

Studio 747's Mini Showcase delights crowd



The small jazz group, consisting of Danielle Cadrain, Brienne Grenier, Addison Kerber, Emersyn Nahorniak, and Jordyn Verbonac, closed out the first act with a high-energy number.

By JORDAN TWISS

Shellbrook Chronicle Reporter

The dancers of Studio 747 took over the Shellbrook Theatre for their annual Mini Showcase on Saturday, March 9, giving their family and friends, and the community, a sneak peek at the hard work they've put in to the 2023-2024 dance season so far.

Though billed as a mini showcase, the evening's program packed 27 solo, duet, and small group numbers, in varying styles of dance, into a thrilling 90-minute package. As always, the dancers left everything they had on the stage, and the audience rewarded them with raucous applause and cheers.

The Mini Showcase was introduced when long-time instructor, and now owner and director, Kelly Woodley took over the studio from the former Rhythm Works Dance Studio and rebranded it as Studio 747. For him, the move to two annual shows from just one year-end recital held in May was all about giving everyone a chance to

shine without making the shows too long or too challenging to coordinate.

When it comes to the Mini Showcase, it's all about letting the solo, duet, and small group routines take the well-deserved spotlight after months and months of hard work by the dancers.

As Woodley notes, almost every performance on Saturday night was choreographed and rehearsed outside of weekly classes. During the choreography and rehearsing process, each dancer gets a set number of hours with their instructor (either Woodley or instructor Bailey Doucette) to learn and polish their routines. After this, it's up to the dancers to put in the work to make sure their routines are ready to be performed on the stage.

In the end, Woodley says this translates into hundreds of extra hours of preparation, which in turn translates into the incredible show he feels his dancers put on Saturday evening.

"Seeing our dancers' hard work pay off in this event is very rewarding, because they have made their routines what you see on stage," Woodley said.

"It teaches them to work independently, and to be determined and proud of the work they have done."

Looking at the dance season to date, Woodley says it's been one of all-around growth for Studio 747. Program enrolment is up, as a number of new faces have joined the Studio 747 family, requiring Woodley to hire on Doucette as an additional instructor at the end of the last dance season.

Studio 747 has also expanded its offerings to adults, and saw a strong turnout at adult tap dance classes.

Still, Woodley's primary passion is his young dancers, and seeing the growth their hard work fosters. And he says he can't wait to see how this work pays off during the upcoming competition season.

"In addition to performing in the mini showcase, our dancers are taking the stage at three competitions," he said. "We decided to try some new competitions a little further from home this year, and are competing in Moose Jaw, Prince Albert, and Regina."



Hannah Nordin delighted the audience with her ballet solo.

More photos on page 12



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*Down on the corner...
First & Main*

New Canadians opening new doors in Spiritwood

By **BEVRA FEE**
Spiritwood Herald Reporter

When he was a resident of Malaybalay City in the province of Bukidnon in the Philippines, the concept of operating heavy equipment to groom a hockey rink's ice was not a line of thought that occurred to him as an occupation. In fact, skating rinks only exist in the larger Filipino cities with a population

of half a million people or so.

However, three years into his life in Canada, Marvin Balbon finds himself working at Spiritwood Rec Centre, driving the Zamboni.

"For me it's new – we don't have ice except in big malls – and I thought it would be interesting to try driving Zamboni, so I applied for the job."

When asked what his family back home thinks of his new

task, Marvin confides that his dad says, "Now you have to put your kids in hockey!"

Trained by veteran Zamboni driver Joyce Willick (now just shy of 87 years old and in her first year of retirement), Marvin is perfecting his skills at ice making. He admits that the Zamboni is not the hardest part of the process. Rather, it's the early stages of building up the ice at the beginning of the season, in order to be able to groom it with the Zamboni.

For her part, Willick, who has been part of the rink crew in some capacity since 1984, training her two replacement drivers was a rewarding experience. "In their job interview, they asked 'what is a Zamboni?' But they were so eager to learn, and they had so many questions – they hardly wanted to wait the 20 minutes until it was time to flood the ice again."

Joined in Zamboni duty for the 2023/24 rink season by Jeffrey Mangubat – also hailing from the Philippines – and under the daily guidance of long-time ice technician Fraser MacFarlane, Balbon expressed

satisfaction in the title and is eager to hone his skills again next season. Because Balbon and Mangubat both work full-time day jobs in their honey business, they are part-time at the arena and work mostly afternoon shifts.

Facility Manager Glennalda Saam compliments the newcomers. "They fit right in here at the arena and they are always happy, saying hello to everyone

and getting right to work whenever they are scheduled – they seem to be having fun," she said.

Mangubat, reflecting on his first season as a new Zamboni driver, stated, "Honestly, at first I thought I could never do it – driving Zamboni – but later, I found it to be fun, and it makes me happy to feel that we can help and be part of the community by working in the arena."



Jeffrey Mangubat shows off freshly flooded ice at Spiritwood Arena.



Marvin Balbon on duty, operating the Zamboni at the Spiritwood Arena.

Access sponsors free Wifi at Spiritwood rink

By **JORDAN TWISS**
Shellbrook Chronicle Reporter

Thanks to a signal boost from Access Communications, through its Community Facilities sponsorship program, visitors to the Spiritwood and District Recreation Centre now have access to free WiFi.

SARCS announced the arrangement on Facebook at the end of February, and SARCS Facility Supervisor Glennalda Saam says the availability of free internet has already allowed the Rec Centre to bring in LiveBarn, an online streaming service for youth and amateur sports.

This will be a major asset for the facility, allowing community members who can't make it out to games

to still tune into the action, and Saam says there are other plans made possible by having WiFi at the rink.

"In the near future, we will be upgrading our till system for the kitchen, allowing us to offer debit to our customers and making it easier for our volunteers to run an efficient kitchen," Saam added.

Though Access Communications wouldn't confirm how long the sponsorship will be in place, spokesperson Mark Rathwell said it's a long-term deal.

"Access Communications believes in giving back to the community. One of our core-values is about being community-oriented. Our sponsorship of the Spiritwood & District Recreation Centre with free WiFi is one of the many ways we demonstrate that commitment," he said.

"We cover over 230 communities and almost 200,000 square kilometres of rural Saskatchewan. We give back in three main ways as an organization:

AccessNow TV – our community channels – the Access Communications Children's Fund, and corporate sponsorships."

In addition to the free WiFi sponsored at the Spiritwood Rec Centre, Access Communications sponsors free WiFi in facilities in at least 29 other communities in the province.

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Bylaw 159/2022 pursuant to section 214 of *The Municipalities Act* has been passed and the assessment notices have been sent as required.

Any person who wishes to appeal against their assessment is required to file their notice of appeal along with a non-refundable fee of \$300 to: *The Centralized Board of Revision, ADR Institute of Saskatchewan Centralized Board of Revision Services Inc.* Phone: 306-528-2131 cbor@adrsaskatchewan.ca
A copy of the notice should also be sent to *The Administrator of the Resort Village of Chitek Lake*, Box 70, Chitek Lake, SK S0J 0L0 by the 15th day of April, 2024.

Dated this 14th day of March, 2024.

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The list shall be accompanied by a letter of good standing with WCB and proof of liability insurance of no less than 3 million dollars applicable to their operations.

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Shellbrook pool to be built in Centennial Park

By **JORDAN TWISS**
Shellbrook Chronicle Reporter

Following months of deliberation and investigation by the Parkland Pool Project Steering Committee, Centennial Park has been selected as the location for the future Shellbrook Swimming Pool.

Steering Committee chair Mark Klaassen says the decision was not made lightly, and the committee looked at the decision from a lot of different angles, including cost to prepare the site, the location in the town itself, surrounding green space, access from Highway 3, and town demographics.

Since the committee was formed, it has been considering a handful of potential locations, including where the existing pool is, a little further north in Kin Park (by the tourist booth), the area by the Hidden Hills of Shellbrook Golf Course and Parkland Integrated Health Centre, and Centennial Park.

While other locations being considered had their own pros and cons, Klaassen says Centennial Park simply offered the most pros and the fewest cons.

“This location checked all the boxes for us, as it is fully serviced already with water and sewer as well as curb and gutter. The surrounding green space is large and offers the correct atmosphere that we are looking for,” he said.

Also working in Centennial Park’s favour were the ease of access for both town residents and those from out of town, the space for the design and build to be done with minimal disruption to the rest of the park, and also the availability of space for adequate parking.

While a location has been settled on, there’s still a long way to go before a new Shellbrook Swimming Pool is built and operating. Currently, about \$320,000 has been raised towards the project.

The Story So Far

According to a feasibility study conducted by aodbt architecture + interior design in 2022, the price tag for a new pool is about \$4.6 million. That same study said the cost of repairing the existing pool, which was built in 1971, would be about \$2.6 million.

The quote for a new pool includes everything: the design, the pool, and the building containing the changerooms, space for the lifeguards, and the mechanical room. Break-

ing down the numbers, Klaassen said the feasibility study pegged the cost of the new building was \$1.2 million, while the new pool was quoted around \$2.2 million, putting the costs in line with what other communities have paid to replace their swimming pools in recent years.

Klaassen says the loss of the pool would be economically devastating, not just for the community but for the whole region, including communities as far away as Big River, Blaine Lake, Spiritwood, and Glaslyn — a claim supported by the fact that more than 800 people registered for swimming lessons and swim programming last summer.

Aside from the economic rationale to replace the existing pool, Klaassen says a new pool would also be a boon for the Shellbrook Silverfins, as the current pool doesn’t meet Swim Saskatchewan’s standards to host meets and competitions.

A replacement would also allow for some other key upgrades, including a zero-depth entry for little swimmers, spray features or a waterslide, and a 25-metre lane pool. And finally, eliminating current issues with the high water table would allow the pool to open up earlier in the season, meaning more space for lessons and programming.

Northern Spirit 4-H holds public speaking event

By **MYA DUHAIME**
Northern Spirit 4-H

The Northern Spirit 4-H Club held its annual Public Speaking event at the Pioneer Center in Spiritwood Feb. 25, 2024. At 1 p.m. sharp, the first of 27 members started their speaking. The Cloverbud and Junior members were the first half of the program. With such a large club, the decision was made to make sure all the younger members spoke first.

After the first 19 members spoke there was an intermission and awards were handed out for the Cloverbud and Junior members.

Skyler Booker placed first with her speech titled “Oreo,” and Casi Lepage placed second with her speech titled “Grandma and Grandpa’s Farm” in the Cloverbud category.

Cameron Gaboury took first place with his speech titled “Lego,” and Irvin Jones nabbed second with his speech about “Irvin Roy Jones” in the Junior category.

The Intermediate and Seniors were up for the later part of the afternoon. With their speeches being longer than the younger categories, it was only fair they all perform last.

Intermediate winners were Ethan Gaboury in first place with his speech titled “Artificial Intelligence,” followed by the second place winner Mya Duhaime with her speech titled “Things I would rather forget”.

And last but not least, the Seniors. Kiara Duhaime placed first with her speech titled “Small Business Expansion,” and second place was awarded

to Sophie Lafond with her speech titled “Barefoot Trimming.”

Volunteer judges who donated their time to

the event included Holly Youst, Heather Gatzke, Dalice Lavoie, Stacy Hill, Eden Turgeon, Jenny Soucy, and Allison Tetreault.

The event was organized by general leader Lisa Rose and Larissa Swityk-Conacher, and MCed by Kendall Gaboury.

Successful members advanced to the District 33 Public Speaking event, which was held on Sunday, March 10th in Debden.



Northern Spirit 4-H members and volunteer judges. Back row, left to right: Judges Heather Gatzke, Jennifer Soucy, Stacy Hill, Holly Youst, Dalice Lavoie, Allison Tetreault, and Eden Turgeon. Middle: Ethan Gaboury, Caleb Turgeon, and Sophie Lafond. Front row: Mya Duhaime, Avarie Conacher, Tenille Rose, Cameron Gaboury, Tyce Turgeon, Kiara Duhaime, and Neve Lafond.

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Teachers have good reason to doubt gov't promises

What's been most remarkable in the ongoing war of attrition between the province's educators and the Sask. Party government, is the almost complete radio silence from Premier Scott Moe.

Easily in the running for Canada's most outspoken premier (alongside Alberta counterpart Danielle Smith), Mr. Moe always seems to have something to say about most important issues.

Yet, as weeks have turned to months, and contract negotiations between the Ministry of Education and the teachers' union have remained at a standstill, Mr. Moe hasn't done much beyond share the occasional Twitter post from Education Minister Jeremy Cockrill.

This all changed in a big way last week, as the spring session of the Legislature got under way and the Sask. Party government got back to work.

Now, when I say "changed in a big way," I don't mean Mr. Moe stepped outside to talk face-to-face with any of the 3,500 educators who gathered outside the Legislature building in Regina last Monday, March 4 (though, he did offer them an insincere "Thanks for coming out, folks").

No. As we all know, this is a government that does all of its "communicating" through taxpayer-funded ads and social media, where it can present its case without facing any questions or having to listen to what the other side is saying.

And so, it's no surprise that on March 4 (the very same day he was thanking teachers for showing up at the Legislature to voice their concerns), Mr. Moe took to Twitter to call out the Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation (STF) for "only being at the table for 30 minutes in the last five months" while his government remains "ready to bargain at any time."

"Students and teachers should be in the classroom. The teachers' union should be at the bargaining table," Mr. Moe wrote, apparently oblivious to the fact that this means government negotiators have spent just as little time at the bargaining table.

Along with the post, Mr. Moe shared a clip of Mr. Cockrill speaking in the Legislature, outlining the offer the government has put on the table: a wage increase on par with those received by



JORDAN TWISS
~
News Editor

MLAs (3 per cent per year over the next four years), control over dental benefits, two newly launched pilot programs, and a commitment, outside of contract negotiations, to boost funding to address class size and complexity by \$53.1 million.

Taking to Twitter again two days later, Mr. Moe posted a video in which he took the unprecedented step of unveiling a piece of the upcoming education budget.

The reveal included a government commitment to earmark \$356 million for classroom supports (an increase of \$45 million over last year's budget), and a \$180 million boost to school operating funding, increasing the school divisions' portion of the budget to \$2.2 billion from \$2 billion.

"That is a record budget to address classroom size and complexity. And we will continue to work very closely with our school divisions to ensure that this record investment is used where it is needed the most — right in our classrooms, supporting our students," Moe said, calling on the STF to pause job actions and return to the bargaining table.

Altogether, this makes four occasions on which the Sask. Party government has made program or funding announcements to address educators' classroom-related concerns outside of contract negotiations.

To make matters worse, the government revealed on Friday morning (March 8), that the increased funding is part of a four-year deal it signed with the Saskatchewan School Boards Association (instead of the STF and educators).

Apparently, then, the government was more than willing to negotiate on class size and complexity — just not with the province's educators, and not at the bargaining table where it can be held to account through a contract.

What's more, it should be lost on no one that the Sask. Party government's upcoming budget is an election budget, meaning it's more likely to promise everything but the kitchen sink to boost its odds of getting re-elected.

It's a practice as old as politics, used by governments and political parties of every possible stripe, because they have nothing to lose.

If the Sask. Party wins the election and has a strong enough mandate, it can



easily walk away from its commitments, and voters have no choice but to wait another four years to hold it accountable for breaking its promise.

And if it loses the election, the whole budget is moot and it's off the hook.

For its part, the STF has said it has no plans to take the government's bait and won't be pausing job actions or returning to the table until the government's bargaining committee is given a new negotiating mandate.

"Saskatchewan teachers have made it clear that predictable, sustainable funding to address classroom size and complexity is their priority," said STF President Samantha Becotte in a statement.

"This government has a long history of making and breaking promises when it comes to funding education. That's why teachers insist that any measures to address class size and complexity be included in a province-wide collective agreement — this is the only way to ensure government will live up to its word."

It's easy to understand why the province's educators are sceptical of any non-binding commitments made by the Sask. Party government.

In 2017, the government faced protests against Bill 63, a revision of the Education Act that critics believed would have stripped school boards of their power to be a local voice in education (the very same "local voice" it's been purporting to protect in its ongoing contract negotiations with educators).

That same year, in a tough 2017-2018 budget that also saw the PST increased

to 6 per cent and expanded to cover more goods and services, education was on the chopping block, with funding cuts totalling \$54 million (though \$30 million of this was "restored" in the 2018-2019 budget).

The cuts to education were made as the government was trying to find its way back to a balanced budget in the aftermath of three consecutive years of low resource prices.

So, if education was one of the first things on the Sask. Party government's chopping block then, what's to keep it off the chopping block when economic times get tough again?

And those times, it seems, are coming sooner rather than later.

In last spring's budget, the government optimistically projected a \$1 billion surplus. But by the fall, due to "unforeseen" drops in potash revenues and crop production, this surplus had become a \$250 million deficit, and it's still unclear if \$757 million in special warrant spending announced last month will see the deficit soar past \$1 billion (because the Sask. Party government won't say).

With potash prices even lower than they were through the last budget cycle, and the spring runoff forecast looking rather grim, it's unlikely potash revenues and crop production will rebound in this budget.

So, where is the Sask. Party government planning to make up the shortfall?

Based on its history, you can't blame educators for fearing it could come from education.

Shellbrook Chronicle

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Report from the Legislature

Later this month, the new provincial budget will deliver the largest ever increase in school operating funding and a record new commitment to address classroom size and complexity. Premier Scott Moe recently took the unusual step of announcing part of the education budget prior to budget day, to clearly demonstrate our government's commitment to address teachers' concerns around classroom sup-

ports. The 2024-25 provincial budget will include the largest increase in school operating funding in Saskatchewan's history. There will be \$180 million of increased funding, up nearly 9 per cent, to \$2.2 billion. This increase will include over \$356 million that is specifically allocated to classroom supports, an increase of over \$45 million or about 15 per cent since last year.

In light of these significant new commitments, we are asking the STF to pause their job action so that teachers and students can

return to their classrooms, and the teachers' union can return to the bargaining table.

Our government recently introduced the Saskatchewan Labour Market Strategy, outlining how the province will ensure Saskatchewan people benefit from the jobs our economy is creating and that Saskatchewan employers have access to the workforce needed to succeed. The strategy outlines how the province is preparing people for both current and emerging jobs in Saskatchewan and aligning training

opportunities in post-secondary institutions to the needs of industry.

A strong labour force drives healthy economies and successful communities, and this strategy is our roadmap to secure a labour force that keeps pace with growing demands and opportunities of our economy. Through strategic investments that align the workforce with the needs of industry, we are ensuring that investment in to our province is supported and that growth translates into a better quality of life for Saskatchewan people.

Our province's growing labour force is supported by a growing economy. Saskatchewan's agriculture sector continues to experience growth, further fuelling a strong provincial economy. Agri-food exports to India have increased in volume by over 71 per cent from 2022 to 2023. Exports of Saskatchewan lentils and peas to India, the province's largest pulse market, experienced significant growth by the end of 2023.

Our government ensures Saskatchewan's agricultural industry can continue to grow through strategic investments that support the industry. Details of the 2024 Crop Insurance Program have recently been released, building on the existing suite of Business Management Programs offered by the Saskatchewan Crop Insurance Corporation (SCIC).

All producers are encouraged to take a proactive approach to tailor their coverage to further manage and mitigate their risk. March 31, 2024, is the deadline for Saskatchewan producers to apply, reinstate or cancel their Crop Insurance contract. Producers must select insured crops and coverage levels or make additional changes by this date. Producers can speak to their local SCIC office to make any changes or coverage will remain the same as the previous year.

A strong and growing economy ensures investments can be made in key services, such as health-care, as well. Saskatche-



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wan is investing in several breast cancer and screening initiatives to support substantial detection and treatment enhancements for patients.

A new Breast Health Centre in Regina was just announced, which will provide diagnostic imaging, consultation with specialists and surgeons, and patient education, support and navigation. It will also provide on-site access to post treatment care, such as therapies and rehabilitation.

Family physicians and nurse practitioners will

be able to refer patients directly to the new centre, helping to reduce wait times. The new centre will be located at Regina Centre Crossing on Albert Street and will be open within the 2024-25 fiscal year.

The province is also making changes to the screening age eligibility from the current 50 and older to include women aged 40-49. In addition, new 3D breast imaging and breast tumour localized "seed" technology will enhance breast cancer detection, result in fewer delays and cancellations, and offer less discomfort for patients. Our government is committed to continuing to make targeted investments in health care so you can receive the care you need when you need it.

As our government continues to move through the spring sitting of the Legislative Assembly and prepares for the presentation of the provincial budget on March 20, we look forward to hearing from you! Please reach out to my office to share any comments or concerns.



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Shellbrook Skating Club sparkles in competitions

By **JORDAN TWISS**
Shellbrook Chronicle Reporter

Skaters with Skate Shellbrook shone like stars at a pair of recent competitions, bringing home plenty of ribbons and medals.

Up first was the Carrot River and Churchill Regional Competition, hosted by Skate Melfort on Feb. 17 and 18, with seven Skate Shellbrook members participating. Through two days of competition, each skater earned at least one ribbon or medal.

The individual results were as follows:

Jayden Nelson - STAR 1 Freeskate - Gold ribbon

Gwyn Phan - STAR 2 Freeskate - Gold ribbon

Annika Horricks - STAR 2 Freeskate

- Gold ribbon, STAR 2 Elements - Silver ribbon, STAR 2/3 Solo Dance - Gold ribbon

Kayla Klaassen - STAR 2 Freeskate - Gold ribbon, STAR 2 Elements - Silver ribbon, STAR 4/5 Solo Dance - Bronze medal

Jacey Keyowski - STAR 2 Freeskate - Silver ribbon, STAR 2 Elements - Silver ribbon

Sarah Fisher - STAR 3 Freeskate - Gold ribbon, STAR 3 Elements - Silver ribbon, STAR 2/3 Solo Dance - Gold ribbon

Julia Shindle - STAR 8/9 Solo Dance - Gold medal, STAR 9/10 Elements - Gold medal, STAR 9 Artistic - Bronze medal, Region 12 Senior Dance Award

On top of the individual events, Regionals also featured the Team Element Event.

“It’s the highlight of the weekend and lots of fun,” said Skate Shellbrook coach Tasje Sharron. “Skaters get to dress up as a team as they tackle the elements together. There are four elements in each category. If you’re in a team of two, then each skater performs two elements.

In the Team Element Event, Skate Shellbrook’s Star 2 (Sparkling Stars) and Star 3 (Sensational Stars both earned silver ribbons. Meanwhile, joining forces with the Prince Albert Skating Club, Julia Shindle earned a gold medal alongside her team.

Two weeks later, at the Winter Classic in Kindersley, Skate Shellbrook had three members competing and once again brought home a collection of ribbons and medals.

Jacey Keyowski earned a silver ribbon for her STAR 2 Freeskate and a gold ribbon for STAR 2 Elements, while Sarah Fisher received silver ribbons in both her STAR 3 Freeskate and Elements. Finally, Julia Shindle won a gold medal in STAR 9 Artistic, a silver medal for her Pre-Novice Short Program, and a bronze medal for her Pre-Novice Free Program.

“It was a very successful weekend

for the skaters overall,” Sharron said. “It was the first provincial competition for Jacey and Sarah, and Julia skated her new Free program for the first time in competition. The skaters prepared the best they could for these competition weekends, and felt success throughout.”



Skate Shellbrook skaters at Winter Classic in Kindersley. Left to right: Sarah Fisher, Julia Shindle, and Jacey Keyowski.



Skate Shellbrook members competed at Regionals in Melfort in February. Left to right: Jacey Keyowski, Kayla Klaassen, Sarah Fisher, Julia Shindle, Gwyn Phan, Jayden Nelson, and Annika Horricks.

Library hosts presentation about potatoes

By **EDDIE HOEHN**
Assistant Librarian

On Tuesday, March 5, Ruth Prosser taught Shellbrook Library attendees about the versatile potato and the wonderful dishes that can be made from it.

Attendees sampled Ruth’s premade soup, stew, lefsa, biscuits, and spud-nuts, as well as potato pancakes, which she prepared and cooked at the library that evening.

Special features and some history on the potato were shared, as Ruth referenced an old 1969 potato recipe book.

Some of the comments heard that evening were, “What’s not to like?” when commenting about the lefsa, and, “More potato pancakes? Why not?”



MaryAnne Kennedy served up some of Ruth’s potato soup.



Michelle and Laurel enjoyed sampling Ruth Prosser’s lefsa.

Notice of Date of Record

Notice is hereby given that Innovation Federal Credit Union’s (“Innovation”) Board of Directors have selected March 22, 2024, as the date of record for determining Innovation’s members who are entitled to vote in the 2024 Director Election and Annual General Meeting.

Innovation will send formal notice and details of the Annual General Meeting to members on April 4, 2024.

By Order of the Innovation Board,

Ian McArthur
Corporate Secretary



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Alberta energy policy sparks farmland debate

Farmland is an interesting commodity to be sure.

On one hand, the farm community sees land as almost a sacred resource for the production of crops and livestock.

But is that the best use of all farmland?

Good question.

Over the years, a significant amount of farmland has been lost to urban sprawl for example. As cities grow, farmland gets taken over for housing developments, airports, and factory sites.

Farmers may not always want to hand over the land, but there are processes for municipal-

ities to annex land when required.

And of course, farmland gets stripped for the increasingly hard to find gravel pits, and all kinds of rights of way for power lines and roadways.

It's all part of a system whereby progress, or at least what is determined by many to be progress, can move forward. A farmer can't hold up the expansion of a city by simply saying no.

But there is also the broader question of who will own farmland.

Should non-Canadians be able to buy up tracts of land? Or big



CALVIN DANIELS

business conglomerates?

Many would say no. Although a farmer seeking out might argue that limiting potential markets impacts their ability to realize the best price – which of course is what they will retire on.

And what about land

being sold for non-agricultural production purposes?

There is at present a move toward alternate energy sources, a move which includes large scale windmill and solar panel 'farms', and they require land.

So, should wheat automatically trump alternate energy uses?

Newly released Alberta policy states it will no longer allow such projects on Class 1 and 2 land, unless they can demonstrate crops and/or livestock can co-exist with them.

So, land growing grain which might be utilized

for ethanol production is therefore good and windmills and solar panels are less good, which of course seems a little counterintuitive.

And, if you follow that thinking, should hemp to make paper be banned because it isn't food production?

Certainly, we already see where farmers often face barriers to draining wetlands because they are deemed more important than the land would be if used to produce grain. So, in this regard, agriculture production is hardly paramount.

So perhaps, before lim-

iting energy production options on land, turning it into a shopping mall or airport would be a better line to draw in the sand?

Of course, in Alberta where the economy has been highly reliant on the oil and gas sector to drive its economy, it's hard not to see that connection looming in the shadows of a decision which might make wind and solar panel farmers more difficult to create.

Ultimately though, this would seem only the start of a very important debate. What is an acceptable use of farmland in a world which is constantly changing?

Highlights of a Shellbrook Town Council meeting

BY JORDAN TWISS

Shellbrook Chronicle Reporter

(The following council highlights are not the approved minutes of council for Feb. 5.)

Shellbrook's Town Council met for its regular meeting in person and via teleconference on Monday, March 4.

In attendance were Mayor Amund Otterson, Councillors Bruce Anderson, Larry Batten, Peter Halayka, Cheryl Ledding, Brent Miller, and Kathleen Nording, and the town's CAO, Kelly Hoare.

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Otterson, and council began with its customary Treaty 6 land acknowledgement in recognition of Truth and Reconciliation. Then, it approved the meeting's agenda, adopted the minutes of its Feb. 20 meeting, and began by welcoming delegates Zach and Jim Toporowski, who were in attendance to discuss charges incurred for a water leak that occurred on Zach's property last spring.

Zach explained he was notified of a water leak on May 1, 2023. When attempts to turn off the water to the property were unsuccessful, water was left to leak into his basement for two weeks. Arguing that town bylaws state the town is responsible for curb stop installation and maintenance, Zach and Jim asked for the repair

costs of \$5,000 to be resolved.

Though council didn't make a decision in the moment, it passed a motion later in the evening to forward the matter to Public Works to come up with a recommendation.

Moving into reports next, Councillor Ledding provided an update on the work of the Parkland Pool Project Steering Committee, starting with an update on grants the committee has applied for or is working on applications for.

The big news item, however, was that the committee has chosen Centennial Park as the location for the future pool, in part because all utilities are already available at the location.

Closing out the report, Ledding noted the committee is looking at hiring a fundraising consultant to assist with its efforts. Currently, more than \$300,000 has been raised by the committee.

Rounding out the reports with fire and rescue and emergency measures, council reviewed minutes from the fire committee's most recent meeting, in which the department's 5-to-10-year capital plan was outlined. The department's wishlist includes a new fire hall and fire truck.

Council also reviewed an update from the Regional EMO Steering Committee, which includes the Town and R.M. of Shellbrook, and a number

of other communities and rural municipalities in the area.

Currently, the regional emergency plan is being drafted. In the meantime, the Town and R.M. of Shellbrook have committed to contributing \$3,500 annually to contract a regional emergency planner.

Starting on new business, council took care of some housekeeping by finalizing a trio of financial transfers, including the transfer of \$37,907.00 from the Richardson Pioneer Recreation Centre board signs revenue to reserves, the transfer of \$10,997.66 from the Shellbrook Curling Club's remaining funds in reserves into a trust account, and the transfer of \$30,483.27 from the sale of the museum into the swimming pool reserve.

In some more housekeeping business, council approved a motion to authorize TAXservice to proceed with requesting title for a number of lands in tax arrears, and to begin tax enforcement proceedings on a number of other properties in arrears.

Up next, during discussion of a motion to approve recommended rental rates for town-owned facilities, including the Richardson Pioneer Recreation Centre, council had a lengthy debate about how rental rates are set.

While an 8 per cent rate increase has been recommended for the rink, Councillor Batten said it's import-

ant for the town to know the costs of running its facilities (namely for water and electricity) so user groups are charged appropriately and taxpayers aren't being asked to shoulder an unfair burden to keep the rink running.

Councillors Ledding and Nording noted that rates can't just keep increasing for user groups, who put a lot of volunteer work into town facilities, while Councillor Miller added that the town will never be able to charge enough to cover the costs of running town facilities – not without alienating users, at any rate. Miller also noted the town is in a good position to compete for users, as the City of Prince Albert is starting to charge out-of-town users at a higher rate.

In the end, council voted to accept the recommended rate increases.

Finally, in its last item of business, council carried a motion to allow the Shellbrook Royal Purple to rent the Community Hall for six hours for their Bingo events while only being charged for four.

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Homan wins Hearts; Jones wins fans' hearts

Rachel Homan was the deserved winner of the 2024 Scotties Tournament of Hearts, but Jennifer Jones of Winnipeg deservedly won the hearts of Canadian curling fans.

Homan won her fourth Canadian women's curling title by going undefeated through 11 games, edging Jones in the championship game by a 5-4 score. Jones, vying for her record seventh national championship, announced prior to the start of the week-long event that this would be her final Scotties. Her future curling would be limited to two-person mixed doubles with her husband, Brent Laing.

Jones is near or at the top of the list of Canada's best female curlers. Sandra Schmirler is revered; Colleen Jones won six Scotties; Kerri Einarson of Gimli won four in a row and Homan is en route to perhaps eclipsing them all.

But Jennifer Jones' resume on the curling ice is spectacular: Six Scotties' wins; two world championships; two Olympic appearances, one Olympic gold.

And if it's agreed that Jones is the greatest Canadian women's curler of all time, and Canada has won more world championships

than any other country (Canada 17, Switzerland 10, Sweden 8 are the top three), then a solid case could be made for suggesting Jones is the world's greatest female curler — ever.

While the sentimental choice for winning this year's Scotties was probably Jones' Winnipeg-based rink (although Jones, now living in Ontario, was the team's import), the best hope for Canada winning at the world level lies with Homan and her rink of Tracy Fleury, Emma Miskew and Sarah Wilkes. They didn't lose a game all week, going 8-0 in round-robin play, and then beating Einarson and Jones twice to take the title. It was the first Scotties title for Fleury, a top Canadian skip from Sudbury who joined the Homan rink two years ago, skipped it for one year, and then moved back to third.

Homan is almost certain to contend at the 2024 world championships in Sydney, N.S., while Jones moves on to become a full-time mother to two girls and a mixed doubles threat — with another Olympic appearance in mind — with her husband.

Jones' final appearance at the women's curling



BRUCE
PENTON

championship was one of two major story lines at this year's Scotties. The other was the 11th-hour announcement that Briane Harris, the lead for Einarson's rink, gunning for its fourth straight Canadian title, had been ruled 'ineligible', with Kremlin-like silence about the reasons.

There was no such silence from Jones' rivals after the final game. "Jen, unbelievable, an absolute hero to the game and an unbelievable competitor," Homan said in a TSN interview. "I remember watching her a million times, cheering hard for Canada... watching her win gold, forever in history as one of the greats. Unbelievable week for her team."

When the world's best gather in Sydney March 16 to 24, Homan's rink will be

among the favourites. And Jennifer Jones will likely be watching on TV, cheering on Canada's best and relishing the memories of her own great career.

• Torben Rolfson of Vancouver: "What are the ratings for the Borje Salming mini-series in the U.S. I'm guessing a 0.1 in Minnesota and a 0.0 everywhere else."

• Bob Molinaro of pilotonline.com (Hampton, Va.): "For the Steelers, the good news is that Mike Tomlin likes Bears quarterback Justin Fields; the bad news is that Tomlin likes Justin Fields."

• Super 70s Sports: "When Boog Powell joined the Dodgers, he'd eat nachos all game and then pinch-hit in the helmet they came in."

• An oldie but a goodie from RJ Currie of sports-deke.com: "Good news for Norwegian golfers: the European Challenge Tour is returning to Norway after a three-year absence. Have you driven a fjord lately?"

• Steve Simmons of the Toronto Sun: "The Blue Jays have added 270-pound possible DH Daniel Vogelbach to a team that already has Vladimir Guerrero Jr., Alejandro Kirk and Alek Manoah. If the Jays need an offensive line, they've

got one. Not sure about the ball team, though."

• Mike Bianchi of the Orlando Sentinel: "I just saw where LIV defector Jon Rahm says Tiger Woods is ignoring him. Hey, maybe he should dress up as a Perkins waitress."

• Comedy writer Alex Kaseberg: "Former NFL star, Cam Newton, had to be removed by security after being in a huge brawl at a youth football game. Apparently he and another parent were arguing over which team had the best sportsmanship."

• Another one from RJ Currie: "In honour of Canada's men's curling championship, the top five Montana's Brier curling rock acts: 5. Kiss; 4. Crowded House; 3. Ice-T; 2. Guerdin' Lightfoot; 1. The Roll-

ing Stones.

• RJ Currie again: "The crowd was so loud at the recent Canadian women's curling championship, Ontario second Emma Miskew threw a draw when Rachel Homan asked for a takeout. Call it Miskew-munication."

• Fark.com: "FedEx ends its 25-year deal with Washington's NFL franchise for naming rights to their home field. Which makes sense since it's been a couple of decades since the Commanders delivered anything."

• fark.com again: "(New coach) Jerod Mayo creating Patriots way instead of 'only works with Tom Brady way.'"

Care to comment? Email brucepenton2003@yahoo.ca

Spiritwood Curling Club crowns 2024 champ

By BEVRA FEE
Spiritwood Herald Reporter

The week of March 4 saw a flurry of activity take over the Spiritwood Curling Rink as the club play-downs took place over three days on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday.

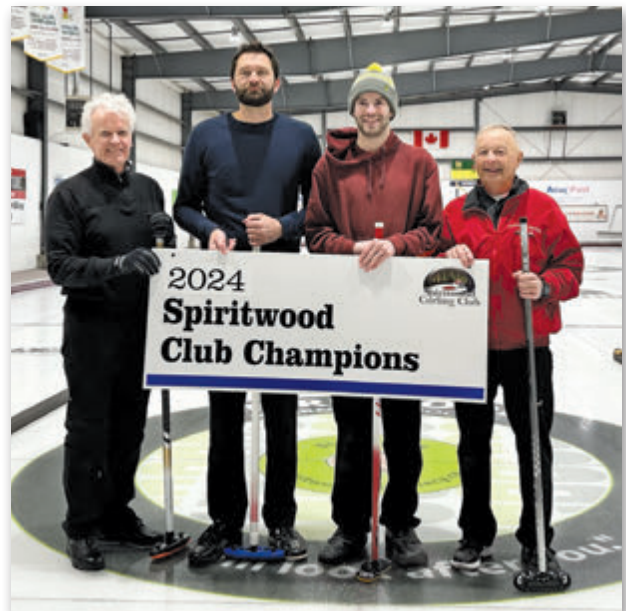
From the regular league teams that competed during the 2023/24 season, 14 took to the ice on day one to begin narrowing the path to the semi-finals. By Wednesday evening, the stage was set for four teams to vie for the final.

The Wayne Pauls rink squeezed by the Dyllan Franson rink to advance against Lloyd Fisher, who handily advanced out of his semi-final match against Danica Laventure.

The final between Pauls and Fisher was a swap of singles until the fifth end, where Fisher pulled away and stayed ahead for the remainder of the ends to capture the Club Championship.

Over his 40-year curling career, Fisher noted this was his first Spiritwood Curling Club Championship.

"I curled in high school and until I was involved in hockey. And then when I quit coaching hockey I got back into curling — mostly at bonspiels — until Spiritwood got the new rink," he said.



The Spiritwood Curling Club's 2024 champions. From left to right: Neil Buswell, Landon Swityk, Craig Thompson, and Lloyd Fisher.

U18 Elks fall to Riverkings in playoffs

By JORDAN TWISS
Shellbrook Chronicle Reporter

After making it to the SAAHL postseason by the skin of their teeth, the U18 AA Elks had their work cut out for them as they drew the first-place Saskatoon Riverkings as their opponent in the opening round of the playoffs.

The Riverkings have been sailing calm seas through the 2023-2024 hockey season, losing just four games out of 33. Despite this, the Elks consistently put the team through its paces in each of their regular season meetings (even in losing efforts), and the playoffs proved to be no different.

Elks (1) vs Kings (4)

Travelling to Saskatoon for game 1 of the best-of-three series on Thursday, March 7, the Elks weathered a first period storm of 19 shots from the Riverkings, and goaltender Hunter Nakonechny turned away every single one. But with the Elks firing only seven return salvos on the Riverkings' goal, the first period ended in a 0-0 draw.

The stalemate came to an end quickly in the second period, and it was the Elks who broke it, thanks to a goal from Kendon Skalicky, assisted by Brody Anderson and Jake Boettcher.

The Elks held on to this lead for six minutes, before a penalty got them in hot water and allowed Kash Ringdal to tie the game at 1-1 on the power play, with assists from Jeremy Wehrens and Charlie Kay. Soon after, it was 2-1 Riverkings on a goal by Cohen Van Horne, assisted by Kieran Sobry and Ryder Wilm.

In an evenly matched third period, the Elks fought to tie the game back up, but couldn't make any of the 10 shots they fired on goal count. In the end, Wilm sealed the Riverkings' victory with an empty netter, on an assist from Troy Shewchuk. And with the Elks rattled, Brock Kolibab added another goal, on an assist from Carter Stolte, to push the final score to 4-1.

Elks (3) vs Kings (5)

(Editor's note: as of Monday, the box score for this game had yet to be uploaded, meaning the recap will be incomplete.)

When the action moved to Shellbrook for game two on Saturday, March 9, it was do or die for the Elks. However, it was the Riverkings who came out firing on all cylinders like they had everything to lose.

The Riverkings poured on the shots through the first 20 minutes, firing 21 pucks on net to the Elks' 6.

Fortunately for the Elks, only one of the Riverkings' shots found the mark, leaving them with a 1-0 deficit after one period.

When the Elks returned to the ice for the second period, they came out playing like a whole new team. And thanks to back-to-back goals from Kendon Skalicky just over a minute apart, the Riverkings soon found themselves on the ropes and down 2-1. Kaiden Couture assisted on Skalicky's first goal, while Jake Boettcher and Brody Anderson assisted on his second.

Lane Keyowski capped off the early period offensive flurry for the Elks only a few minutes later, putting his team up 3-1 on assists from Aiden Tait and Skalicky.

As the midway point of the second period passed, the Riverkings were able to right the ship and close the gap to 3-2. Then, just under two minutes later, an Elks power play proved costly, allowing the Riverkings to tie the game at 3-3 and send the action to the third period.

There, the Riverkings struck once more early in the period to take a 4-3 lead. Then, with time ticking down, they clinched the game and series win with one last empty net goal, leaving the Elks to hang up their skates for the season.

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Sun. Worship - 11:00 a.m.
(10:30 a.m. June - August)
306-468-2525

IMMANUEL LUTHERAN

Parkside
11 a.m. - Worship

PRESBYTERIAN

Mistawasis
Sunday worship
11:00 a.m.
Rev. Stewart Foster

CATHOLIC CHURCH

Debden
Sun. Mass - 9:30 a.m.
Fr. Mariusz Zajac
Big River - Sacred Heart
Sun., 11:30 a.m. - Mass
Whitefish
Sun., 2:30 p.m. - Mass.
Victoire
Sat., 7:30 p.m. - Mass.
Fr. Mariusz Zajac
St. Agatha's - Shellbrook
Mass - Sunday 11 a.m.
St. Henry's - Leask
Mass - Sunday 9 a.m.
Mistawasis
1st & 3rd Sundays 1:30 p.m.
Fr. Tuan Doan

SEVENTH DAY ADVENTIST

407-2nd Ave E, Shellbrook
Sat., 9:45 a.m. - Sabbath
School
Pastor Myshan Irving
306-747-3398

PRAISE & WORSHIP

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

PARTNERS IN FAITH

Lutheran/United/
Christchurch Anglican,
137-2nd St. W.
Spiritwood
Worship 11:00 a.m.
Rev. Sarah Urano

UNITED /ANGLICAN

Worship Services
Glaslyn
Time is on the sign
Rev. Kun Kim
Rev. Don Skinner

CATHOLIC SUNDAY

Leoville - 9:30 a.m.
Spiritwood - 11:15 a.m.
Shell Lake - 2:00 p.m.
SATURDAY
Medstead - 6:00 p.m.
Everyone Welcome
Fr. Ramel Macapala

COWBOY CHURCH

Spiritwood
Every Wednesday Night
7 pm
Spiritwood Legion Hall
Pastor Riek Martin

LAKELAND COMMUNITY CHURCH

(Corner of 1st Ave. and 4th
St., Spiritwood)
Sun., 11 am - Worship
Service & Sunday School
Pastor Michael Kluthe
306-883-2380

FIELDS OF HOPE (HOFFNUNGSFELDER)

MENNONITE CHURCH
Glenbush
Worship - 11:00 am

BETHEL

Medstead
2nd Sunday, 10 am -
Worship
Pastor David Jensen
4th Sunday, 10 am -
Worship
Pastor David Jensen

MENNONITE BRETHREN

Glenbush
10:00 am - Sunday School
Worship 10:50 am

Gideons International of Canada

Battlefords Camp
Phone Art Martynes
(306) 389-4633

SEVENTH DAY ADVENTIST

407 - 2nd Ave. E.,
Shellbrook
Sat., 9:45 am -
Sabbath School
Sat., 11:00 am - Worship
Broadcast on
VOAR 92.1 FM
Pastor Liviu Tilihoi
306-747-3398

BELBUTTE FULL GOSPEL

11 am Worship Service

PARTNERS IN WORSHIP

Shell Lake
Worship Services
Sunday 9:00 a.m.
Pastor Sarah Urano
306-841-7333

ADVERTISING DEADLINE IS FRIDAY 4 P.M.

Studio 747's Mini Showcase delights crowd



Brienne Grenier gets a boost from Danielle Cadrain in their jazz duet.



A high-energy senior hip hop group number closed out the Mini Showcase.



Brienne Grenier displayed grace during her ballet solo.



Addison Kerber opened the second act with an emotional lyrical solo.



Kyra Parsons showcased flexibility in her lyrical solo.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

SPIRITWOOD: Wapiti Regional Library - Tuesday 9am - 5pm; Wednesday 9am - 5pm; Friday 9am - 5pm
LEOVILLE: Wapiti Regional Library - Wednesday 10am - 4pm; Thursday 10am - 4pm
SHELL LAKE: Wapiti Regional Library - Tuesday 11am - 4pm; Wednesday 12 pm - 5 pm

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

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

CANWOOD: Canwood Branch of Wapiti Regional Library. Tuesday 10am - 3:30pm; Thursday 2pm - 6pm; Friday 1:30pm - 5pm. Kids Club is Fridays 3:30pm - 4:30pm. Crafter's Choice is the 2nd and 4th Tuesday of each month.

DEBDEN: Wapiti Library hours: Tuesday 10am - 4pm; Wednesday 1pm - 7pm. Librarian: Aline Hannon

LEASK: Wapiti Library & Legacy Gallery Hours - Tuesday 9am - 2pm; Wednesday 3pm - 6pm; Friday 11am - 5pm

MARCELIN: Wapiti Library - Thursday 2pm - 7pm; Saturday 9am - 2pm. For information on all your library needs, please contact 306-226-2110.

SHELLBROOK: Shellbrook Branch of the Wapiti Library located at 105 Railway Ave., West (Provincial building). Library Hours: Monday 2pm - 6pm; Tuesday 2pm - 8pm; Wednesday 2pm - 8pm; Thursday 12pm - 6pm; Friday 10 am - 5pm (Story Time 10:30am - 11:30am); Saturday 10am - 4pm.

SPIRITWOOD: SARCS (Spiritwood Area Recreation, Culture and Sport Inc.) is now accepting requests for the "Saskatchewan Lotteries Community Grant"! Non-Profit Community Sport, Culture and Recreation Programs – Programs running from: April 1, 2024 - March 31, 2025. Deadline to apply: Must be received by March 18, 2024. Email spr@sasktel.net or call (306) 883-2176 to receive Funding Request Form.

BIG RIVER: Ice Fishing Derby on Cowan Lake in Big River, SK – Saturday, March 23. \$20,000 in prizes! Entry fee: \$50/Hole; 2nd Hole \$20. Tickets available by phone 306-469-7990 or @ Timberlost Outdoors in Big River and @ The Fishin' Hole in Saskatoon.

SHELLBROOK: You are invited to Skate Shellbrook's Shamrock Showcase – Sunday, March 17, 1pm @ the Shellbrook rink. Admission by donation.

TRIPLE YOUR ADVERTISING

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

\$60.00 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!"

Shellbrook Chronicle & Spiritwood Herald

Box 10, Shellbrook, SK S0J 2E0

Ph: 306-747-2442 • Fax: 306-747-3000 • Email: chads@sbchron.com

Spiritwood Library activity highlights



March's Dessert of the Month Winner is Carmen Gonda-Price. Her yummy Easter Dessert was made by Library Board Member Brooke Gaboury. By HEATHER GATZKE, Librarian



Regional KidsFirst from Prince Albert came to Spiritwood Library on Friday, March 1, for some fun themed Early Learning. With lots of activities to choose from, the children were kept hopping with some Easter games and painting, ring toss, and the highlight of the morning: the big parachute game. With songs to start and end with, the morning was completed with all types of literacy and social interaction.

For over the past four decades The Saskatchewan Weekly Newspapers Association, in partnership with SaskPower and 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 a \$3000 bursary, provided by SaskPower, to use towards their post-secondary education. Someone you nominate could be one of them.

Visit www.swna.com for further information and nomination forms. Nominations close March 31, 2024