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Moose Mountain Pro Rodeo coming up July 20-21  
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**Lots of ads and information on upcoming summer events around the region inside!**



More information on Living Skies Come Alive inside!  
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# Plain & Valley

Covering Southeast Saskatchewan and Southwest Manitoba  
July 2019 • Volume 12, Number 7



Kim Poole photo

## August long weekend at Moosomin Lake:

# Canada versus Philippines for Fireworks Competition

BY KEVIN WEEDMARK

Organizers are counting down the days until the 2019 Living Skies Come Alive Fireworks Competition August 3 and 4 at Moosomin Lake.

Every August long weekend, the skies come alive over Moosomin Lake. For the last several years the Living Skies Come Alive Fireworks Competition has pitted two fireworks companies against one another.

Each competitor puts on their best show—one on Saturday night, one on Sunday night—and a panel of judges selects the winner.

The fireworks shows are unlike anything else on the Prairies. Timed to music and carefully choreographed, the fireworks shows are a different calibre of show than anything else on the Prairies. The fireworks are shot off across the lake



from the main beach, so they are reflected in the water of Moosomin Lake.

The fireworks weekend has grown over the years, with thousands of people taking in the shows each night.

The two-day fireworks competition long pitted Saskatchewan against Manitoba, but for the last two years it has gone international, as Canada took on China and the United States over the last two years.

It will be Canada versus the Philippines at the 2019 Living Skies Come Alive Inter-

national Fireworks Competition at Moosomin Regional Park August 3 and 4.

### Moosomin, Esterhazy Filipino communities involved

The Moosomin and Esterhazy Filipino communities will be involved in the weekend, serving Filipino food and performing. "We will have a cultural presentation," said Leo Ilustrisimo, a member of Moosomin's Filipino community. "We will be

performing 4-5 pm on the Sunday, the day the Philippines will be doing the fireworks. We will have a food booth both days, Saturday and Sunday, with the help of the Esterhazy Filipino community."

He said members of the local Filipino community are excited about taking part in the weekend. "Everybody is really excited, not just here in Moosomin but in all the towns around," he said. "It will be something new for everyone. They want to see what the Filipino fireworks team can do. We have been talking to a few Filipino communities from surrounding towns and they are really excited about it."

"We're setting up a tent and will be playing a video on a big-screen TV all about the Philippines so people can learn more about the Philippines. It will be set up close to the food booth."

*Continued on page 3*

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Moosomin, SK

**August long weekend at Moosomin Lake:**

# Canada versus Philippines for Fireworks Competition

*Continued from front*

Ilustrisimo said he is looking forward to the fireworks weekend. "We were busy with the Philippines National Heritage Month, and then getting ready for the parade weekend (the local Filipino community participates in Moosomin's Chamber of Commerce Parade and in a Multicultural Celebration on the Moosomin Rodeo weekend). Now that the rodeo weekend is over we are already in preparation for the fireworks weekend. We're going to be busy preparing for the show the next few weeks. It's going to be something else. We're really happy that the committee chose a team from the Philippines to participate. It's exciting."

**Organizers excited to host the Philippines**

"We're really excited about having the Philippines come this year," says Laurie Renneberg of the organizing committee. Layne McFarlane, another member of the committee, said he hopes members of the Filipino community across the Prairies come out to see the Canada vs. Philippines competition. "The Filipino community is really quite large between Winnipeg and Regina. We hope a lot of them come out," he says.

The organizers are hoping to replicate the excitement of the Canada vs China competition two years ago with the competition with the Philippines. "There was a lot of excitement with China coming, not quite as much with the States because they're maybe too familiar," said Renneberg. "I think the Philippines will create that same level of excitement we had with China again."

The weekend also includes music both nights. This year, the live bands are Stuck on Red and The Firm from Langenburg.

The fireworks weekend has become a very successful fundraiser for Moosomin Regional Park. "Last year it raised a little over \$100,000," says McFarlane. "The year before that, with China, it was \$130,000. So it's huge, but at the same time, our overhead cost going into it is like \$130,000, so most of all you hope for good weather. I feel a little like a farmer—the costs of the fireworks and the entertainment coming in and the security and the porta-potties and the tents for the beer gardens are committed costs. You've put everything on the line, and you see how it goes. Have we been fortunate? Yes, we've been fortunate with the weather each year.

"Our new water plant at the park cost in the range of \$630,000. A rough guess as to how much has been raised over the years by the fireworks is about \$450,000. As a public park, if we could make another significant bite into the



cost of the water plant and help pay off some of our loan, that would be wonderful."

The organizers are hopeful they will get a good crowd again this year. The Canada vs. U.S. weekend attracted 9,500 spectators and the Canada vs. China weekend attracted 12,500.

"We have a cap of 7,000 tickets a night," says Renneberg. "We're hoping with the Philippines it will have that international draw like we had with China."

She says she is looking forward to the August long weekend. "I am truly looking forward to it, because our Filipino community has been so involved in our community, and this is like we're giving something back to them by having the Philippines come."

"Having the Philippines come is really special because of the community both locally and regionally," adds McFarlane. "This should be special for them."

Anyone interested in volunteering can contact laurie.reneberg@hotmail.com or lh.mcfarlane@sasktel.net or call Laurie at 306-435-7746 or Layne at 306-435-9662.

Canada will be represented in the competition by Canfire

of Winnipeg, which has represented Canada at the Living Skies Come Alive International Fireworks Competition and other competitions. The Philippines will be represented by Platinum Fireworks. Platinum Fireworks provides fireworks shows for the Enchanted Kingdom theme park in Santa Rosa, Philippines, and has competed in several international fireworks competitions.



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# 10th Annual Living Skies Come Alive International Fireworks Competition

## Canadian competitor says Living Skies a world-class event

BY KEVIN WEEDMARK

The Canadian competitor in the 2019 Living Skies Come Alive International Fireworks Competition says the event at Moosomin Lake has become a truly world-class competition.

"It's international level fireworks," said Peter Palmer of Canfire Pyrotechnics.

"The pinnacle of fireworks for people around the world is Montreal. They have a long legacy of 30-40 years of teams from around the world.

"Moosomin just switched over to an international level over the last three years, and it looks like we're going to maintain that. As the budgets go up at Moosomin, we're able to attract bigger companies, more countries, and more talent. The level of the show is now on par with international competitions you would see in other parts of the world, whether it's Hanover Germany, Montreal, even English Bay in Vancouver.

"Here it's a little different than English Bay where they're limited to 12-16 people on the barge. And those teams are helping out whereas our teams work for us, so there's a pride factor and a passion going into the shows here.

"It's a win for the visiting team such as the Philippines, it's a win for Canada, and it's also a win for the audience and the regional

park. Everyone benefits, because everyone wants to put their best foot forward."

He said there is a lot of preparation for the show, and there are no second chances.

"We don't get a second chance to do this," he said. "We can't go back on the following weekend and say 'Let's do a do-over.' You have to do everything right, right here, right now. There's a lot of pressure. There are a lot of specialty fireworks that Ottawa approves one time for the show that we can't use any other time or for any other shows."

He said Living Skies is unlike any of the other shows Canfire does.

"Moosomin is a highlight and a feature show for us. It's something the crew looks forward to. It's not an issue of 'how much money can I make?' It's an issue of 'how well can I do this?'"

"I don't think we've ever made a profit on these shows because it's not about that, we're always trying to up our game and bring new equipment. Last year we invested at least \$20,000 into equipment just for Moosomin, beyond the fireworks, beyond the travel, beyond the crew. That's in hardware, and we upgraded our firing system for Moosomin last year by \$15,000 to handle the larger capacity of the show.

"It's not like other shows, because we know a year ahead of time we're going to

be doing this, which makes it easy for us to plan. We're not wondering if this is going to happen or not. I told the board I'm on board for the next 10 years if they want to do this."

Canfire Pyrotechnics has been around since 2002, and Palmer has offices in both Canada and China, which gives him insight into the fireworks world. "I was able to be at the Liu Yang International Fireworks Festival. I was a judge this year in May. I worked with six other judges and we judged entrants from around the world. The judging was so close, Italy vs Japan vs Holland, for the top three places. There was less than two points between first, second and third. I was able to meet the teams, see their setup, talk to them afterwards and debrief on what they could have done different or better. It was a great experience."

Palmer is looking forward to Living Skies. "I'm absolutely looking forward to it, the crew is motivated. Canada is up Saturday night, and the Philippines is up Sunday night. We're happy to be the first up at bat."

He said the two shows will be very different.

"I know the Philippine team is doing a very traditional show using Filipino music, it will have the national flavor of the Philippines," he said.

"Ours is called 'Ignite the pyro machine.'"

"We want to create that energy—here we go. Bring it in, and it's going to come in there, and then we create our magic. It's not a traditional Canada theme, a national patriotic theme, it's more for those fireworks enthusiasts—here we go and we want you to be completely enthralled with the energy and what we bring forward from Team Canada, so it's a little different approach than the last two years.

"We're looking forward to it. We've been building fireworks for 6-8 months for this show. We have half a shipping container full of fireworks for Moosomin.

"The Philippines team has the advantage of seeing what we did last year, what the Americans did last year, and what the China team did two years ago—everything's on YouTube—and I believe they've definitely upped their game. The Moosomin organizers have increased the budget over the last two years, so we have a healthier budget and we can put on a bigger show.

"The intensity and the complexity is increasing drastically. We're spending more prep time ahead of time with the fireworks selections, organizing the angles, the pieces.

"Each show involves over 2,000 pieces, so that involves a lot more pre-work. We're like elves in the workshop sorting all the pieces out. It's going to be an amazing show."

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# 10th Annual Living Skies Come Alive International Fireworks Competition



## Saturday, August 3 Schedule

### Breakfast at the Store

7:30 - 11:30 am  
Come on down to the Park Store and start your day with a good cup of coffee and breakfast.

### Sandcastle Building Contest

11 am - 12 noon  
Bring your own sand toys and build whatever inspires you in the sand. You have one hour to create your masterpiece. No limit to number of people in a group. Simply arrive at the main beach at 11:00 A.M., pick a spot and start building. Good luck! Treats for everyone!

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### Kids Beach Games

11 am - 1 pm, Saturday and Sunday  
Cool off by the water with some beach games down at the main beach from 11 - 1 pm both days.

### Kids Games

1 - 3 pm, Saturday and Sunday

Kids games on Saturday and Sunday from 1 - 3 pm. Send the kids down to wear off some energy. Meet on the grassy area by the store and playground equipment. Prizes for everyone!!

### Pontoon Boat Rides

1 pm - 4 pm, Saturday and Sunday  
Come on out and cruise the lake. No Charge! Rides last approximately 30 minutes. Boats leave from the dock down by the main stage area. Signs will be posted.

### Kids Face Tattoos

4 - 5 pm, Saturday and Sunday  
Come on down by the main store area and there will be a booth where you can get a tattoo of your choice.

### Food Booths and Park Store

11 am - 9 pm  
Food booths will be set up in the grassy area across from the store. There will be a wide variety of foods to choose from. The Park Store will be serving Chicken Wings as well as a Deep Fried Basket with

your choice of Pickles, Mushrooms, Mozza Sticks or Avocados. You may also like to try their delicious Butter Chicken and Samosas.

### 11 am - 11 pm

Saturday and Sunday  
Have a blast at our tennis courts where you can ride on the bumper cars (\$5.00 per ride), jump on bouncy toys (\$10 day pass includes one bumper car ride) and visit with T-Rex and other characters.

### Celebration Ford Lumberjax Axe Throwing

1 - 7 pm - Cost is \$5  
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### Fusion Audio Visual

Saturday and Sunday  
Our returning DJ will be our MC for the 10th annual fireworks and provide music in the afternoons and as well in the evenings.

So bring a blanket or a chair and enjoy!

### Beer Gardens

4 pm - Midnight  
Saturday and Sunday  
When it is hot out there is nothing like a cold beer. Our volunteers will be happy to serve you that refreshing drink. Beer gardens are located south of the store on the grassy area both days.

### 50/50 Draw

Saturday and Sunday  
\$500 minimum each day. Tickets are 4 for \$5 and can be purchased by the store. As well sellers will be walking amongst the crowd. Don't miss out!

### 7:30 pm - 1 am

Bring your lawn chair and enjoy the music of a favorite fireworks band, Stuck on Red. The will rock the crowd before the fireworks and entertain in the beer gardens until 1:00 A.M.

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# 10th Annual Living Skies Come Alive International Fireworks Competition



## Sunday, August 4 Schedule

### Pancake Breakfast

7:30 - 11:30 am  
Come on down to the Park Store and start your day with a delicious pancake breakfast.

### Kids Beach Games

11 am - 1 pm, Saturday and Sunday  
Cool off by the water with some beach games down at the main beach from 11 - 1 pm both days.

### Kids Games

1 - 3 pm, Saturday and Sunday  
Kids games on Saturday and Sunday from 1 - 3 pm. Send the kids down to wear off some energy. Meet on the grassy area by the store and playground equipment. Prizes for everyone!!

### Pontoon Boat Rides

1 - 4 pm, Saturday and Sunday  
Come on out and cruise the lake. No Charge! Rides last approximately 30 minutes. Boats leave from the dock down by the main stage area. Signs will be posted.

### Kids Face Tattoos

4 - 5 pm, Saturday and Sunday  
Come on down by the main store area and there will be a booth where you can get a tattoo of your choice.

### Food Booths and Park Store

11 am - 9 pm  
Food booths will be set up in the grassy area across from the store. There will be a wide variety of foods to choose from. The Park Store will be serving Chicken Wings as well as a Deep Fried Basket with your choice of Pickles, Mushrooms, Mozza Sticks or Avocados. You may also like to try their delicious Butter Chicken and Samosas.

### 11 am - 11 pm

Saturday and Sunday  
Have a blast at our tennis courts where you can ride on the bumper cars, jump on bouncy toys and other special attractions. Tickets can be purchased at the tennis courts.

### Filipino Community Entertainment

4 - 5 pm  
The main stage will be the center of attention as our local Filipino community entertains us.

### Fusion Audio Visual

Saturday and Sunday  
Our returning DJ will be our MC for the 10th annual fireworks and provide music in the afternoons and as well in the evenings. So bring a blanket or a chair and enjoy!

### Beer Gardens

4 pm - Midnight  
Saturday and Sunday  
When it is hot out there is nothing like a cold beer. Our volunteers will be happy to serve you that refreshing drink. Beer gardens are located south of the store on the grassy area both days.

### 50/50 Draw

Saturday and Sunday  
\$500 minimum each day. Tickets are 4 for \$5 and can be purchased by the store. As well sellers will be walking amongst the crowd. Don't miss out!

### 5 - 10 pm

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# 10th Annual Living Skies Come Alive International Fireworks Competition

## Filipino competitor has lots of international experience

Representing the Philippines in this year's Living Skies Come Alive is Platinum Pyrotechnics, co-owned by Patrice Guy.

"I am originally from Montreal," says Guy. "I started in fireworks 33 years ago. In 2000, I started doing international gigs and I eventually ended up in Hong Kong. I met my wife in Hong Kong, my wife happens to be Filipino, and three years ago we moved to the Philippines and I became co-owner of a company there, Platinum Fireworks.

"We do a lot of shows in the Philippines, we also organize the Philippines International Pyromusical Competition, so we do have our own competition where we invite companies from all over the world to come to the Philippines to compete, and we also compete abroad.

"In the past two years we have done shows in Poland, Macau, China, Australia, all over the place.

"What differentiates the Philippines is there are not high budgets for some of the shows, so we have to be very inventive, we need to work with not a lot and turn it into a show. That forces you to be inventive."

Peak fireworks season in the Philippines is the Holiday season, with the summer being a slacker time.

"Fireworks are very, very popular with everyone in the Philippines except the government," Guy says with a laugh. "We start getting really busy around mid-November and that carries on until New Year's Eve, which is the busiest night of the year, and right after that we get into the hosting of our competition,



A show by Platinum Pyrotechnics

which keeps us busy until May, and then summer is the low season, so summer is when we do the international shows."

He said he has a very special show planned for Moosomin. "We have quite a show for Moosomin. We are well aware of the Filipino community in that part of Canada, and we went all out. The soundtrack is 100 per cent Filipino music. They are all-time favorites. Filipino people who come and watch the show, you will see a big smile on their face because they will totally relate to the soundtrack.

"It's a very complex show, we have well over 2,500 ignitions, so technically it's a very complicated show. The Philippines is my adopted country now, and we aim to do them proud."

The show is planned to take advantage of the reflections from Moosomin Lake, since the fireworks

are set off across the lake from the main beach.

"We plan for the reflections, we plan for the size of the site. The venue affects the design of the show," said Guy.

Guy said he often doesn't see his company's fireworks shows, since he has crews in different areas putting on shows, but he plans to be at Moosomin Regional Park for Living Skies Come Alive.

"The show was designed in the Philippines by our designer, and usually I don't go to all of the productions, I try to give the chance to our employees to travel and see the world, so usually I stay back at the office and they go and do the productions. But since this one is in my home country, I took the opportunity to tag along and be present for the show.

"Every device has a position in the field, has an angle, has timing, so we have a very detailed list that has over 3,000 lines to implement the show."

Guy says work on the Moosomin show began in the spring. "We started the choreography in April," he said. "We started by working on the soundtrack. That took about a week. Once that was done, the soundtrack was handed over to our designer, and our designer takes about three weeks to design the show. When that is done, we contract all of our suppliers all over the world to produce the material. Then it boils down to logistics, to ship everything to Saskatchewan.

"I'm absolutely looking forward to coming to Moosomin. Personally, it's going to be the highlight of my year. I'm really looking forward to it. It's going to be a blast."

Enjoy the pyrotechnics extravaganza of the summer at the 10th Annual Living Skies Come Alive Competition at Moosomin Lake!

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# 10th Annual Living Skies Come Alive International Fireworks Competition

## Scenes from previous Fireworks weekends



Fireworks competitors with the Ring of Fire



Kids playing on the beach before the fireworks.



The Lion Dance before the Chinese fireworks.



Sask Express at the 2018 Fireworks Competition



Above: Shifty Morgan at the 2018 competition  
Right: A family from Brandon enjoyed the LED balloons at the 2018 competition.



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