



Storyteller at Hartley Clark



Rivier K-1 students with the many animals appearing in "The Way".

Chad Solomon gave a presentation to students of Hartley Clark and Rivier Elementary Schools on Wed, Feb. 6, sponsored by Spiritwood Library as an activity of Aboriginal Storytelling Month. He also performed at Kisikohk School at Witchekan Lake First Nation in the afternoon.

However, Solomon claimed he wasn't a storyteller.

"I just bring the puppets and the idea," he said, "and the kids tell the story."

He had help from many students in telling the story "The Way", about "how the Turtle carries our world on her back and how the tiny muskrat succeeded in

giving all of us the greatest gift of all: A place to call home, Turtle Island."

Solomon claims to be an author and puppeteer, telling stories using puppets from a series called Rabbit and Bear Paws. He and his fellow authors from Little Spirit Bear Productions have created thirteen stories, so far, with the two brothers, Rabbit and Bear Paws, as the main characters.

He chose the creation story for his audiences Wednesday, since they were hearing this story for the first time.

"And every story begins with this one," he said.

Students selected from the audience helped by playing roles with the pup-

pets. In the story, each of the animals went out looking for land. Finally, the muskrat found some earth, and with the help of all the students, the four winds grew the earth on the Turtle's back.

Solomon has been telling his stories through puppetry for many years, and has been on tour during Aboriginal Storytelling Month with Saskatchewan Libraries for five years.

Little Spirit Bear has a very informative website. Information there includes the following: "All the characters are based on Traditional Teachings. Rabbit is based on the ideas from The Seven Fires Prophecies. He is to be

the little boy who helps to guide us to the path the ancestors have made for us. While Bear Paws is based on stories that describe Naniboozhoo and the many adventures that were created around this person."

"We use The Seven Grandfathers to help create all age stories that reflect a positive message that is needed for all the people of the medicine wheel. The main characters were brothers, so the adventures would be around social experiences and everyday life events that would happen in the 18th century that are as important today as they were yesterday."

More photos on page 2

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Storyteller at Hartley Clark



Chad Solomon and "Bear Paws", a central character in the Rabbit and Bear Paws stories.



Sasquatch is off in search of land. All the animals took their turn looking for land, but it was muskrat who finally found it.



Students from the audience were selected to use the puppets in the story.

NDP calls for scrutiny of Sask. Party's relationship with SNC-Lavalin

With SNC-Lavalin embroiled in numerous scandals, the NDP is calling into question the long-standing relationship that the Sask. Party has had with the troubled company and renewing its call for campaign finance reform in the province.

"When we look at the history between the Sask. Party and SNC-

Lavalin over the past decade, with nearly \$10,000 in publicly disclosed donations going one way and three quarters of a billion dollars (\$765,846,640) in contracts going the other, it's enough to give the people of the province pause, especially when our political donations and conflict of interest rules are so lax,"

said NDP Leader Ryan Meili. "We are calling for a moratorium on any further deals with SNC-Lavalin until a full review has taken place."

"SNC-Lavalin gave money to the Sask. Party several years in a row, but we don't know what lobbying went on during this period because the registry doesn't go back beyond 2016, and because the government has shown no interest in fixing a

loophole that allows some businesses to lobby politicians without leaving a record," Meili continued. "Has there been any influence beyond the donations that were publicly disclosed? And will the Sask. Party finally commit to bringing the province's conflict of interest laws into the twenty-first century?"

On Jan. 16 of this year, SNC-Lavalin announced they had been selected by the hospital's contracted property developer, Graham Capital Partners, to be the facility manager for the publicly funded North Battleford P3 Hospital. The contract was awarded to the Montreal-based company despite the province being burnt previously in a multimillion-dollar dispute with the company over the BD3 Carbon Capture project that is currently in arbitration.

Under then-Minister Bill Boyd, SaskPower had contracted SNC Lavalin to engineer, procure, and build the

carbon capture facility, which was plagued with serious design issues. Meili said it's curious that SNC Lavalin has continued to receive Saskatchewan contracts after all the issues with their management of the CCS contract. "The Sask. Party like to pretend they're players, but they keep getting played," Meili said. "Meanwhile, Saskatchewan people are the ones losing in these shady deals. We need to see the full picture, and that work needs to start now."

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Indigenous Services Canada Services aux Autochtones Canada

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Rare opportunity is available for an autonomous Registered Nurse Supervisor to support nurses who manage home care programs on eight First Nation communities near Spiritwood.

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To apply for this position and to view the full list of required qualifications, please refer to the federal government employment website: www.canada.ca/government-jobs. The deadline for applications is February 10th, 2019.

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Rivier Day a fun afternoon

Rivier Elementary School held their annual Rivier Day celebration on Wednesday, Feb. 6, with the day spent in fun and games for all.

The day began with Mass in the morning, followed by lunch, with the Grade 5/6 class donating the chili, buns and goodies, all of which were eagerly eaten by the many in attendance.

Following lunch, the games began in earnest, with many activities

taking place throughout the school. Games of chance seemed to be the most popular, with bean bag toss, dart toss, ring toss and other tosses. There was a duck pond, a fish pond, golf and hockey.

There was also a cake walk, in which participants stepped on letters of the alphabet. When the music stopped, a letter was announced, and it and the person who had been standing on it

were eliminated. Much fun!

The longest line, though, was to the prize room. Prizes had been divided into small, medium and large, and winners were free to choose what they wanted from the appropriate tables.

There was also a Silent Auction that filled three tables, with many items donated by staff and others.

More photos on page 6



The Bean Bag Toss, one of a number of "tossing games" available.



The lunch room was a popular spot during the noon hour, with pots of chili and lots of hot dogs disappearing.



"No hard shots!" The instruction was clear, although not everyone adhered to it.



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“Computer crashes”

Years ago, a friend was typing out his master’s thesis on what was, for its time, a state-of-the-art Commodore computer. He was so engrossed in his project that he was completely oblivious to the fact that the computer’s memory was filling up, and available space was counting down, character by character. Eventually, it locked up on him completely, and he was unable to press a single key. He had filled the computer’s memory completely, and he couldn’t even backspace a character or two so he could perform a “save” operation.

Worse, he hadn’t saved any of it along the way. His entire paper sat there on the screen, and he could do nothing about it. Finally, he bit the bullet, so to speak, and shut the computer off, losing his entire paper.

The lesson, of course, was that he should have been saving his work as he went along. I used to tell my students that every time they stopped to think – and I used to have students who occasionally would do that; think, I mean – they should do a quick Control-S and save their work.

Years later, I had a student who was keying in a long program in Apple Basic, which was one of the most kid-friendly computer languages of the time.

She spent an entire period on the project, hating every second of it and wondering why she had to take computers because she hated it so much.

Shortly before the end of the period, she moved the table that her computer was sitting on, and in a flash of light, the computer shut down and she lost every bit of the work she had been doing all period. She hadn’t been saving.

It was a mystery. But we discovered that the power cord had shorted out, due to being cut over a period of time by being pressed up against the metal chalk rail, until the rubber had been sliced right through, and it was only a matter of time before the exposed wire was going to come into contact with something metallic, like a chalk rail.

More recently, a friend’s computer had crashed, and she had neglected to back up her work, with the end result being everything is gone. She was given an estimate on recovery of her files, but felt the \$2,000 was a considerable distance above her ability to absorb, given that she’s still a struggling university student.

Why is this an issue this week, you ask? Well, as I write this column on my wife’s laptop, I peer over my shoulder occasionally to check on the progress of my computer’s recovery.

You see, it crashed, but it has given me the option of backing up some files before it goes through the recovery process. I have been backing up my computer, but the last one was some time ago, and I’m trying this approach in order to recover some of the stuff I’ve saved since the last backup.

So, if you have learned anything at all this week, it should be this: buy a little hard drive with lots of space, and back up your work periodically. Like, frequently.

And as you’re working, save often. I once wrote a column during a thunderstorm, but after losing everything when the power went off, I discovered when power was restored that all I had lost was a comma.

Now, having reached this point of this week’s column, I can tell that some of you in the back have drifted off and you’re about to forget about this important message.

All I can say is “you’ll be sorry.”



DAVE
HYNDMAN
~
News Editor

Passed SUMA motion dims light on democracy

In the midst of the New England Patriots winning their sixth Super Bowl title with the duo of head coach Bill Belichick and quarterback Tom Brady at the helm, Super Bowl LIII (53 for those not familiar with Roman numerals) called a timeout on the typically over-the-top spectacle that goes hand-in-hand with its proceedings, and took an unexpected turn for the gravely serious.

The change in tone came courtesy of The Washington Post, which leveraged the Super Bowl’s massive reach to remind viewers of the vital role that journalists, and newspapers, play in keeping the public informed, and protecting the foundations of democracy from those who might sometimes prefer that their truth not be brought to light.

“Democracy dies in darkness” was the phrase scrawled in white across a stark black background as the commercial ended. And whether you love or hate the Washington Post, it’s not wrong about that.

We live in an age in which powerful forces, on either side of the political aisle, are working to erode the public’s trust in media outlets by decrying any coverage that they disagree with as “fake news”.

What’s worse, a quick visit to the comment section of any article that is even slightly political reveals that the efforts of these saboteurs are working.

If a news story is critical of United States President Donald Trump’s daily gaffes, the story is bombarded with accusations that it’s “fake news”, or that it’s propagating some nefarious “Liberal mainstream media” agenda.

It’s been this way since Mr. Trump first took office. And, though the Washington Post’s Super Bowl spot was primarily targeted at an American audience, we’re certainly feeling the “fake news” effect here in Canada.

Indeed, no matter what side of the political spectrum their editorial staff tends to lean towards, newspapers just can’t seem to rise above the political din.

In an age in which misinformation is just a click away, and seemingly available in greater supply than actual facts based on verifiable evidence, this benefits no one – aside from those deliberately spreading the falsehoods, of course – and only serves to chip away at the foundations of democracy.

That’s why it was profoundly disappointing to see Saskatchewan’s municipalities cast votes that could further erode these foundations, and weaken a newspaper indus-



JORDAN
TWISS
~
Columnist

try that is already fighting against the swelling tide of digitization and the forces vying to sully its reputation.

At last week’s Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association Convention in Saskatoon, SUMA members passed a resolution that would remove the legal requirement for municipalities to place public notices – such as a recent contentious public notice from the town of Shellbrook about the rezoning of a certain piece of land to industrial – in community newspapers.

Put forward by the town of Pilot Butte, the “Modernizing Public Notice Requirements” resolution is premised on the rationale that not all Saskatchewan municipalities are served by community newspapers (though, ironically, Pi-

lot Butte is served by at least one), and that digital forms of communication, like emails, municipal websites, and social media, are becoming the norm.

Now that it’s passed, SUMA will take the resolution to the Saskatchewan government, and lobby to have the current Planning and Development Act regulations changed.

It remains to be seen how the province will respond to these efforts. But if the government proves amenable to SUMA’s lobbying, it will be the general public (and community newspapers) that suffer for it.

The town of Pilot Butte, and the leaders of the municipalities who supported its resolution, will undoubtedly try to tell their ratepayers that it’s all about saving important taxpayer dollars, and ensuring that the general public is made aware of municipal goings-on.

However, it should be noted that there’s no law prohibiting municipalities from disseminating their public notices via website, email or social media. So municipalities could already be using these methods, and arguably should be using them, in addition to leveraging the strength of their community newspapers.

What’s more, shouldn’t a municipal government that genuinely wants an informed ratepayer base be actively striving to leverage every advertising vehicle, within reason, that is available to it?

In taking an online only approach to advertise their business, and taking away important advertising revenue from their community newspapers, municipalities will be missing a wide cross-section of their ratepayer base.

And keeping ratepayers in the dark is not the way to build a strong democracy.

Moe manages to keep municipalities happy

Think back about a dozen years ago when we were in the middle of a pre-election fight over education property tax on farmland.

Then premier Lorne Calvert vowed to remove it, although his NDP government never quite got around to doing it. Instead, his NDP government's focus in its 2007 budget was free prescription drugs for seniors. The NDP were clobbered in rural seats and lost power to Brad Wall and the Saskatchewan Party.

It was an important lesson on why governments need to pay attention to municipal funding issues – even issues in areas where you aren't likely to win many seats.

Both municipal politicians and property taxpayers are all too

aware of the provincial government's role in providing adequate funding to keep down local taxes.

This takes us to one of the bigger problems Scott Moe has faced since becoming premier a year ago.

Upon taking over from Wall, Moe has had to contend with a reduction in the municipal revenue sharing pool from \$271 million in 2016 to \$241 million in 2017. Moreover, after that \$30-million cut in the austerity 2017-18 budget, the revenue sharing pool was frozen at \$241 million last year so that Moe's government would have a better shot at balancing the budget this year.

On top of having to contend with cut and freeze, there was now uncertainty for municipal



MURRAY
MANDRYK

politicians. The revenue sharing formula had been based on a simple, clean and predictable formula most quite liked.

Under Wall's administration, it was decided to give one percentage point of the then-five-per-cent provincial sales tax to fund the municipal revenue sharing pool.

Simple. Easy. Predictable. It was a formula that towns,

cities, villages and rural municipalities could easily use to determine what amount of money they could expect in future years. That made budgeting decisions for municipalities – who, unlike the province, cannot run deficits – significantly easier.

But then along came that spring 2017 budget that not only raised the PST to six per cent but broadened it significantly to things like junk food, restaurant meals and insurance.

It was more money for the province that it clearly needed to fight its deficit. But it also threw its revenue-sharing formula out of whack.

Annual provincial sales tax revenue vaulted to close to \$2 billion – more than \$300 million per single percentage point of the now, broader six-per-

cent PST.

Ideally, Moe could have re-instated the old one-percentage-point-of-the-PST as the new revenue sharing pool formula and handed over \$300-million-plus to the municipalities. Municipalities surely would have been overjoyed over that.

But it wouldn't have been as helpful to the provincial government's own deficit fight. The Sask. Party government clearly needs every penny it can get to balance the budget.

So what Moe did instead at last week's annual Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association (SUMA) is unveil new formula to fund the revenue sharing pool. It is now three-quarters of percentage point of a much broader six-per-cent PST.

In practical terms, that will mean \$251 million

for the municipal revenue sharing pool in the 2019-20 budget. That's a modest \$10 million or four-per-cent more than last year – still less than the \$271 million in 2016 and far cry from the \$300-million plus it would have been if was a full percentage point.

The NDP and leader Ryan Meili have cried foul, hinting an NDP government could provide a full percentage point.

And mayors of the big cities – where Moe and the Sask. Party are in for tougher political fights – seem happy with the modest increase and even happier to see a return to stable source of funding.

And Moe seems to have dealt with a big potential big headache.

Keeping municipal politicians reasonably happy is key.

YOUR TWO CENTS

The Pro-vaccine argument is definitely profitable

Dear editor,

The anti-vaccine people use the same tired arguments they accuse these people of using and apparently they don't realize it. No vaccines, people died; once the vaccines appeared, deaths plummeted. One shouldn't need more proof than this. Six deaths - three unvaccinated (no mention of vaccinated) - proof of what?

Justifying 100 per cent vaccination? Wow, how profitable is that?

One probably should not fixate on negativity, however, both scientists and the public should be skeptical of salesmen trumpeting their own product, or anyone making money off it.

At this time, there is no proof of any type that vaccines work!!! As we get more knowledgeable

doing any proving of medical miracles is difficult.

Lawyers have made a lot of money successfully suing drug companies. These companies have been accused of fake lab work more than once. Research these before going out on a limb. More than one country has banned vaccines because of deaths and injuries.

The FDA admitted that they have been lax about reporting incidents of any type, before congress. Most doctors don't know they are supposed to report them, and those who do aren't going to risk their careers as well as take the time to report and cross-examine to defend it. In spite of all the obstacles and secrecy, the fund established for vaccine injuries/death has paid out millions.

Screens on windows and moving slaves away from

water prevented malaria, not better healthcare. When people in New York City 3rd story tenements stopped throwing their two types of waste products on the front lawn when indoor plumbing came, that took a big step towards everyone's health. Better employment opportunities, and a better educated public, increased health. As did safer water.

The drug industry and those who inject substances in people can't be sued in North America now. Does this mean they are safe?

This brief letter is a defence of communication, nothing else. We must start talking to, not at each other – everyone has something to offer, even if only to turn a light on in somebody else.

Hoping to be of use,
N. Levandoski, Chitek Lake, Sask.

Spiritwood Herald

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Member of



Rivier Day a fun afternoon



The Fish Pond is always popular, even with a meter stick as a fishing rod.



Plinko, with the prize determined by the slot it falls into.



The Duck Pond.



The cake walk was popular. As each letter was called, the letter and the person standing on it was eliminated.

Sask. Health Authority volunteer opportunities

The Volunteer Service Department is in need of caring, compassionate and committed volunteers to fill the following service positions:

Entertainment – Evergreen Health Centre, Leoville (306) 984-2136

Volunteer performers (Musicians, magicians, actors, etc.) share their talents with residents in long-term care. Other volunteers assist by inviting residents to a specific area for entertainment, parties, sing-a-longs, etc. Assist with snacks, lunches, etc.

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Mothers and/or fathers along with their young children may visit residents on a one-to-one basis or in small groups. Parents are responsible for their children at all times.

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Pet Therapy – Hafford Special Care Home (306) 549-2108

Volunteers with well-trained, friendly pets may visit the residents at the Nursing Homes. The pets must meet the necessary requirements prior to visiting.

Shifts: Once or twice per week: Flexible hours.

If you are interested in this or any other Volunteer service position, or if you have a particular skill or talent you would like to share with the patients, residents or clients, please call your local health care facility to apply. You can also reach the Volunteer Services Department at (306) 765-6010, by email at volunteers@paphr.sk.ca or find us on the web at www.paphr.ca. We look forward to matching your talents and interests with the right position for you.

Memorial Lake Regional Park Clubhouse Manager

Full Time Seasonal Position
Starting mid April to Thanksgiving
Wage TBD

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- » Schedule and supervise staff (Approx. ten staff)
- » Inventory Control - Tracking sales, ordering supplies, stock and products, and picking up inventory
- » Daily, Weekly and Monthly Summary Sheets
- » Staff and Public Relations
- » Promote and Advertise
- » Balancing Cash and Deposits
- » Cleaning and Maintenance of Clubhouse
- » Report to Board and Administration

Skills and Requirements

- » Well Organized
- » Work well independently
- » Strong Leader
- » Strong Computer Skills (Microsoft Office, Excel, Online Booking System and Outlook)
- » WHMIS, Serve it Right and Food Safety Courses (must possess by start date)
- » Valid Drivers License

Must be able to work early morning, as well as night shifts and weekends.

Please apply with resume, cover letter and expected wage to
Memorial Lake Regional Park
Box 10
Shell Lake, SK
S0J 2G0
Fax 306.427.2190
Email: memorial.admin@sasktel.net

Deadline for application is March 1st, 2019
Only successful candidates will be contacted.

Memorial Lake Regional Park Kiosk Campground Manager

Full Time Seasonal Position
May 1st to September 7th
Wage TBD

Duties Include

- » Monitor and take Campsite Bookings
- » Schedule and supervise staff (Office Staff, Campground Security and Greeters)
- » Inventory Control - Season Stickers, Day Passes and Boat Passes
- » Daily, Weekly and Monthly Summary Sheets
- » Staff and Public Relations
- » Balancing Cash and Deposits
- » Process Cabin and Seasonal Site Payments
- » Monitor campground
- » Cleaning and Maintenance of Kiosk
- » Report to Board and Administration

Skills and Requirements

- » Well Organized
- » Work well independently
- » Strong Leader
- » Strong Computer Skills (Microsoft Office, Excel, Online Booking System and Outlook)
- » WHMIS Course (must possess by start date)
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World economics a difficult balancing act

Trying to fully understand the intricacies of the economics of world trade is not surprisingly like figuring out how to unravel the Gordian Knot.

So much of trade is influenced by other economic sectors which, when looked at in isolation, are good for a particular area of trade, but when you zoom out to look at the overall impact, it might not be as positive across a broader range of trade.

Of course there are university degree courses dedicated to understanding world economics, but for the

layman, of which I am most admittedly one, the connections within the economy are fascinating.

For most of us, we look at the world economy in terms of how it directly impacts us on a personal level.

For example, at a recent luncheon, a former staff associate was talking about their decision not to head south to spend a portion of the winter months in the warmer climate of the southern United States. The reason was simply one of personal economics. They had looked at the state of the Canadian



CALVIN DANIELS

dollar versus its American counterpart, didn't like that the Canuck buck was, at least in the early winter, rather low against the US dollar and so they decided to turn up the thermostat at home and stay here.

The same conversa-

tion did get around to my friend fondly recalling the days of the Canadian dollar being higher than the American one, and how that made a trip south highly advantageous.

That same scenario is generally reversed if you are an agricultural producer. While a weaker Canadian dollar creates some challenges in terms of buying some things, the lower dollar is hugely advantageous when it comes to export sales. When you operate in a country which far over produces the domestic market for most farm products, exports

sales are crucial and a lower dollar opens doors to sales.

While no one would want the Canadian dollar to completely tank compared to the US currency, par value is certainly less conducive to export sales.

But the dollar tends to trend higher as oil prices rise given that this country sits on a significant reserve of oil. In fact just last week the Canadian dollar was up at market close Friday, following the price of oil.

Reports showed oil was up on Friday as West Texas Interme-

diante crude oil gained US\$1.54 to close at US\$55.33 per barrel.

While the changes are modest, if it were to become a trend, Alberta and Saskatchewan could benefit significantly on the oil side. We don't seem to be on any path that will get us to \$100/barrel oil, but even a jump of \$10 would be big for the sector.

Of course if it drags the dollar higher, it could impact export sales in some other sectors, and send more Canadians south on holidays next winter, which have economic impacts that are less desirable.

APAS welcomes third expansion of Livestock Tax Deferral eligibility, calls for program improvements

The Agricultural Producers Association of Saskatchewan is pleased with the expanded coverage for the Federal Livestock Tax Deferral announced on January 30 but is calling for a review to improve the program for future years.

"Livestock producers across Saskatchewan

faced serious impacts from drought in 2018," said Todd Lewis, APAS President. "It was very clear to everyone in the industry by late August that feed and water shortages were going to have an impact on the entire province."

"It has been a very complex process to get

those impacts recognized in the area designations," Lewis continued. "We need a review of the technology and area boundaries used to determine the eligibility for the program. A final designation at the end of January, after the end of the tax year, does not allow producers to make informed

business decisions." APAS had raised concerns about the list of areas designated on September 14, 2018, and then again on November 1, and called for the entire province to

be eligible. As of January 30th 2019, 75% of Saskatchewan RMs have been designated as eligible.

Lewis concluded by noting that concerns have been raised by

livestock producers across Canada, and APAS will be working with their colleagues at the Canadian Federation of Agriculture to advocate for changes to the program.



Junior Citizen of the Year Scholarship

For over the past four decades The Saskatchewan Weekly Newspapers Association, in partnership with SaskPower and with the Lieutenant Governor of Saskatchewan, have recognized the youth of Saskatchewan through the Junior Citizen of the Year Award.

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Great reasons to visit your local library

Many people have a wonderful resource at their disposal just minutes from their homes. This resource can transport them to distant lands, teach their children valuable lessons and serve as a great place to meet new friends.

So what is this magical place? The local library.

Libraries are filled with books for adults and children. But libraries have even more than books to offer, making them an invaluable resource for the entire community. The following are just a handful of the many great reasons to visit your local library.

- Reading may help improve long-term mental health. A 2001 study from researchers at Case Western Reserve University found that patients with Alzheimer's disease were less active in early and middle adulthood in regard to intellectual, passive and physical activities than people who did not have AD. Young adults and middle-aged men and women who visit their local libraries and check out a good book might decrease their risk for cognitive decline later in life.



- Reading can improve your vocabulary, even as you get older. Reading for pleasure as a child has long been linked to helping young people age 16 and under develop strong reading and math skills. But a recent

study from researchers at the University of London that examined how the vocabularies of more than 9,400 people developed between the ages of 16 and 42 found that vocabulary continued to improve long after

teenage years. By continuing to read books from their local libraries into adulthood, adults can further develop their vocabularies.

- Libraries provide lots of free entertainment. Libraries are home to thousands of books, but that's not all you can find at your local branch. Newspapers, magazines, CDs, and DVDs are some examples of the forms of entertainment available at local libraries. Better yet, such entertainment is free to card holders.

- Libraries offer age-appropriate programs for kids. Some parents may lament the lack of programs available for their youngsters. Such parents are urged to visit their local libraries, which are often home to many programs that can inspire kids to read and foster their creativity. The scope of kid-friendly programs at your local library is wide and may range from sing-a-long sessions for toddlers to group art programs for preschool-aged children to STEM-based programs for elementary and secondary school students.

The local library is an invaluable resource that can benefit people of all ages.

How to sanitize a mobile phone

The most germ-added item in your home may not be the toilet or the kitchen sponge. Mobile phones pick up bacteria wherever they go. In addition, users touch their phones an average of 47 times a day according to the national average determined by a Deloitte research survey, introducing new contaminants to the device each time they do so.

Researchers at the University of Arizona found that cell phones carry 10 times more bacteria than many toilet seats, and there may be as many as 17,000 bacterial gene copies on the average high-schooler's phone.

While cell phone safety often focuses on protecting data, smartphone users also should consider keeping their phones clean to remove the potentially harmful microbes that accumulate on phones every day.

Avoid excess moisture when cleaning cell phones, advis-

es the home and lifestyle experts at The Spruce as moisture can damage internal components. Most cell phone screens have an oleophobic coating that repels oils from hands and fingers. Harsh cleansers or abrasive materials on the glass can prematurely remove this coating and/or scratch the surface.

While you clean at your own risk, many tech experts suggest a spray mixture of distilled water and isopropyl alcohol applied to a microfiber cloth to remove surface contaminants. Don't directly wet the phone. There also are pre-packaged cleansers sold for electronics usage. Invest in an antimicrobial cover to provide an added layer of protection for the phone.

Other ways to keep a phone clean are to wash your hands before use and to try to keep the phone away from areas that may be vulnerable to germs, such as bathrooms.



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Trotz working magic for Islanders

Take Connor McDavid off the roster of the Edmonton Oilers and things could get uglier in Edmonton. Remove Nikita Kucherov from Tampa Bay and the Lightning might fall back into the pack in the National Hockey League. Make Sidney Crosby an ex-Penguin and Pittsburgh might not even make the playoffs.

So it's somewhat astonishing that the New York Islanders, a team that didn't even make the playoffs last year, are in first place in the Metropolitan Division after losing their (by far) best player, John Tavares, to free agency last summer. On Groundhog Day they stood second overall in the Eastern Conference after finishing 11th last season.

So let's cut to the chase: Islanders' bench boss Barry Trotz is this year's Coach of the Year. He also may be a miracle worker.

Trotz, a Dauphin, Man., native, is the rare coach who wins a Stan-

ley Cup, as he did with Washington last season, and is not signed to a new contract. Trotz was making only \$1.5 million with the Capitals and management there showed little interest in making him wealthier, Cup or no Cup. So he quit. Within four days he had signed with the Islanders for a reported \$4 million per season. So far, it appears to be money well spent. The Islanders' performance this year stands as testimony to his skills as a coach.

Instead of the Islanders looking to Tavares to carry the team, Trotz has a committee of lesser stars banding together to handle the offence. Last season's rookie of the year Mathew Barzal had 45 points at the all-star break to lead the team, while Anders Lee, Josh Bailey, Brock Nelson and Jordan Eberle follow. Lee leads the team with eight power play goals and Eberle, the former Oiler, has five. Thomas Griess and Robin Lehner, not ex-



BRUCE PENTON

actly Marty Brodeur and Patrick Roy, have been stellar, splitting the goaltending chores and stopping shots at an average .925 clip.

"Every night we have a feeling that there's not much to worry about," Lee told Elliotte Friedman's 31 Thoughts. "We're poised on the bench. Calm. If you stick to the plan and play the right way, you're in a good spot. Getting production from different guys every night is a huge part of the morale. A lot of us believe in the guys in our room and who we have. The work we have done is validating that. It's different.

Things are different."

Can Trotz's magic continue? A playoff spot for the Islanders is almost assured, and Trotz does have a proven, and recent, playoff track record. The 'No Tavares, no chance' thoughts at the start of this season are looking a little silly right now.

• Greg Cote of the Miami Herald: "CBS rejected a Super Bowl ad from a medical cannabis company. Sponsors of the ad threatened to sue, then lost track of what they were mad about, got the munchies and fell asleep listening to Pink Floyd."

• Cote again, on the leadup to the Super Bowl: "The NFL held a Salute To Service on Tuesday, billed as a "military appreciation" event. Prohibited items included umbrellas, coolers and Colin Kaepernick."

• Norman Chad of the Washington Post, on his distaste for the New England football club: "The Patriots and their fans are so loathsome, I wish we could Brexit

New England."

• Chad again, on the Patriots' QB: "(Tom) Brady is so unbeatable, when he had acne as a teenager, he sued Clearasil — and won."

• Scott Ostler of the San Francisco Chronicle, about the Super Bowl ads: "Everyone watching the beer commercials will muse, 'How come this stuff doesn't make me young and beautiful and hip? I must not be drinking enough of it.'"

• Ostler again, reminiscing about the 1988 super Bowl halftime show: "The 1988 halftime show featured the Rockettes and Chubby Checker, a man with three career hits: 'The Twist,' 'Let's Twist Again,' and 'Let's Twist One Last Time, I Swear, for My Retirement Fund.'"

• Comedy writer Brad Dickson: "Nebraska football has landed a four-star cornerback out of Hawaii. I'm going to guess he doesn't watch the Weather Channel."

• RJ Currie of sports-

deke.com: "The NY Post reports Alec Baldwin and Ben Stiller were the centre of attention at MSG during a recent NBA game. What do they expect people to do, watch the Knicks?"

• Dwight Perry of the Seattle Times: "There's rumblings out of L.A. that the Lakers are itching to swing a three-city trade to land Pelicans big man Anthony Davis. In return, the Lakers would send Lonzo Ball to New Orleans, and LaVar Ball to Flin Flon."

• Perry again, under the 'just wondering' header: "Shouldn't an errant hike over the punter's head be known as a snapfu?"

• Another one from RJ Currie, after the NBA fined Pelicans star Anthony Davis \$50,000 because his agent made his trade request public: "Tsk. There's seven minutes salary he'll never get back."

Care to comment? Email brucepenton2003@yahoo.ca

Dessert of the month



The first draw in the 2019 series of the Dessert of the Month has been made, and the lucky winner is Reva Booker. The dessert, featuring a Valentine's Day motif, was made by librarian Joyce Carriere. There are still a few tickets on sale, and with ten more draws to be made, it's still a good deal.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

SPIRITWOOD: Wapiti Regional Library - Tuesday 9:00 am - 4:30 pm, Wednesday 9:30 am - 4:30 pm & Friday 9:00 am - 4:30 pm

LEOVILLE: Wapiti Regional Library - Wednesday 10 am - 4 pm; Thurs. 10 am - 3 pm (Storytime from 10:30 am to 11:30 am)

SHELL LAKE: Wapiti Regional Library - Tues. 12:30 pm - 4:30 pm; Wed. 1 pm - 4 pm.

SPIRITWOOD: Spiritwood Spirited Players Presents 'Daddy's Girl' by Gary Ray Stapp. Dinner Theatre: March 8 & 9, 2019. Tickets \$40 each. Tickets available at: Martodam's Family Retail until March 7 @ 5 pm. Catered by Ronnie's Catering. Doors open @ 6, Supper @ 7, Performances to follow. Spiritwood Civic Centre. Performance Only: Thursday, March 7 @ 7 pm. \$10 admission at the door, doors open @ 6:30. Spiritwood Civic Centre.

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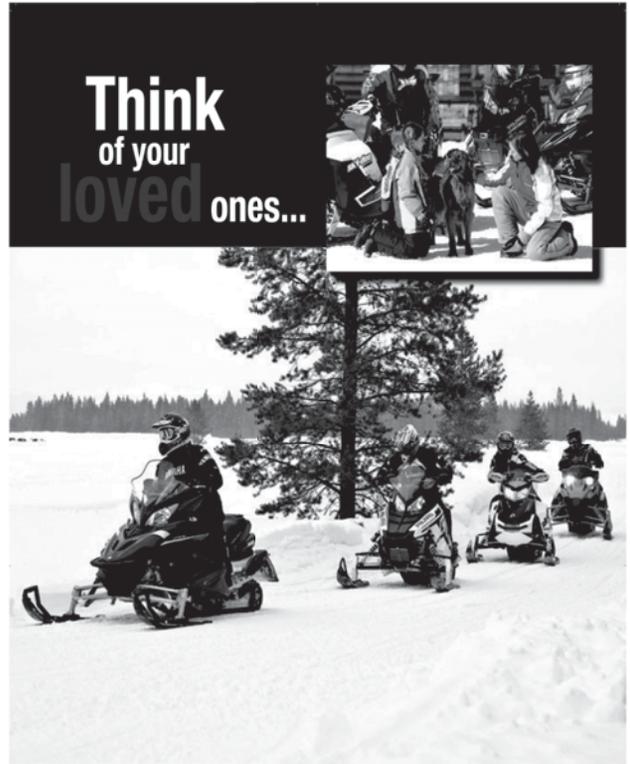
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University of Saskatchewan fruit breeders receive award (Part II)

By Sara Williams

Haskaps

Haskaps (*Lonicera caerulea edulis*) have gone through many incarnations: they've been called blue honeysuckle, sweetberry honeysuckle, and honeyberries. The earliest Canadian selections were made by George Bugnet, a French novelist and early plant breeder who homesteaded west of Legal AB in 1905. Better known for his roses, Bugnet's honeysuckles were bred as ornamentals and not intended to be eaten.

Breeding at the University of Saskatchewan began soon after Rick Sawatzky came across what were then called honeyberries in 1997 in an article by Jim Gilbert in a Minnesota fruit magazine, *Berryland News*. He planted two each of four honeyberry cultivars from a nursery in Oregon.

Rick was in the preliminary testing mode when Bob joined the Department and first tasted them in the summer of 2000 when he and

Rick were giving a field tour to growers. It was June and they were a ripe. Both Bob and the growers became very excited (Bob has yet to calm down).

The following year crosses were made among the four varieties.

By 2003, over 30 Russian varieties had been obtained. In 2004, Bob heard a talk on haskaps by Dr. Maxine Thompson at a conference. That was a double whammy. Haskaps had him. She generously gave him many seeds and cuttings of Japanese haskaps to use in his own breeding. Over the next decade, Bob made trips to Japan, Poland and across Canada gathering a huge collection of wild and cultivated haskaps.

Maxine Thompson called them haskaps: the phonetic spelling of the word used by the Ainu people who settled Hokkaido, Japan in the 13th century and the world's oldest name for this berry. Bob followed her nomenclature

and haskaps they've become.

"We had the most diverse collection in the world. Once they were in the plots I selected what was worth crossing. There were so many to choose from and they ripened at different times."

Among the early and mid-season haskaps released in 2007 were 'Borealis', 'Tundra' and the Indigo Series ('Indigo Gem', 'Indigo Treat' and 'Indigo Yum'). 'Aurora' and 'Honey Bee' followed in 2011. Later ripening haskap releases were 'Boreal Beauty' and 'Boreal Blizzard' in 2014 and 'Boreal Beast' in 2016.

Bob wishes other breeding programs would replicate the University of Saskatchewan's style. "Many of them still operate in a traditional manner – they exclude the general public. We welcome the so-called 'backyard gardener', hand out materials, and have an annual plant sale. Grassroots connections with the general public are crucial and should not be underestimated.

Haskap research was initially funded through Saskatchewan Agriculture grants years. Over the last five years 75% of the program funding has come from plant patent royalties derived from their introductions as well as plant sales, workshop registration fees and cherry and haskap cookbook sales.

Parting Thoughts

Rick feels his greatest accomplishment was simply keeping the fruit program going during periods when few others in the Department were interested. He loved his work on fruit over the 47 years he was with the University and believes that good apples and great pears



'Boreal Beauty', ripens in late July with the berries holding on until early August and heavily producing plants. Plant it with 'Boreal Beast' for cross-pollination. Image credit: Bob Bors

are only one generation away.

Bob's greatest accomplishment has been "the initiation and expansion of the haskap program to where the University of Saskatchewan has the world's best breeding program. Our haskaps are hardier, taste better, ripen later and stay on the bush longer and we were the first to use mechanical harvesters. We have given birth to a whole new industry." Along with cherries and haskaps, we have continued breeding work with a diverse collection of over a dozen far-north fruit crops our "Prairie Fruit Gene Bank".

Sara Williams is the author of many books including Gardening Naturally with Hugh Skinner, Creating the Prairie Xeriscape, and with Bob Bors, Growing

Fruit in Northern Gardens. She continues to give workshops on a wide range of gardening topics throughout the prairies.

This column is provided courtesy of the Saskatchewan Perennial Society (SPS; saskperennial@hotmail.com). Check our website (www.saskperennial.ca) or Facebook page (www.facebook.com/saskperennial) for a list of upcoming gardening events.

**Advertising
Deadline is
Friday
5:00 p.m.**



Haskaps look somewhat like blueberries but are more elongated. Image credit: Bob Bors



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