

Shellbrook Chronicle & Spiritwood Herald

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Spiritwood Spirited Players stage another hit



With a gun to her husband (or maybe he wasn't) Sheila Pontoon (Pascale Giroux) demands answers in a scene from *Dis-Order in the Court*.

By DAVE HYNDMAN

"Oh, this is going to be such a good article!"

The line was delivered by a would-be reporter in the courtroom of Judge Titus Clapham, and came about because of the multiple storylines that were about to ensue on a confusing day in court.

Let's see. A judge that may or may not have quit, rendering all his decisions invalid, a couple who may or may not have been married in a ceremony performed by the said judge, a landlady who may or may not have faced losing her boarding house, feuding granddaughters, a love triangle or two, an ambulance-chasing attorney, and a clown.

Have we left anything out? Possibly. But one thing is for certain, the local Spiritwood Spirited Players staged yet another hit with their version of *Dis-Order in the Court*, a two-act play written by Pat Cook, to three nights of appreciative audiences Feb. 29 through March 2.

This year's production by the Spirited Players consisted of a cast of thirteen, large by historical standards, but indicative of the interest in perform-

ing by more and more people. Two of the cast were "rookies," appearing on the Spiritwood stage for the first time. Cole Cote played the part of Reverend Leon Wright, while Haley Nicoll was cast as Lydia Rothschilde.

Shannon MacFarlane was one of the 70 or so who took in the performance on Thursday night. MacFarlane, who had for many years been staff advisor-slash-director-slash producer of drama productions at Spiritwood High, was pleased to note that at least half the cast had cut their teeth in drama with the SHS Drama Club.

"What they learned from Shannon has really been valuable," said Cari Denis, director of the Spirited Players.

And while they may not be ready to take on Hollywood or Broadway, for an amateur local group they acquitted themselves quite well. For example, it was a quiet night for prompters, much like the Maytag Repairman, as the lines were delivered and cues kept in a production that featured many quick switches in focus from one group of characters to another to maintain the flow of the interlocking stories.

Tanner Gaboury had the lead role as Judge Titus Clapham, whose courtroom included court clerk Carolina,

played by Ali Sullivan, and bailiff Junior, played by Brett Goller.

Leroy Dangerfield (Koltyn Gaboury) and Sheila Pontoon (Pascale Giroux) played the couple who were in court to be united in marriage, or criminal and witness, depending on how things worked out.

Ryan Steinhilber was E.Z. Miles, a lawyer who wasn't about to respond to the Judge's claim — his tenth — of an ambulance passing by.

Kaylee Penner and Taylor Kuffert played cousins Bobbie Sue and Darla Faye, granddaughters of the judge, neither of whom got along with each other, and both of whom were required to pay a toll — a kiss on grandpa's cheek. It was Bobbie Sue who was writing the article for her high school paper, while Darla Faye was in court to get the judge to do something about her beau, Harvey Pangborne (Caleb White), who had taken a job as a clown, much to the chagrin of Darla Faye.

Add an Assistant District Attorney fighting his first case (Grant Lavoie as Wallace Sopworth), an official needing to determine whether the judge's resignation was real (Jill Mayo as Marge Thrombecker), and a landlady needing to make a mortgage payment by

noon or lose her boarding-house (Haley Nicoll as Lydia Rothschilde), and there you have the cast of *Dis-Order in the Court*.

Have we left anyone out? Don't think so. But as the judge said: "That's what I hate about this job. There's too much thinkin' goin' on."

Audiences Friday and Saturday, sell-out crowds of 150 each night (although there was talk circulating the hall about some coming out of Saskatoon were snowbound and therefore not in attendance), enjoyed a meal of Tuscan chicken, bourbon ribs, rice pilaf, and several salads put on by Ronnie's Catering.

Thank yous expressed included to the Town of Spiritwood, Spiritwood High School, Hartley Clark Elementary School, Kilogram Designs, and Spiritwood High School Travel Club.

The Spiritwood Spirited Players have produced "around 30 plays" in the Spiritwood Civic Centre.

"The support we've received over the years has been tremendous," said Cari Denis.

The cast presented Cari with a bouquet in a vase in appreciation of her work in producing the play.

More photos on page 3



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High schools have strong week in curling

By **BEVRA FEE**
Spiritwood Herald
Reporter

The town of Unity was the site of the Saskatchewan High School Athletics Association's junior curling District play-downs of Feb. 29.

Having won regionals to advance to the competition, the Spiritwood High School Junior Boys rink and the Junior Mixed rink both brought home hardware, with the Boys taking the bronze medal and the Mixed rink, featuring Jessie Allchurch, Cooper Woytiuk, Wyatt Youst, and Rory

Booth, scooping up gold. For the Junior teams, the District level is the pinnacle of curling competition.

Meanwhile, in St. Walburg, the Senior curling teams who moved on from Districts to Regionals – namely the Senior Girls and the Senior Boys – competed for the opportunity to move on to Provincials.

While the Senior Girls, Alea Beaulac, Avarie Conacher, Jessie Allchurch, and Danica Laventure placed fourth, the Boy's rink, which consisted of Grade 9 curlers Van Slater, Cooper Woytiuk,

Wyatt Youst, and Rory Booth, ended the tournament on top of the standings.

For the senior girls, the tournament began with a close 5-3 loss to Saskatoon Holy Cross. The team rebounded with their second game in the evening, sweeping their way to a dominant 10-3 victory over Rosthern Junior College.

The win earned the girls a shot at redemption against Saskatoon Holy Cross on day two of the tournament, but they were outmatched, losing by a score of 10-2.

Though they went on to win gold, the senior boys had to fight to earn their medal, starting the tournament with a razor thin 6-5 win over LCBI. This was followed up with a close 8-6 victory over Maidstone, granting the Spiritwood foursome a trip to the gold medal game.

There, facing off against a strong Langham rink, they managed to score another hard-fought 6-5 win to claim the gold.

The Senior Boys will now play at the Provincial level in Gull Lake this weekend.

Elsewhere, in Senior Mixed curling action, WP Sandin High School's senior mixed team, consisting of Jake Boettcher, Payten Keyowski, Lane Keyowski, and Marcail Philp, competed at Re-

gionals in Melfort over the weekend.

The team opened the tournament with an 11-6 loss to Humboldt, before finding its rhythm and topping Choiceland 7-6 to keep its Provincials hopes alive.

On day two of the competition, the Shellbrook rink got some redemption in a nail-biting game against Humboldt, besting them 7-6 in an extra end to punch their ticket to the B final. And in yet another nail-biter, the team came up just short, falling to Tisdale by a score of 6-5 to end its curling season.



SHS' senior boy's curling team won gold at Regionals. From left to right: Van Slater, Cooper Woytiuk, Wyatt Youst, Rory Booth, and Coach Shannon Caffet.



Spiritwood High School's junior mixed curling team won gold at Districts. From left to right: Coach Shannon Caffet, Jessie Allchurch, Cooper Woytiuk, Wyatt Youst, and Rory Booth.

Fundraiser raffle nets \$20,000



With the support of family, friends, and the community, Barb and Norm Farthing can breathe a little easier. To help cover the costs of Norm's care for a terminal cancer diagnosis, the couple raffled off his beloved Macsimizer Work Station (valued at \$15,000) on March 2. With tickets priced at \$100 each, more than 200 tickets were sold, raising \$20,000. The lucky winner of the draw was Barry Fusick. Pictured: Norm Farthing with his Macsimizer.

By JORDAN TWISS, Shellbrook Chronicle Reporter

SARCS

Spiritwood Area Recreation, Culture and Sport Inc. is now accepting requests for the "Saskatchewan Lotteries Community Grant"

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TOWN OF SHELLBROOK NOTICE

ASSESSMENT ROLL

Notice is hereby given that the assessment roll for the Town of Shellbrook for the year of 2024 has been prepared and is open to inspection in the office of the Assessor from 8:30am to 4pm, Monday to Friday from March 7th, 2024 to April 12th, 2024.

A bylaw 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 his or her assessment is required to file his or her notice of appeal with: The Assessor, Town of Shellbrook, Box 40, Shellbrook, SK., S0J 2E0 by 4pm on the 12th day of April, 2024.

Dated this 7th day of March, 2024.
Kelly Hoare, Assessor

NOTICE OF PREPARATION OF ASSESSMENT ROLL

R.M. OF BIG RIVER NO. 555

Notice is hereby given that the assessment roll of the Rural Municipality of Big River No. 555 for the year 2024 has been prepared and is open to inspection at the office of the Assessor from 9:00 a.m. to noon and 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. on the following days: Monday to Friday, March 8th, to April 8th, 2024.

A bylaw pursuant to section 214 of the *Municipalities Act* has been passed and the assessment notices have been sent as required.

Any person wishing to discuss the notice of assessment or potential appeal may contact the Assessor at the RM of Big River No. 555, Box 219, Big River, SK S0J 0E0 or call 306-469-2323.

Any person wishing to appeal an assessment is required to file a "Notice of Appeal to the Board of Revision", by April 8th, 2024, with Mike Ligtermoet 642 Agnew Street, Prince Albert, SK S6V 2P1 along with the applicable fee(s), made payable to the RM of Big River No. 555, which will be returned if the appeal is successful.

Dated at Big River, Saskatchewan this 8th day of March, 2024.
Michael Yuzik
Assessor

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Spiritwood Spirited Players stage another hit



Curtain call for the cast of *Dis-Order in the Court*, from left to right: Tanner Gaboury, Kaylee Penner, Haley Nicoll, Ali Sullivan, Grant Lavoie, Pascale Giroux, Ryan Steinhilber, Cole Cote, Taylor Kuffert, Jill Mayo, Brett Goller, Koltyn Gaboury, and Caleb White. Missing: Jose Lopez (Technical Assistant).



At dress rehearsal on Wednesday, the cast got ready for their final run-through before performing in front of an audience.



A woman scorned makes a play for the newcomer.



Ronnie's Catering provided a delicious meal for the two nights of the Dinner Theatre.



Cast member Ali Sullivan presented a bouquet to Cari Denis, director, on behalf of the Spiritwood Spirited Players.



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Sask. Party proves not all growth is positive

Of all the words in the English language (the Oxford dictionary estimates there are just over 170,000 in active use), growth is perhaps the favourite word of this Sask. Party government.

Or at least, it's the word it uses the most.

From its "growth that works for everyone" tagline, which was seemingly everywhere for a couple of years, to its endless boasting about the province's economic and population growth, the Sask.

Party desperately wants us to believe things have never been so good in this province.

And, with it being an election year, it just as desperately wants us to believe that it's responsible for all this growth and goodness.

Since it rose to power in 2007, the Sask. Party government has largely succeeded in positioning itself as the government of growth, while painting the Saskatchewan NDP as the party of stagnation and decline.

In every election since 2007, the Sask. Party has consistently used the former Saskatchewan NDP's closure of 52 rural hospitals and 176 schools in the 90s to hammer this point home.

It's effective because it's true, and because it taps into the emotions of the party's largely rural base, which was most directly impacted by these closures.

As we know, however, the truth is not as simple as the Sask. Party paints it to be.

When it took power after the Conservative government of Grant Devine (12 members of which faced fraud charges for misconduct with taxpayer money while in office), Roy Romanow's NDP government inherited a province on the brink of bankruptcy.

The provincial debt at the time was well in excess of \$20 billion (that would be more than \$40 billion today), and for the province to get anywhere near fiscal solvency, difficult cuts needed to be made.

Through a mix of taxation, facility closures, and public service cuts, Mr. Romanow's government pulled Saskatchewan back from the ledge and got back to delivering balanced budgets.

By 2007, when the Sask. Party ousted the Sask. NDP government, led then by Lorne Calvert, the provincial



JORDAN TWISS
~
News Editor

debt had dipped below \$10 billion.

Unfortunately for the Saskatchewan NDP, a legacy of taxation, debt reduction, and public service cuts just don't resonate as strongly with voters as rural hospital and school closures do.

So, while the Sask. NDP governments of the 1990s and early 2000s may have saved the province from fiscal oblivion, it was hard to see and appreciate what they'd done.

There was nothing big or flashy or exciting, just boring old responsible fiscal management, which made it all too easy for the Sask. Party to reduce the Sask. NDP to nothing more than the government of shutdown hospitals and schools, while taking all the credit for the province's sudden growth.

That growth, of course, had little to do with any specific Sask. Party policies, and almost everything to do with a well-timed boom in oil revenues around 2007.

And in the 17 years since the Sask. Party government took over, Saskatchewan's economic star has continued to rise on the strength of oil and gas, potash, and canola.

Along with the emergence of these three hot commodities, the province saw a population boom as people flocked to Saskatchewan to work in these highly lucrative industries. The boom has continued with an influx of immigration, helping grow Saskatchewan's population to 1.2 million (from about 1 million in 2007).

Does the Sask. Party deserve some credit for seizing on these burgeoning markets to turn the province into an international exporting powerhouse and an attractive place to live? Certainly.

But you don't exactly need to be a rocket scientist to convince other people to give you money for the things they want or need, or to persuade people to move where there are good paying jobs and a lower cost of living.

What's more, no matter what the Sask. Party wants us to believe, not all growth is positive.

Take, for instance, the province's growing public debt under this Sask. Party government.

As was mentioned before, 15 years of Saskatchewan NDP governance saw



the province's public debt slashed in half and a string of balanced budgets.

After 17 years of Sask. Party management, with economic conditions that most governments could only wish for, the public debt has skyrocketed to nearly \$31 billion, and only one budget has been balanced since the 2014-2015 fiscal year.

A far cry from growth that works for everyone.

This negative growth has been echoed in important sectors in the province like education, where a 9,000 student increase since the 2019-2020 school year is coupled with a reduction in the number of teachers (7.5) and educators of all types (94.5).

And, as we learned last week, Canadian Institute of Health Information (CIHI) data shows that rural Saskatchewan is experiencing negative growth in healthcare, as professionals continue to flee the province for greener pastures.

According to the CIHI numbers, there were 2,234 rural and remote registered nurses in the province in 2018. As of 2022, the most recent year for which data is available, there were only 1,760 (a decrease of 474, or 21 per cent).

Rural and remote communities have also lost 12 psychiatric nurses during this time, down to 68 from 80. And this loss of rural frontline healthcare workers has only been partially offset by a modest increase in the number of licensed practical nurses (to 1,039

from 1,009), while numbers for physicians, nurse practitioners, and occupational therapists have remained almost unchanged despite Saskatchewan's population growth.

Naturally, we never hear about these numbers from the Sask. Party government, because they don't fit into its growth narrative.

Instead, it's too busy touting the alleged triumphs of its Health Human Resources Action Plan – a plan that the provincial auditor says will fall well short of filling 2,200 hard-to-fill vacancies identified by the Saskatchewan Health Authority over the next five years.

Meanwhile, as patients are being forced to travel out of province for surgeries and mammograms at a much higher cost, hospital emergency rooms are overflowing, and services are routinely being disrupted, the Sask. Party seems to have no interest in listening to or addressing the everyday realities and concerns of frontline healthcare workers.

Once again, a far cry from the Sask. Party's promised growth that works for everyone.

It's time for the Sask. Party government to stop blaming the ghosts of NDP governments past, and instead take accountability for its own abysmal record on growth.

As these last 17 years have taught us, not all the "growth" Saskatchewan has experienced under this government has been positive.

Shellbrook Chronicle

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Phone 306-747-2442 or Fax 306-747-3000

Editorial: chnews@sbchron.com
Advertising chads@sbchron.com

Jordan Twiss & Meghan Penney, Co-Publishers

Jordan Twiss, Shellbrook Chronicle Reporter
jordan@sbchron.com/chnews@sbchron.com

Bevra Fee, Spiritwood Herald Reporter
(306) 883-7058 or bevrafee@yahoo.ca

Meghan Penney, Advertising Sales & Composition/Pagination chads@sbchron.com

Karen Stene, Bookkeeping/Reception
accounting@sbchron.com

Office Hours: Monday - Thursday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.;
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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR: In the interest of readers of this newspaper, we will publish opinions of our readers. Letters To The Editor are most welcome; however, they must be signed and include writer's contact information and will only be published with the writer's name on it. Letters should be limited in length and be typed or clearly written. We reserve the right to edit letters depending on available space.

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Report from the Legislature

Our government recently made the decision not to remit the carbon tax on natural gas used by residential SaskEnergy customers. This is a decision we do not take lightly, and we recognize it may come with consequences.

That is why in December of 2023, the Saskatchewan Legislature unanimously passed The SaskEnergy (Carbon Tax Fairness for Families) Act which gives our government and the Minister of Crown Investment Corporation, Dustin Duncan, the exclusive responsibility for compliance with the federal carbon tax on home heating. The Canada Revenue

Agency has accepted Minister Duncan's application to register the Government of Saskatchewan as the Registered Distributor of natural gas in the province and has deregistered



HON. SCOTT MOE,
PREMIER

~
MLA for Rosthern -
Shellbrook
Toll Free:
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scottmoe.mla@sasktel.net

SaskEnergy. As a result, the hardworking women and men at SaskEnergy are protected from any consequences which may arise from our decision.

The decision to remove the federal carbon tax on home heating has already saved Saskatchewan families a lot of money through January and February. It also helped reduce Saskatchewan's inflation rate to 1.9 per cent, down from 2.7 per cent in December, according to the latest Consumer Price Index report released by Statistics Canada.

Our government believes that if the federal government is serious about fighting inflation,

they need to remove the carbon tax for everyone and everything. These numbers show how much impact the removal of the carbon tax on home heating has on inflation, just here in one province. Imagine the impact it would have on gas prices, grocery prices and everything else we produce and transport in Canada if the federal government scrapped the carbon tax.

Instead, the federal government is committed to another carbon tax increase on April 1. It shows they really don't care about the impact it is having on Canadian families struggling with the cost of living.

As inflation goes down, our province's economy continues to grow; housing starts are up 62.1 per cent over last year. We saw impressive figures in building construction investment as well, ranking third in the nation for year-over-year growth with an increase of 13.9 per cent.

We also recently learned that Saskatchewan ranked second among provinces for pri-



HON. JEREMY HARRISON
MLA

~
Meadow
Lake
Toll Free:
1-877-234-6669
jharrisonmla@sasktel.net

private capital investment in 2023 and is expected to rank first in 2024. Growth in private capital investment helps to build jobs and opportunities, creating a high quality of life for Saskatchewan people.

Economic growth allows our government to invest in key programs and services, such as healthcare. Saskatchewan's surgical system achieved the highest volumes ever recorded in the first nine months of the fiscal year from April 1 to December 31, 2023. Within that period, 71,850 procedures were performed, an increase

of 6,000 procedures over the same period in 2022.

Aggressive surgical targets are in place to surpass last year's highest surgical volume of over 90,000 procedures, to ensure 90 per cent of surgeries are performed within 10 months and that no patients are on the waitlist longer than 18 months.

To further build capacity in our health care system, we continue to make investments in training programs for healthcare professionals. Suncrest College will offer a new provincial Diagnostic Medical Sonography Advanced Diploma program in Yorkton beginning this fall. The new program will help meet the demand for diagnostic services and ultimately speed up treatment for residents.

Our government will continue to build and protect our great province so Saskatchewan continues to be the best place to live, work and raise your family. As we continue this work, we look forward to hearing from you.

Washington Crisis Summit hears Canadian experience

It was a great honour to be invited to speak at the International Crisis Summit (ICS) held in Washington, D.C. last month. The even greater honour was to represent the people of Saskatchewan as I joined several other prominent Canadian figures who came together to share the Canadian pandemic story to this international audience.

Collectively, we shared the reality of life in Canada when government overreach caused immeasurable harm to our society.

In the name of public health and safety, we saw unprecedented restrictions imposed on our daily lives. Our freedom of movement was severely restricted, with lockdowns and stay-at-home orders becoming the norm. Our right to education was compromised, with schools closing and children being deprived of in-person learning. Our right to assemble and protest was stifled, with gatherings arbitrarily limited and dissenting voices silenced.

Eventually, it became almost comical as we watched politicians from around the world put on masks for the camera, then immediately take them off after the photo op. The politicians knew it was a charade!

Now, we live with the fallout of devastated families, bankrupted businesses, and lost careers because our provincial government colluded with the federal government to restrict our freedom to live productive lives.

We know today that much of what we were told about the pandemic was false, with many people in powerful positions profiting from the "cure," which failed miserably. We also know that despite the very real issues of not-so-rare, life-altering vaccine injuries, the Saskatchewan government continues to push these ineffective genetic



NADINE WILSON
MLA

~
Saskatchewan
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therapies on those that still manage to trust their administration.

I was very proud to share with the ICS attendees the legacy of Prime Minister John Diefenbaker, who gave Canada the Canadian Bill of Rights in 1960. He was a champion of freedom who understood the need to safeguard the rights and liberties of every Canadian citizen. He understood that true liberty and freedom is not granted by the state, but is inherent in the dignity and autonomy of each individual.

Freedom is not merely a word, it is a fundamental principle that lies at the core of our existence as individuals and as a society. Today, we must confront the reality of freedom lost, a concerning trend of government overreach, and the curtailing of our fundamental freedoms.

As we enter the spring session at the Saskatchewan Legislature, I would challenge Premier Moe and every member of the Legislative Assembly to affirm the values of our former Prime Minister. Will they become vocal enough to uphold the principles they were privileged to grow up with, or will they continue to "go along to get along" with outside influencers?

I for one, will work with you and for you, cloaked with the mantle Prime Minister Diefenbaker gifted to all of us: "I am a Canadian, free to speak without fear, free to worship in my own way, free to stand for what I think right, free to oppose what I believe wrong, or free to choose those who shall govern my country. This heritage of freedom I pledge to uphold for myself and all mankind."

My speech (timestamp 1:27:09) and other International Crisis Summit speakers may be viewed here: <https://vimeo.com/912947834>

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Sask. teachers escalate job action at Legislature

By **JORDAN TWISS**
Shellbrook Chronicle
Reporter

As MLAs returned for the first day of the spring session of the Legislature in Regina on Monday morning, they were greeted by a larger than usual crowd.

In an escalation of job action activities, about 3,500 educators from the southern half of the province staged a one-day demonstration at the Legislature building, hoping once again to convince the Sask. Party government to give its bargaining team a new mandate to negotiate on class size and complexity and growing violence in the classroom.

The Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation (STF) had promised an escalation of job action in the week after the February break and thus far educators have made good on their pledge. Last week, educators across the province participated in a one-day withdrawal of support for extracurricular activities on Monday, Feb. 26, as well rotating withdrawals of noon hour supervision throughout the week.

This week, in addition to the one-day demonstration at the Legislature, teachers withdrew support for extracurricular activities on Tuesday and Wednesday (March 5 and 6),

and continued rotating withdrawals of noon hour supervision.

"Students, families and teachers are in this situation because this government simply will not listen," said STF president Samantha Becotte in a statement. "For years, they have not listened to parents, teachers, trustees, and other experts in the education

sector who have been raising alarm bells about underfunding. Today, we bring those concerns to their doorstep. Enough is enough."

The province's educators have been without a contract since August.

In addition to demanding that the government negotiate on class size and complexity and classroom violence, they

are seeking an annual salary increase of 2 per cent over the next four years, plus a top up tied to the Consumer Pricing Index (CPI).

They are also asking for things like greater autonomy for educators, and rights for supply teachers, including a minimum salary, paid sick leave, and the freedom to unionize, but Becotte says

the government has refused to negotiate on nine out of ten issues brought forward.

After initially offering teachers a 7 per cent wage increase over the next three years, Education Minister Jeremy Cockrill upped the increase to 12 per cent over the next four years (matching the 3 per cent per year salary increase for MLAs).

Though Cockrill has stood firm in his assertion that class size and complexity aren't contract negotiation items, the last failed round of bargaining saw the government's bargaining team try to sway educators by offering a \$53.1 million boost to funding to address the issues in a separate bargain.

While referred to as a "contractual agreement" by Cockrill, the text of the offer calls it a memorandum of understanding, and gives both sides the power to break off the agreement so long as the other party is given 12 months notice.

The offer was rejected by the teachers' bargaining committee, with Becotte saying educators want to see a commitment the government can be held accountable to.

As of Monday's demonstration at the Legislature, neither side had shown any indication of plans to return to the bargaining table any time soon.



Educators gathered in force at the Legislature building in Regina to greet MLAs returning for the spring sitting on Monday, as contract negotiations with the Sask. Party government remain at an impasse.
Photo Courtesy of STF



Saskatchewan's Focus on Recovery

The Government of Saskatchewan's focus is on helping people overcome addictions and live healthy, safe lives in recovery. We are doubling capacity for treatment by adding 500 addictions treatment spaces in the health care system. Work is underway on a central intake system that patients can contact directly to self-refer for addictions treatment. By helping people overcome addictions, we can save lives, heal families, and strengthen communities.

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Saskatchewan

Government travel needed to secure ag trade

When you are an agricultural producer in Canada, you will generally be reliant on export sales.

Certainly, there are producers who have found local markets, but they are largely specialized or what might be called niche producers.

Of course many make local sales, hauling oats or flax or canola to local processors which pay the farmer. However, what those processors make – rolled oats, flax, or canola oil – typically ends up shipped out of country, so the farmer still needs export sales to operate.

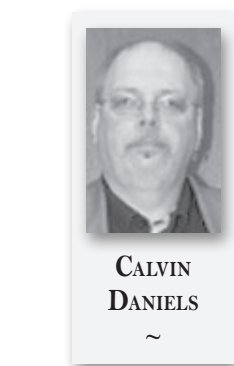
In terms of securing

export markets, it can be a very complicated thing.

The world of trade in general, and agriculture trade in particular, is complicated. While not an economist, it doesn't take that degree to know trade in agriculture is not as easily achieved as a buyer wanting a product and a seller having it.

There are very often government-imposed impediments to what should be the free flow of goods. The barriers, tariffs and taxes, and regulatory red tape, are created usually for political gain and not for good business. Countries have issues with other coun-

tries and trade between those countries may have new hoops to jump through.



CALVIN DANIELS

And of course, countries often try to protect what they see as their key sector farmers from trade slapping tariffs of imports.

It is certainly not a case

of the lowest cost producers filling worldwide market demand.

So, when government representatives – federal or provincial – attend trade junkets, it is almost always a positive effort to be appreciated by the agriculture sector.

Recently, Lawrence MacAulay, Canada's Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, visited Malaysia and the Philippines to strengthen trade relationships there.

The trip wasn't one which created a lot of major headlines, but high-ranking officials do tend to find more doors open to them than others

might, and that allows conversations with key people ensconced behind those harder to open doors.

For example, in Kuala Lumpur, Minister MacAulay met with Deputy Minister of Agriculture and Food Security Datuk Arthur Joseph Kurup to discuss how Canada can contribute to Malaysia's food security goals, and how to leverage the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP) to benefit both countries, noted an Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada release.

While in Manila, Min-

ister MacAulay opened Canada's first-ever Indo-Pacific Agriculture and Agri-Food Office (IPAAO). The IPAAO will bolster regional ties, assist Canadian exporters in finding new business opportunities, and help position Canada as a preferred supplier in the region, continued the release.

Such talks aren't likely to create an immediate spike in exports headed from Canada to that area, but it does create dialogue, which is important in solidifying trade ties essential to Canadian agriculture exports.

District 33 4-H wins silver at Provincial curling

By NORTHERN SPIRIT 4-H

The Northern Spirit 4-H Club curling team advanced to the Regional playoff competition in Radisson in January, after being deemed the District 33 representative team. After playing a total of three games, the team captured second place and advanced to 4-H Provincial playoffs.

The team consisted of Jessie Allchurch (skip), Avarie Conacher (third), Payten Keyowski (second), Kiara Duhaime (lead), and Tanya Allan (coach).

Provincial curling was held in Prince Albert at the Prince Albert Golf & Curling Club Feb. 16 to 18. Various teams from each region competed in the bonspiel, with a total of 15 teams entered. Seven junior teams and eight senior teams played throughout the weekend, with District #32 acting as hosts.

The draw began at 8 a.m. on Saturday, with District 33 from Spiritwood playing against District 9 from Ernhold, resulting in an 18-0 score for the rink from District 33.

The win led to District 33 curling against District 7, which resulted in a loss for the Spiritwood rink. They were able to come back in their game against District 31, which guaranteed them a spot in the bronze medal game.

The banquet was held Saturday night, where all the teams were introduced. Around 190 curlers, as well as their family members and friends, attended the banquet and dance.

Sunday morning came early and saw

the District 33 team face District 38 from the Paradise Hill area and win, advancing it to play the team from District 26 Tisdale in a skill-testing game. An 8-7 win guaranteed District 33 a berth in the provincial final, and a shot at redemption against District 7.

This resulted in a second loss to District 7 – albeit providing great competition – with a final ranking of second place overall for District 33.

It was a great weekend!

The final bonspiel placings were as follows:

Junior

1st place: SE – District #41 Carnduff & Area Beef 4-H Club

2nd place: SE – District #12 Spring-side 4-H Beef Club

3rd place: NE – District #20 Foam Lake 4-H Beef Club

Senior

1st place: SE – District #7 Pragman-Ogema 4-H Beef Club

2nd place: NW – District #33 Northern Spirit 4-H Club

3rd place: NE – District #26 Tisdale 4-H Beef Club



The senior District 33 4-H curling team won silver at Provincials. Pictured, from left to right: Kiara Duhaime, Payten Keyowski, Avarie Conacher, Jessie Allchurch, and coach Tanya Allan.

Tax Enforcement List Village of Parkside

PROVINCE OF SASKATCHEWAN

Notice is hereby given under *The Tax Enforcement Act* that unless the arrears and costs appearing opposite the land and title number described in the following list are fully paid before the 30th day of April, 2024, an interest based on a tax lien will be registered against the land.

Note: A sum for costs in an amount required by subsection 4(3) of *The Tax Enforcement Act* is included in the amount shown against each parcel.

DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTY

Lot Sec	Block Twp	Plan Range	Title No.	Total Arrears	Advertising Costs	Total Arrears and Costs
19	01	P5205	115409471	\$ 881.57	\$ 30.19	\$ 911.76
20	01	P5205	115409482	\$ 881.57	\$ 30.19	\$ 911.76
21	01	P5205	115409493	\$ 881.58	\$ 30.19	\$ 911.76
17	02	P5205	129162168	\$ 652.59	\$ 30.19	\$ 682.78
18	02	P5205	129162157	\$ 652.59	\$ 30.19	\$ 682.78
19	02	P5205	129162146	\$ 652.59	\$ 30.19	\$ 682.78
08	08	AE2827	115408953	\$ 668.69	\$ 30.19	\$ 698.88
09	08	AE2827	115408975	\$ 668.69	\$ 30.19	\$ 698.88
10	08	AE2827	115408997	\$ 668.69	\$ 30.19	\$ 698.88
19	08	AE2827	143748311	\$ 4,416.69	\$ 30.19	\$ 4,446.88
20	08	AE2827	143748333	\$ 4,416.69	\$ 30.19	\$ 4,446.88
	N	PA12997	134294430	\$ 1,887.69	\$ 30.19	\$ 1,917.88

Dated this 29th day of February, 2024.
Sigourney O'Halligan, Treasurer

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SCAN ME

NDP, SARM sound alarm over rural nurses

By **JORDAN TWISS**
Shellbrook Chronicle Reporter

The Saskatchewan NDP is accusing Premier Scott Moe of driving doctors and nurses out of rural Saskatchewan, citing new data released by the Canadian Institute of Health Information (CIHI).

According to the data, which was released last week and covers the period from 2018 to 2022, rural Saskatchewan has seen a 21 per cent drop in registered nurses (RNs), with numbers falling to 1,760 from 2,234 (a loss of 474 nurses).

Rural and remote communities have also lost 12 psychiatric nurses during this time, down to 68 from 80, while Saskatchewan overall has seen a larger 10 per cent dip, dropping to 679 from 755 (a loss of 76 psychiatric nurses).

This loss of rural frontline healthcare workers has only been partially offset by a modest increase in the number of licensed practical nurses (LPNs) (to 1,039 from 1,009), with numbers for physicians, nurse practitioners (NPs), and occupational therapists remaining almost unchanged (though, the Prince

Albert Parkland Health Region has seen a net decline in physicians, dropping to 98 from 102).

"Our hometowns have the potential to be some of the best places in Canada to put down roots. There's no excuse for Premier Moe to be driving doctors and nurses out," said Official Opposition Leader Carla Beck. "Scott Moe just isn't getting results for rural Saskatchewan. The Premier that broke our healthcare system can't be trusted to fix it."

While the CIHI's numbers paint a less than optimistic picture for frontline healthcare in rural Saskatchewan, urban areas fared better between 2018 and 2022. There are now 602 more RNs, 135 more LPNs, and 48 more NPs working in urban centres. The number of physicians in the province, both specialists and family doctors, also increased by 216 (129 more specialists, and 87 more family doctors).

"It's not just about money. We need to listen to our healthcare workers and change the culture that's driving them to other provinces," said Rural and Remote Health Critic Jared Clarke in a statement. "Local leaders know what's

best for their communities and deserve a seat at the table."

"The Sask. Party government has closed services, such as emergency rooms or laboratories, at a minimum of 53 different hospitals since Scott Moe took power," added Health Critic Vicki Mowat. "The longer the Sask. Party is in power, the further our friends and family will have to travel for care."

Joining the official opposition in sounding the alarm about rural healthcare, the Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities (SARM) called on the Sask. Party government to use the province's NPs to their full potential.

In a press release issued last week, the organization also amplified calls from the Saskatchewan Association of Nurse Practitioners (SANP) for the reinstatement of the Grow Your Own Nurse Practitioner Program, which was first introduced in 2014.

"We need to see our government make some changes to make it easier for our Nurse Practitioners who

live here in Saskatchewan to work where they live. Instead of recruiting, we must grow our own, right here at home," said Ray Orb, president of SARM, in a statement.

"We need more positions for our currently licensed Nurse Practitioners, who are underutilized, and we must reinstate the 2014 Rural and Remote Nurse Practitioner Recruitment Strategy. The government needs to consider incentives for Nurse Practitioners in the form of contributions towards relocation expenses and potential bonuses for hard-to-fill positions."

According to SARM's news release, Saskatchewan is underutilizing trained NPs. As of April 2023, there were 328 NPs in Saskatchewan, with 10 per cent being unemployed and continuing to work as RNs.

The Sask. NDP says it supports the idea of reinstating the Grow Your Own Nurse Practitioner Program, noting that healthcare workers are more likely to stay and work where they grew up if given the chance.

ADVERTISING DEADLINE IS FRIDAY 4:00 P.M.

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.

CANWOOD: Canwood Regional Park Supper & Auction, Canwood Elks Community Hall - Saturday, March 9, 2024. Refreshments 5pm, Supper 6pm ~ Auction to follow. Adults \$20 / 6-12 yrs \$10 / 5 & Under Free. For information call Bob 306-468-7942 or Grant 306-893-8085. Proceeds to Canwood Regional Park for equipment & building upgrades and spray park.

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Canwood students learn about Canadian flag




Canwood Public School's Grade 5/6 class enjoyed learning about the Canadian Flag on Feb. 15, known as National Flag Day of Canada. The presentation at the library by Canwood Legion Service Officer Lester Wyatt, and Bev Wyatt, was well received by a very interested class. A flag trivia game challenged them to some interactive fun. This was a great way to learn more about our distinctive Canadian Maple Leaf Flag.

SUBMITTED BY RYAN AIKEN, Teacher



JUNIOR CITIZEN OF THE YEAR



2024 JUNIOR
CITIZEN OF THE YEAR
SCHOLARSHIP

CALL FOR
NOMINATIONS



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

Shellbrook Library February activity highlights

By **LORRAINE THIBEAULT**
Assistant Librarian

The Shellbrook Public Library hosted a Haiku Poetry competition during the month of February. A haiku is a short, unrhymed poem that adheres to a specific three-line, seventeen-syllable format. The first line has 5 syllables, the second has seven, and the third has five. Five entries were received and displayed in the library. The winner of the draw for entering a poem was Joan Sommerfeld.

On Feb. 8, woven paper hearts were the craft of the day. Participants prepared heart baskets for Valentine's Day. The library aims to increase patrons' literacy through the accurate reading of directions, while allowing participants to have fun and go home with a hands-on product.

Prince Albert KidsFirst visited the library on Feb. 9 to host a 'super' story time. Nineteen toddlers were present for the dramatized reading of *The Very Hungry Caterpillar*. Following the reading, varied activities took place throughout the library. Puzzles, tunnels, crafts,

painting, and beadwork were explored by the children.

PA KidsFirst is a free, voluntary program, which assists adults to become the best parents they can be. KidsFirst provides support and education to help increase knowledge of healthy early child development and attachment to your baby. The library looks forward to hosting PA KidsFirst again in May.

On Feb. 16, First Responders Allison Irvine and Al Dion provided a CPR Demonstration for interested patrons and answered questions regarding how and when to perform CPR, and the first steps if someone is having a heart attack. They brought in a training Automated External Defibrillator (AED) and demonstrated how to use it.

On Feb. 20, Danette Barton from the Parkland Integrated Health Centre presented on Winter Blues Busters – a guide to beating the winter doldrums and the lack of sunshine of our winter months. She spoke on the difference between Seasonal Affective Disorder and depression, and about anxiety. She provided tips to try when there's been a short pe-

riod of "low mood," as well as when it might be time to seek professional help.

On Feb. 28, Laura Erickson-Lumb from the Alzheimer Society discussed factors for reducing our risk of developing dementia-related illnesses.

In February, the Lego Club participated in challenges on the themes of mountains, trees, racing cars, and Valentines. The participants had lots of fun racing

the cars, as well as testing their cars for indestructability. Valentine challenges included hearts, rings, keys, and a bouquet of roses.

No matter what is planned, participants always find an 'out-of-the-box' activity to amuse themselves. On the racing car Lego day, Erica tried an 'out-of-the-box' 'in-a-box' activity.



Erica, Liam, and Ethan ready for the Lego car race.



Erica tried thinking inside the box in a unique way during Lego car race day.



Layla built a bouquet of flowers for the Valentine's Day Lego challenge.



Dawson showcases his caterpillar, made during storytime with PA KidsFirst.



First Responders Allison Irvine and Al Dion led an informational session on CPR.

Board Nominations 2024

Nominations for the Board of Directors are being received from **March 5-19, 2024**. Members of Prairie Centre Credit Union (2006) Ltd. are informed that there are **4 vacancies** on the Board of Directors in the following districts:

District 5: Herbert, Morse - 1 Vacancy

District 8: Members at Large - 3 Vacancies

An information meeting for interested nominees will be held on **March 12 at 7pm**. To register for this meeting, call **306.882.5566**.

Annual General Meeting 2024 Tuesday, April 23

Harbor Golf Community Centre, Elbow
6pm Supper | 7pm AGM

Join us virtually or in person!

For more information on Board Nominations and Annual General Meeting, including registration links, please use the QR code below or visit **pccu.ca**.



New Surgical Record with Highest-Ever Volumes Performed

Between April and December of last year, 71,850 procedures have been performed, which is an increase of 6,000 procedures over December 2022. Thousands more patients are receiving the procedures they need thanks to the tireless effort, leadership and collaboration of our surgeons, anesthesiologists, nurses and care teams.



Hon. Jeremy Harrison
MLA for Meadow Lake
jharrisonmla@sasktel.net



Hon. Scott Moe, Premier
MLA for Rosthern-Shellbrook
scottmoe.mla@sasktel.net

Families enjoy Rivier Day

By **BEVRA FEE**
Spiritwood Herald Reporter

The staff and students at Rivier Elementary School staged their annual Rivier Day on Thursday, Feb. 29. Beginning with a morning mass at the Sacred Heart Roman Catholic Church and followed by a lunch at the school, Rivier Day is an annual opportunity for students, staff, and the general public to come together to celebrate.

After lunch, the focus was on a penny carnival-style games afternoon.

A silent auction was held online and in person during the week preceding Rivier Day, and acted as a fundraiser for the school's philanthropic teachings. Funds raised are divided, with one third donated to a local person that is going through a tough time, one third to an international charity, and one third staying with the school. The long-standing event saw their international donation this year being raised

for The Real Humanitarian Organization for the children in their projects in Ethiopia, where they purchased shoes for the children.

According to Frances Weber, a teacher at Rivier Elementary School, the annual event is intended to celebrate the namesake of the school, Anne Marie Rivier, a French Catholic nun and founder of the Sisters of the Presentation of Mary.

"This event in our school dates back prior to my origins here, possibly to 1984, when the school was named after Marie Rivier," Weber said.

Described on Wikipedia, "Marie Rivier's focus was on education and she opened a school just before the beginning of the French Revolution, which saw her school confiscated. The end of the revolution allowed for her to resume her educational inclinations and she also founded her religious order to take care of the education of orphans and other children who needed education."



Teacher Terra Turgeon leads students in the Ball Pong game.



Teacher Frances Weber (left) guides students Drew, Nixon, and Hanna while parent Rachelle Swan looks on.

Quilters showcase work at Canwood Library

By **GERDA BRUNER**
Canwood Library Board

Wapiti's Canwood Public Library held a creative quilting-focused Crafter's Choice

gathering on Tuesday, Feb. 27, showcasing the works of local quilters.

Along with the quilts themselves, quilters shared personal stories about their pieces, starting with Sandra Willner.



Sandra Willner holds her newly completed quilt

"When I retired from Tommy Douglas Collegiate, the staff gave me a gift certificate for a quilt shop. In July of 2016, I purchased a package of 10-inch squares on jewel tone Batiks fabric," Willner said.

"It took me about two years to find a pattern and about five years to complete the blocks, one at a time. I really wanted to hand quilt this one, so that took another year. I finally completed it in February of 2024."

Also sharing a bit more about her work was quilter Lorean Nichol.

"I had fabric left over from quilting a large quilt for my sister and

decided to make her a matching runner for her dresser. I found the pattern on Pinterest and it worked out great (my sister had picked out all the fabric)," she recounted.

ed. "The bigger square piece, I made for myself. Again, I found the pattern on Pinterest and only made it smaller. The pieces worked up



Sandra Willner (left) helps Lorean Nichol (middle) hold her quilt patterned dresser runner, while Jean Christiansen assists holding Lorean's second piece.

very quickly. I found the 'cutting' takes way more time than the 'sewing.'"

Crafting, coffee, conversation and selecting library reading materials wrapped up our fourth Tuesday of the month Crafters' Choice gathering.

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PRAISE & WORSHIP

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

LUTHERAN CHURCH

Zion - Canwood
Sunday School,
Worship Sunday, 9 a.m.
(in-person only)
St. John's - Shellbrook
Sunday School,
Worship Sunday, 11 a.m.
(in-person and online
via Facebook live)
Rev. Emmanuel Aristide

PENTECOSTAL CHURCH

Parkside
10:30 a.m. Worship
Pastor Lorne Valuck
306-747-3572
Shellbrook
Adult Study
9:30 a.m.
Sun., 10:30 a.m. - Worship
Pastor David Bodvarson
306-747-7235
Canwood
Summer: 10 a.m. - Worship
Pastor Bob Wrench
306-468-2138
Leask Gospel Tabernacle
Sunday 11 a.m.
Pastor Josh
1-780-690-2100

UNITED CHURCH

Big River
Sundays
11 a.m. - Worship
at Anglican Church
Rev. Dave Whalley
306-747-2804

ANGLICAN CHURCH

Leask - All Saint's
Sunday Service - 9 a.m.
St. Andrew's - Shellbrook
Sunday, 11 a.m. Service
Canwood - Christ Church
Sunday, 2 p.m. - Service
Rev. Canon David Butorac
306-961-1634
Minister's Warden:
306-922-5159
H.C. Service with Rev.
Butorac - 2nd Sunday of the
month

EVANGELICAL FREE

Big River
11:00 a.m. - Worship
Bible Classes 9:45 a.m.
Summer: 10:30 a.m. - 12
306-469-2258
Youth Nite: Fridays
Mont Nebo
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
Sat., 11:00 am -Worship
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 Rick 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

Dodgers appear to be invincible

With spring training camps under way in Florida and Arizona, it's time to bring out the hyperbole machine to try to foretell what will happen in 2024.

The Los Angeles Dodgers are going to be so dominant in the National League, they may go 162-0. OK, 153-9 at worst. They may be baseball's best team ever. They could have the home-run champion, the most valuable player, the rookie of the year and the Cy Young award winner. The commissioner's office may step in "for the betterment of baseball." They may clinch the pennant by the Fourth of July.

How can the Dodgers possibly not win the World Series?

Manager Dave Roberts already had an all-star lineup, led by superstars Freddie Freeman and Mookie Betts. They then signed baseball sensation Shohei Ohtani, who led the American League with 44 home runs for the L.A. Angels last year and who won't pitch again until 2025 due to

off-season surgery.

The Dodgers also won the free-agent race for another Japanese superstar pitcher, Yoshinobu Yamamoto, who is reportedly a better pitcher than Ohtani.

With an apparently limitless supply of money, the Dodgers signed free-agent pitcher Tyler Glasnow, who was 10-7 with Tampa Bay last year. He will join Yamamoto, Bobby Miller (11-4 last year), Tony Gonsolin (8-5), Walker Buehler (6-3 in 2022 before an injury shut him down for the entire 2023 season, Dustin May (4-1) and future Hall of Fame Clayton Kershaw, who signed a one-year contract for his 17th season after undergoing off-season shoulder surgery.

And because a team can never have enough hitting, former Blue Jay and Seattle Mariner Teoscar Hernandez, who hit 26 home runs for the Mariners last year and has 159 homers in his eight-year career, signed as a free agent with the Dodgers.

Because Ohtani's \$700



BRUCE PENTON

million contract calls for \$680 million to be deferred until after he retires, the Dodgers have circumvented some of the luxury-tax penalties they would otherwise have faced.

The Dodgers (100 wins) and Atlanta Braves (104) were the only two N.L. teams to win 100 or more games last year, and both were eliminated in their opening playoff rounds. Baltimore, the only A.L. team to win more than 100 games, also went out in the first round of playoffs. Which means, of course, that regular-season success doesn't always translate to the post-season. The situation may look dif-

ferent come October, but right now, on the eve of the '24 season, it looks like the Dodgers, in a breeze.

A story on MLB.com said the obvious: "We're looking at one of the most loaded teams in recent memory."

• Comedy writer Alex Kaseberg, after Canadian swimmer Betty Brussel sets records in the 100-to 104-year-old age class in Saanich, B.C. at the age of 99 (turning 100 in July): "This beats the previous record of drowning."

• Headline at fark.com: "Good news: Rob Manfred retiring. Bad news: In 2029."

• Super 70s Sports: "Every time Frank Sinatra attended a Dodgers game he permitted Tommy Lasorda to point out one person he wanted dead."

• Super 70s Sports. remembering from 1973 the greatest racehorse of all time: "The fastest times ever recorded in each Triple Crown race: Kentucky Derby: Secretariat, 1:59 2/5; Preakness Stakes: Secretariat,

1:53; Belmont Stakes: Secretariat, 2:24."

• Headline at The Beaver, Canada's parody website: "Auston Matthews vows to work on his 'pass to a guy who passes to a guy who scores' skills so he can finally deserve MVP."

• Mike Bianchi of the Orlando Sentinel: "The sports betting industry recorded revenue of nearly \$11 billion last year, according to the American Gaming Association. How can that be? Every serious sports bettor I ever talk to always tells me how much they're winning!"

• Scott Ostler of the San Francisco Chronicle, during the Steph Curry-Sabrina Ionescu three-point shooting competition: "Man, if you can't enjoy watching this, give pro cornhole a try."

• RJ Currie of sports-deke.com: "At the Scoties, Team Canada first-rock thrower Briane Harris was ruled ineligible to play just hours before the tournament start — with no explanation given. Rather than

a lead-off story, we got a lead-out story."

• Headline at theonline.com: "Victor Wembanyama's Head Lodged Between Rim And Backboard Again"

• From fark.com: "Mets IR list has arrived at spring training."

• Steve Simmons of the Toronto Sun: "The injury to Mark Stone in Vegas gives crafty GM Kelly McCrimmon all kinds of LTIR (long-term injury reserve) money to play with as the trade deadline approaches. No doubt, Stone will be back for the playoffs, where dollars don't count and the creative McCrimmon will be front of the trading line with money to spend."

• Another one from Simmons: "If NBA players don't cover anybody during the season why would they be expected to cover anyone in an All-Star game?"

• Another one from fark.com: "Auston powers his way to reach 50 goals. Yeah, baby."

• Care to comment? Email brucepenton2003@yahoo.ca

U18 Elks end regular season with big win over Stars

By JORDAN TWISS

Shellbrook Chronicle Reporter

After a rough stretch of 2024 that saw them win just one game between Jan. 7 and Feb. 26, the Parkland U18 AA Elks ended their season in winning fashion, when they welcomed the North West Stars to the Richardson Pioneer Recreation Centre on Friday, March 1.

There was a lot on the line for the Elks, namely a chance to clinch the last playoff spot, and the team showed up to play in front of its hometown crowd, setting a fast, hard-hitting pace.

However, it was the Stars who would draw first blood, when Jared Nichol scored on a rebound off a defensive zone turnover by the Elks. Jase Borschneck earned the lone assist on the play.

Continuing to play their style of game, the Elks retaliated later in the period on a blast of a goal from Colton Sommerfeld, who was assisted by Tyson Gagnon on the play. Later, despite generating good scoring opportunities on a 5-on-3 power play, the Elks just couldn't seal the deal, ending the period with the game tied at 1-1.

The game remained fast-paced as the second period got under way, with both teams trading off scoring opportunities and big hits. This time, it was the Elks who would strike first, as Brady Hujber scooped up a loose puck after a penalty kill and beat Stars' goalie Nate Dallyn over his blocker.

Mirroring the first period, the Stars knotted things up at 2-2 when Memphis Kahpeasyewat fired a shot that flipped high in the air before coming down into the Elks goal. Nichol and Borschneck earned assists on the play.

Tensions heated things up on the ice through the middle of the period as the big hits and scoring opportunities kept coming from both teams. But just like the first period, the second ended with the score tied.

If there was any expectation of a calmer game in the third frame, those expectations were quickly thrown out the window. The Stars' rough play proved to be a boon for the Elks, giving them three consecutive power plays.

Though the first two power plays yielded plenty of opportunities and

no goals, the third proved to be the charm, as Hujber buried his second goal of the game on assists from Brendan Aug and Brody Anderson. And Hujber turned his two goals into a hat trick just 32 seconds later, scoring on a textbook cross-crease feed from Corvan Stewart to put the Elks up 4-2.

After fending off pressure from the Stars on back-to-back penalty kills, the Elks went back on the offensive with the help of another power play, as Lane Keyowski scored on a screen shot from the point. Anderson and Gagnon assisted on the goal.

With the Stars' frustrations boiling over, the Elks were in a strong position to capitalize, as back-to-back turnovers by the Stars allowed Anderson to put the Elks up 6-2 on an assist

from Stewart.

Then, with the Elks on yet another power play in the dying minutes of the game, Keyowski scored his second of the night after weaving through traffic and finding the perfect spot for a wrist shot. Kaiden Ross and Stewart assisted on the goal.

With their 7-2 win over the Stars, the Elks finished their regular season at 11-18-3-1.

On Facebook, the team confirmed it had clinched a playoff spot. But as of Tuesday, the SAAHL website hadn't been updated with a playoff schedule.

In other exciting news for the team, the Battlefords AAA Stars announced that they have picked up Keyowski to play for them in the 2024-2025 hockey season. Meanwhile, Brendan Aug has signed on to play with the Prince Albert Jr. B Timberjaks next season.

Provincials

In other hockey action, The Shellbrook Senior Elks and the Shellbrook U13 C Elks both played Provincial matches over the weekend.

For the Senior Elks, who were up 1-0 in their first round series against the Delisle Bruins, Friday's game in Delisle didn't go to plan, as the Bruins scored a 13-3 victory to force game three. That game was to be played in Delisle on Tuesday, March 5.

Meanwhile, the U13 C Elks needed a win against the Watrous Hawks to force a third and series-deciding mini game. Unfortunately, a 6-3 loss ended its Provincials run.



Elks goalie Hunter Nakonechny dives on a loose puck in front of the goal, shutting down a scoring opportunity for the Stars.

OBITUARIES

Iris Julia Heppner



Iris Julia Heppner was born April 4, 1933, Laird, SK and passed away February 18, 2024,

Spiritwood, SK at the age of 90 years.

Iris is lovingly remembered by: her husband: Arnold Heppner, her children and grandchildren: Lamont (Cecilia) Heppner of Spiritwood, SK and their son Colin Heppner,

Katherine (Brian) Cross of Spiritwood, SK and Katherine's children Clay (Jodi) Tiegen, Shelley Phoenix, Lavern Heppner of Shellbrook, SK and his children Sirena (Ron) Klassen,

Wayne (Ashley) Heppner, Melissa Heppner (Todd Thurlow), Nicole Heppner, Mark (Robin) Heppner of Meadow Lake, SK and Mark's children Brandie (Ryan) Turgeon, Dylan (Jodi) Heppner, Kyle Heppner, Gina (John) Bernier of Meadow Lake, SK and their daughter Alexandria Bernier, and Myles (Jamell) Heppner of Spiritwood, SK and their children Mathew (Taylor) Heppner, Sarah Heppner, Kayla (Jessie) Nikkel, Emily Heppner,

26 great grandchildren, her sister: Mary Neufeld, her sisters-in-law: Helen (Arnold) Friesen and Carol Parent also numerous in-laws, nieces, nephews, and other relatives.

She was predeceased by: her parents: Abraham and Anne Fischer, her siblings: William, Stephan, and Florence Fischer, her sister-in-law: Helen Fischer, her step-father: Frank D. Martens and her brother-in-law: Pit "Lionel" Parent.

A private graveside service was held Friday, February 23, 2024 - 1:00pm at Crescent Ridge Cemetery, Leoville, SK the service was officiated by Russell Isaac. Music ministry was provided by the Mennonite Singers. Iris' eulogy was prepared by her grandchildren, honorary pallbearers were all of Iris' granddaughters, the active pallbearers were grandsons Clay Tiegen, Colin Heppner, Wayne Heppner, Dylan Heppner, Kyle Heppner,

and Mathew Heppner.

Memorial donations may be made to the Heart & Stroke Foundation in memory of Iris Heppner as tokens of remembrance.

Family and friends wishing to send online condolences are welcome to visit www.beaulacfuneralhome.com. Arrangements have been entrusted to the care of Beau "Lac" Funeral Home and Crematorium, R. Mark Muir Funeral Director, Spiritwood, SK (306) 883-3500.

Yvette Annette (Delisle) McCaffrey



Yvette Annette (Delisle) McCaffrey aged 89, passed away peacefully with her family present on February 25, 2024. She was a beloved mother, sister, (great) grandma and friend who will be deeply missed by all who knew her.

Yvette was born on No-

vember 27, 1934 in Edam, Saskatchewan where she spent her formative years in Jackfish Lake on the family farm. She was a tomboy, keeping up with her brothers doing outside chores, milking cows and driving the team of horses while raking hay. When her younger siblings attended school and the weather was bad, she would hook up the old grey horse to the cart and drop off and pick them up. Yvette left Jackfish in her early 20s and moved to North Battleford. Her first job was killing chickens at a slaughter house.

Yvette married John McCaffrey in Edam, Saskatchewan in 1959 and they had five children

together. With John's job as a heavy-duty mechanic, they moved and resided in many places between Saskatchewan and Alberta; until they moved to High Level in 1972. She was a wonderful homemaker until her children became older than she worked at various jobs. She was known for her hard work and dedication. Yvette retired and moved to Shellbrook in 1991. She made numerous wonderful friends and loved to have coffee with them, she loved the Saturday night dance jams, she had an amazing green thumb and it showed in her beautiful garden filled with vegetables and flowers, she enjoyed many trips to

visit cousins and family whenever the occasion arose and last but not least, she loved to knit, especially dish rags and wool socks (for her children and grandchildren). If there was a rodeo that her brothers raced chuckwagons or chariots in, she was front row and center and cheering the loudest. She loved anything cowboy!

Yvette is survived by her children, her twin daughters Marian (Bob) King, Marie (Clint) McCaffrey, daughter Debbie (Dennis) Dowling, and sons Neal McCaffrey and Ted (Ewelina) McCaffrey, and her grandchildren, Ashley Gibb, Carmen Clark, Jessica Lynch,

Desiree Bruno, Tyrel Roe, Courtney McCaffrey, Riley McCaffrey, Logan McCaffrey, Deklan McCaffrey, and Grayson McCaffrey. She is also survived by her three brothers, Joseph (Janice) Delisle, Harvey (Debbie) Delisle and Clement (Kathleen) Delisle together with numerous great grandchildren, (great) nieces and (great) nephews. She was predeceased by her parents Emanuel and Aldina (Nolin) Delisle, sister Alida Harty, brother Ray Delisle, brother Phillip Delisle, sister Delores Watier and her cherished grandson Eric Hotchkiss. Her memory will be cherished by all who knew her.

A Private Funeral Service will be held for family only. A Come & Go Memorial Luncheon will be held and announced later in the summer for her family and friends.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests that donations be made in memory of Yvette to the Shellbrook & Districts Health Services Foundation - House "A".

Family and friends wishing to send online condolences are welcome to visit www.beaulacfuneralhome.com Arrangements have been entrusted to the care of Beau "Lac" Funeral Home & Crematorium, Tammy Smart, Funeral Director, Shellbrook, SK 306-747-2828.

GOOD NEWS

WHAT'S THE DEAL WITH LENT?

By **RANDALL MCLEOD**
Immanuel Lutheran, Parkside

We are currently in the church season called "Lent." Lent is that season of 40 days (more or less, not counting Sundays) before Easter. During Lent we are invited to deny ourselves in remembrance of Jesus' 40 days in the wilderness. Our preparation, for the season of preparation, begins with what is alternately called Shrove Tuesday, Pancake Day or Fat Tuesday (Mardi Gras in French).

That particular Tuesday, the day before Lent begins, was traditionally used to prepare for the Lenten fasting period by using up all the fatty goods in the house. The milk, the eggs, the

butter and the fat (aha - Fat Tuesday, Mardi Gras, so that's what it means), hence, the making of pancakes. Unfortunately, this sacred task became infused with all sorts of licentiousness, as we see at many Mardi Gras festivities (Think New Orleans here). This outburst of evil prior to a sacred festival also occurs at Halloween, which is properly called All Hallows Eve, or the evening before All Saints Day.

Ok, so Lent is intended to be a season of self denial and a reminder that we are all sinners in need of repentance. But the true beginning of the season is on the next day, "Ash Wednesday." On Ash Wednesday, the penitent takes Holy Communion, as the true sign and reminder of their forgiveness. They are

then marked with the sign of the cross using a combination of the ashes from last years "Palm Sunday" branches and some anointing oil. This anointing serves as a reminder of both our own mortality (Ashes to ashes and dust to dust), as well our salvation (which was secured by Christ's sacrifice on the cross). We sinned, earning ourselves a death sentence. Jesus took that death sentence for us, so we can then be made fit to be reunited with God. That is what happened at the Crucifixion and Resurrection, Good Friday and Easter Sunday respectively.

So, to be sure, our self denial during lent does not gain us any particular favour with God. Rather, it is a reminder to us, and for us, of the price Jesus paid

for our freedom. It also serves as a reminder that the Christian life is a disciplined life. A life committed to serving God and our fellow man, as opposed to serving our own selfish interests.

Our self denial, then, is an acute reminder that, in this new life, we die, on a daily basis, to our own self-centered desires and motivations, and instead, we choose to live committed to doing the will of God.

So, what's the deal with Lent? That's the deal with lent, and Shrove Tuesday, and Ash Wednesday. They are traditions which are deep and rich in meaning and not just some empty rituals that we follow.

That being said, you never go wrong with pancakes!



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NOTICE TO CREDITORS
In the estate of Iris Julia Heppner, late of Spiritwood, Saskatchewan, deceased. All claims against the above estate, duly verified by statutory declaration and with particulars and valuation of security held, if any, must be sent to the undersigned before the 29th day of March, 2024: Arnold Heppner c/o Gina Bernier Box 92 Meadow Lake, SK S9X 1Y1 2-11

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In the estate of Dennis Peter Joseph Proulx, late of Shell Lake, Saskatchewan, deceased. All claims against the above estate, duly verified by statutory declaration and with particulars and valuation of security held, if any, must be sent to the undersigned before the 15th day of April, 2024: NOVUS LAW GROUP Barristers & Solicitors 1200 Central Avenue Prince Albert, SK S6V 4V8 Attention: Bill Cannon Solicitors for the Estate 2-10

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COMING EVENTS

SHELLBROOK LIBRARY AGM - Open to Public, Tuesday, March 19th, 6:30 pm at the Shellbrook Library, 105 Railway Ave W.

CELEBRATION OF LIFE

CELEBRATION OF LIFE for "Les Dahl" - Saturday, March 16, Shellbrook Community Hall. Doors open 5pm. Lunch at 6pm. Memorial Service at 7pm. Shindig at 8pm until ? 2-11

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The importance of growing food

By **PATRICIA HANBIDGE**

For those of us who like to garden, we get pleasure from gardening as well as the bonus of great home-grown food. Growing your own food in any capacity is getting more important with each day that passes. The United Nations Food Systems Summit in 2021 entered into the Decade of Action to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030. This was due to the fact that most of the world's food systems were fragile and not fulfilling the right to adequate food for all. Three billion people (almost half of humanity) are not able to afford a healthy diet. The pandemic, conflict, disruptions to global trade, climate change and inflation are threatening the supply of food for people world-wide. All of these challenges are further exacerbated by poverty and extremely high levels of inequality.

Whether you are rich or poor, young or old, every person in the world needs to eat safe and nutritious food. As consumers, we make choices on what to eat based on what is available, accessible, and affordable. There is an urgent need to transition to inclusive, sustainable, nutritious, and resilient food systems that are essential to build resistance against future shocks, protecting nature and biodiversity to empower communities to build inclusive and resilient economies.

Remembering what plants need to grow will help us to determine how difficult it might be to grow food in the winter indoors or with modifications to severe climate. Plants need light, water, warmth, oxygen, and food to grow. As we are in

the Northern Hemisphere, the sun is a long way away from us in the winter season, so supplemental light would be necessary in order to get good growth once your seeds begin to grow. Thus, if we choose to grow anything other than sprouts, we would need to invest in a grow light.

Light is one of the most important factors to consider when growing plants indoors. When choosing plants to grow this time of year to supplement your diet, think about the light that they need to thrive and ensure it is appropriately situated under your grow light. Follow the directions on the seed packet and remember that generally a seed is planted to the depth of the diameter of the seed. It is important to keep the media moist to ensure even germination so covering the pot with a plastic wrap until most of the seeds germinate is a good idea.

Once the seeds have mostly germinated, they will need to be put directly under the grow light to ensure the seedlings develop into strong, healthy plants. If you notice that your seedlings are tall and spindly, it is likely because they are not getting enough light. As the

seedlings grow, gradually raise the light to coincide with their rate of growth.

Be innovative in what you wish to grow. Some good ideas include a variety of types of lettuce. They germinate quite quickly and can be harvested before too long, ensuring that you and those who are close to you can enjoy fresh lettuce rather quickly. Other ideas will depend on your palette but arugula, corn salad, greens like amaranth, atriplex, beet, chard, choho, claytonia, cress, mibuna, mustard, and kale are all fun to grow and great to eat!

Enjoy the time you have been granted to be less busy with some of the regular life things you might usually be doing. Grow some food, enrich the life of children who now need to learn these essential life skills. Share with them basic and simple skills to grow food and build our world into a better, more sustainable place.

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



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Federal government unveils pharmacare bill

By **JORDAN TWISS**
Shellbrook Chronicle Reporter

With the long-awaited announcement of the federal government's pharmacare bill last Thursday, Feb. 29, universal single-payer coverage for diabetes medication and contraception may one day be a reality for Canadians.

In its current form, Bill C-64, titled An Act Respecting Pharmacare, exists only as a plan to establish universal pharmacare. Rather than implementing a program, the six-page bill simply outlines the "foundational principles" of a national universal drug coverage plan.

The bill was delivered one day ahead of a March 1 deadline set by the federal NDP, which made pharmacare one of the key pillars of its ongoing supply and confidence agreement with the Liberal government.

"This is fundamentally an important day for Canada. It is one for which I am so deeply proud," federal Health Minister Mark Holland said during the announcement of the bill.

"There will be a debate about who gets credit here today... This debate en-

tirely misses the point. Today is a giant step forward for our health system. It was made possible by two adversaries asking what we have in common, rather than what separates us. I hope that it represents the politics of our future; it certainly made the history of today."

If Bill C-64 passes in the House of Commons, the first step will see Holland begin negotiations with the provinces and territories on a funding commitment that would cover the cost of providing medications to people.

In addition to promising consultation with the provinces and territories, the bill calls for the establishment of a committee of experts to make recommendations "on operation and financing," within 30 days of the bill becoming law. This committee will have one year from the bill's passage to provide a report with recommendations to Holland.

The bill also requires the Canadian Drug Agency, which was formed in late 2023, to work on developing a national formulary and bulk purchasing strategy. Like the committee, it will be given a year from the bill's passage to compile a list of essential prescription drugs.

Despite these timelines, and a lack of

certainty about the finances, Holland is hopeful Canadians will be able to access diabetes medications and contraceptives through the program sometime this year.

With the focus being on diabetes medications and contraceptives, Bill C-64 is coupled with a commitment by the government to establish a fund to support Canadian diabetics who struggle to afford them (reportedly one in four of Canada's 3.7 million diabetics, according to a recent study).

Meanwhile, promising access to a "comprehensive suite of drugs and devices," the government says the first phase of the federal pharmacare plan will provide nine million Canadians of reproductive age with better access to contraception to "ensure reproductive autonomy, reduce the risk of unintended pregnancies, and improve their ability to plan for the future."

Coverage for diabetes medications and contraceptives is just the first phase in what the federal government is promising will be a more complete pharmacare regime in years to come. Holland says the federal government's goal is "full coverage." Though, he notes

this will carry a significant price tag.

The Parliamentary Budget Officer, for instance, has pegged the cost of a single-payer program for all medications at nearly \$40 billion a year.

Along with a lack of certainty on the financing, it's also unclear how many provinces and territories will sign on to the federal government's plan. Before the bill was even tabled, Alberta and Québec had signalled they planned to opt out.

While the Sask. Party government has said it won't sign on the dotted line before it sees the full details of the bill, and can determine if it will provide better coverage at a lower cost than existing provincial programs, Sask. NDP Health Critic Vicki Mowat and Rural and Remote Health Critic Jared Clarke issued a statement in support of it.

"A national pharmacare plan would be good for all Canadians," they said. "Too many people in Saskatchewan don't have access to the medications they need, and the Sask. Party government needs to get to the table and ensure a deal that provides coverage for diabetes medication and contraceptives for everyone in our province."

Minutes of an RM of Spiritwood meeting

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

The Regular Meeting of the Council of the Rural Municipality of Spiritwood No. 496 was held on Tuesday, Jan. 9, 2023.

In attendance were, Reeve Shirley Dauvin, Division 2 Dale Wasden, Division 3 Terry Wingerter, Division 4 Dennis Laventure, Division 5 Heather Warkentin, Division 6 Bevra Fee, Administrator Colette Bussiere, and Foreman Darcy Laventure.

Absent was, Division 1 Larry Vaagen.

A quorum being present the meeting was called to order at 9:03 a.m. by Reeve Shirley Dauvin.

Laventure: That the Foreman's report having been read now be filed. Carried

Foreman Darcy Laventure left the council meeting at 10:10 a.m.

Fee: That the minutes of the Dec. 12, 2023, Regular Meeting of Council be approved as presented. Carried

Wingerter: That the Administrator's report having been read now be filed. Carried

Warkentin: That the bank reconciliation for the month ending Dec. 31, 2023, be accepted as presented; and That a journal entry adjustment in the amount of \$13.28 be made to balance the bank rec for the 2023 calendar year. Carried

Fee: That the "List of Accounts" as listed on the attached Schedule "A" forming part of these minutes be passed for payment: Cheque No. 14525-14562 (\$158,196.82), Payroll File No.444, 446, 447 & 448 (\$37,894.76), EFT No. 2023-0084-0090 (\$179,611.84), EFT No. 2024-0001 (\$2025.36). Carried

Wasden: That the Statement of Financial Activities for the month ending Dec. 31, 2023, be approved as presented. Carried

Reeve Shirley Dauvin adjourned the council meeting at 11:01 a.m. for the public hearing.

The public hearing to hear comments on the Division Boundary Review Report was called to order at 11:01 a.m. by Reeve Shirley Dauvin.

CAO Colette Bussiere provided information on the Division Boundary Review Report.

There were no written or verbal submissions received.

Reeve Shirley Dauvin declared the public hearing closed and called the regular meeting of council back to order at 11:04 a.m.

Wingerter: That we accept the division boundary review report (the "report") as presented, and, that we make application to the Ministry of Government Relations to alter the division boundaries within the RM of Spiritwood No. 496 per the report, which will provide a more equitable representation within the six (6) divisions of the Municipality, as the division boundary review revealed a significant variance in representation within the six (6) divisions. Carried

Delegation: 11:30 am - TJ Tipton & Shane Colley - Spiritwood Fire Dept.

Warkentin: The Council of the Rural Municipality of Spiritwood No. 496 confirms the municipality meets the eligibility requirements to receive the Municipal Revenue Sharing grant; and That we authorize the Administrator to sign the Declaration of Eligibility and submit it to the Ministry of Government

Relations. Carried

Fee: That we pay the Resort Village of Echo Bay two thousand two hundred and ninety-eight dollars & sixteen cents (\$2,298.16) to compensate for 1/3 share of the cost overage for the Environmental Capacity Study on Big Shell. Carried

Fee: That the SARM Fidelity Bond Certificate for 2024 be approved as follows:

- Fidelity Bond Coverage: \$200,000
- Registered Mail Coverage: \$50,000
- Money & Securities Coverage: \$25,000. Carried

Warkentin: That we have no objections to the replacement of the natural gas line as per SaskEnergy Work Order No. 361702. Carried

Warkentin: That council remuneration be set as follows:

- Indemnity: \$25.00 per hour to a maximum of \$200 per day
- Supervision: Reeve - \$500 per month, Councillor - \$150 per month. Carried

Fee: That the mileage rate for 2024 be set at 0.70 cents per kilometre for the first 5,000 kilometres driven and 0.64 cents per kilometre driven after that. Carried

Laventure: That we provide a \$200 monetary donation to the Crimestoppers Program. Carried

Fire Chief TJ Tipton and Deputy Fire Chief Shane Colley joined the council meeting at 11:52

a.m. to discuss the Spiritwood Fire Dept.

Fire Chief TJ Tipton and Deputy Fire Chief Shane Colley left council meeting at 12:27 p.m.

Fee: That we abate taxes in the amount of \$162.14 levied on Roll No, 1301 000 (vacant crown land). Carried

Laventure: That the wages for a firefighter to attend a fire call be increased to \$25.00 per hour with a minimum call out wage of \$75.00; and That remuneration for the Spiritwood Fire Dept. heads be set as follows:

- Fire Chief: \$500.00 per month
- Deputy Fire Chief: \$500.00 per month
- Captains: \$100.00 per month. Carried

Wasden: That we allocate the Sask. Lotteries Community Grant for the RM of Spiritwood as follows:

- Town of Spiritwood: \$6,934
- Village of Leoville: \$1,482
- Village of Shell Lake: \$1,482. Carried

Warkentin: That we request the cancellation of lease agreements for non-payment of property taxes for the following list of lands attached hereto and forming part of the minutes (list omitted due to print space limitations). Carried

Wingerter: That we tender the Red Town of Spiritwood fire truck for sale. Carried

Wasden: That the request to clear trees, brush & debris from the

undeveloped right of way described as Twp Rd 492, between Rge Rd 3110 & 3111 and Rge Rd 3110 between Twp Rd 491 & 492 which provides access to SW 07-49-10-W3 be approved as per the road allowance brushing policy. No compensation will be paid as the brush clearing is only beneficial to the applicant & does not provide a benefit to the municipality. Carried

Wingerter: That we purchase a 2024 Maxum Tractor from Martodam Motors in the amount of \$235,000 plus applicable taxes and that we purchase a 2024 Bush Hog mower from Triod Supply in the amount of \$43,300 plus applicable taxes. Carried

Fee: That the council meeting be closed to the public at 2:05 pm under the authority of Part III of The Local Authority Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, to go in camera to discuss Human Resources.

CAO Colette Bussiere left council chambers at 2:05 p.m.

CAO Colette Bussiere returned to council chambers at 3:23 p.m.

The regular meeting of council was out of camera & resumed at 3:23 p.m.

Laventure: That employee salaries be set in accordance with the RM of Spiritwood & RMAA Salary Schedules. Carried

Wingerter: That the meeting be adjourned at 3:29 p.m.

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