been used in much breeding work of hardy apples. Fruit is 6 cm in

diameter, round to cone shaped, greenish-yellow almost completely covered with red. Flesh is slightly tough. It is good for cooking and fair for eating. It stores for up to 25 weeks with flavour being enhanced during storage and is only reliably hardy in zone 3a if growing in a protected microclimate.

'Luke' is an apple of unknown parentage that originated with Mr. John Luke of Rosthern, Saskatchewan, and was introduced by the Morden Research Station in 1961. At 9 cm in diameter, 'Luke' is the largest apple that can presently be grown on the prairies. The fruit takes on a barrel shape, has a green undercolour that is mottled and heavily streaked with dark red. It is fair for eating fresh, and good for cooking. It keeps for ten weeks. The tree is large, vigorous and rounded to spreading, but fruit is late to ripen, and may be damaged by frost on all but the longest seasons.

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



No more 'decisions' needed for LeBron

LeBron James, one of the world's most amazing athletes, has made his final decision.

At the age of 41, the 23-year National Basketball Association star is still among the league's elite players and on July 24, James made Decision II — where to take his talents for the upcoming season. The answer: Philadelphia 76ers.

Decision I came back in 2010, when King James became a free agent after seven seasons with Cleveland Cavaliers. A native of Akron, Ohio, James was a home-state hero and the undisputed best player in the league, proof of which were back-to-back MVP awards in his last two seasons with the Cavs. But LeBron was ready to move and every team in the league visited Fort Knox to gather up enough cash to try to entice him to their team. Where would he go? ESPN turned the James saga into a 75-minute TV special, during which James announced he would be

signing with the Miami Heat.

He played four seasons in Miami, winning two more Most Valuable Player awards and leading Miami to a pair of NBA titles. Free agency beckoned again, and LeBron went back to Cleveland for four more seasons before the most recent seven years and another league title (2020) with the Lakers.

On June 30, James told the Lakers he wouldn't return this season and was ready for another 'Decision.' Golden State, Miami, Cleveland and Philly were all mentioned as potential landings, and James chose Philly, citing the real possibility of another NBA title. "This is my last decision," James said on Instagram. "I'm not going for money. I'm not going for family. What am I really playing for at this point? I still want to sacrifice. I still want to work. I still want to grind. I still want to compete, to win and to have a chance at the feeling of winning another championship."



BRUCE
PENTON

Until he decided, the NBA was spinning its wheels, unable to release its 2026-27 schedule because the league definitely wanted LeBron's team to be featured on opening night and as a Christmas Day headliner. Another factor delaying his 'Decision' had to do with his son Bronny, according to sports.yahoo.com.

Bronny was a second-round draft pick of the Lakers and played two seasons alongside his dad. Would negotiations for a Bronny trade to Philadelphia be part of the reason for the decision delay?

Whether father and son team up or get separated is a minor point.

The major point will be the NBA's all-time leading scorer winding down one of the most spectacular careers.

Will history declare him No. 1 all time? Or will Michael Jordan wear the crown? James' 43,440 career points is more than 5,000 ahead of the runner-up, Kareem Abdul Jabbar. Jordan is sixth, but he played only 15 seasons.

This year will be James' 24th and he signed with the 76ers for the 2027-28 season, too.

No more decisions required for LeBron. Rather, he hopes, an NBA title or two.

The late media mogul Ted Turner, who died recently, on one of his wackiest moves as owner of the Atlanta Braves: "He offered a bonus to his star pitcher, Andy Messersmith, to change his name to 'Andy Channel.' The reason was that Messersmith wore the number 17 and Turner's superstition was Channel 17 so when Messersmith was pitching his name and number on

the uniform would be 'Channel 17.'

• Super 70s Sports, under a photo of Cowboys' coach Tom Landry wearing a suit and fedora: "I liked the NFL better when coaches looked equally capable of calling for a blitz or solving a murder on some BBC television show your mom watches."

• Steve Simmons of the Toronto Sun: "The past 10 seasons with Mark Shapiro as team president and Ross Atkins as GM, the Jays have won 730 games and lost 724. That's a lot of corporate money spent by Edward Rogers and Tony Staffieri for .501 baseball. Can we bring that up at the next annual meeting?"

• Headline at the on-ion.com: "Adam Silver Acknowledges Declining Ratings May Have Something To Do With How He Looks"

• Super 70s Sports: "Back in my day NFL referees would pull out a gun and just pop off a round and we were all like 'Of course he does, how the hell else are

you supposed to end a quarter?"

• Jack Finarelli of sportscurmudgeon.com: "(Baseball Hall of Famer) Richie Allen disliked artificial turf and said that if a horse can't eat it, he doesn't want to play on it."

• Headline at the-onion.com: "Nation Wakes Up From Strange Dream Where They Were Watching Soccer"

• Globe and Mail columnist Cathal Kelly, on the ever expanding FIFA World Cup: "Can't wait for World Cup 2058 Arctic/Antarctica/Lunar Station No. 3."

• Headline at fark.com: "How cute. Norway still believes FIFA has ethics."

• Another fark.com headline: "Seems the world wasn't pleased with the World Cup halftime show: 'Utter garbage,' 'disaster,' 'horrendous' and those were just comments about Madonna's performance."

Care to comment? Email brucepenton2003@yahoo.ca

Op-ed: Your right to know shouldn't depend on the govt's mood

By GAGE HAUBRICH
CTF Prairie Director

Imagine how the highway would look if drivers could treat speeding tickets as a suggestion.

That's how the provincial government can treat the information commissioner.

And it's hurting Saskatchewanians' ability to find out how the government is spending their money.

Saskatchewanians are supposed to be able to ask the government for documents and it is supposed to hand them over by law.

Any Saskatchewanian can demand these documents by making a freedom-of-information request. And requests like this are the way Canadian Taxpayers Federation found out that the city of Saskatoon spent \$26,000 on an AI-powered garbage can that got the right answer less than 40 per cent of the time. Or that it spent more than \$100,000 beautifying downtown back alleys, all

while hiking property taxes.

The government is supposed to work on these requests right away. It even has a duty to assist you in your search.

If you run into a dispute with the government, like delays or refusal to hand over documents, the Information and Privacy Commissioner is the official who is supposed to be there to help you.

It's an office that's independent from the government and makes objective rulings on the law regarding information requests.

The problem is that these rulings aren't legally binding in Saskatchewan. They are only recommendations.

And because they aren't binding, the government can treat them the way most of us treat our doctors' advice to eat healthier and work out more. Which is to say, we nod along and then do nothing.

If the government chooses to ignore the commissioner, the person requesting

the documents is either out of luck or must spend potentially tens of thousands of dollars and years of their life taking the government to court.

For most Saskatchewanians, this is impossible, no matter how important the information may be.

Fifteen per cent of the commissioner's recommendations were entirely ignored by the government last year, according to their annual report. A further seven per cent only had partial compliance from the government.

Last year, less than 40 per cent of recommendations were fully complied with by the government.

Now, 15 per cent isn't a majority of cases, but what kind of information is being hidden when the government completely refuses to listen to the commissioner?

When the new commissioner started her job, she said that she wants to be able to make legally binding orders, not just recommendations.

The previous commissioner asked for the same ability.

This ability isn't an innovation that will break the system. It's one that five other provinces and the federal government have had for decades.

And it's not just a nice-to-have either. This freedom to access government documents is so important that the Supreme Court called it "quasi-constitutional."

After all, you can't use your freedom of expression very well if you don't know what's happening and can't find out.

And things are happening across the province that taxpayers need to know about.

That's because it's not just Saskatoon where freedom-of-information requests are uncovering big waste. Regina Public Library spends about \$35,000 a year to fund already successful writers to spend most of their time working on their own books.

Freedom-of-information records also revealed that

the Queen City had no records of how much it was spending on gift cards.

Under the current system, accessing government records is only possible when the government feels like listening to the commissioner's recommendation. If it doesn't the burden is on individual taxpayers to take the government to court.

If the Information and Privacy Commissioner had the power to make binding orders, taxpayers would have another much-needed protection to keep government accountable.

It's time to make this simple and effective change. The government shouldn't be allowed to ignore Saskatchewanians' right to know how the government is spending their money.

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OBITUARY

~

Maxine Boyle



Maxine Boyle
1933 – 2026

Maxine Claire Boyle, née Harvold, passed away on Thursday, July 2, 2026 at the Regina Lutheran Home. She was born May 29, 1933 in Prince Albert. Maxine was the first child of Olaf and Laura (Benjamin) Harvold.

Maxine spent her early years in the Fox-

dale area, living on the family farm, attending school at the one-room schoolhouse. The family moved to Prince Albert when she was in Grade 3 and she completed her schooling there, attending PACI and business college. Her family attended St. Paul's Presbyterian Church, where she sang in the choir.

After school, she took up secretarial work for the DNR. In 1953, Maxine married a Canwood farmer, Walter Boyle, and settled on the family farm in the Moose Valley area. She was a strong farm wife raising her children, keeping a garden, tending poultry, sewing clothing, and baking bread, among countless other chores.

Farming is weather dependant and the ear-

ly 1960s were very dry. Maxine went to work first at the R.M. office and then at the CIBC in Canwood. Her career at the bank spanned jobs from teller to branch manager. She took further training courses offered through the bank and also night classes from the University of Saskatchewan.

When Maxine retired early from CIBC, she started work in the credit union system, eventually becoming the manager of the Lang Credit Union. When she retired for the second time, she settled in Regina. Her last career was knitting, a skill she learned at the age of four years old! Her work, often siwashes, appeared for sale in various places around town for many years, and she

filled many custom orders.

Maxine was a community person and enjoyed skating, curling, dancing, golfing, and watching her children's and grandchildren's activities. She led the Canwood Community Choir for several years, served in the Royal Purple, and supported the Anglican Church. Her combination of financial and community talents involved her in a variety of fund-raising activities for the construction of the Canwood Elks Hall and the Canwood Skating Rink. In Regina, she was active on the board of the Senior Citizens Centre and sang with the Singing Grannies.

Maxine was predeceased by her parents, and her beloved

son, Jefferey Boyle of Calgary, her sons-in-law, Deryl Coates and Harvey Nelson, and her brother-in-law, Ben Moline. She is survived by her five daughters: Laura Coates of Regina, Barbara Boyle of Regina, Diana Nelson of Canwood, Donna Boyle of Regina, and Darla Boyle of Regina; and her grandchildren: Amanda and Darren Carter and their children Roan, Rhys and Fynlea Carter; Brandon and Dina Coates and their children Jacob Nathanail and Rachel Nieckar-Borden and their daughter, Zora, Jessica Nathanail and her daughter, Violette, Athena, Petra and YB Coates; Alannah Boyle; Logan Nelson; and Jessie and Tyler Hall and their children Dallas

and Sadie Hall. Maxine is also survived by her sister, Marj Moline of Shellbrook and Marj's children, Greg, Cindy and Graham; and numerous cousins.

Her family wishes to thank the staff of the Regina Lutheran Home for their care of Maxine.

A Funeral Service was held at the Canwood Elks Hall, on Tuesday, July 7, 2026 at 1:00 p.m., followed by interment in the North Canwood Cemetery.

Memorial donations may be made in memory of Maxine to the Alzheimer's Society.

Arrangements have been entrusted to the care of Speers Funeral Chapel (306) 522-3232 and Beau "Lac" Funeral Home and Crematorium (306) 747-2828.

GOOD NEWS

~

LIVING WATER

By DEB ANDERSON
Submitted

Fifty days after Easter or Resurrection Day, the promised Holy Spirit was poured out on believers. They would not be on their own after the Ascension. The mission was far too critical and had to continue.

The disciples needed power to survive the persecution and not waver in their commitment. They were already followers of Christ. They knew His teachings and had committed to living as He directed. At the Last Supper, they were told of the promise of the Father that would help them. The Holy Spirit would live in those keeping the commands of Christ (John 14: 15-17, 23, Acts 5:32).

Jesus taught of 'rivers of living water' and tied this to the Holy Spirit. "He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water. But this He spoke concerning the Spirit, whom those believing in Him would receive; for the Holy Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified" (John 7:38-39).

Pentecost was the beginning of the making of followers who were no longer relying on their flesh and strength to do the will of God. All who received Him that day were followers of Christ. They needed more (recall that Peter denied the Lord three times less than two months earlier).

The evidence of the believers receiving the Holy Spirit at Pentecost was

their speaking in unknown tongues. People who heard them from other countries declared that they were declaring "the wonderful works of God" (Acts 2: 11, 1 Cor 14:2-4).

The first time I entered a church where believers worshipped God with unknown tongues was awesome. It was something I had only seen twice before (with individuals). The effect of the whole congregation praising in the Holy Ghost was good and desirable. This is a gift for any believers who desire deeper connection with the Lord and more power for service.

We are saved by faith in Jesus, and receive a measure of the Holy Spirit at that time, but if we will seek, we will find more (Matthew 7:7). We ask the Father in faith and we will receive

this good gift that only He can give (Luke 11:13). For me, it was not instant, but several weeks later.

John G. Lake (1870-1935) grew in and taught others of manifesting healing by the power of the Holy Spirit (Holy Ghost). "God gave the blood of Jesus to the Christian Church. God gave the power of healing to the Christian Church in the Holy Ghost, and as long as they lived under the anointing of the Holy Ghost and exercised the faith of Jesus in their hearts, the healing power of God manifested and still manifest[s]." — John G. Lake: His Life, His Sermons His Boldness of Faith, 160.

The Holy Spirit truly is a source of daily refreshing and tremendous help as we live out the Christian life.

Spiritwood Library promotes fire safety

By HEATHER GATZKE
Branch Librarian

Smokey the Bear made a scheduled stop at Spiritwood Public Library with Anara Arcand from the Saskatchewan Public Safety Agency on Tuesday, July 28.

Anara spoke to the kids, and also shared a powerpoint presentation about wildfire safety, wildfire prevention, and environmental responsibility.

Following the presentation, each child received a Smokey the Bear ruler and got to have pictures taken with Smokey.

Afterwards, the Spiritwood Fire Department brought over its fire truck so the kids could see it and have their pictures taken.



Children got an up-close look at the Spiritwood Fire Department's fire truck.



Kids were excited to have their picture taken with Smokey the Bear.

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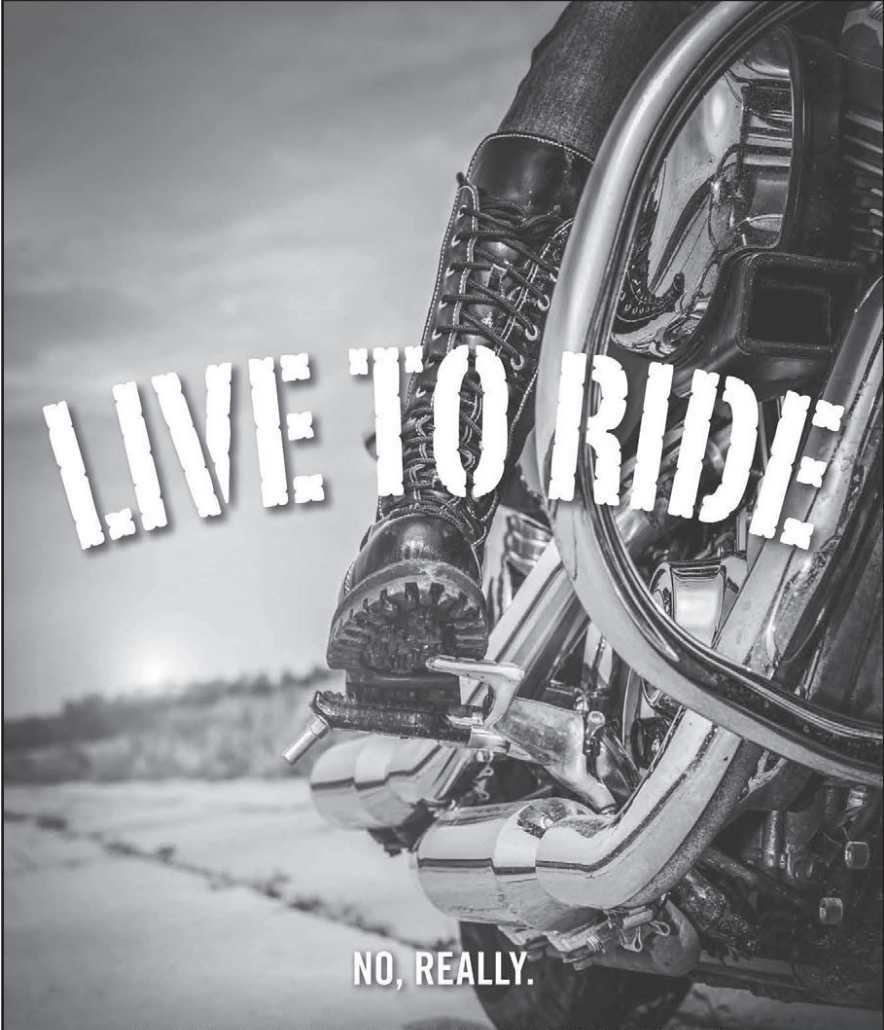
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