



Medstead skaters present “Wild Wild West”



Part of the opening number, which featured the entire cast.

The Medstead Skating Club held their annual carnival on Feb. 24, with members performing before a packed house of family and friends. The theme of this year's show was “Wild Wild West”, with a program chock full of country and western favorites.

The program got off to a start with Melanie Payne with an a capella version of O Canada.

This was followed by an opening number that featured the entire cast.

There were two solos by club skaters, both of whom were in the STAR-Skate program. Asha Pederson skated to “Country Girls” and Reece Janzen to “God Made Girls”.

The other solos were performed by the two guest skaters, 11-year-old Jorja Hamilton and 12-year-old Claire Knelson, both of whom skate in the Meadow Lake Club. Both have been skating since they were small children – three in the case of Jorja and four for Claire. The two com-

bined on a duet in the first half of the program.

Shea Janzen and Kaylee Schmidt, two STAR-Skate skaters skated a duet to “Dueling Banjos”.

The other numbers featured groups of CanSkate skaters and Power Skaters, with each group displaying the skills they've acquired over the course of the skating season. These skills were enumerated by MC Michelle Boyd, who gave the audience an idea what each skater was learn-

ing at each stage of their journey through the CanSkate and STAR-Skate programs.

At the end of the show, the Program Assistants were presented with a flower and a gift card in appreciation for their work with the kids over the course of the season.

As well, coach Sheryl Britton was presented with a bouquet in appreciation for her hard work throughout the season.

More photos on pages 2 & 12



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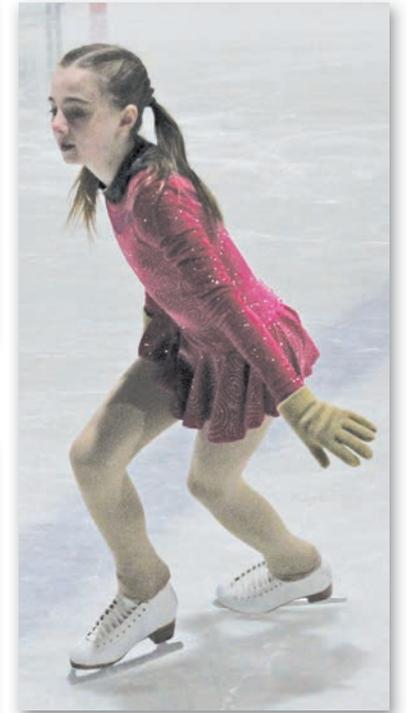
Medstead skaters present "Wild Wild West"



Duelling Banjos, STARSkate Duet. Kaylee Schmidt and Shea Janzen.



Guest duet by Claire Knelson and Jorja Hamilton, two Meadow Lake STARSkaters.



Claire Knelson, 12, of Meadow Lake, has been skating since she was four, and currently is in U12 Competitive Juvenile.



The Tumbleweeds, with some help from the Program Assistants. These little ones are the beginners.

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Tumbleweeds, CanSkate 1-2-3: Back row: Reegan Pain, Emmett Hundt, JR LaClare, Kaleb Kohl, Trevor Thompson, Abigail Wirth, River Martens. Front row: Adley Kohl, Scarlette Robinson, Olivia Schmidt, Payton Boyd, Magnus Seidle, Aleena Wirth. *More photos on page 12*

Spiritwood Golf Club is seeking an enthusiastic leader for Clubhouse Manager.

If you have experience as a business manager, know the world of golf, possess creative skills and are a co-operative supervisor, we want to hear from you.

Our commitment to service excellence, and to savvy management requires a dedicated individual to begin the 2019 season.

Submit your application or inquiry electronically to: **bevrafee@yahoo.ca**



Progress made on construction of Guy's Furniture



Work on the new home of Guy's Furniture is progressing. With somewhat milder weather after an intense deep freeze, conditions are undoubtedly a bit more favourable to getting things done. Last Wednesday, the crew was busy putting the plywood down on the roof.

Lions gearing up for spring projects

The Spiritwood Lions Club held their first meeting since early January, with incoming president Lion Bryan Ferguson and incoming secretary Lion Brooklyn Orange at the

helm. The Lions normally meet on the first and third Thursdays of the month, but the second meeting in January was cancelled due to the Games Night,



Lion Bryan Ferguson, incoming President, with office effective July 1, and Lion Brooklyn Orange, incoming secretary. The two presided over the Feb. 21 meeting of the Lions Club. In the foreground is the Lions bank, with its head caved in.

and they were unable to meet Feb. 7 due to the break-in at the Civic Centre in the wee hours of the morning.

Lion Bryan reported on the losses sustained by the Lions as a result of the break-in. An estimated \$340 was missing, including an approximate \$160 from the Lions Fine Bank, which was smashed. An exact amount is unknown.

As well, refreshments were stolen from the Lions cabinet, along with the liquor permit. The thieves even stole a turkey from the Community Kitchen supplies, and all the rolls of liquor tickets from the bar.

Plans for the upcoming Cordwood Bonspiel, an event of March 30, were front and centre on the agenda. Lion Sonja Nielsen is chairing the project, with Lion Torben Nielsen in

charge of the pancake breakfast, Lion Dave Hyndman organizing the teams, and Lion Wayne Pauls looking after the draw.

Also at the meeting, the Lions gave approval to their annual donation to the Spiritwood Music Festival. The Lions for many years have sponsored the trophy for the Outstanding Performer of the Festival and have provided scholarships given to performers at the discretion of the adjudicator.

As well, the Lions discussed a contribution to the SARCS Community Auction and are expected to finalize it at the next meeting. That project will be held April 13.

The next meeting will be held Mar. 7 at the Legion Hall, as the Lions will be giving up the meeting room at the Civic

Centre to the Spiritwood Spirited Players, who will be holding their spring production.

Guests and prospective members are welcome.



The door handle of the Spiritwood Civic centre following the Feb. 7 break-in.

Library adopts bookmark



Rachelle Beauchesne presented the prizes to Declan Marion, winner of the "Feed Your Passions" bookmark contest at Spiritwood Library.

Spiritwood Library has adopted a new bookmark to be given to patrons.

The bookmark, pictured (right), was created by Declan Marion in the "Feed Your Passions" bookmark contest held in conjunction with last summer's Reading Program.

Each child entering the contest was asked to draw -- something they were passionate about. From all the various, interesting entries Declan Marion's kittens passion was chosen to be made into bookmarks for the library. Rachelle Beauchesne presented Declan with his prize.

(Right) Declan Marion's winning entry in the Bookmark Contest will be Spiritwood Library's official bookmark.



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“Full contact bingo”

Just when you think it's safe to play bingo, we hear a story that makes you wonder whether the game has changed, and rather than just covering numbers with dabbers when those numbers are called, it is now a full-blown, head-to-head, full contact sport.

I'm referring, of course, to the incident in a Kingston, ON, long-term-care home, in which a dispute between a 79-year-old woman and an 86-year-old over seating arrangements led to a brawl that involved a number of other residents.

Details are sketchy, but one wonders what the 8/9ths of this particular iceberg were contributing factors. For starters, if the two were friends, it's hard to think that where one sat would be the subject of acrimony so serious that it would lead to blows.

It's easy for people on the outside to assume that those living in close quarters, like nursing homes, all get along with each other and daily life is so harmonious to be actually quite boring and humdrum.

I'm waiting for the books, yet to be written, about the actual goings-on among residents once the caregivers retire and are no longer subject to a gag order under some confidentiality agreement. If such agreements extend into retirement, we may never know.

I'm guessing, since they are senior citizens, there are lots of little conflicts among residents. I'm guessing that, because seniors on the outside seem to have lots of little conflicts and denigrating opinions of their neighbours and other seniors.

Or maybe they don't have any more than ordinary – read “younger” – people but they've reached the stage of their own life where they either have no filter to determine whether what they are thinking is better left unsaid, or they just don't think things like diplomacy and turning the other cheek are worth it.

While on the subject of seniors, while some of us may be entering our most cantankerous period, we need some consideration, especially from people who need to show a little compassion.

A Facebook friend posted the other day about an incident she saw. An elderly gentleman was crossing the street and he slipped and fell. The drivers in the cars at the red light just sat there. The friend jumped out of her car from a couple of spots behind and helped the gentleman get up and get across the road. All the while she was wondering why the guys never helped the old man. And worse, the guy in the car behind her was honking at her and flipping her the bird because she was blocking him.

She said she got her revenge, though. She sat through a green light, which means he sat through it too, and then she drove down the street very slowly, forcing him to drive slowly too.

I think we all need to be a little more aware of our surroundings, and when we see someone, anyone, who might need a little help, offer that help, and do it without reservation and without judgement.

After all, it might be us someday when we could use a little consideration from others around us.

Back to Bingo for a sec, while we still have a bit of room. SARCS holds bingo on the third Tuesday of the month in the mezzanine at the Rec Centre. Unfortunately, there are a few senior citizens who have quit going because they can't do stairs, and the door to the elevator is locked.

“We know how to run the elevator,” one senior bingo player told me, “but if it's locked, we can't get in.”

But it won't cause any brawls.



Amber Alert outrage a pathetic display

Picture this.

It's the dead of night, and you're fast asleep after a long day of work or taking care of the kids, when out of nowhere your cell phone begins to emit a dreadful noise that pulls you from a wonderful dream.

Dragging your barely-awake carcass out of bed, you fumble around for your phone in the dark and manage to turn the screen on, only to be blinded by the glaring light.

Through still-bleary eyes, you peek at the notification that caused the awful, pull-you-from-your-sleep sound to discover an Amber Alert. Initially concerned by the alert, you quickly note, upon reading through it, that the missing child in question is halfway across the province from you, and that there's no way you can be of any help at three in the morning.

Knowing this, do you put your phone down and attempt to go back to sleep, or do you call 911, or post on social media, in a fit of rage at having your slumber so unjustly disturbed?

I'd like to believe that most of us, while a little miffed at being woken up for something we can do nothing about, would choose to go back to bed. Additionally, I'd like to believe that at least some of us would have trouble falling back to sleep out of concern for the wellbeing and safety of the missing child in question.

Regrettably, however, we all live in the real world. And that means living with more than a few people who are so self-absorbed and lacking in empathy that they care more about losing a little shut-eye than they do about an innocent little girl.

There were at least a few dozen of these types in Ontario two weeks ago, when 11-year-old Riya Rajkumar was abducted by her father, Roopesh Rajmukar, and, later, tragically found dead in a home near Toronto – killed by the very man who was meant to provide and care for her.

Consider the following Twitter offering from Brian French, a civilian employee with the Chatham-Kent Police Service's communications centre, and a shining beacon of human goodness: “EMERGENCY ALERT just scared the crap out of me!!! Suspect headed EASTBOUND from BRAMPTON??? Ummm I'm 3-hours WEST of Brampton. Idiots. How do I turn this (expletive) emergency alert off???”

Like the Peel Regional Police, who put out the Amber



JORDAN
TWISS

~
Columnist

Alert, I can't comprehend why other people could be so devoid of basic human decency and compassion, that they would clutter up 911's phone lines, thereby endangering people who might actually have an emergency, just because they were mildly inconvenienced.

It's harder to fathom, still, because if it was their missing child, these same people who got so angry about the Amber Alert would be demanding that the police do anything and everything in their power to bring their child home, regardless of who was inconvenienced.

But again, this is the real world we live in. And, in this real world, people dial 911 when their takeout order isn't up to their exact specifications, or when their parents take away their

video games.

If you're wondering, then, yes, both of the above are incidents that actually happened within the past couple months.

Welcome to the golden age of false outrage. What a time to be alive!

It shouldn't need to be explained or justified to anyone, but Amber Alerts, and other emergency alerts that are delivered through mobile devices, serve an important purpose. They inform us of potential danger, and assist the police by giving them a whole province of eyes to make use of.

Indeed, the police even credit the aforementioned Amber Alert in Ontario with helping them locate and arrest their suspect – according to reports, it was a 911 call from a person who saw the alert on his or her phone, then spotted the suspect's vehicle, that allowed the arrest to be made.

Granted, there are still some kinks to be ironed out of the system, such as the Amber Alert in question going out to some people in Manitoba. But these are to be anticipated with any system that is relatively new, and they will most assuredly be fixed.

In the meantime, if you doubt the value of the alert system, or feel that those who complained about it were justified in doing so, consider the following tweet from the union that represents the Peel Region's paramedics:

“If you have a problem with a system designed to find missing children making your phone go beep because a child was missing and in danger, then you are a horrible person. Please don't waste time calling 911 to complain. The dispatchers there can't help you, and they are too professional to tell you to go to hell.”

Moe may have won carbon tax case before it started

It is a case that most expected Premier Scott Moe and the Saskatchewan Party would lose.

But if wins are measured in political gain, Moe may have already won by challenging carbon pricing in the Court of Appeal.

After hearing from the provincial and federal governments and some 15 interveners, the five-member Saskatchewan court is now deliberating on whether the federal Liberal government had constitutional authority to implement its \$10 a tonne carbon fee that rises to \$50 a tonne by 2022.

One of the things the court is determining is whether the federal government's Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Pollution Act is a regulator pricing on pollution or whether it is, indeed, a tax as contended

by the Saskatchewan government and its lawyers.

"If it looks like a duck and walks like a duck and it quacks like a duck, it's a duck," Mitch McAdam told the Court of Appeal.

This is important because the crux of the provincial argument is the federal regulatory industrial levy on polluters is not being applied evenly.

Essentially, it was argued that the federal government made arbitrary decisions on which provinces' industries are meeting standards and which aren't.

This is unfair to a jurisdiction like Saskatchewan that, by virtue of its oil, mining and farming sector and the fact that we burn coal for electrical production, is hit disproportionately hard.

Moreover, it usually falls under the provin-



MURRAY
MANDRYK

cial authority to regulate specific local businesses. Also, the province and federal government hold joint jurisdiction over the environment.

However, the thinking among most legal academics has been that regulating industrial pollution is a matter that is well within the constitutional jurisdiction of the federal government.

And even if it is deemed a tax, as Saskatchewan

has suggested federal government lawyer Sharlene Telles-Langdon argued, it was still within the federal government's authority to use taxation power or whatever tool it deemed necessary to address a matter of "national concern" under the Constitution's "peace, order and good government" provision.

During her submission to the court, Telles-Langdon argued that greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions are "indivisible" particles that do not recognize international or provincial borders.

As such, only the federal government can deal with the "cumulative dimension" of climate change and the federal government is well within its authority to require provinces to meet "minimal national standards" to

deal with this "threat to humanity."

In a nutshell, that was the court argument we heard earlier this month.

Now, it's up to the court to decide, although it's highly likely that whichever side loses will appeal to the Supreme Court of Canada. So even if the province wins its case, we will still face a carbon tax.

But maybe seeing this fight carry on for couple more years is also a win for Moe and the Sask. Party, too.

After all, there is a win in simply fighting an unpopular tax imposed by another level of government.

There were plenty of overtones of politics in the provincial case, including calls for no taxation without representation. (Yes, there was a reference to the Boston tea

party among the legal arguments.)

Of course, the province might very well lose its legal arguments that the federal government exceeded its jurisdiction by applying carbon pricing on local companies regulated by provinces and by unfairly applying its carbon prices to provinces like Saskatchewan simply because it didn't like this province's GHG-reduction efforts.

But its lawyers did outline a strong brief with strong legal arguments.

And what may be even stronger is the political argument that Ottawa is being unfair to the West and could have evenly applied any tax directly on fuel so that all Canadian consumers paid.

In that sense, Moe and Saskatchewan may have already won.

YOUR TWO CENTS

It's crucial that we build pipelines now

Dear government officials,
I am in support of the convoy to Ottawa. Canadians in this sector of Canada are not being heard or represented.

Bill C-69, which is under consideration in Ottawa, is hurting Canadian energy companies, employees, contractors and their families, while it helps foreign competitors by ensuring Canadian fair-trade oil remains virtually landlocked from global markets and higher prices.

Canadians, like myself, want pipelines like Energy East that connect Canadian resources to Canadian markets to be able to function. Bill C-69 prevents this from happening.

I recently watched a program that, contrary to most media outlet news, reported that most Aboriginal com-

munities want these pipelines. They want to provide work and self-esteem for their people. This is a viable way to do it.

Over the years, Alberta's fiscal transfers have provided much of the glue that bound a wobbly Canada together. The biggest source of transfers is simply the federal personal income taxes collected from Alberta that fund federal revenues to spend all over the country, both inside and outside of the equalization program. Albertans tend to have higher incomes than elsewhere, so they pay more per capita federal tax than other Canadians.

Thank you, Albertan', for helping all Canadians!

I am very concerned that government (Liberals) are moving away from the good of the people towards what is good for government. Is this a thrust towards socialism?

I am asking for Bill C-69 to be a helping hand for Alberta, and all Canadians!

Sincerely,
Patricia Argent, Blaine Lake SK

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Telemiracle projects underway

TeleMiracle 43 is looming, and community groups and businesses around the province have begun raising funds through various projects to contribute to the longest-running most lucrative fundraising project in Saskatchewan. This year's event will be this weekend, March 2 and 3, beginning at 9 p.m. Saturday and running until 5 p.m. the next afternoon.

Included among those groups is the staff of Spiritwood Scotiabank, who held a bake sale Feb. 19.

Team Scotia members each contributed baking, and took turns behind the table selling to customers dropping in to do their banking. They reported a profit for TeleMiracle of \$594.51 from the sale.

Last year's TeleMiracle set an all-time record, raising

\$7,151,256.

Included in that amount were individual bequests of

\$1.2 million and \$1.5 million.

In fact, one of the features

of TeleMiracle is that the record for the amount raised keeps rising and rising. Two

bequests totalling 2.7 million may make setting a new record somewhat difficult, but hey, this is Saskatchewan. Anything is possible.

Money raised through TeleMiracle goes to the Kinsmen Foundation to assist Saskatchewan people to acquire special needs equipment and access to medical treatment.

TeleMiracle is aired on CTV channels across the province. The lineup of entertainers this year includes Andrea Menard, Jess Moskaluke, Fred Penner and many other well-known names.

Closer to home, the cast includes a few names familiar to Spiritwood and the area, such as Marentin Fehr (Leoville), Sylvia Charles (Spiritwood), and Debden's Amundson Family.



Team Scotia members held a bake sale Feb. 19 to raise funds for a contribution to Kinsmen TeleMiracle 43. Standing: Ron Radke, Kimberley Gagne, Ashley Forbes, Reva Booker, Janessa Hummel. Seated: Adel Steinhart, Elia Becerrilvargas.

Sask. Health Authority volunteer opportunities

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

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

Duties include visiting residents on a one-to-one basis or in small groups, chatting, playing cards, reading, sitting outside with residents, portering residents, taking residents to functions, shopping trips, walking residents and Elders.

Shifts: 9:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. or 1:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m. daily

Monday – Sunday: Flexible: Once or twice per week.

Activity Programs – Spiritwood and District Health Complex (306) 883-4432

Volunteers will assist the staff with activities and set up for such. Duties include assisting with crafts, shopping trips, birthday parties, special functions, music therapy, exercise programs, bowling groups, horticulture, painting, baking, etc. Programs change periodically.

Shifts: 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. or 12:45 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. Monday - Friday

Parent-Tot Program – Hafford Special Care Home (306) 549-2108

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.

Shifts: Flexible, once or twice per week.

If you are interested in this or any other Volun-

teer 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.



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Swine sector must keep eye on disease

The swine sector appears under the threat of what would be its version of Bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE), or at least have the same effect on markets.

African swine fever is a disease in hogs which currently has the world market for pigs and pork on edge.

A recent story at www.producer.com noted the "disease is spreading across the gigantic Eurasian landmass, infecting pigs and wild boars from northeastern China to Belgium.

"Not only does it lead to mass-culling of animals in infected areas, but it can lead to export

bans and exile from the world market."

How serious is the threat? Well the same story noted "a major exporter that the Danes are building a border fence all the way along their border with Germany."

The issue for Canada of course is the need to maintain market access to foreign countries.

Canada's pork industry produce far more product than can be consumed domestically, most of what is produced sold to foreign markets.

In general terms there is some definite optimism in the pork sector.

World market demand is strong and is trending



CALVIN DANIELS

upward, and that should be good news for Canada.

But what would an outbreak of African swine fever in Canada do to the industry?

If we remember back to 1993 when the first case of BSE in recent time was discovered in

Canada, the reaction of world markets was a swift closing of access. That left Canada with a glut of beef and a domestic market too small to effectively eat the problem away. The beef sector, starting with producers lost hundreds of millions.

The world market for pork does have one major difference. China has the largest herd of pigs of any country, but because it also consumes most of the production domestically, its exports are limited. And, China has ASF.

According to a January story from Reuters, "China has culled 916,000

pigs after around 100 outbreaks of African swine fever in the country", and "the disease continues to spread to new regions and larger farms."

The likelihood China closes borders is less likely than was the case of almost every country when BSE hit.

Also, unlike BSE, there is not the fear of ASF passing to humans, so reactions should an out-

break occur will be related to protecting a country's domestic pig herd as the disease is deadly, and without a vaccine.

That said ASF could become a political pawn as well, used as a way to impact trade with certain countries for politically rather than health motivations.

For the pork sector, the disease will certainly be a cloud on the horizon to keep a very close eye on.

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* A research study by Ernst & Young (EY) measured the incremental impact of Nutrien's operations, capital expenditures and investments in Saskatchewan in 2018.

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Op-ed: Protest convoy highlights jobs calculus

By Aaron Wudrick
CTF federal director

On one side, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau says he wants to build pipelines the energy sector desperately needs. On the other side, the prime minister also promises carbon taxes and similar measures will stimulate a surge in so-called green jobs. But the convoy is a clear illustration that Canadians don't trust Ottawa to gamble with their livelihoods.

This government's track record on pipelines raises serious doubts about that bet.

The prime minister directly or indirectly killed off alternatives to the Trans Mountain pipeline expansion, effectively

putting all its eggs in one basket.

Then, when the Federal Court of Appeal overturned the approval of Trans Mountain, the government suddenly found itself trying to buy its way out of the problem, by shifting the project's risks from private sector shareholders onto the backs of Canadian taxpayers. And yet, despite government ownership, uncertainty continues to surround the construction of Trans Mountain.

All of that doubt is compounded by Ottawa's introduction of Bill C-69 to overhaul the approval process for pipelines.

In the view of the Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers, Bill C-69

will "make the regulatory process more complicated, time consuming, legally vulnerable and, ultimately, erode public and investor confidence" by replacing the federal Canadian Environmental Assessment Act, Environmental Assessment Agency and National Energy Board in one fell swoop. In their place, new legislation and regulatory bodies would be created with a much broader scope. Overall, the bill is a veritable festival of additional red tape and obstacles when what is needed is less of both.

(It's not as if the existing process was a walk in the park: in the case of Energy East, the Trudeau government arbitrarily imposed an "upstream emissions test" – one that did not apply to foreign producers – before forcing the National Energy Board to restart the entire process.)

Some hardline environmentalists want to leave resources in the ground, but for Canadians who work in the industry – as well as millions more who would benefit from the additional economic activity and tax revenue – crippling the industry would be a catastrophe.

The bill for that catastrophe is payable in jobs. The Trans Mountain expansion alone would be worth \$46 billion in tax revenue over the first 20 years of operation and support 37,000 long-term jobs. At this point, those paycheques are on hold indefinitely – and that's enough to make ordinary Canadians drive from Calgary to Ottawa in the middle of the winter.

But it's important to look at both sides of the calculus to see if sacrificing real jobs that people can count on today can

be balanced out with vague promises that green jobs will appear...someday.

Hardline environmentalists argue that so-called dirty industries are dying and that the "future is green." It's a line they've used many times before, most prominently in Ontario where the McGuinty government's disastrous Green Energy Act caused skyrocketing electricity prices for consumers, while creating only a fraction of the promised 50,000 jobs – and resulted in the loss of between 62,000 and 124,000 jobs elsewhere in the economy.

Not exactly a winning trade off.

While the green industries touted by some sound great on paper, most of these jobs still aren't economical in 2019 – which is why they require perpetual taxpayer support.

So, while some fantasize about a future where all energy is renewable, cheap and reliable, in the here and now – for the next week, next year and next decade – Canadians will still have energy needs. Federal legislation should help facilitate, rather than obstruct, projects that can help provide it – and create the jobs that so many, especially in Western Canada, desperately need.

Bill C-69 is a major step in the wrong direction. The Trudeau government needs to start over again and stop strangling natural resource industries already reeling from past missteps. Otherwise, those who aren't willing to gamble on Ottawa's policies will continue to clog its streets with convoys of people desperate to save the jobs their families depend on.

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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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New-look foursomes hoping for Brier success

An off-season game of curling musical chairs has paid off for at least three Canadian men's teams as the 2019 Brier approaches this weekend.

It was similar to baseball's free agency frenzy, as a number of teams splintered, a couple of top skips went on a recruiting mission and everyone involved was hoping to find the magic brew that would eventually cook up a berth in the Olympic Curling Trials in 2021.

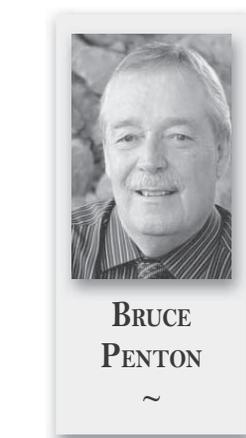
The race starts March 2 in Brandon, where only about a half dozen of the 16 teams have a legitimate chance to win the Brier, and boost their confidence as they move toward a berth in a select field of nine teams vying for a berth in the Beijing Olympics in 2022.

Kevin Koe's team from Calgary, ranked No. 1 in the world, did a 50-per-cent remake, picking up second Colton Flasch from Steven Laycock's rink from Saskatoon and BJ Neufeld from Mike McEwen's foursome,

which completely disintegrated. The McEwen crew went in four different directions — McEwen, a perennial Brier contender, joining forces with fellow Manitoban Reid Carruthers; lead Denni Neufeld joining Jason Gunlaugson's rink; and second Matt Wozniak taking early retirement. McEwen and Carruthers had met in the two previous Manitoba finals, each winning once, but were tired of beating their heads against each other.

Another free agent of note was Laycock, who made it to the Brier seven times as the Saskatchewan representative, but always came up short. When he got the chance to throw third stones for Jim Cotter of B.C., another Brier non-winning regular, he jumped at it.

So after all the provincial playdowns were finished, how did the musical chairs play out? Koe won in Alberta, bouncing back from a couple of early losses to beat Ted Appelman in the final. McE-



BRUCE
PENTON

wen and Carruthers, whose team was in the doldrums most of the year, caught fire at the right time, and won the Manitoba title. And Cotter and Laycock will get an opportunity to finally win a Brier after they captured the B.C. championship.

One remade team that didn't win a provincial crown was John Epping's of Ontario, who picked up front ends Brent Laing and Craig Savill, onetime members of Glenn Howard's unit. Epping lost in the Ontario final to relative unknown Scott McDonald.

Of course, a number of top contenders made no moves whatsoever, and hope the consistency pays off with a trip to the world championships. Defending champion Brad Gushue of Newfoundland and Brier-winner and Olympian Brad Jacobs of Northern Ontario kept their teams intact and will be key performers in a strong field. Epping and Alberta's Brendan Bottcher, last year's Brier runner-up, will meet in the wildcard play-in game to add another strong foursome to the competition.

• R.J. Currie of sportsdeke.com, who loves to poke the Blue Bombers: "The upcoming CFL season will be Winnipeg's 29th without a Grey Cup, the league's longest championship drought. Maybe those helmets should sport an L instead of a W?"

• Cam Hutchinson of the Saskatoon Express, on the best NHL defensive tandem he ever saw: "Bobby Orr and anybody."

• Jason Botchford of The Athletic: "Explaining the

Canucks goaltending situation is not unlike trying to tell someone the plot to Bird Box. Both include lots of blindfolds and none of it makes much sense."

• Ryan Whitney on Twitter: "In a crazy sequence of events Matt Kuchar just picked up a quarter Jon Rahm was using to mark his golf ball. When asked to put it back Kuchar threw down a nickel and walked away."

• Brad Rockof of the Deseret News: "A Kansas City woman reportedly makes \$40,000 a year as a 'professional cuddler.' She offers comfort, understanding and reassurance by hugging people. Sources say the Cavaliers have booked her for the entire month of February."

• Comedy writer Jim Barach: "A Colorado sports store that boycotted Nike goods because of Colin Kaepernick has gone out of business. A sports store banning Nike is like trying to run a liquor store during Prohibition."

• Barach again: "A golfer

hit into the water six times in making a 17 on one hole in a Web.com event. If he had gone in the water any more he would have been eligible to play on the tour for webfoot.com."

• R.J. Currie again: "Ex-Manchester United coach Jose Mourinho dropped the ceremonial opening puck at a KHL game, then promptly fell flat on his butt on the ice. 'Tell us about it,' said the Anaheim Ducks."

• Dwight Perry of the Seattle Times: "Police were called when two women, 86 and 79, came to blows over seating arrangements during Bingo night at a retirement home in Rideau Lakes, Ont.. Because it was Canada, both returned to action after serving five minutes for fighting."

• Headline at TheOnion.com: "Schnauzers rioting outside Madison Square Garden following Westminster Dog Show defeat."

Care to comment? Email brucepenton2003@yahoo.ca

Community gardens make homegrown produce easy

By Erl Svendsen

Nothing is tastier than locally-grown fruits and vegetables. And what could be more local than in your own back yard? But alas, that's not an option if you live in an apartment or condo. And even if you have a yard, it may be too shady, the soil may not be suitable and your children and pets may have other ideas the use of the limited space. Of course, you can satisfy some of your local produce cravings at your local Farmers' Market but that's not as satisfying as growing your own. The solution? Lease a community garden plot.

When I moved to Saskatoon from Victoria, B.C. some decades ago, I thought it odd that there were so few community gardens. In fact, the only one I knew about was the large city-run garden on the west side. Since then, dozens of community gardens have sprouted up all over the city in parks, schools and church yards.

For a modest annual membership fee (depends on the garden, but ours is \$50/year), you get a plot large enough to grow a vari-

ety of produce to feed your family during the season (usually at least 100 square feet). You are expected to look after your own plot from seed to harvest, particularly, controlling pests and weeds. Of note is that most community gardens follow organic principles and that means no synthetic fertilizers, insecticides or herbicides. There are good reasons for this, foremost among them is that when you use a synthetic pesticide, it is likely to drift onto your neighbours' plots without their permission or knowledge, potentially impacting their health and enjoyment.

The 'community' part comes into play at the plot-level by helping and learning from each other as well as sharing resources as you putter in your garden space and visit with other gardeners. At the garden-level, 'community' means coming together to manage and operate the garden. In the garden in which I'm a member, for example, we have group activities such as spreading compost (good organic fertilizer) over the garden and staking out the plots at the beginning of the season. As well, one

can volunteer to water our little fruit orchard and to maintain the communal garlic, horseradish and rhubarb patches. The fees are used to cover costs such as watering hoses and nozzles, wheelbarrows, trucking charges to bring in compost, rototilling, and removal of the great volume of end-of-season organic matter (e.g. corn stalks, tomato vines). The garden members meet once a year to discuss issues that have come up, review finances, update bylaws as necessary and vote in a new board.

In Saskatoon, Chep Good Food Inc., a local non-profit organization, administers many great initiatives including the Community Garden programs. Their website includes an interactive map showing where all the Saskatoon community gardens can be found along with an online form to connect you with a specific community garden coordinator: <https://www.chep.org/program/community-gardens/>. In Regina, there doesn't seem to be a central organization to help connect gardeners to the community gardens. But there are at least 10 large-scale commu-

nity gardens throughout the city — most have their own website. In Prince Albert, there's a city-run community garden (<http://citypa.ca/Things-to-Do/Parks-And-Trails/Community-Gardens>). Besides consulting Google, your local community association, library, school, church, RM or town office may be able to point you to the closest community garden. The deadline to apply for a garden

plot is rapidly approaching. Apply today!

Erl gardens in Saskatoon and tweets about @ErlSv on occasion.

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.



Typical garden plot early in the season. Image credit: Darren Hill.

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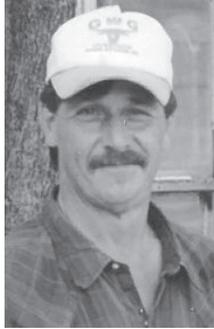
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“God Made Girls”, a STARSkate solo by Reece Janzen.



The Program Assistants skated to “Ghost Riders in the Sky”. They are Maria Jennett, Asha Pederson, Shea Janzen, Clark Janzen, Kaylee Schmidt, Austyn Hundt and Mikki Orange. At the end of the show, these young people were presented with a flower and a gift card in appreciation of their participation in helping the club’s young skaters over the course of the year.



Eleven-year-old Jorja Hamilton of Meadow Lake was one of two guest skaters. She is in U13 Competitive Juvenile, and has been skating since she was three.



A Country Girl, STAR-Skate Solo by Asha Pederson.



Outback Riders, CanSkate 4-5, skating to “Forever in Blue Jeans”: Lyla Thompson, Tyler Hundt, Chloe Sloan, Addison Pain, Gracie Martens. Out Back Riders - Lyla Thompson, Tyler Hundt, Kiera Sloan, Addison Pain, Graice Martens



Animals, CanSkate Stage 1, skating to “Old McDonald Had a Farm”: Scarlett Robertson, Adley Kohl, Olivia Schmidt, River Martens, Payton Boyd, Magnus Seidle, Aleena Wirth.



Saloon Girls: Kaylee Schmidt, Shea Janzen, Asha Pederson, Reece Janzen



A Bake Sale was held in the lobby, along with sales of 50-50 tickets.



Rodeo Clowns, CanSkate 2-3: Reegan Pain, Emmett Hundt, JR LaClare, Clark Janzen, Trever Thompson, Kaleb Kohl, Abigail Wirth.



The cast begins to line up behind the western-themed display.



Farmers, power Skaters, skating to “She Thinks My Tractor’s Sexy”: Addison Pain, Brenner Ege-land, Anton Steinhardt, Tyler Hundt, Jesse-Dzialo-Findlay.



Advanced CanSkate Synchro, Line Dancers, skating to “Boot Scootin’ Boogie”: Back: Tyler Hundt, Lyla Thompson, Chloe Sloan, Bethany Ross, Brooke Allchurch. Front: Sierra Schmidt, Grace Driedger, Addison Pain, Gracie Martens.



The Square Dancers, CanSkate Stage 5-6: Brooke Allchurch, Grace Driedger, Bethany Ross, Sierra Schmidt.