



Fur Trader dynasty continues



The Fur Traders, three-time winners of the Blair Dietz Memorial Tournament.

What length of domination does it take to be considered a dynasty? Three years? Well, if so, then the Fur Traders could be called such, having just won their third consecutive championship in the Blair Dietz Memorial Rec Hockey Tournament.

This was the 17th annual tournament, which was an event of March 2-3 at the Spiritwood Arena.

However, this year's victories didn't come as easily as in past years. Their final, a 7-6 win over Wazzy's Warriors,

featured a winning goal with just a couple of minutes on the clock. They had a game in the round robin – also a 7-6 win—in which the go-ahead goal came with just over a minute remaining.

Still, a win is a win. They parlayed their 3-0 record into top spot in the "A" Playoff, facing the Bulls 'n' Beavers, second place finishers in Pool B.

Wazzy's Warriors, first place in Pool B, met Beans Magnums to earn the spot against the Fur Traders.

The Dusters hung on to beat the Phan-

toms 10-9 in the Consolation final.

There were eight teams in this year's tournament, making for a draw consisting of two even pools, followed by knockout playoffs in the Championship and Consolation events.

Last year's tournament had nine teams, and some of the teams this year struggled to come up with a full complement of players. A reason advanced by tournament co-ordinator Jillian Mayo was that many former participants now have children who are entering their

own playoffs, and as parents, the kids are going to come first.

That assessment was backed up by Marty Lehouillier, who chose not to participate this year as his son, Caley, is involved in playoffs with the Battleford Barons.

"It's just a bad time of year for me," he said.

Bad time or not, the Blair Dietz Memorial is still the premier rec tournament on the calendar.

More photos on page 2

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Fur Trader dynasty continues



The Dusters, winners of the Consolation.



The Phantoms come close, but The Dusters keep the puck out.

New exhibit coming to Main Street Gallery

In 1926, as a toddler, Mary Schira emigrated with her family from Hungary to Plunkett, Sask. Her interest in drawing and color could have ended early in her life, as she used the interior papered walls of family, friends and neighbors as her canvas. However,



Mary Schira

with ongoing enthusiasm and encouragement from her schoolhouse teachers, particularly that of Miss Raycroft, Schira persisted.

Once the youngest of her five children started high school and the balance started families of their own, Schira then attended formal art education from Elaine Iverson hosted at the Spiritwood High School.

It was at this time that a daughter-in-law requested portraits of her children, subsequently Schira's subject matter transitioned from landscapes and still-life to her current body of work, portraiture.

To date, Schira works strictly with oil paints and mixes her own color palettes. The slow-drying quality of oils enables Schira to achieve desired color and line; fine textured canvas board enables the very fine detail of her work.

Schira's portrait series captures the youth and vitality of her parents and 11 grandchildren.

Although she does have a favorite piece, she clarifies



Mary Schira's artwork

that she does not have a favorite grandchild!

Mary Schira's portrait series will be on exhibition at the Main Street Gallery, 218 Main St, Spiritwood, Sask., March 17 to June 14, 2019. Join us to celebrate the opening of Schira's show 1 - 3 pm, Sunday, March 17, 2019.

For more information please contact Bevra Fee at (306)883-2426.

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ANNUAL MEMBER INFORMATION MEETING

SATURDAY, MARCH 23, 2019

John M. Cuelenaere Public Library
125 12th Street East
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10:30 a.m.

ALL MEMBERS WELCOME!

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Mark these dates on your calendar!

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- May 25th - Estate of Lloyd Pirot - Shop, Yard, Tractor, Recreational, Store Inventory & Household - Cochin
- June 22nd - Shop, Yard, Antique/Collectable Sale for Warren & Elaine Iverson - Glaslyn
- July 6th - Farm, Shop, Yard, Household Sale for Walter & Wilma Isaak - Medstead
- July 13th - Antiques & Collectable Sale for Connie Leask-Grant - Battleford

Watch our Website and Facebook for more detailed listings

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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 March 17, 2019.

We thank all candidates who apply and advise that only those selected for further consideration in the process will be contacted. Preference will be given to Canadian citizens. We are committed to Employment Equity. The Public Service of Canada is committed to developing inclusive, barrier-free selection processes and work environments. If contacted regarding this competition, please advise of the accommodation measures which must be taken to enable you to be assessed in a fair and equitable manner.

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Report from the Legislature

Your Saskatchewan Party government starts the spring sitting of the legislature with a commitment to stand up for Saskatchewan and move forward with plans to build a stronger economy, all while managing spending and keeping taxes low.

Standing up for Saskatchewan means protecting the people and jobs that keep our province moving forward. This means a focus on the three Ts – trade, transport and taxes.

The United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA) is a step in the right direction, but we need to keep working with our American counterparts and be mindful of the deep integration of our



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economies. From steel to manufacturing, to agriculture, we should keep working to improve the flow of goods back and forth across our borders and maximize our competitiveness.

Growing and improving the Canada-U.S. re-

lationship by reducing trade barriers was the focus of a recent trip to Washington. Premier Moe joined New Brunswick Premier Blaine Higgs and Ontario Premier Doug Ford as part of a Canadian delegation to build relationships and engage with U.S. governors on the importance of trade with our largest trading partner.

We value the relationship we have with the United States, and it is one we must continue to improve.

Importantly, we need the ability to transport our products to port.

The recent ruling by the National Energy Board on Trans Mountain confirms what we already know about the



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project: it's in our national interest, and it needs to be built. Now we need the federal government to keep moving ahead to ensure it gets done.

This reinforces the need for Canada to have a regulatory framework that gives private inves-

tors enough certainty to proceed with projects that are beneficial to our economy and create wealth for everyone in Canada. Bill C-69 most certainly is not that framework, and will only see the current trend of global energy sector investment leaving Canada accelerate.

We also need a fair tax and regulatory environment so we are competitive with other people who are producing products around the world.

Saskatchewan and its supporters recently put forward strong and compelling arguments in court, supporting the position that the Trudeau carbon tax is fundamentally unconstitutional. The

Trudeau carbon tax is just that, a tax – not a regulatory charge – and it violates the principles of federalism which underwrite our great country.

This spring, your Saskatchewan Party government will continue to stand up for Saskatchewan while delivering on our 3-year plan to balance budget while maintaining a competitive tax & business environment, and focusing on important government programs and services for the long-term.

I look forward to the spring sitting and the opportunity to keep standing up for Saskatchewan's interests in the Legislative Assembly.

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 – Hafford Special Care Home (306) 549-2108

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. – 4:00 p.m., 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.

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

“Loving Spoonfuls” – Evergreen Health Centre, Leoville (306) 984-2136

Duties include escorting residents to and from dining rooms, assist-

ing residents with meals when necessary, sitting with residents, and helping to make mealtime a pleasant time.

Shifts: Breakfast, Lunch and/or Dinner meals.

Monday – Sunday, once or twice per week.

“On Call” Volunteers – Spiritwood and District Health Centre (306) 883-4432

Extra volunteers are often needed for the long term care residents on an “on-call” basis, to assist with outings, parties, social gatherings, shopping trips, taking residents to appointments, etc.

Shifts: As needed

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.

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Blaine Lake, SK
 March 20, 7PM
 Senior's Centre

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“It depends...”

Interesting story in a recent Star-Phoenix. A retired Mountie, while snorkeling in some warm climate, came across a ring laying in the coral. There was an inscription in the ring – Darrin and Leah, 30-11-91.

He took it upon himself to try to find out who they ring belonged to, and to return it to him. He spent the better part of the next 27 years using police research techniques and wasn't able to come up with a solution to his quest.

Then he posted it on Facebook on Jan. 28 of this year, and asked friends for help. It was shared 2,500 times, and when someone put it on Reddit it received another 25,000 shares.

Within a short period of time, he was able to locate the “Darrin”, complete with a phone number. He called, and left a message. A week or so later, Darrin called, and in the course of the conversation, he said that he didn't want the ring back. He and Leah had divorced in 2000.

The story demonstrated the power of social media when used for good.

About the same time this story came out, there was another one that appeared on Facebook. Someone from Flin Flon had been doing some renovations and came across a letter written from overseas to a loved one back home. The finder of the letter stuffed it in a drawer, where it stayed for a few years. When she decided to clean the drawer, she came across the letter and decided to try to find someone from the family to whom the letter could be sent.

It didn't take long before a former Flin Flonner now living in Parksville, BC recognized that a friend of hers was a possible relative. The connections were made and verified, and the letter was sent to the family to become a cherished souvenir from wartime.

There you go, two examples of the positive impact of Facebook and other social media.

But it's not all fun and games. Front and centre recently is concern about a phenomenon known as the “Momo Challenge”, in which video clips inserted into such sites as Kids Youtube are supposedly encouraging children to do harm to themselves or to others.

On the one hand, there doesn't seem to be any reports of children actually doing anything that the clips are supposedly encouraging them to do, and reports of suicides by children as a result of “Momo” are for the most part bad reporting and not related.

Reputable debunking sites, like Snopes.com, don't put much stock in the phenomenon, but there are some parents who have asked their children about what they've seen or heard about Momo, leading to some very emotional and uncomfortable conversations. Hoax or not, it is making many children terrified to the point where they break down when asked about it.

At this point, it is widely believed that the whole thing is a hoax, and the surest way to avoid problems is to not click on links or call any unfamiliar numbers, and for kids to seek out adult help if they do come across anything disturbing, whether it is Momo or anything else. (For more information, we recommend the Wikipedia entry.)

At the very least, it is up to parents to be vigilant with their children's activities on social media and other sites, and to keep the lines of communication open so that kids feel comfortable talking about it with an adult.

Parents of children in Spiritwood will be able to get some ideas about internet safety from a presentation March 12 by Cpl Cory Patterson of the RCMP's Integrated Child exploitation Unit.

The presentation is called “Helping Children Stay Safe”. He will speak to Grades 4-6 students in the morning and 7-12 in the afternoon.

The evening session is for parents only.



SNC-Lavalin affair must be fully investigated

Over the past three weeks, Canadians have watched Liberal apologists twist themselves into knots trying to defend Prime Minister Justin Trudeau from allegations that he acted inappropriately in an effort to protect Quebec engineering firm SNC-Lavalin from going to court over corruption and bribery charges.

Their defences of Mr. Trudeau have been multi-pronged and highly coordinated, starting with attacks on the credibility of the *Globe and Mail*, the news outlet that broke the story – the *Globe and Mail*, we were told, was making a mountain out of a molehill, and doing so without any concrete evidence of wrongdoing.

Then, following her implication in the sordid SNC-Lavalin affair, former Justice Minister and attorney general Jody Wilson-Raybould became the next victim of Mr. Trudeau's defenders, and the attacks on her were far more vicious and personal.

Targeted even by her own colleagues, Ms. Wilson-Raybould was called “difficult to work with,” or dismissed as being bitter about her “demotion” to the Veterans Affairs portfolio.

Elsewhere, even some who believed that Mr. Trudeau may have acted inappropriately in the SNC-Lavalin matter were quick to argue that he acted in Canada's best interest by attempting to shield the company from prosecution that would have barred it from bidding on federal contracts for 10 years.

Quebec's pundits, in particular, waxed political about the need to protect jobs and the economy from an avoidable blow, and they argued that, unlike the old adage, a few bad apples shouldn't be allowed to spoil the barrel.

On and on this trinity of defences has been employed, intermingled with Mr. Trudeau's own denials and deflections, and early concerted efforts by the Liberal government to quash any fulsome investigation of the allegations.

Fortunately, those latter efforts to sweep the controversy under the rug failed, opening the door for Ms. Wilson-Raybould to “speak her truth.”

That truth, delivered before the Commons justice committee last Wednesday, was a damning and detailed account of a four-month campaign of “pressure”, “veiled threats”, and “interference” with regards to her decision not to pursue a deferred prosecution agreement (DPA) for SNC-Lavalin.

According to Ms. Wilson-Raybould, that pressure came both directly from Mr. Trudeau himself, and from a number of other high-ranking officials.

And, though she can only speculate, Ms. Wilson-Raybould said she felt that her refusal to give into this political pressure led

to her ouster as justice minister and attorney general.

Naturally, Mr. Trudeau's opinion of how events unfolded differs vastly from Ms. Wilson-Raybould's. But given that it would be a serious political faux-pas to call her a liar, he instead offered reporters the following bouquet of verbiage: “I completely disagree with the characterization of the former attorney general about these events.”

And so, we're left with a case of he said-she said. But, at the end of the day, who are we to believe?

Ms. Wilson-Raybould certainly has less to gain from fabricating statements, and also seems to have far more evidence. Indeed, whether she's telling the truth or lying, she's effectively made herself persona non grata in her own party.

Would she do that over nothing? It's hard to fathom a universe in which the answer to that question is yes.

Meanwhile, we have Mr. Trudeau, who in his three-plus years in office has demonstrated that he's not above pressuring or bullying others into bending to his will – just look at how he's treated the provinces when it comes to healthcare funding, and the impending federal carbon tax.

We also have a prime minister who once spoke about the importance of believing and supporting women who come forward with allegations of sexual assault. It seems only logical that this should hold true for any allegations of wrongdoing, and yet Mr. Trudeau has already demonstrated that he doesn't believe this applies to him.

When groping allegations, dating back more than decade, emerged last year, Mr. Trudeau conveniently couldn't recall any wrongdoing, then flat-out denied it – though, he conceded that the other party could have felt differently. Now, he's taking a similar tack with Ms. Wilson-Raybould.

Lastly, we have a prime minister who, throughout his first term in office, has shown either a limited understanding of, or blatant disregard for, the code of ethics to which he expected to adhere.

Beyond questions of character, Mr. Trudeau also has the most to gain from bending the truth, and even more to gain (votes and financial contributions) from protecting SNC-Lavalin – indeed, it's telling that just days after Ms. Wilson-Raybould's testimony, a Liberal cabinet minister was talking about how a DPA could still be on the table.

Of course, these things alone are not incontrovertible proof of wrongdoing, and Ms. Wilson-Raybould has already said that nothing criminal occurred.

Still, Canadians deserve answers to their many questions.



DAVE
HYNDMAN
~
News Editor



JORDAN
TWISS
~
Columnist

Disclosure from government far too slow

For those of us who had spent our adult, working lives demanding full-disclosure from governments, the SNC-Lavalin fiasco may just be the latest depressing episode.

Or at least, this has been the case so far.

As of the writing of this, former federal justice minister Jody Wilson-Raybould was getting ready to testify before the House the Commons justice committee.

But while she had received a partial waiver that would allow her to disclose some conversations with government officials surrounding the prosecution of the international Montreal-based engineering and construction company, even Wilson-Raybould seemed to be downplaying expectations on what she could say.

Wilson-Raybould had already written to the justice committee saying that

while she would be willing to speak, she wouldn't necessarily be able to speak freely because on-going constraints "do nothing to release me from any restrictions that apply to communications while I served as minister of veterans affairs and in relation to my resignation from that post or my presentation to cabinet after I had resigned."

Combined with cabinet and confidentiality by which Wilson-Raybould and all ministers who swear the oath of office must abide, it seemed increasingly doubtful the public was going to get the full disclosure it deserves from government.

This always seems to be the case in government where its members use their majority to hide information from the public.

Certainly, one gets the sense from the behaviour



MURRAY
MANDRYK

by Liberal government members that hearing the truth from Wilson-Raybould, or anyone else, was about the last thing they want.

The Conservative and NDP MPs on the committee were justifiably angry when the majority Liberal members on the committee initially used their numbers last month to block not only Wilson-Raybould, but also Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's chief of staff Ka-

tie Telford or former principal secretary Gerald Butts (who, mysteriously, has resigned his position).

According to Liberals MPs last month, having critical witnesses who could actually answer questions about allegations of undue pressure placed on the former justice minister isn't actually the kind of thing lawmakers on a justice committee do. "The role of the justice committee is not an investigative body," said Liberal MP Randy Boissonnault. "At best, committees of the House of Commons are political theatre that can occasionally achieve good studies."

But lest one feel too bad for the frustrated Conservatives on the committee, it's worth noting that under former prime minister Stephen Harper they pulled the same stunt to block key witnesses from testifying at

the Senate hearings investigating Senator Mike Duffy's expenses.

Moreover, Conservative Leader Andrew Scheer isn't exactly making any commitments to do anything differently. Nor would Scheer commit to changing the rules around criminal prosecution of SNC-Lavalin related to the deferred prosecution agreement that the engineering company was allegedly lobbying for in its meetings with Trudeau and others. (Scheer was among those that met privately with SNC-Lavalin's lobbyists.)

And here in Saskatchewan, we witnessed Saskatchewan Party government backbenchers block opposition requests that key government employees come forward to address legitimate questions on the overspending for land purchased by the Global Trans-

portation Hub just outside Regina.

But as frustrating as this is, maybe it's important to recognize that change comes slowly and in small increments.

There was a time not so long when the public didn't have accountability through freedom of information or disclosure through the timely release of budgets and quarterly and mid-year updates.

The political system resisted each and every one of these changes, too. Governments, once in power, don't want to change rules that are to their advantage. But change did happen.

Sometimes, the best we can do is watch for the events that produce small changes.

That Wilson-Raybould even appeared before this committee may just be such a small, baby step forward.

YOUR TWO CENTS

Canada should continue to lead AIDS fight

Dear editor,

With a sexy scandal in Ottawa, it is easy to ignore the mundane everyday business of the government.

Of course it is important to get to the bottom of the SNC-Lavalin/ Raybould matter, but let's not forget that there are lives at stake and decisions to be made on the international level.

This year, 2019, the Global Fund to fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, is due for replenishment.

Canada has been a key donor since the Global Fund's inception in 2002; it holds a seat on the Global Fund Board, and shares in its values. It was clear during the 5th replenishment conference in Montreal

in 2016, that Canadians care about fighting these diseases, and believe that Canada has a strong role to play.

The Global Fund has saved 27 million lives to date. I, for one, would like to see Canada continue to play a leading role.

Connie Lebeau,
Victoria, B.C.

Dear editor,

It's time for Canada to provide its share of the Global Fund to fight HIV, Malaria, and TB, due for replenishment this year.

A fully funded Global Fund will cut the death toll of HIV malaria and TB in half, saving 16 million lives - almost half the population of Canada - and provide an economic boost for the poorest nations of \$19 for every dollar invested.

These diseases strike women and children the

hardest, the backbone of community life.

With the federal government's focus on child and maternal health, Canadians expect our share of the Global Fund contribution to be timely and robust.

May Chan
Victoria, B.C.

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Member of



Two SHS curling teams bound for Provincials

Two of Spiritwood High School's three senior curling teams are off to the SHSAA Provincial Championships March 8-9 in Nipawin as a result of successful outings at the Regional Competition in Meadow Lake last weekend.

The Girls team, skipped by Aleah McNabb, with Payge Galambos, Jaida Jones and Amber Simonar, won the "A" Event and the gold medals with three straight wins.

The Mixed team, consisting of Dalton Wasden at skip, Emma Beaulac third, Jordan Tuttroen second and Olivia Parker lead had a tougher road, but rebounded from a loss with three straight wins to take the "B" Event and the silver medals.

The Boys team, with Kyle Brewer, Colton Balaszi,

Karstin Booth and Tyson Knot, curled well but came up empty against some pretty stiff competition.

The Boys got off to a slow start, getting bounced 8-1 in their first game, which was against one of the two Holy Cross teams in the competition. They rebounded in Game 2, downing Waldheim 10-6, but Game 3 was against the other Holy Cross team, who beat the Spiritwood boys 5-2, leaving them with nothing to do but to cheer on their SHS teammates.

The Girls started their draw with a 7-4 win over Centennial 2, and dispatched Rosthern by a narrow margin, 8-7 and then met Allan in the "A" final. Allan reached the final by beating Medstead 8-4 in the semi-final. Spiritwood

beat Allan 9-3 to claim the "A" Qualifier spot at the upcoming Provincials. Allan went on to beat Rosthern, winning the "B" and the silver medals.

The Mixed team started off with a win in their draw, downing Bishop Mahoney 9-2, but then lost a squeaker to Maidstone, 6-5 in Game 2. That put Spiritwood into the "B" side, with a longer route to the prize. That route started with a 12-2 thrashing of Lloydminster, followed by a 9-0 walloping over St. Walburg to earn a berth in the "B" final.

That "B" final was redemption for the Spiritwood foursome, as they exacted some payback over Maidstone, defeating them 7-3 and claiming the silver. St. Joseph (Saskatoon) won the "A".

The Mixed team is making their second appearance at Provincials, having won the bronze medals in last year's championships.

The Girls are headed to Provincials for their first time, apart from third Payge Galambos, who was a member of the Mixed team last year.

Two members of the Mixed team will also be competing in the CurlSask U18 Provincials later this month. Dalton Wasden and Emma Beaulac will be on teams competing from the area.

The Medstead Senior Girls, the other Battle West qualifier at the Regional Championships, won their first game, but then dropped the next two.



Colton Balaszi delivers a rock, while Karstin Booth and Tyson Knot prepare to sweep. Unfortunately, the boys took it on the chin at the Regional competition. However, they are all Grade 10 students, and have two more years of eligibility. They'll be heard from.



Spiritwood High Senior Girls, Provincials bound following their gold medal win at Regionals in Meadow Lake. L. to r.: Jason Reddekopp (coach) Aleah McNabb, Payge Galambos, Jaida Jones, Amber Simonar, Brad Nemish (coach).



Spiritwood High Senior Mixed, bronze medal winners at SHSAA Provincials last year, are off to Nipawin March 8-9 for the 2019 Provincials. L. to r.: Dalton Wasden, Emma Beaulac, Jordan Tuttroen, Olivia Parker, Brad Nemish (coach).

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'Sell Canadian only' system would hamper trade

The other day, on one of those glorious afternoons when I was actually off for holidays, I was perusing Facebook primarily as a time sink, when I happened upon a post that I found interesting.

The post called for Canadian gas stations to sell only Canadian gas, and for stores to sell only Canadian beef.

While the post was rather specific in focusing attention on only two things, it made sense in terms of wanting to support the economy of Western Canada

as oil and beef are rather significant to the region.

On the surface the idea would seem to make excellent sense. Frankly I've often thought there should be a maple leaf tag on any product made in Canada so that consumers could support local producers, and local jobs.

But, then I paused long enough to remember items in a store are not so easily defined by some arbitrary border line on a map.

And, of course it's important to remember the Canadian beef and



CALVIN DANIELS

oil sectors do rely heavily on export sales to be viable.

We only need to recall what happened in 2003 when a case of bovine spongiform encephalopathy was identified

in a cow in Alberta. Borders closed to Canadian exports of cattle and beef and the country was left with mountains of beef to deal with in a country with not enough people to deal with it. The cattle sector was shaken to its core with massive losses piling up until the BSE scare passed.

The Canadian agriculture sector in particular relies on access to export markets to be viable. It would be difficult to access those markets if we suddenly went to a Canadian only in-store

system here.

The idea of a label works no better.

Producers in Canada fought long and hard against the idea of Country of origin labelling (COOL), in the United States because it was seen as a major detriment to market access of Canadian beef.

The issue becomes when does beef become only from a particular country? Is a calf born in Alberta forever Canadian? Or, if that calf is sold to a U.S. feedlot when it's 500-pounds, does it become Ameri-

can beef at some point as it grows toward being ground into hamburger?

And, what about from a Canadian perspective, what do you label that same calf born here, finished in the States and then the steaks sold in a Canadian store?

The complexity of trade, and the need for open access as possible to foreign markets unfortunately make a sell Canadian only system one more likely to hamstring key sectors than it is to be supportive of Canada's economy.

Seed synergy and value creation: a solution in search of a problem

By Cam Goff, NFU

A few months have gone by since the first round of "consultation" meetings on "value creation" and the folks at Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) are in damage-control mode, trying to re-spin their message to farmers after its disastrous reception before Christmas.

In their November and December meetings, AAFC and its partner, the Seed Synergy group, were telling farmers that Canada's public plant breeding system was broken and that the federal government was not willing to increase its funding. Farmers were told that unless we help private plant breeders to step in and rescue us, Canada would become an agricultural backwater and suffer economic devastation.

In order to entice these private saviors, all farmers need to do is encourage our government to pass regulations allowed under the Plant Breeders Rights Act that would hand them a suite of control mechanisms over new plant varieties registered after February 2015.

Private breeders want the authority to impose additional royalties on farmers who use new varieties -- either on the entire crop (Option 1 - End Point Royalty) or on the portion of the crop saved for seed to grow a future crop (Option 2 - Trailing Contract Royalty). Royalty rates would be decided solely by the variety's owner, along with any other conditions they might attach to the use of the variety. The Seed Synergy group expects a new royalty regime would bring private seed companies over \$100 million per year.

The Seed Synergy group's mantra "Industry led, Government enabled" can be understood as "we'll tell you what we want, you make it legal." So, AAFC is attempting to get farmers to accept one of these two options, at the behest of the Seed Synergy group.

AAFC's "consultation" is based in large part on the false claim that Canada's public breeding system does not perform as well as the private sector.

Canada's public plant breeding system has operated for over a century. It started with farmer-scientists like Seager Wheeler and evolved into government infrastructure and programs that put the needs of Canada's farmers and citizens in first place. Its history right up to today is studded with world-class plant breeders consistently developing field crop varieties that are arguably the highest quality in the world, as well as fruit and vegetable varieties uniquely adapted to our northern climate. A peer-reviewed study showed that publicly bred wheat had 35% greater rate of yield increase compared with privately bred canola between 1981 and 2000, and 13% greater rate between 2000 and 2011.

Farmers have willingly contributed hundreds of millions of dollars to the public system by way of per-bushel crop check-offs and levies. Independent studies show returns from plant breeding range from \$7 to \$20 per dollar invested, with AAFC itself claiming an 11:1 return rate. Our public plant breeding system retains the revenue generated by its services, returns real value to our public system, our farmers and the Canadian economy.

In response to farmers' concerns that the government is trying to exit plant breeding, AAFC says the federal government is not going to get out completely, but will continue doing "discovery science" -- the long, hard background work of developing new lines - before handing promising germplasm to private industry to finish and register, which would allow the seed companies to control access to the varieties and reap the royalties from farmers.

Not surprisingly, farmers' response to

AAFC's options for "value creation" by compelling farmers to fund private sector breeding with royalty payments was overwhelmingly negative.

As a result, AAFC has changed their approach. Now they proclaim they are open to other ideas -- without a formal process for any input on alternatives. Their new pitch is a soft-sell, but they're still selling the same unwanted options.

The critical question is why does AAFC believe Canadian farmers and citizens will be better off if the returns from public and farmer money invested into plant breeding is diverted to private companies

where it can flow offshore to fatten shareholder dividends?

There is no doubt that the changes AAFC is proposing will create untold wealth and power for private plant breeders at the cost of Canada's farmers and citizens, and ultimately give them control over the very basis of our food system: seed.

Given the health and vigor of Canada's public plant breeding system, and farmers' willingness to step up and help to enhance and improve it, it appears that Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada's "Value Creation" initiative is a unwanted solution to a manufactured problem.

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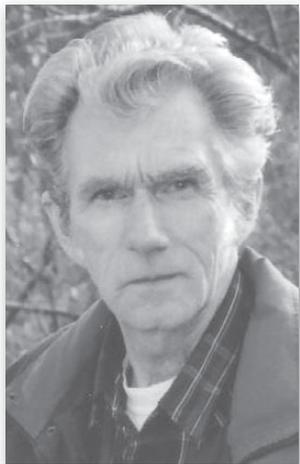
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OBITUARY

Gordon Wood



WOOD - Gordon

In loving memory we celebrate the life of Gordon Robert Wood who passed away March 1, 2019 in Banff, AB. surrounded by his living family and friends.

Gordon will be remembered by his wife Wendy Wood of Canmore; son Jason of Calgary; daughter Annette Stewart (Wood) and husband Tom of Edmonton; three grand daughters Sabrina, Nicole and Shannon and great granddaughter Triniti. He is also survived by his sister Vir-

ginia (Eddie) of Shell Lake, Sask. and numerous nieces, nephews and friends.

Gordon was born on the farm at Wood Hill, Saskatchewan August 24, 1933. He was predeceased by his parents Kenneth and Margaret Wood, sibling twins James and Margaret and one sister Alice.

Gordon first fell in love with Canmore when he arrived with his bride in 1971. They raised their family in small town Didsbury until 1992, then moving to Banff. After a short stay in Creston, BC, they returned to Canmore to once again enjoy mountain living. During his life, he worked at a variety of different jobs, the last one being at Brewster Transportation.

Gordon enjoyed spending time with family and friends, sharing stories and fond memories of old times.

Donations can be made to the Parkinsons

Society of Southern Alberta, the recreation department at St. Martha's long term care in Banff or the Heart and Stroke Foundation.

Memorial service for Gordon will be held at 1:00 pm on Friday, March 15, 2019 in the Ralph Connor Memorial Untied Church in Canmore (also known as the little white church on Main street). Private family burial of the urn will be held at a later date in the Canmore Cemetery.

Condolences for the family may be sent to www.bowriverfuneral.com

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Growing sweet potatoes in Saskatchewan

By Jill Thomson

For several years we have been growing sweet potatoes in our garden in Saskatoon, harvesting enough tubers that we eat them several times a week until the New Year. We were introduced to the idea of growing our own sweet potatoes by our gardening friends, Cedric and Anne Gillott, who started growing them in 2015. They shared their experience, and some produce, with us, and now we have grown them for 3 years and are preparing for our 2019 crop.

Sweet potatoes (*Ipomea batatas*) are native to tropical America, and are related to the Morning Glory flowers that grow in many of our gardens. They are not closely related to our common potatoes (*Solanum tuberosum*) or yams (*Dioscorea* spp). They require a longer frost-free period than is normal for Saskatchewan and extra care must be taken to give them warm soil and adequate water during the summer, and to protect them from frost in late spring or early fall.

Sweet potatoes are planted as slips, which are rooted shoots taken from parent plants. We have been buying our rooted slips from Mapple Farm (New Brunswick). Vesey's (Prince Edward Island) sell slips, and it is also possible to start your own plants from tubers sold in grocery stores. This winter our tubers produced small shoots and I have started plants from these. We will either plant them out in late May, or take shoots off them and root them (typically roots appear after 3-4 days in water).

We have tried about 8 of the cultivars available. Our favourite is Beaugard, an older cultivar with orange flesh and tan skin. Covington and Carter are similar cultivars that do well in our growing conditions. The book "Sweet Potatoes for the Home Garden" by Ken Allan, gives excellent information on growing this crop, and describes most of the cultivars. There is also an article in the Gardener magazine that provides information on cultivation of sweet potatoes in the prairies (Summer 2017, Vol 23 Issue 2).

We dig our soil bed in mid May, adding



Harvest in 2016. Image credit: Jill Thomson

in compost, watering the soil well, laying down a soaker hose, and then covering the bed with plastic (either clear or black). In early June we usually put 20-24 plants in a 3.5m bed, which is 1m wide, in a staggered pattern (about 45cm apart). A circle or slit is cut out of the plastic at regular spacing and the rooted slips are planted in the soil, through the holes in the plastic. A saucer-like depression is left around the slip, to catch water, and the edges of the plastic are held down by a layer of earth. We water frequently, every 2-3 days depending on rainfall and temperature. Our bed has sandy soil so frequent watering is required. If there is a risk of frost then we cover the beds at the beginning and end of the season. This extends the growing season for the plants, as they require a temperature above 10°C to grow, and will be killed by frost.

The plants require very little attention during the summer, apart from frequent watering. There may be small caterpillars, of the morning glory plume moth, that will eat new leaves but these likely do not impact yield. I did apply one spray of Bt in our first year.

Harvest is exciting, as you really don't know what to expect. Cut the green leaves and stems off before rolling back the plastic and carefully dig away the soil. Most plants have a cluster of tubers hanging down near the main stem. Occasionally the roots go searching for water, and then a tuber will be found away from the main plant. Our biggest tubers are usually about 300g, and 20-30cm long. The mice (or voles) do like them too and in our first year several bigger tubers were hollowed out. The following year we were careful to keep the edges of the plastic sealed in with earth and we had no further rodent problem.

Jill Thomson is a plant disease specialist (retired) who enjoys gardening in Saskatoon with her family, including the dogs.

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.



2018 crop. Image credit: Jill Thomson

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Regular services, Sunday school and special services will be listed.

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Super sniper Ovechkin not slowing down

Fans at the Bell Centre in Montreal sing 'Day O' when they get excited about their Habs, but in Washington, and all around the National Hockey League for that matter, a drawn-out version of "AAAAAA OOOOOO" should be part of the night's entertainment in tribute to the greatest sniper of our time, the Great 8, Alex Ovechkin.

The Capitals captain, whose personal career highlight came last June when Washington won its first Stanley Cup, is a goal-scorer's goal scorer and it seems he's getting better with age.

There's no argument about this, however: Ovechkin is the best Russian-born player to ever play in the NHL. Pavel Datsyuk, Evgeni Malkin, Igor Larionov and Sergei Fedorov had or are having terrific careers, but it's hard to argue with more than 650 goals, and counting. Just 33 years old, Ovechkin doesn't seem to be slowing down. His fans

bring out their calculators, punch in a few numbers and voila! — five more 50-goal seasons or seven 35-goal campaigns and even the 894-goal total of the greatest of all time, Wayne Gretzky, would be eclipsed by Ovechkin on the NHL's career goal-scoring list.

If he continued on his late-February pace toward a 58- or 60-goal season, Ovechkin would record the second most prolific scoring season of his career, trailing only the 65 goals he tallied in his third season in the league. But he has been a model of consistency, with seven 50-plus-goal seasons and a career low of 32 goals in 2012-13. Most NHLers would give up their red Ferrari or annual trip to Kauai in exchange for a single 32-goal season.

NHL goalies know where Ovechkin will be and what he will attempt to do while the Capitals are on the power play, but are virtually power-



BRUCE
PENTON

less to stop him. He sets up near the left face-off circle, waits while his mates pass it around enough to get the goaltender leaning a particular way and then quickly drift the puck over to Ovechkin, who's already winding up while the puck is en route. Then, in a blur, he fires the puck in excess of 100 MPH and, more often than not, beats the overmatched netminder, setting off yet another celebration.

The future Hall of Famer is

not just about goal-scoring, however. He plays with an obvious joy on the ice and despite a rugged style of play, he's durable. Only once in his career has he missed more than 10 games in a season.

In Washington these days, the go-to phrase is not Russian collusion, but, thanks to Ovechkin, it's Russian celebration.

• Dwight Perry of the Seattle Times: "The Mariners, whose home becomes 'T-Mobile Park' this season, say they'll keep only the 'S' from the big Safeco Field letters that were removed from the ballpark last week. Fed-up fans, noting the team's 18-year playoff drought, immediately put in first dibs on the 'L.'"

• Comedy writer Tim Hunter, on Colorado State selling wine and beer at home basketball games: "If you've seen them play, you'll understand why."

• Hockey Night in Canada curmudgeon Brian Burke,

on the scoring woes of Jets' Patrik Laine: "This is not a slump now. This is a horrible Grand Canyon of failure."

• Norman Chad of the Washington Post, on Twitter: "If Robert Kraft's misdemeanor charge of soliciting a prostitute ultimately goes to replay review, he will be exonerated."

• Perry again: "Look who's back, back, back in the booth. Former ESPN icon Chris Berne will be among the rotating stable of announcers calling Red Sox games on WEEI Radio this year. Mookie Betts and Mitch 'This Land Is' Moreland refused comment."

• Comedy writer Jim Barach: "Zion Williamson of Duke hurt his knee when his Nike shoe fell apart in a game. Somewhere in China there is a six-year-old who is in a whole lot of trouble."

• RJ Currie of sportsdeke.com: "A final score from the Canadian women's curling

championship: PEI 13; New Brunswick 12. Put it this way: they exceeded the Patriots-Rams Super Bowl total by three field goals."

• Currie again: "An ESPN pundit suggested the Westminster Dog Show was biased because for the 47th time out of 115 events, a terrier won. Why not say it's fixed — or in dog terms: call a spay a spay?"

• Another one from Currie: "The Hartford Yard Goats baseball team no longer serves peanuts or Cracker Jack due to nut allergies. A few years ago Mariners also solved a nut problem: they cut Milton Bradley."

• Headline at TheOnion.com: "Diamondbacks settle long-standing civil suit with offspring of bird hit by Randy Johnson's fastball."

• Dwight Perry again: 20/20 hindsight: Marshawn Lynch should have run. Robert Kraft should have passed."

Care to comment? Email brucepenton2003@yahoo.ca

Midgets out in league and provincial play

The season for the combined Glaslyn-Spiritwood Midget hockey team came to an end this past weekend. They lost their league playoff game to the Pierceland Panthers in Spiritwood on Saturday, and then dropped an 8-4 decision in the

second game of their Provincial Midget "C" Playoff in Hague the next day.

The loss in Hague Sunday gave them a 15-6 win in the two-game total-goal series, and moved Hague into the northern final against Cudworth, who

had downed Watrous 9-8.

The previous night, Glaslyn appeared to be holding their own against Pierceland, jumping off to an early 2-0 lead, which, unfortunately evaporated later in the period. Glaslyn held a 4-3 advantage after two periods with a tie-breaking goal coming with just 15 seconds remaining in the frame.

However, the third period belonged to Pierceland, which scored four unanswered, including two within seconds of each other that took the wind out of the sails of the Glaslyn bunch.

With their win, the Panthers took the best of three series two games to none, and will now meet Edam in the next round.

In other S.T.E.P. League series:

PEE WEE: Meadow Lake 2 downed the Spiritwood Timberwolves two games to none to win their series on the "B" Side.

ATOM "A": Spiritwood 2 beat Spiritwood 1 two games to none and will meet Meadow Lake 3. The first two games are March 5 in Spiritwood and March 7 in Meadow Lake.

ATOM "B": Spiritwood 1 lost their series 2-0 to Turtleford.



Atom 2 won their series over Atom 1.



Pierceland scored on this play, giving them a third-period lead they would not relinquish.



A Panther is foiled on the game's only penalty shot.



Pierceland pressure, but the puck stayed out.

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Your newspaper helps stitch our communities together - questioning what needs questioning and serving as the voice of our democracy. Newspaper journalism is essential to protect our vibrant communities. **Access to truthful, local news is under threat.** Now more than ever we need reliable LOCAL journalism.

Join the list to keep LOCAL news alive at newspapersmatter.ca



CAREER TRAINING



WIM/WiN-SK Mentorship Program is now recruiting **WOMEN WORKING IN THE MINING INDUSTRY AND UNIVERSITY AND TRADES STUDENTS** interested in a career in mining or mining support industries.

Visit wimwinsk.com or email mentorship@wimwinsk.com.

Application deadline March 15, 2019.

COMING EVENTS

BIG RIVER FISH DERBY on Cowan Lake. **SATURDAY, MARCH 23, 2019**
For info visit: www.bigriver.ca or email: krienkemaisie@sasktel.net To register call: 306-469-7990.

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FOR SALE

Advertisements and statements contained herein are the sole responsibility of the persons or entities that post the advertisement, and the Saskatchewan Weekly Newspaper Association and membership do not make any warranty as to the accuracy, completeness, truthfulness or reliability of such advertisements. For greater information on advertising conditions, please consult the Association's Blanket Advertising Conditions on our website at www.swna.com.

FOR SALE

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For Details Contact Your Local Newspaper or the Saskatchewan Weekly Newspapers Association
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LOCAL MATTERS.

Support advertisers that power your community voice.

NEWSPAPERS MATTER
NOW MORE THAN EVER



Game day fun for kids

Some eleven young people took part in Game Day at the Spiritwood Library Feb. 27.

Game Day is a joint activity of the Library and the Spiritwood Literary Partnership. As with the case with other Game Days, it was held on a day when Spiritwood schools had an early dismissal.

Participants played games provided in a kit from Wapiti Regional Li-

brary, including such old favorites as Uno and Jenga as well as never-seen-before games like Hoot Owl Hoot and Fish Stix, and they don't know what they're getting for games until they get the shipment from Wapiti.

The next joint Library-Literacy Partnership activity day will be March 27. Space is limited, so interested children should pre-register at the Library.



Another new game, Hoot Owl Hoot, with Arianna, Kay Wilson, Avarie and Danica.



Emily, Rory, Chance and Favian playing Hed Banz.



Rory looks on as Chance removes a block from the tower in a fun game of Jenga.



Maya, Ciara, Favian and Emily played a new game, called Fish Stix.



Lucas and Pujan, with Susan Siegel, play a spirited game of Uno, with Librarian Joyce Carriere giving a bit of assistance to Pujan.

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 Skating Club presents "Through the Year". Sunday, March 17, 2019, 2 pm, Spiritwood Arena. Silver Collection. A Skate Canada Sanctioned Event.

TRIPLE YOUR ADVERTISING

We'll advertise your important community event in our Community Calendar FREE for two weeks prior to the event with the purchase of a 2 column x 2" Display ad for only:

\$49.00 plus G.S.T. - A savings of over 30%

Available to Non-Profit & Community Organizations Only

Call Now For Further Details

"Don't miss out on letting your Community and others know of your event!"

Spiritwood Herald

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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.

These prestigious awards are given to youth who:

- Have a positive lifestyle
- Have had the ability to overcome life's challenges
- Have a strong sense of caring and responsibility
- Are dedicated to community and school
- Inspire others
- Are between the ages of 8 to 18



This year four deserving youth will receive \$3000 bursaries to use towards their post-secondary education.

Visit www.swna.com for further information and nomination forms

Nominations close March 31, 2019

