

Shellbrook Chronicle & Spiritwood Herald

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Kennedy reflects on Lobstick experience

By **JORDAN TWISS**

Shellbrook Chronicle Reporter

Shortly after moving to Shellbrook in 2017, Krystal Kennedy knew she wanted to do something to help people in and around the community.

For most people, this means getting involved with a community group or sports organization. However, in 2023, Kennedy decided to join Shellbrook Fire and Rescue.

“Back in my home town, Bradwell, Sask., I was part of the local fire department and was a first responder as well,” she said. “I also love driving the fire trucks.”

Being the one to run into, rather than away from, a fire isn't for the faint of heart. And for members of Shellbrook Fire and Rescue, who are certified for extrications as well as fighting fires, the training is constantly ongoing and no less gruelling.

“The department has regular meetings during which we work as a team going through the trucks, using the equipment to ensure it is working properly,” Kennedy said. “Sometimes we set up vehicles and cut them apart with the extrication tools to learn the best ways to get the job done.”

This consistent training ensures members of Shellbrook Fire and Rescue are well prepared when major fires, like the recent Lobstick wildfire, spark up close to the community.

According to the Saskatchewan Public Safety Agency (SPSA), the blaze kicked off in the Nisbet Forest in between Duck Lake and Prince Albert on Tuesday, May 26. Though it was initially believed that the fire was started by an ATV, the SPSA has since attributed it to a lightning strike.

Fueled by dry, hot conditions and blustering southeasterly winds, the Lobstick wildfire blazed a path through the forest over the next few days, despite the efforts of SPSA crews and local fire departments to contain it.

The situation changed rapidly on Friday, May 29, as the fire grew by 1,300 hectares throughout the day to reach a size of 13,000 hectares and jumped across the North Saskatchewan River, posing a more immediate threat to Holbein and properties in the southern part of the R.M. of Shellbrook.

The rapid spread of the fire prompted the SPSA to issue an evacuation



Shellbrook Fire and Rescue's Krystal Kennedy stands in a field east of Ottmeier place, located south of Shellbrook.

order for 130 R.M. of Shellbrook residents. Though the fire posed no immediate threat to the Town of Shellbrook, long-term care residents and acute care patients at Parkland Integrated Health Centre were also evacuated as a precaution. The hospital remained open for emergencies.

Kennedy and Shellbrook Fire and Rescue worked on the frontlines of the Lobstick fire, first by assisting the R.M. of Shellbrook and SPSA with evacuation preparedness and driving around to people's homes to get them

to evacuate.

Shellbrook Fire and Rescue also assisted other firefighters and a ground crew from the SPSA with containing the blaze, hauling water and putting out hot spots.

“The experience was hot and tiring, but we kept pushing,” Kennedy said. “I can't really compare [it to other] firefighting experiences — every situation is different and we all feel different ways about each situation.”

Through the efforts of fire crews, the evacuation order for the R.M. of

Shellbrook was rescinded late last Monday (June 1). The residents and patients from Parkland Integrated Health Centre returned to the facility later in the week.

By Thursday, June 4, the SPSA declared the Lobstick fire contained.

Though she fights fires to serve the community, Kennedy says Shellbrook Fire and Rescue couldn't have done it without the community's support, and the individuals, community groups, and businesses who helped keep crews fed and hydrated.



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W.P. Sandin shines at District Track & Field

By **JORDAN TWISS**
Shellbrook Chronicle
Reporter

Student athletes from W.P. Sandin High School represented their school at the SHSAA District Track & Field Meet, held at Prince Albert's Harry Jerome Track on May 27 and 28.

"Competing against schools from across the region, the students demonstrated determination, sportsmanship, and a commitment to excellence throughout the days," said teacher and coach, Devon Thorpe.

"The meet featured a variety of track and field events, including sprints, distance races, relays, jumps, and throws. W.P. Sandin athletes achieved several strong performances and personal bests, showcasing the hard work and dedication they have put into their training this season."

W.P. Sandin's podium finishes were as follows:

Boys

Competing in the

Intermediate Boys tetrathlon, Dylan Collins secured a 1st place finish by topping each of the events: the 100-metre dash, the 800-metre race, shotput, and long jump. Meanwhile, Reagan Collins earned gold medals in the Junior Boys' 100-metre and 200-metre races, as well as long jump and triple jump.

Another strong outing on the day came from Will Kasner, who won the Intermediate Boys 100-metre and 200-metre races, placed 2nd in javelin, and narrowly missed the top three in long jump.

Camden Olsen and Hunter Smith both earned a trio of first place finishes over the two days, with Olsen winning the Intermediate Boys 3,000-metre, 1,500-metre, and 800-metre races, and Smith topping the Junior Boys shotput, javelin, and discus.

Among the remaining Intermediate Boys, Jayden Lamai placed 3rd in discus and shot-



W.P. Sandin's District Track & Field team.

put, and Gavin Smart placed 2nd in the 800-metre race and 3rd in the 1,500-metre and 3,000-metre races.

For Junior Boys, Josh Lamai finished 2nd in 100-metre hurdles and 3rd in the 100-metre dash and long jump, Merek Tait placed 2nd in shotput and 3rd in javelin, and Oaklin Williams placed 2nd in javelin.

Finally, for senior boys, Dalen Thiel placed 2nd in the 400-metre race and 3rd in the 800-metre race. And in the Senior Boys tetrathlon, Xander Dupuis placed 1st in long jump, 2nd in shotput, and 3rd in the 100-metre and 800-metre races.

Girls

Among the girls, Kayla Klaassen had three



Reagan Collins runs to victory in the Junior Boys 200-metre race.

1st place finishes in Intermediate discus, shotput, and javelin, while Thora Lenz won in Junior discus, javelin, and shotput. Elsewhere, Sa-

mantha Kennedy won the Senior girls 80-metre hurdles and triple jump, and placed 2nd in the 200-metre race, while Ayli Schatkoske won the 400-metre and 800-metre races, and finished right behind Kennedy in the 80-metre hurdles.

Meanwhile, over a busy two days, Jersey Kereluk won the junior girls 400-metre race, placed 2nd in the 200-metre race and long jump, and finished 3rd in the 100-metre race.

Other Intermediate Girls top finishers included Embree Schmitz, who placed 2nd in triple jump and 3rd in high jump, and

Vayda Kreese, who finished 3rd in javelin. At the Junior Girls level, Paige Herndier placed 2nd in javelin.

Rounding out the results, Presley Low had 2nd place finishes in the Senior Girls 100-metre race and long jump, and came in 3rd in the 200-metre race.

With top finishes in their respective events, 19 athletes from W.P. Sandin made the cut to compete at the SHSAA Provincial Track and Field meet, which was held at the Gordie Howe Complex in Saskatoon on June 5 and 6.

The Chronicle & Herald will have those results in next week's edition.



Paige Herndier readies a throw in Junior Girls javelin.



Kayla Klaassen competes in Intermediate Girls shotput.

NOTICE OF SPECIAL MEETING & AGM
STURGEON LAKE REGIONAL PARK
Saturday, June 20, 2026
SPECIAL MEETING: 9:00 AM Camp Kitchen – Store Update – Everyone Welcome
AGM to follow at 10:00 AM Camp Kitchen – Lease Holders

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Happy Hearts Childcare Centre
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
Thurs., June 18th 7:00 p.m.
@ Happy Hearts Childcare Centre
Thinking about joining the board?
We welcome both parents and community members to join our Board of Directors.
Board meeting are scheduled once every 2 months.
Please contact **Natalie** at the centre at (306)747-3991 or by email at natalie.happyhearts@hotmail.com if you have questions, or if you are wanting to join the board.
Hope to see you on June 18th, 2026!

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Sask Party, NDP spar over future of power grid

By **JORDAN TWISS**
Shellbrook Chronicle
Reporter

Though the spring sitting of the legislature is over, the Sask Party government and the Saskatchewan NDP continue to duke it out over the future of the province's power grid.

In contention are the costs and risks surrounding the government's plans to refurbish existing coal power plants in Estevan and Coronach and run them until 2050.

When it first announced the plan, the government said it would spend \$900 million over four years. But the cost soon doubled to \$1.9 billion, then increased again to \$2.6 billion, and now is expected to cost \$26 billion out to 2050 (just over \$1 billion per year).

These capital and operational expenses include: \$11.4 billion for capital, \$13 billion for fuel, \$1.4 billion for transmission, and \$393 million of sustainment capital.

The questions surrounding coal's future in Saskatchewan's power grid date back to 2013, when Prime Minister Stephen Harper's Conservative government introduced regulations mandating that all coal-fired plants that are more than 50 years old be shuttered.

For the province, this would have meant shutting down every coal-fired plant except the Shand Power Station by 2030. But through an agreement with Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's Liberal government in 2019, Saskatchewan received an exemption that would have allowed plants to run into the 2040s.

Responding to questions posed to SaskPower, Jesse Knisley, a senior media relations officer with the Executive Council, says the government's change of course hinges on the need to generate reliable baseload power as the province's population continues to grow.

The best way to ensure the province's power demands are met, he says, is by taking an all-of-the-above approach to power generation, including coal, natural gas, renewables, and eventually carbon-neutral nuclear power.

Though SaskPower has said the decision to extend the life of the ex-

isting coal-fired power plants wasn't driven by it being the lowest-cost generation option, Knisley says it is, in fact, the most economical path forward.

Saskatchewan already owns the power stations, the coal belongs to the people of Saskatchewan, and the cost of coal as a fuel source has been built into SaskPower rates for over 60 years. By contrast, converting to more natural gas generation would mean importing more natural gas from Alberta.

"The current estimated cost for each coal unit varies, based on the age and condition of the unit. But we currently estimate it will take \$2.6 billion in capital investment to life extend about 1,500 megawatts (MW) of coal," Knisley explained.

"Based on current gas plant estimates of \$2.3 billion to \$2.4 billion for a single 370-MW plant, it would cost between \$9.3 billion and \$9.7 billion to build the equivalent in gas generation."

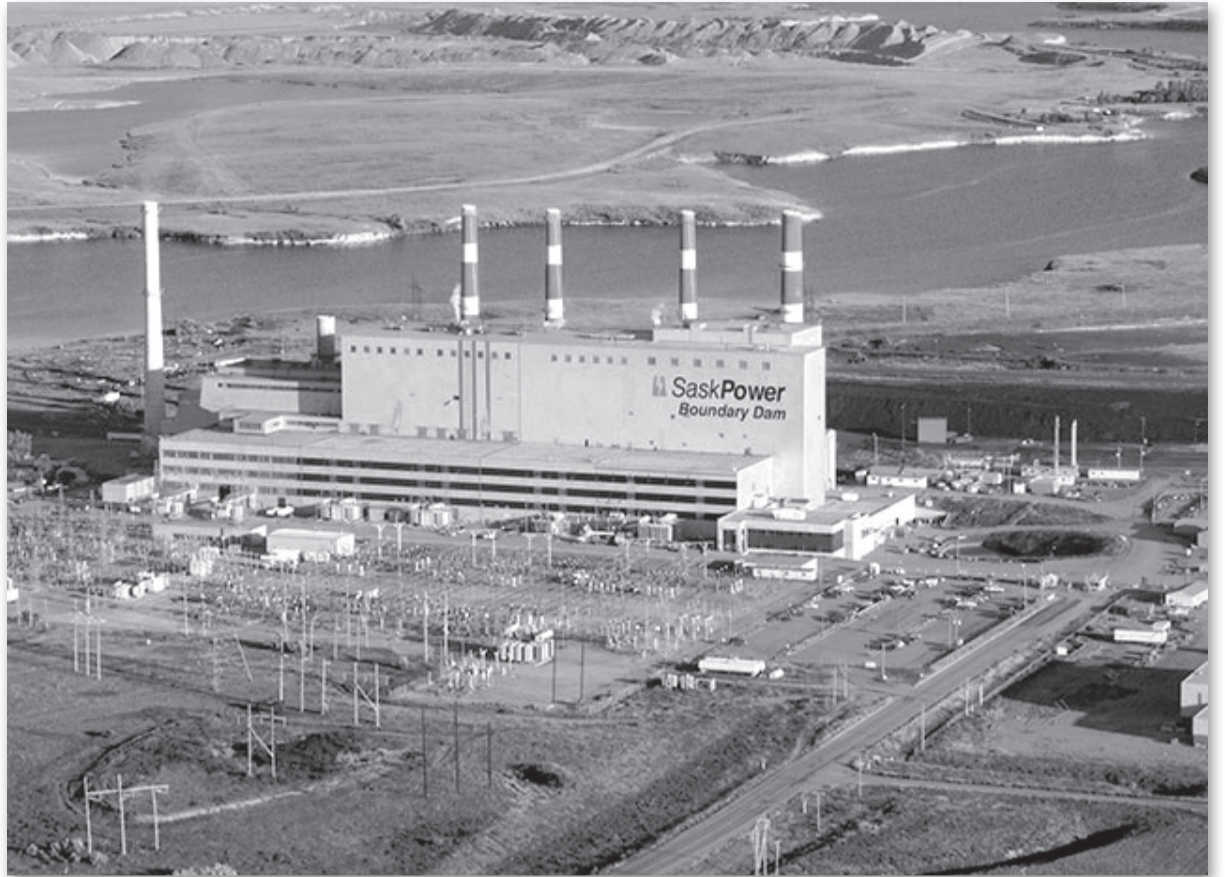
Noting that electrical utilities across Canada are facing significant rate pressures, Knisley adds that losing "even one megawatt" of generation would put constraints on the province's grid. To prevent this, SaskPower needs to make significant investments to maintain or replace existing infrastructure.

"SaskPower is committed to balancing the need for significant infrastructure investments with a strategy of implementing regular, moderate rate increases to ensure long-term reliability and affordability for customers," he said.

The people of Saskatchewan are already seeing such increases this year, as SaskPower imposed a 3.9 per cent rate increase on Feb. 1. It has also requested Rate Review Panel approval for another 3.9 per cent increase effective Feb. 1, 2027.

Aleana Young, the Saskatchewan NDP's Shadow Minister for Jobs, Economy, and SaskPower, understands the need to maintain a reliable power grid.

However, she believes that the Sask Party government's plan to spend \$1 billion per year to keep coal running, when it provides only a third of the province's power, fails to strike the right balance



The Sask Party government plans to run the province's coal-fired power plants, like the Boundary Dam units near Estevan, until at least 2050.
Photo courtesy of SaskPower

between reliability and affordability (for context, SaskPower's capital spend for all of its assets this year is estimated at \$1.2 billion).

The lack of focus on affordability she says, is made clear in a leaked SaskPower memo, which reads: "In absolute terms relative to rates in 2025, the average cost of electricity is projected to be 20 per cent higher in 2030 and 95 per cent higher in 2040, without carbon tax."

In search of its own answers, the Saskatchewan NDP contracted the independent firm Energy Super Modelers and International Analysts (ESMIA) to review SaskPower's own numbers.

"We just wanted the information, and we didn't know what the answer would be. It could have come back that rebuilding the coal plants is the

most economically viable option for the province," Young said.

"But it came back that it was the most expensive and had the highest and most immediate impact on rates, and had the highest capital costs. All of this was with no policy driving it: no industrial carbon tax or clean electricity regulations."

This, too, is supported by SaskPower's own internal documents, which classify the risk level of extending the life of coal-fired power plants as "extreme" (though SaskPower President and CEO Rupen Pandya has said this classification is linked to federal regulations like the industrial carbon tax, which the province has chosen to disregard).

In addition to crunching SaskPower's numbers, the NDP also published its own Grid and Growth plan as an alternative to

the Sask Party government's plan.

The plan commits to running coal-fired power plants into the 2040s in accordance with the province's agreement with the federal government. However, it proposes converting the coal-fired plants to natural gas, and Young notes that TransAlta converted a similar-sized fleet in Alberta for \$300 million — a third of the initial cost estimate of the government's plan.

In addition to increasing natural gas, the NDP plan would also invest in

wind, solar, and battery storage to build out the province's grid rapidly and cheaply, and work to develop capacity for nuclear "when the economics make more sense across Canada."

"This isn't about having a fight with the government over the merits of coal. This is about affordability," Young said.

"We want to see an affordable, reliable, flexible plan for Saskatchewan. Having affordable power for an export-driven province is non-negotiable."

RURAL MUNICIPALITY OF CANWOOD NO. 494 PUBLIC NOTICE

Public notice is hereby given that the Council of the R.M. of Canwood No. 494 intends to adopt bylaws under *The Planning and Development Act, 2007*, to replace Bylaw No. 2003-6, known as the Basic Planning Statement and Bylaw 2003-7, known as the Zoning Bylaw.

Intent: The intent of the new Official Community Plan Bylaw 2026-05 and Zoning Bylaw 2026-06 is to implement land use regulations and minimum standards, establish zoning districts, prescribe a permitting process, prescribe a process of appeals, and provide a provision for amendments.

Affected Land: The proposed bylaws will affect all land within the incorporated area of the R.M. of Canwood No. 494.

Reason: The proposed bylaws will help facilitate, direct and manage development within the R.M. of Canwood No. 494.

Public Inspection: Any person may inspect the proposed Official Community Plan Bylaw and Zoning Bylaw at the R.M. Office between 8:30 AM and 5:00 PM Monday to Friday, excluding Statutory Holidays. Copies of the bylaws are available at cost. Additionally, the bylaws and associated maps may be viewed online at the following website:
www.rmofcanwood.ca

Public Hearing: Council will hold a public hearing on Thursday July 16th, 2026, at 7:00 PM at the Canwood Legion Hall. The Canwood Legion Hall is located at 585 South Avenue in the Village of Canwood. Any person or group that wants to comment on the proposed Official Community Plan Bylaw and Zoning Bylaw is welcome to attend or to submit comments prior to the meeting. Council will consider all comments received.

Issued at the R.M. of Canwood No. 494 this 28th day of May, 2026.

Lorna Benson
Chief Administrative Officer

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Smith shows belated leadership on separation

A few years ago, the prospect of a province trying to follow Québec's example from the 1990s and vote on separating from Canada seemed rather remote.

Certainly, after nearly a decade of Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's style over substance brand of governance, there was no shortage of justified (and unjustified) grievances to go around – particularly in Saskatchewan and Alberta.

The COVID-19 pandemic only exacerbated things, serving as the perfect pot from which these grievances could boil over into resentment towards the federal government (even though the majority of public health mandates were imposed by the provinces).

Pair an unpopular federal government with a global pandemic that afforded people plenty of time to stew in their frustrations, then factor in the rise of Trump-style politics, which excels at stoking and targeting bitterness, and you have a perfect storm for the separatist question to rear its ugly head once more.

Even still, it was hard to believe things would go so far that a province would actually have to put the matter of separating from Canada to a referendum.

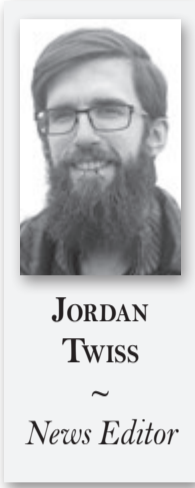
And yet, somehow, Canada crossed some invisible point of no return last year.

Much of it seems tied to the 2025 federal election. In the months prior to the election, Mr. Trudeau's government had sunk to levels of unpopularity not seen since 2011, when the Liberals lost Official Opposition status.

All signs pointed to the end of the Trudeau era and a victory for Conservative Party Leader Pierre Poilievre, who had campaigned on reversing every Trudeau policy deemed even a minor inconvenience to western Canada.

But then came the double-edged sword of Trump-style politics.

While Mr. Trump excels at catalyzing and directing hatred at specific targets, this also has the opposite ef-



JORDAN TWISS
~
News Editor

fect of stoking resistance against him.

As Mr. Trump turned his rhetoric against Canada, threatening its economy and sovereignty with talks of making it the 51st state, Mr. Poilievre was caught in the crossfire.

Mr. Poilievre's failure to pivot and divorce himself from some of the Trump-style elements of his campaign, coupled with Mr. Trudeau's long overdue resignation, upended the political playing field.

And much to the chagrin of western separatists, it was enough to unite Canadians to vote for another Liberal minority government under Prime Minister Mark Carney.

Though Mr. Carney immediately struck a different tone from his predecessor and made the elimination of the federal carbon tax his first order of business, it was too late; Alberta's long-simmering pot of resentment was already boiling over.

For Alberta Premier Danielle Smith, who didn't campaign on separating from Canada but relied heavily on the support of the separatist movement, the political calculus suddenly became infinitely more complex.

On the one hand, as the leader of the province, Ms. Smith couldn't necessarily be seen to be endorsing the separatist movement.

On the other hand, she and her party seemed determined to do everything in their power to placate the separatists.

Last summer, Ms. Smith and her government introduced legislation to lower the threshold to trigger a referendum to 10 per cent of registered voters (from 20 per cent) and extend the window for obtaining petition signatures to 120 days from 90 days.

It also established a panel to discuss the province's future within Canada, in anticipation of a referendum being held this year.

In the year since, despite a profound shift in the relationship between Alberta and Ottawa, Alberta's disparate



separatist contingents have been emboldened by the unspoken endorsement they've received from Ms. Smith and some members of her UCP government thus far.

Jeffrey Rath, lawyer for the Alberta Prosperity Project, suggested that Ms. Smith will face "political consequences" if she "betrays her base" on the separation issue.

Meanwhile, the Centurion Project somehow illegally obtained and distributed Alberta's voter list, and brazenly displayed it at a meeting attended by a UCP staffer. When said staffer apparently didn't raise any red flags about the data breach, it fell to the Alberta NDP to report it to the RCMP.

And then there's Mitch Sylvestre, a leader of the Take Back Alberta movement, who continues to trumpet the unverified claim that the petition to hold a vote on separation has tallied 300,000 signatures.

All this political drama has set the stage for Oct. 19, when Albertans will be asked to vote in a referendum. Among the 10 questions that day will be one about holding a future referendum on separating from Canada.

For her part, Ms. Smith has said she'll be campaigning for Alberta to remain a part of Canada.

Last week, she did this in a big way by suggesting that separating from Canada could cost \$400 billion in

transitional costs, and another \$25 billion to \$50 billion in annual costs.

"I think it's responsible for us to be very forthright about the cost associated with what is being proposed, so people can make an informed decision," Ms. Smith said last Monday.

To support this claim, Ms. Smith says her government is preparing a full costing document, which it plans to release in August to give voters ample time to review it.

Mr. Rath dismissed Ms. Smith's figure as a shameless scare tactic to convince Albertans to vote to stay in Canada. Instead, he cites the Alberta Prosperity Project's own costed fiscal plan, which pegs the price to separate at \$6 billion.

Though the costs of separation would vary depending on whether Alberta chooses to become a sovereign nation or become the 51st state, they would be considerable.

And there's also no shortage of tricky political questions to navigate around treaties with First Nations and the federally-owned land within Alberta's borders (roughly 10 per cent of Alberta's territory), as well as the indirect and harder to calculate costs of separation.

Though, if recent polls are anything to go by, with only 18 per cent of Albertans supporting independence, all these questions could be moot.

Shellbrook Chronicle

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Spiritwood Herald

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Spiritwood Library receives new flooring

By **HEATHER GATZKE**
Branch Librarian

It took 144 and a half hours, 15 volunteers and lots of organization to co-ordinate the project to install new flooring at the Spiritwood Public Library.

From Saturday, May 2, to the morning of Tuesday, May 12, the library was, in some parts, literally upside

down. A work bee was formed to pack up all the books, DVDs, audio books and some permanent artwork. Walls, shelves, and shelf bases were all labeled. Shelves were then dismantled and moved away, either off their bases or leaning along the wall.

More than 200 boxes of items were divided up, some packed in the vault with the puzzles (which totaled

13 boxes not included in the main count) or in the office area. Both of those rooms were packed so full, almost to bursting. The remaining boxes were set aside.

The old carpet was removed and the new vinyl flooring was installed in three stages by the flooring company, who also moved some shelf units. Then another work bee was

arranged to put the shelves back, unpack and reshelve the books, DVDs, and audio books in time for the opening date of May 12.

It was a huge undertaking, as well as a large funding commitment from the RM of Spiritwood and the Town of Spiritwood, and a time commitment for Steve Buban and all the volunteers.

There are three samples of the carpet on display at the library showing the original colour, the colour after 26 years of wear, as well as a sample of the carpet baked from the sun. It was time to update, and the new flooring will be much easier to maintain.

The library is so much brighter, and more open and inviting to enter.

On Wednesday, May 20, one of the first activities in the newly refloored library saw talented artists create masterpieces with bubbles.

A selection of differ-

ent coloured dyes were loaded up with clear dish soap. In order to get the dyed soap bubbles on the paper, you needed to use a straw and blow the bubbles

up high.

There were plenty of giggles happening, since it was more fun to blow the bubbles than dipping the paper into the bubbles.



The Spiritwood Library received new flooring between May 2 and 12.



Kids had fun painting with and blowing up bubbles.

It's About Time Rural Saskatchewan Got the World's Best Internet

Rural Saskatchewan has long faced a familiar challenge: slow, unreliable Internet connections that make it difficult for families, farms, and businesses to stay connected. That's beginning to change as **RFNOW**, a Manitoba-based Internet service provider, expands its **100% Pure Fiber** network into more rural communities across the Prairies.

Built for Rural Canada

Headquartered in Virden, Manitoba, RFNOW was born in rural Canada and built for life in the Prairies. For more than 20 years, the company has been connecting homes, farms, and businesses across western Manitoba and eastern Saskatchewan, bringing world-class technology to regions often overlooked by larger providers.

What sets RFNOW apart is its combination of technical expertise and small-town values. Its team members live and work in the same communities they serve, providing dependable, local support that rural residents can count on. The company's focus on community connection and customer care reflects its belief that geography should never limit opportunity.

What Fiber Internet Means for Rural Living

Fiber Internet is considered the gold standard of connectivity — fast, reliable, secure, and built for the future. By transmitting data through light rather than copper or wireless signals, it delivers unmatched performance for every aspect of modern life. Because fiber is installed underground, it's also protected from weather-related outages — keeping you connected even during prairie storms.

For rural households and businesses, that means smoother video calls, faster uploads and downloads, and seamless streaming in 4K and 8K quality. It also supports the growing demand for connected home security systems, cameras, telehealth devices, and reliable phone service that stays up when it matters most. These tools — along with farm technology and smart home systems — help communities thrive and stay safe.

With each new connection, RFNOW is helping close the digital gap between rural and urban Canada — empowering families, students, and entrepreneurs to stay connected, productive, and competitive.

Because it's about time.



Building Rural Saskatchewan's Fiber Future

Scan the QR code to learn more and check service availability in your area, or call **888-852-3631** for more details.



RCMP investigate suspicious death on Mistawasis

By **JORDAN TWISS**
Shellbrook Chronicle Reporter

Police are calling for the public's assistance as they investigate a suspicious death on the Mistawasis First Nation.

According to a news release, the Shellbrook RCMP received a report about a deceased adult male in a rural area of the Mistawasis First Nation at around 6:20 p.m. on Thursday, June 4.

Officers from the detachment responded immediately and secured the scene for further investigation, and the Saskatchewan RCMP's Major Crimes Unit was called in to investigate the death after it was deemed suspicious. The Saskatchewan Coroners Service was also engaged to assist with the investigation as police worked to identify the deceased.

The Saskatchewan RCMP's Major Crimes Unit is now asking anyone who

observed suspicious activity or individuals in the Mistawasis First Nation or Shellbrook areas between the evening of Monday, June 1, and the evening of Thursday, June 4, to please call 310 RCMP (7267).

Information can also be submitted anonymously by contacting Saskatchewan Crime Stoppers at 1-800-222-TIPS (8477) or www.saskcrimestoppers.com.

Investigators advise there will be

an increased police presence near the Mistawasis First Nation and Shellbrook area for an undetermined amount of time.

As of Monday, June 8, the RCMP had provided no updates about the investigation or the victim's identity, but said updates would be provided when they were available.

If an imminent risk to public safety is identified, the RCMP says it will notify the public.

APAS calls for nation-building strategy for agriculture

By **APAS**
Submitted

The Agricultural Producers Association of Saskatchewan (APAS) is urging a transformative approach to the upcoming Next Agricultural Policy Framework (NPF), positioning it as a nation-building strategy that drives economic growth, strengthens competitiveness, and unlocks the full potential of Canadian agriculture.

APAS has already voiced this position during consultations with the provincial and

federal governments, emphasizing the need for a coordinated strategy that leverages agriculture as a pivotal economic sector.

"This isn't about incremental change. This is about recognizing agriculture as a nation-building industry and creating a framework that reflects that reality," said APAS President Bill Prybylski.

The next Policy Statement will replace the Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership when it expires March 31, 2028, and will set the direction

for Canada's agriculture sector. APAS is calling for a shift away from a compliance-focused approach toward a purpose-driven strategy focused on long-term growth and competitiveness.

"The decisions made through the NPF will shape the future of agriculture in Canada. The framework must recognize agriculture's vital contribution to our nation's prosperity and its role as a key driver of the Canadian economy," Prybylski added.

APAS has identified six priority areas for the

NPF:

1. Economic Growth and Competitive-ness
2. Innovation, Technology and Business Resilience
3. Supply Chain Efficiency, Trade & Market Diversification
4. Climate Adaptation, Water & Soil Resiliency
5. Value-Added Processing & Red Tape Reduction
6. Farm Transition

APAS is also calling for farm transition to be recognized as a central pillar of the NPF. APAS

stresses the economic importance of farm transitions, viewing effective policy support in this area as crucial for sectoral sustainability and growth.

"Farm transition isn't just a family succession planning issue — it's a national economic issue," Prybylski said. "If we want a competitive and growing sector, we need policies that remove tax disincentives and support effective transition planning and access to capital for the next generation."

With discussions expected at this summer's

federal-provincial-territorial meeting in Halifax, APAS proposes governments reflect on agriculture's broader role in the national economy, underscoring the sector's importance to Canada's economic strategy.

APAS continues to work closely with provincial and federal entities to ensure that the views of Saskatchewan's producers influence the future of agricultural policies, aiming to establish a framework that drives growth and supports rural communities across Canada.

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Saskatchewan

Strange spring means murky canola prospects

For those of us in Yorkton and the surrounding area, recognizing how canola has continued to grow in significance is rather easy.

We need only to look to the two near simultaneously announced canola crush facilities — LDC and Richardson Oilseeds — and the major expansions at both sites since opening to fully appreciate how significant canola is locally.

While the significance to farmers is obvious — two local plants with massive appetites for canola — as an easy ac-

cess and competitive market for a crop they produce, it extends beyond that for area farmers.

The two plants, and the farm supplies needed to produce the canola, create jobs — both directly in the crush plants, but also crop supply businesses serving canola producers. The wages earned by sector workers then contribute to the local economy and ripple through provincially.

So, when Statistics Canada issued its monthly crush report



CALVIN DANIELS

on May 22, citing record canola crushing of 1.05 million tonnes, it's significant news.

That Canada continues to set records speaks well of the crush sector, farmer production, and continuing demand for

canola oil.

But, even with a record April crush, updated supply and demand estimates from Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, released on May 21, were down.

While the report suggests domestic usage for 2026-27 was steady, it also notes canola exports in 2026-27 were down by 300,000 tonnes from the April estimate, at 7,500 million tonnes.

The reduction in exports is not likely unexpected, given trade tensions that have involved

canola with China, and the ongoing trade disruptions caused by American loose cannon President Donald Trump.

Of course, the looming question now is the impact of the late prairie spring on canola production in 2026.

Canola is a crop that generally likes to be seeded as early as possible for top yields. But in the east central area for the period May 19 to 25 only 17 per cent of canola was in, and about double that provincially.

Though the last week

of May had weather that should have progressed seeding significantly, in general crops will be much later than normal. And with forecasters predicting another hot summer, the impact on production remains rather unclear.

Certainly, there is a need for at least average production to give farmers a chance at breaking even this season. And with the demand for Saskatchewan canola oil now firmly established, the need is just as great for those working in the crush sector.

Crop Report: May 26 to June 1

By **MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE**
Submitted

Seeding progress in the province advanced significantly this week, reaching 80 per cent complete, up from 52 per cent last week. While this progress is encouraging, it remains behind the five-year average of 91 per cent and the 10-year average of 92 per cent.

The southwest region leads seeding progress at 91 per cent complete, followed closely by the west-central region at 90 per cent, the southeast region at 87 per cent and the northwest region at 86 per cent. While the northeast and east-central regions made significant seeding progress, they remain behind at 67 per cent and 63 per cent complete, respectively.

Pulse crops, including lentils and field peas, remain the most advanced in seeding progress, followed very closely by durum. Other cereals and oilseed crops made significant progress this week.

Rainfall varied across the province with the highest rainfall reported in the Piapot region with 60 millimetres (mm), the Luseland area with 54 mm and the Manitou Lake region with 52 mm.

Overall, topsoil moisture levels remained relatively stable, despite some areas receiving precipitation alongside high temperatures and windy conditions.

Of the crops that have emerged, the majority are in good to fair condition. For pulse crops, chickpeas are rated at 21 per cent excellent, 75 per cent good and four per cent fair. Lentils are rated at 21 per cent excellent, 74 per cent good and five per cent fair while field peas are rated at 24 per cent excellent, 67 per cent good and nine per cent fair. Soybeans are rated at eight per cent excellent, 68 per cent good and 24 per cent fair.

For cereal crops, durum is rated at 21 per cent in excellent condition, 69 per cent good and 10 per cent fair, while oats are 19 per cent excellent, 69 per cent good, 11 per cent fair and one per cent poor. Spring wheat is rated at 21 per cent in excellent condition, 69 per cent good and 10 per cent fair, followed by barley at 18 per cent in excellent condition, 71 per cent good, 10 per cent fair and one per cent poor.

Other cereal crops are also rated as being in mostly good to fair condition. Winter wheat is rated at 15 per cent in excellent condition, 70 per cent

good and 15 per cent fair. Fall rye is seven per cent excellent, 80 per cent good and 13 per cent fair. Canary seed is 20 per cent in excellent condition, 67 per cent good and 13 per cent fair, and finally, triticale is seven per cent excellent, 69 per cent good and 24 per cent fair.

For oilseed crops, flax is rated at 20 per cent excellent, 67 per cent good, 12 per cent fair and one per cent poor, followed by canola at 22 per cent excellent condition, 67 per cent good, nine per cent fair and two per cent poor. Mustard is at 17 per cent excellent, 75 per cent good and eight per cent fair.

Crop damage this week was caused by wind and heat in multiple regions of the province. Minor damage from flea beetles, cutworms and wireworms was also reported. Gopher damage ranged from minor to moderate in all regions except the northeast where there was no gopher damage reported.

If weather conditions remain favourable, producers anticipate seeding will progress rapidly and will be wrapping up in some regions. Challenging spraying conditions were reported across the province due to the hot, windy weather and have resulted in delays in herbicide applications.

Producers are reminded to keep safety top of mind while working. For any crop or livestock questions, producers can call the Agriculture Knowledge Centre, toll free at 1-866-457-2377.

A complete, printable version of the Crop Report is available online.

YOUR TWO CENTS

The real math of representation

Dear editor,

What did you think about the unusual wave of floor crossings? In the aftermath of Conservative MP Gladu's floor crossing, Prime Minister Mark Carney said, "If you really want to unite the country, you want people with lots of different views." This applies most clearly to elections, when diversity within a party is built transparently. After elections, when diversity is gained through defections, it can raise questions about legitimacy.

When someone crosses the floor, it blurs the connection between how people voted and who governs. That dynamic is

sharper under first-past-the-post, where even a small shift can have outsized effects on power. This strengthens the case for proportional representation (PR), where seats reflect how people actually voted. Similar shifts would be less likely to dramatically alter who governs because power is usually shared among multiple parties and coalition agreements.

While majority governments elected with less than majority support may "get things done," the policy lurch that follows can undo those gains and create uncertainty. GPC Leader Elizabeth May points instead to Lester

B. Pearson's minority governments, which worked closely with Tommy Douglas and the NDP to help deliver Medicare, the Canada Pension Plan, and major expansions of social programs.

Canadians cast ballots for representation, not surprises. PR would make sure the democratic math still adds up after election day.

Support electoral reform with PR. Visit FairVote.ca or Charter-Challenge.ca to learn how.

35% votes = 35% seats — simple math, fair representation
Nancy Carswell,
Shellbrook, Sask.

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SAT., JULY 13 – 10:00 am – Bruce and Cathy Reinhart:
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Moroccan lamp workshop lights up fun

By **BEVRA FEE**
Spiritwood Herald
Reporter

On a recent trip to Montreal, two of Spiritwood's adventurous citizens embarked upon a workshop to learn how to create Moroccan Lamps.

"This was something I thought we could do in Spiritwood – it just needs someone to guide people. The kits have design ideas and all the supplies included, so we thought it would be a fun group session to do," states Rachelle Swan.

Rachelle and Kelly Swan welcomed the 17 participants into the Spiritwood Rec Facility where they had tables set up with all the supplies for lamp-making laid out for each place setting. One of them then gave an intro lesson to the group while the other mingled amongst the groups offering guidance and advice.

For the uninformed, Moroccan lanterns are the result of a rich, centuries-old cultural blend. They evolved from functional, ancient

North African metalwork combined with Islamic geometric art and later influenced by European styles. Today, they remain iconic symbols of warm hospitality and ambient, exotic design made from metals, vibrant stained glass, and colourful beads.

The evening was projected to last about three hours, with refreshments included. The Swans set out a themed array of appetizers invoking a Moroccan/Turkish flavour, with flatbreads, olives and dip for each guest.



Rachelle Swan sets the table with Moroccan-influenced appetizers.



Bev Willick shows her completed Moroccan Lantern.



Kelly Swan assists with supplies and provides guidance to the session's participants.



Joan Dzialo and Hannah Dzialo set up to make their Moroccan Lantern designs.

Hislop celebrates 99 years



Shellbrook's Marjorie Hislop celebrated her 99th birthday on Tuesday, June 2, surrounded by family.

Submitted By **DOUG AND DEBBIE MACKENZIE**

NDP calls for reversal of childcare funding changes

By **SASK NDP**
Submitted

The Saskatchewan NDP is joining rural childcare advocates to call on Scott Moe and the Sask. Party to fix their broken childcare deal.

Effective July 1, childcare centers in Saskatchewan are losing all funding for children who are enrolled as casuals or part-time, a move that will hammer the viability of childcare providers attempting to stay open and serve their community.

"Continuing down this path is going to send Saskatchewan's childcare into a complete tailspin," said Beck. "We are going to see waitlists skyrocket overnight, and we are going to see thousands of parents forced out of work because they have lost consistent and affordable childcare, especially in rural Saskatchewan."

On Wednesday, leader Carla Beck and Childcare & Early Learning Shadow Minister Joan Pratchler were joined by Cara Warner, the Director of Dream Big Childcare Centre in Rocanville, and Kaitlin Gibson, a mother with a 16-month-old son, who had to quit her job, when she couldn't secure permanent and reliable childcare.

"I was forced to walk away from my job, not because I lacked ambition or work ethic, but because childcare in Saskatche-

wan made employment impossible," Gibson said.

"Saskatchewan says it wants young families, workers, and rural growth, but it is impossible without dependable childcare. Unfortunately, I had to learn the hard way that when the government says they are supporting working families - it's just a slogan."

Warner said the funding cut is, "a huge blow for families trying to access affordable care. The Government is taking funding from children already accessing affordable care and giving it to spaces that aren't even usable yet – it makes zero sense."

Joan Pratchler, Shadow Minister for Childcare and Early Learning, noted that she has childcare providers across the province calling her every day, terrified of the government's plan to cut funding. Many have said they can't afford to look after children as a result, which could mean that centers will be unable to afford caring for children enrolled as casuals.

Pratchler added that the government needs to stop pretending childcare is a problem for parents to deal with – childcare is an economic policy.

"Affordable and accessible childcare is the gateway to thriving communities," said Pratchler. "If you can see that you are driving yourself over a cliff, just stop."

"Clearly, it's time for change."

**ADVERTISING DEADLINE IS
FRIDAY 4:00 P.M.**

Local athletes excel at P4A meet

By **JORDAN TWISS**
Shellbrook Chronicle
Reporter

The Prince Albert and Area Athletics Association (P4A) track and field meet was held in Prince Albert from June 2 to 4, with student athletes from Shellbrook, Wild Rose, Canwood, Debden, and Big River representing their respective schools across five age categories (Novice, Atom, Pee wee, Bantam, and Midget).

After three days of competition, the local athletes did their schools proud, dashing, jumping, and throwing their way to a plethora of podium finishes.

Starting with the Novice Girls, Shellbrook's Alaina Nelson had a strong outing on both the track

and field, placing 1st in the 150-metre run and 2nd in high jump. Shellbrook's Vayda Lavoie also had a good day, placing 1st in the 1,000-metre run and 3rd in the 600-metre run, and the Shellbrook 4x100-metre relay team capped things off with a 1st place finish.

All this was enough for Shellbrook's Novice Girls to earn the top team score for their division.

For Novice Boys, Shellbrook's 4x100-metre relay team also placed first. Meanwhile, Canwood's Logan Hegland placed 2nd in the 600-metre run, and Big River's Wyatt Fraser placed 2nd in the weight throw.

Rounding out the podium finishes, Debden's Thomas Poirier earned 3rd place finishes in the



Shellbrook's Beckett Horricks (left) accepts the Atom Boys aggregate award.

60-metre dash and long jump, and Shellbrook's Haydin Smart placed 3rd in high jump.

Among the Atom Girls, Shellbrook's Keira Verbonac brought home some hardware with a 1st place finish in triple jump and 3rd place in shotput. Shellbrook's 4x100-metre relay team finished 3rd.

On the Atom Boys' side, Beckett Horricks put on a show on the track, winning the 1000-metre, 600-metre, and 150-metre races. Amid all his wins, Horricks won the Atom Boys aggregate award, and also set a new record in the 600-metre race.

Canwood's Harlem

Eldridge had a similar outing, placing 2nd in the 60-metre dash, and 3rd in the 600-metre and 150-metre races. Rounding out the track results, Shellbrook's 4x100-metre relay team finished 1st.

In field events, there were a trio of 2nd place finishes for Shellbrook's Bentley Engele (long jump) and Oscar Lavoie (triple jump), and Wild Rose's Stran Muirhead (shotput).

Shellbrook's Atom Boys team also earned the top team score for the division.

At the Pee wee Girls level, Shellbrook's Marie-Annette Aghedo reached the podium three times with a

2nd place finish in the 80-metre dash and 3rd place finishes in the 150-metre and high jump events, while Big River's Annika Horricks, also from Shellbrook, placed 1st in discus and 2nd in triple jump.

Elsewhere, Shellbrook's 4x100-metre relay team placed 2nd, Shellbrook's Tayler Cameron finished 2nd in long jump, and Canwood's Bree Isbister placed 3rd in triple jump.

For the Pee wee Boys, Big River's Drew Thiesen had a strong day with 1st place finishes in the 150-metre race, as well as in high jump and shotput. Shellbrook's Cam Smart also had a good outing, winning the triple jump and placing 3rd in the 80-metre dash.

Additionally, Shellbrook's 4x100-metre relay team placed 1st, with Canwood's coming in 3rd, Shellbrook's Jack Robin finished

2nd in shotput, and Debden's Kaleb Poirier placed 3rd in long jump.

Up at the Bantam Girls level, Big River's Aleia Christiansen and Devyn Bergen did their school proud. Christiansen placed second in the 150-metre and 80-metre races, while Bergen placed 2nd in discus and 3rd in shotput.

Elsewhere, Shellbrook's Belle Armstrong won the 800-metre race, Wild Rose's Adriana Lambiris placed 2nd in high jump, Madisyn Verbonac finished 3rd in discus, and Shellbrook's 4x100-metre relay team placed 3rd.

On the boys' side, Shellbrook's Gunner Armstrong was the only local athlete to reach the podium, with a 3rd place finish in the 150-metre race.

Last but not least, at the Midget Girls level, Debden's Jozie Teatreault won the tetrathlon.



Shellbrook's Tayler Cameron (in blue) runs in the Pee wee Girls 80-metre race.



Shellbrook's Jayden Nelson competes in Bantam Girls long jump.

Shellbrook Library takes flight with butterflies

By **EDDIE HOEHN**
Branch Librarian

On Tuesday, May 26, Nancy Carswell gave a presentation at the library called Magnificent Monarchs, which was about her trip to the El Rosario Monarch Butterfly Sanctuary in Mexico.

Nancy showed attendees pictures of her trip on a screen with a projector as well as a few souvenirs. Nancy and her husband Alan also travelled to Puerto Vallarta, Morelia, Tzintzuntzan, Pátzcuaro, and Santa Clara del Cobre.

Monarch butterflies undergo

complete metamorphosis with four phases in their life cycle: egg, larva, pupa, and adult. Monarchs can transition from eggs to adults in 25 days during warm summer temperatures, or in seven weeks during cool spring temperatures. Normally less than 10 per cent of monarch eggs and caterpillars survive because of weather extremes, predators, parasites, and diseases.

North American monarchs migrate about 4,800 kilometers south to central Mexico in the fall. Monarchs use the sun and body clocks to complete a route they have never travelled before. The round trip that the butterflies take to Canada is completed in four generations. The fourth generation of butterflies does not reproduce and stores energy to survive longer and migrate to Mexico.



Attendees at Nancy Carswell's Magnificent Monarchs presentation.

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By **MINISTRY OF JUSTICE**
Submitted

The Government of Saskatchewan continues to work with Indigenous partners to respond to missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls.

The Final Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls was released on June 3, 2019. In the seven years since the Report was released, the province has made significant progress in developing initiatives, building legislation and raising awareness about this important issue.

“Saskatchewan remains focused on addressing missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls and building safer communities for all residents,” Justice Minister and Attorney General Tim McLeod, K.C. said. “Through collaboration with Indigenous and community partners, we are identifying root causes of gender-based violence, strengthening legislation to protect victims and those

at risk of gender-based violence, improving access to justice and ensuring Indigenous voices are heard as we strive toward a future free from violence, exploitation and abuse.”

The province supports families of missing persons through the Missing Persons Liaison (MPL) programs and the Family Information Liaison Unit (FILU). The MPLs are based in the victim services units of the Prince Albert, Regina and Saskatoon Police services, and work to keep families updated and support their needs. They identify best practices, develop training materials and provide expertise, advice and education to all police-based victim service programs in Saskatchewan.

The FILU actively helps families of missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls navigate government processes ensuring that they can access supports and information about their loved ones.

The province also funds a wide variety of supports for families of missing per-

sons including counselling sessions, educational sessions for professionals and family members and sharing circles.

Currently, these programs support over 170 families across the province. They also help organize Missing Persons Week and Red Dress Day events and gatherings, which are held across Saskatchewan to honour those who have gone missing.

Saskatchewan has enacted a wide variety of legislation to address interpersonal violence and abuse in recent years, including:

- The Cyberstalking and Coercive Control Act, which expands the definition of interpersonal violence in The Victims of Interpersonal Violence Act to include cyberstalking and online harassment, as well as coercive and controlling behaviour. This change clearly defines cyberstalking and coercive control as a form of interpersonal violence and provides legislative support to victims when they are seeking help;
- Clare’s Law, which authorizes police to disclose risk-related information to potentially at-risk intimate partners;
- The Protection from Human Trafficking Act, which provides additional supports to victims and survivors of human trafficking; and
- The Protection from Human Trafficking (Coerced Debts) Amendment Act, which amends existing legislation to prohibit lenders from including information about coerced debts in credit reports and from taking coerced debts into account when evaluating a potential loan.

Ongoing commitments to strengthen Saskatchewan’s response include provincial projects funded through the National Action Plan to End Gender Based Violence. The province was among the first in Canada to sign on to the federal National Action Plan in November of 2022. It provides \$20.3 million over four years to enhance programs and services that address interpersonal violence and

abuse.

“Our focus is on prevention, on stopping violence before it starts through investments in community-based supports, stronger laws and collaborative partnerships,” Minister Responsible for the Status of Women Alana Ross said. “As we honour the lives and voices of missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls, we will continue to build partnerships that help women and girls live safe, healthy lives.”

Additionally, the provincial Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls+ (MMIWG+) Community Response Fund continues to provide \$800,000 to community-led projects that promote and enhance violence prevention and build safety, with half of the funding provided by Women and Gender Equality Canada. Established in 2022-23, the program has supported 83 projects to date through grants of up to \$40,000.

The province has also introduced powerful campaigns and outreach programs that highlight interpersonal violence and abuse in Saskatchewan.

Campaigns, commitments and programs including:

- \$100,000 to #NotInMyCity, through the National Action Plan to End Gender-based Violence, to have the International Association of Human Trafficking Investigators deliver specialized training to Saskatchewan law enforcement.
- A commitment of \$115,000 through the National Action Plan to End Gender-based Violence to Hospitality Saskatchewan. This funding will support an industry-wide training program across Saskatchewan’s hospitality and tourism industries to identify and safely respond to instances of human trafficking.
- 211 Saskatchewan: A 24/7 service referral platform for situations involving interpersonal violence and abuse, including sexual violence and human trafficking.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

SPIRITWOOD: Wapiti Regional Library - Tuesday 10am - 5pm; Wednesday 10am - 5pm; Thursday 1pm to 5pm; Friday 10am - 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 - 5:30pm; Wednesday 11:30am - 4:30pm; Thursday 11:30am - 4:30pm. Phone # 306-469-2152

CANWOOD: Canwood Branch of Wapiti Regional Library Hours: Tuesday 9:30am - 4pm; Wednesday 10:30am - 5pm; Phone: 306-468-2501

DEBDEN: Wapiti Library hours: Tuesday 10am - 4pm; Wednesday 12pm - 6pm. Librarian: Aline Hannon

LEASK: Wapiti Library & Legacy Gallery Hours - Tuesday 9am - 2pm; Wednesday 2pm - 8pm; Friday 9am - 12pm

MARCELIN: Wapiti Library - Saturday 10am - 2pm; Thursday 2pm - 8pm. 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.

BIG RIVER: Alcoholics Anonymous Meeting – Every Wednesday, 7:30 pm @ Train Station in Big River (Railway Avenue)

SHELLBROOK: Ballapalooza – June 13 @ Shellbrook Sports Grounds! Admission \$10. Play Ball – All day starting @ 9am: Slo-pitch, Baseball, Softball; Canteen – 9am to 7pm: Food, Drinks & Snacks; Kidzville – 10am to 6pm: Petting Zoo, Face Painting, Bouncy Castles, Games, Lazer Tag, Glitter Tattoos, Dunk Tank & More!; Beer Gardens – Noon to Midnight; Juggling – 2pm & 6pm: Roaming Jugglers All Day & Shows @ Centennial Building. Supper – 5pm to 7pm @ Centennial Building. Battle of the Businesses Slo-Pitch on Friday, June 12 (no entry fee). Games at 6pm and 7:30 pm @ Diamonds #1 and #2. Beer Gardens and Food Truck. Prize for Best Dressed Team!

BIG RIVER: Mark your calendar for the 20th Annual Northern Lights Bluegrass and Old Tyme Music Camp (Aug 10-14) and Festival (Aug 14-16) at beautiful Ness Creek. The Mainstage includes Virginia’s New Floyd County Ramblers and local favourite Jake Vaadeland, with daytime workshops, nightly dances and campfire jams. Get ready for a magical, musical ring-dang-do, we’ve got 20 years of bluegrass and old time to be celebrating this Summer... Learn more at northernlights-bluegrass.com.

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Government issues warning about fake casino ads

By **LOTTERIES & GAMING SASK**
Submitted

With the CFL’s regular season underway, Lotteries and Gaming Saskatchewan (LGS) reminds sports betters and other online gamblers to be cautious of fake casino ads on social media.

Saskatchewan people who wish to gamble online can do so safely and securely on PlayNow.com, which is the only legal online gaming platform in the province.

“If you see a social media ad for an online version of Casino Regina or any other land-based casino in the province, don’t click on it,” LGS Vice President of Gam-

ing Steve Tunison said. “None of Saskatchewan’s land-based casinos have an online version where you can bet on sports or wager on a casino-style game, and neither does the province’s VLT program.”

LGS encourages anyone who spots this type of fraudulent ad to report it promptly and directly to the online channel where it appeared, such as Facebook, X or Instagram. Suspected fraud and cybercrime can also be reported to the Canadian Anti-Fraud Centre online: <https://anti-fraudcentre-centreantifraude.ca/report-signal-eng.htm> or by calling 1-888-495-8501.

“LGS has contracted

with a brand impersonation takedown service to identify these types of threats and help remove them from the Internet,” Tunison said. “In the first six months of using this service, it has identified and helped remove more than 140 fraudulent ads that were targeting Saskatchewan people by impersonating one of our province’s casinos.”

These scam ads, which typically copy the names, logos and exterior images of actual land-based casinos, are an ongoing issue for casino operators across North America. Scammers use these online ads to defraud people by stealing credit card numbers and other banking information.

Canada welcomes the World Cup hoopla

Canadian sports fans — no, Canadians, period — will have a tough time avoiding news and hoopla about the World Cup, which kicks off June 12 in Toronto. Just don't call it soccer — it's 'football' everywhere in the world.

It is the world's biggest sporting event by far, bigger than the Super Bowl, bigger than the Olympic Games, far bigger and more important than regional events such as the Stanley Cup playoffs or World Series.

Organized and run by FIFA — Fédération Internationale de Football Association — the World Cup features 48 teams split into 12 seeded groups of four. After round-robin play, the top two teams from each group, plus the eight best third-place teams, advance to the 32-team knockout stage.

Played in stadiums in Canada, Mexico and the United States, the 2026 version of the tournament is the first to be spread over three

countries. Canada gets 13 games, seven in Vancouver and six in Toronto. The tournament will run over a five-week period, culminating with the championship game at MetLife Stadium in New Jersey on July 19.

Here's a going-out-on-a-limb prediction: Canada will not win the World Cup. But, based on the current world rankings, it could advance to the 32-team knockout stage by finishing in the top two in its group, which features Switzerland, Qatar and Bosnia Herzegovina. The Swiss team is ranked 19th in the world; Canada 30th; Qatar 55th, and Bosnia Herzegovina 65th.

Canadian coach Jesse Marsch is a native of Wisconsin who recently signed an extension which takes him through the next World Cup, in 2030, to be held in football hotbeds Morocco, Portugal and Spain. Marsch played 14 seasons in Major League Soccer and is held in high regard by Canada's soccer hier-



BRUCE
PENTON

archy. He guided the Canadian entry — its roster features players from club teams all around the world — to as high a world ranking as 26th in 2025 and he steered the Canadian team to a surprising semi-final berth in the 2024 Copa America tournament.

Marsch may be American, but he loves everything about Canada. Said *Sports Illustrated.com* in a recent Marsch feature: "He's defended the nation's sovereignty, snapping at comments from President Trump about annexing Canada to make it the 51st U.S. state, and has spent ample time touring the

country's youth programs, seeking to raise the level of grassroots soccer."

In Canada, Marsch said, "I've found a place that embodies for me the ideals and morals of what not just football and a team is, but what life is, and that's integrity, respect and the belief that good people can do great things together."

Canada has a few world-class superstars — fullback Alphonso Davies of Edmonton and forwards Cyle Larin and Jonathan David to name three— but the roster consists of mostly Canadian-born players who wouldn't necessarily be classified as 'star' material. The usual powers — Brazil, Germany, France, England — are likely to dominate the tournament, but Canada's football stock is definitely on the rise.

• Super 70s Sports: "Military experts have confirmed that Chuck Norris and Walter Payton together on the same boat was temporarily the world's

fourth-strongest navy."

• Mike Bianchi of the Orlando Sentinel: "Aaron Rodgers has announced that he will retire after the upcoming NFL season. Hey, I guess it's time to sell your ayahuasca stock."

• Headline at the on-ion.com: "Tiger Woods Completes 12-Step AA Program In 9"

• Vancouver comedy guy Torben Rolfsen: "I took a deep dive into Jeff Hoffman's advanced stats and discovered something: He can't get batters out."

• Cathal Kelly of the Globe and Mail, on how desperately Canada will need the injured Alphonso Davies to play against Qatar if it loses its opening game: "If Canada loses, Davies will appear in the next game on crutches, trying to head the ball the length of the field."

• Torben Rolfsen again: "Real grass is being installed in B.C. Place ahead of the World Cup. It will be the first time real grass has been in the stadium since the Snoop Dogg

concert a year ago."

• Greg Cote of the Miami Herald: "... Hearing lots of fan and media noise about (World Cup) tickets being pricey. Like that's a surprise!? Demand steers cost. It's the American way!"

• fark.com headline: "The next time you fell like you want to complain about your sore, aching body, just remember Rafael Nadal won 22 Grand Slams over 20 years on a busted foot and never complained about it."

• Another fark.com headline: "Jets say they're finding inspiration in the Knicks' NBA Finals run, which is a weird way to tell everyone they need another 27 years to rebuild."

• Steve Simmons of the Toronto Sun: "The International Ice Hockey Federation is waffling on what to do about Russia for future international events, while the war in Ukraine continues. But really, it's simple. Just say no."

Care to comment? Email brucepenton2003@yahoo.ca

Spiritwood Lions present flags to students

By DAVE HYNDMAN
Spiritwood Lions

Members of the Spiritwood Lions Club, representing Project Maple Leaf, presented flags and certificates to Grade

1 and 2 students at both Spiritwood elementary schools on Tuesday, June 2.

The two members, Lion Dave Hyndman and Lion Bryan Ferguson, talked about citizenship, the makeup of the country, and the elements of the Flag of

Canada.

Each certificate read, "My country is Canada. I am free to be ME regardless of my colour, or beliefs."

Begun as a project of Lions Clubs in Alberta, Project Maple Leaf has been conducted by the Spiritwood Lions for a number of years.



Hartley Clark Grade 1 and 2 class received Canadian flags and certificates from Spiritwood Lions Club under Project Maple Leaf.



Spiritwood Lions presented flags and certificates to Grade 1 and 2 students at Rivier Elementary under Project Maple Leaf.

OBITUARIES

Arnold Heppner

In Loving Memory of
Arnold Heppner
December 23, 1930 –
May 27, 2026

Arnold was a loved father, grandfather, great grandfather, brother and friend, passed away peacefully on May 27, 2026, surrounded by his loving family. Born on his grandparents' farm site in Dundurn, Saskatchewan on December 23, 1930.

Arnold's life was enriched by his many family members and friends. He was an entrepreneur, businessman, rancher, farmer, logger and horseman. He worked very hard in the logging industry both physically and mentally from the early 50s until the early 90s from which time he passed his industry to his boys to continue. He was a rancher and farmer in those years and continued helping his family to carry on the tradition that he started with his father. His horse days were filled with a lot of ups and downs. He quite enjoyed visiting with his friends in the shed rows and going on trips with them to Kentucky, California and other places to "look for that one good horse" – which he was able to accomplish.

Dad's mind was very sharp right up to his last breath. His body was worn out from the many years of working, but he never gave up on it. It peddled his "CUBI" and worked his hands with the hand grips every day.

Dad was predeceased by his loving wife, Iris Heppner, of almost 73 years of marriage.

He is lovingly remembered and deeply missed by his children, Lamont (Cecilia) Heppner, Katherine (Brian) Cross, Lavern Heppner, Mark (Robin) Heppner, Gina (John) Bernier, Myles (Jamell) Heppner, grandchildren Clay (Jodie) Tiegen, Shelley Phoenix, Colin Heppner, Wayne (Ashley) Heppner, Sirena Heppner, Melissa Heppner, Nicole Heppner, Brandie

(Ryan) Turgeon, Dylan (Jodi) Heppner, Kyle Heppner, Alexandria Bernier, Mathew (Taylor) Heppner, Sarah (Cody) Baillie, Kayla (Jesse) Nikkol and Emily (Brock) Zakreski, and numerous great grandchildren.

A family interment was held at the Crescent Ridge Cemetery on June 8, 2026, and a service and lunch was held at the Spiritwood Civic Center (Hall) on June 8, 2026, at 3:00 p.m.

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, Mark Muir Funeral Director, Spiritwood, SK (306) 883-3500.

Lorne Stanley Peterson

PETERSON, Lorne
Stanley

It is with deep sorrow that we announce the passing of Lorne Stanley Peterson of Edmonton, formerly of Shellbrook, SK on June 2, 2026, at the age of 72.

Left to cherish his memory are sons, Jason and Nathan; siblings, Linda (Mike) Maruk of Edson, AB, Chuck (Barb) Peterson

of Holbein, SK and Wendy (Brad) Smith of Shellbrook, SK; along with numerous extended relatives and friends.

He was predeceased by his parents, George and Dorothy; and nephew, Corey.

The family wishes to extend their gratitude to the staff of St. Michael's Extended Care Centre for their ongoing support, care and compassion.

Cremation has been entrusted to Park Memorial.

Photos, memories, and condolences may be shared through www.parkmemorial.com.

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GOOD NEWS

LIFE AND GROWTH

By DEB ANDERSON
Submitted

What a wonderful thing yeast is! It can turn a flat dough into a delicious cinnamon bun. There is life in the yeast that causes dough to rise. A baker makes the dough, then waits, then punches the risen dough down, then waits an hour while it rises again, then punches it down as small as can be, rolls it out, adds raisins, brown sugar and cinnamon, and forms into small rolls which rise again!

Jesus used yeast and dough to explain the kingdom of heaven to people: "The kingdom of heaven is like leaven, which a woman took, and hid in three measures of meal, till it was all leavened." (Matthew 13:33). He had a way of explaining wonderful, eternal spiritual realities by using down-to-earth examples that people understood.

Having the whole Bible at our fingertips today, we should be able to see this endless growth as we examine the book from cover to cover. The Creator made all life

and declared it "very good" (Genesis 1:31). The first people used their free will to disobey the one thing that God asked them not to do. This act of obeying the Tempter allowed sin, death, and disease into the Creation.

Jesus came to restore – to destroy the works of the devil – to bring new life. Through Him people can be forgiven, set free from power and penalty of sin, become new creatures (2 Corinthians 5:17), empowered by God's Spirit within them (John 14:17) and continue to grow in the gifts of the kingdom. I see life and growth in this.

R.A. Torrey (1856-1928) was a pastor who wrote of a man who was "stuck," not growing in his Christian life. The story is as follows: At the age of eight, the man had believed that Jesus died for his sins and he felt a burden roll away and was "perfectly happy." As an adult, he worked in the stockyards and "got to drinking and every little while went off on a drunk...Is there any way to get

victory over drink and over all sin?" the man asked Torrey.

Torrey explained that the man had only half a Gospel. The cross and tomb were not the end of the story. Death, sin, and everything belonging to that kingdom was defeated when Jesus rose from the dead. Torrey asked the man if he believed that Jesus had all power in heaven and on earth? The man replied, "Yes."

"Well then, it follows that He can set you free from the power of sin." The man agreed and declared these beliefs to God in prayer, stating that he was now trusting to be set free from the power of sin and drink.

A few weeks later Torrey received a note from the man simply stating that: "I am so glad that I came to see you. It works." – "The Other Half of the Gospel" in Anecdotes and Illustrations.

Overcome by faith in who Jesus is and all that He has done. The victory half of the Gospel leads to life. Continue to grow in the things of His kingdom.

Quintin Verbonac

VERBONAC – Quintin
1968 – 2026

It is with heavy hearts that we announce the sudden passing of Quintin Stacey Verbonac, 58, of Edmonton, Alberta, who passed away on Thursday, May 14, 2026.

Quintin was born at St. Paul's Hospital in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan on April 24, 1968, to Claudette and Eugene Verbonac.

Quintin will be lovingly remembered by his father, Eugene; his sisters Monique (Craig) and Jolene (Gary); his nephews Blake and Byryn (Tonya); his nieces Britni (Spencer) and Kortni (Kenden); and his great-nephew Finley. Along with many aunts, uncles, cousins and friends.

Quintin was

predeceased by his son, Joseph; Joseph's mother, Rosalina; his mother, Claudette; his sister, Celeste; his aunty, Cindy; his uncles Gilbert, Gerry, Keith, Ron, and Claude; his cousins Shelley, Garnet, Jeff, Barry, and Julien; and his grandparents Angeline and Josef Verbonac, and Josephine and Julien Mercereau.

A Celebration of Life will be held at 2:00pm on Saturday, June 13, 2026, at St. Henry Roman Catholic Parish on Main Street in Leask, Saskatchewan. Followed by interment at the cemetery in Marcelin, Saskatchewan.

Memorial donations may be made in memory of Quintin to the Leask Cemetery, cheques can be payable to the Village of Leask (Box 40 Leask, SK S0J 1M0).

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, Leask, SK 306-466-4822.

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MEMORIALS



In Loving Memory
John "Jack" Schuetz
August 13, 1939 – June 12, 2022

There is a bridge of memories from here to heaven above, That keeps you very close to us, It's called the "Bridge of Love." As time goes by without you, and days turn into years, They hold a million memories and a thousand silent tears. To us you were so special, what more is there to say, except to wish with all our hearts that you were here today. Sadly missed and always loved, Sharon & Family

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Kennyah, 12 Sickle Cell Anemia

I WISH TO BE A SINGER

Kennyah's love for singing developed at a young age. With big dreams of living the life of a superstar, the talented 12-year-old's wish soon came true. From having her very own recording session and music video to experiencing a professional photo shoot and performing before hundreds of adoring fans, Kennyah was able to smile at a time when she needed to most. Wishes like Kennyah's come true through the compassion and generosity of people like you.

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Spiritwood senior activity highlights

By **ARMAND SMITH**
Submitted

The month of April was busy with the usual Bingo every Wednesday afternoon, Cribbage played every Friday afternoon, plus the Kaiser tournament on the third Sunday of the month.

The seniors always welcome players from Shell Lake and Leoville that come and play Cribbage and Kaiser. Everyone is welcome to play — no age limit.

Cribbage winners were as follows:

April 10: 1st Paulette Lafond, 2nd Shirley Turgeon, 3rd Pat Lutz

1st 24 hand: Dot Gaborou

50/50: Marene Iverson

April 17: 1st Armand Smith, 2nd Gerry Lafond, 3rd Barb Lutz

1st 24 hand: Dot Gaborou

50/50: Cheryl Smith
Kaiser winners were as follows:

April 19: Men 1st Pat Lutz, 2nd Paul Durette

Ladies 1st Bernice Tiringer, 2nd Joyce Willick

50/50: Paulette Lafond

The month of May was very busy not only with the usual bingo and cards but it is the month that the seniors have their annual strawberry shortcake and tea sale.

May 8 saw some very busy seniors whipping cream, cutting cakes, putting them in individual containers, adding strawberries and whipped cream, then three groups of deliverers made the trip to some shut-in seniors, businesses, and schools.

The seniors delivered about 300 pieces of cake, and had about 70 people either come and pick up or sit down and have a piece of cake with tea/coffee/juice at the decorated tables. It was a great afternoon!

May 17 there was a gathering for Sally Tipton's 95th birthday. She is now living at the Rose Gill Centre in Rabbit Lake. Happy Birthday Sal!

The seniors' second pot luck supper was held May 20, followed by pictures of members who celebrated birthdays and anniversaries in the months of April and May.

The second games night was held May 23 those who attended enjoyed various board and card games, shuffle board, and darts.

Cribbage winners were as follows:

May 1: 1st Marene Iverson, 2nd Joyce Willick, 3rd Louis Marion

1st 24 hand Linda Hill

50/50 Irene Marion
May 15: 1st Dot Gaborou, 2nd Barb Lutz,

3rd Cheryl Smith
1st 24 hand Dot Gaborou

50/50 Barb Lutz

May 22: 1st Cheryl Smith, 2nd Paulette Lafond, 3rd Joyce Willick

1st 24 hand Cheryl Smith

50/50 Joyce Willick
May 29: 1st Pat Lutz,

2nd Barb Lutz, 3rd Rosanne Smith

50/50 Barb Lutz

Kaiser winners were as follows:

May 17: Men 1st Armand Smith, 2nd Paul Durette

Ladies 1st Barb Lutz, 2nd Cheryl Smith

50/50 Hugh Pineault



Anniversary celebrants. Back row: Roy Conacher and Dave Corneliuson. Front row: Helen Conacher and Penny Holden.



Birthday celebrants. Back row, left to right: Done Heide, Penny Holden, and Murray Mack. Front: Linda Potts, Joyce Willick, and Isabelle Horn.

Peonies: the most forgiving flowers

By **BERNADETTE VANGOOL**
Sask. Perennial Society

If you ever walked in an abandoned farm yard, one neglected for five years or more, one of the most likely perennials to have withstood the constant neglect is the peony.

When the Indian Head Nursery closed in 2012, a lot of perennials and peonies were dug out by gardening enthusiast, yet today, you can still find peonies along some of the buildings, as well as in the area where the perennial gardens were located. I also found some peonies in bloom at my mother in law's place, long after she had moved from her farmyard into a memory care facility.

There are over 30 species of peonies (Paeonia), many of these have single flowers, with five or more petals. Species peonies were the breeding parents of the large flowered peonies we have in our gardens. In the last ten years, I have added some species peonies to my garden. They flower earlier in the spring and extend the flowering season in my front yard. Another benefit is that they are shorter in stature and have single flowers, which means that they do not require staking.

There are three types of peonies. Herbaceous peonies, also known as Chinese peonies or garden peonies, these are native to eastern Asia. Tree peonies hail from China and are not hardy on the prairies, and the Itoh peony which is an intersectional peony. The Itoh peony is named after Dr. Toichi Itoh from Japan who

after thousands of failed attempts, was successful in 1948 with a cross between a yellow tree peony (pollen parent) 'Alice Harding' and an herbaceous peony *P. lactiflora* 'Kakoden' (seed parent). This cross produced 37 seedlings. Unfortunately, Dr. Itoh died before any of his seedlings actually flowered.

In China, peonies have been cultivated for centuries. In the early days they were used and cultivated for medicinal purposes. Ornamental plants were developed from these and started to appear in the Imperial Gardens. By the tenth century they were a common addition to Chinese gardens.



Peony photographed in a yard that had been abandoned for over five years.

Earnest cultivation in the west and extensive breeding started in France in the 1820s.

There are many varieties to choose from. Although peony roots are typically planted and divided in fall, if you purchase, or are given a plant, do get it into the ground as soon as possible. Choose your planting spot wisely, as peonies don't like to be moved and may sulk for a couple of years after transplanting. Do not plant your roots too deep, new eyes should be just below the surface of the soil. Find a sunny spot, 6 to 8 hours of sunlight is ideal for good flowering, although the Itoh peonies will produce with

less light.

Even though we are told to clean up garden debris in the spring rather than the fall, if at all possible do clean up the dead peony stems in the fall. This will curb botrytis or fungus growth which is prevalent in cold, wet spring years. The fungus spores overwinter on old plant debris. If you had any foliage problems during the year, discard the foliage in the garbage rather than the compost pile.

In spring as early as possible, ensure that all old foliage is removed and move mulch or leaf litter away from the base of the plant. Make sure not to disturb the buds. If your plant is young in its second or third year, you could spread some slow-release fertilizer at the base (low nitrogen number). This will ensure good root growth. Mature plants usually do not require fertilizer.

If you grow peonies with large double flowers, make sure you have your peony rings or other stakes in place before they are actively growing. You don't want to be struggling to get stems in place later. Itoh peonies have a long bloom time and generally can stand on their own.

Water your peonies around the base to prevent diseases such as powdery mildew. Mature plants are drought tolerant but can benefit from watering during dry spells. Any young perennials benefit from more frequent watering in the first couple of years.

This column is provided courtesy of the Saskatchewan Perennial Society (SPS; saskperennial@hotmail.com).