

# Plain & Valley

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Covering Southeast Saskatchewan and Southwest Manitoba



A competitor takes down a young steer during the 2019 Moose Mountain Pro Rodeo, above. Barrel Racing at the Spy Hill Sports Days, right.



**Moose Mountain Pro Rodeo July 24 and 25 • Free Blake Berglund Concert at Moosomin Lake July 31**  
**Spy Hill Sports Days August 14 and 15**

## Summer of events after Saskatchewan reopening

By SPENCER KEMP

**LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER**  
It didn't take long for the celebrations to begin after Saskatchewan lifted Covid-19 restrictions July 11. Moosomin held a downtown block party with a free concert by the Back 40 Drifters Sunday, July 11, and followed it up with the Reopening Celebration Saturday, July 17.

Multiple events are coming up over the next several weeks, including the Moose Mountain Pro Rodeo July 24 and 25, a free concert by singer-songwriter Blake Berglund at Moosomin Lake Saturday, July 31 during the August long weekend, and the Spy Hill Sports Days is a go with a full rodeo on August 14 and 15.

### Moose Mountain pro Rodeo back after a year off

Jill Lowe of the Moose Mountain Pro Rodeo said the group is happy to be back with a rodeo after cancelling the event in 2020 due to Covid-19 restrictions.

"We have decided to go ahead with a full-fledged pro rodeo," she said. "This will be our 88th annual Moose Mountain Pro Rodeo and it will take place on July 24 and 25," said Lowe.

Earlier in the year, there were concerns regarding international riders from the USA, New Zealand, and Australia being able to participate in Canadian rodeos. But with the Calgary Stampede opening

on July 9 and running until July 18, the Canadian Professional Rodeo Association (CPRA) is working to bring international riders to Canada.

Lowe says that because of this, there is a good chance that the Moose Mountain Pro Rodeo will see rodeo competitors from around the world.

Because the Moose Mountain Pro Rodeo

takes place a week after the Calgary Stampede, Lowe says the Moose Mountain Rodeo sees many of the same competitors, but in Kennedy, the spectators get to see those competitors and the action right up close.

"We always follow the Calgary Stampede so quite often those riders will come to Kennedy. So in the Calgary Stampede,

you see the action from the grandstand, which is a ways away, but in Kennedy, you see it right up close," Lowe said.

Financially, Lowe says the rodeo committee is expecting fewer sponsorships but thanks those who are working hard to bring the rodeo back to Kennedy.

"We couldn't run our rodeo without the help of our committee members. We also rely a lot on our sponsorships and we realize that this year a lot of businesses have had a difficult year with Covid. We're still hoping that the sponsors will come out and help us financially get this off the ground and of course, we couldn't have this without our volunteers.

"Our sponsorships will most likely be lower this year but we still hope that people give whatever they can give. We will gladly make use of it and do as much as we can in return for exposure for the businesses."

### Blake Berglund concert planned for August long at Moosomin Lake

Plans for the August long weekend at Moosomin Regional Park are still coming together, but Karen Hebert says that there are plans for both a beer garden and a free concert on Saturday, July 31, on what was traditionally the fireworks weekend at the lake.

Continued on page 4



The Back 40 Drifters played for a Reopening Celebration Block Party in Moosomin July 11 that attracted hundreds of people. More events are coming up as Saskatchewan celebrates a reopening summer.

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## Glasser's TV Service

# Patricia Ballantyne's Walk of Sorrow stops in Moosomin; Ballantyne shares her story

After hearing about the unmarked graves at the residential school in Kamloops, B.C., Patricia Ballantyne from Prince Albert decided to walk from PA to Ottawa on a journey of healing.

Ballantyne, who is a residential school survivor, set out on the journey alone initially, but was joined by others—family members, friends, supporters and other survivors—as her walk progressed.

Ballantyne was in Moosomin on Saturday, June 19 and spoke with the World-Spectator before continuing on her walk to Virden. Ballantyne is hoping to reach Ottawa in August and speak with politicians there about current-day childcare policies.

Following are her comments on the morning of June 19 in Moosomin:

## How did you come up with the idea to do this?

It was just a spur of the moment thing. After the news with the Kamloops Residential school, it re-triggered my trauma. It brought up everything about my childhood and I started thinking about all the little children and those poor babies and how we couldn't protect ourselves.

And then I started thinking about the parents, what the government must have said or what the schools must have said to them or even if they were told or if they ever knew.

It just got too much for me over that weekend. It took a couple days for it to all just soak in, and it just got too much for me. I was having a hard time sleeping, and I thought I'm going to take a walk, and that helped. So I thought I need to take a walk. It was healing, it was therapeutic for me to walk, when I went for a walk. So I thought well I'm going to take a walk. I've got to heal myself. This is something I need to do.

So I just decided. The best thing I could do for our people is to make it known, and I thought I'll do a walk. I didn't know about the name right away. I said I'm going to do a walk for my people to help them start their healing, bring the message out there that we need to get together, come together and start healing.

And then the name came to me, and I thought we'll do the walk of sorrow. I'll call it the Walk of Sorrow. It was just by myself, it wasn't with anyone else or planning with anybody. I was just by myself and that was how it was going to go.

My common-law, he knows he can't stop me once I set my mind to something. He asks "where are you going?" And I said well I'm going by myself. I'm going to stop in PA. I got my little bit of clothes, grabbed my supplies that I need. I have my tent to carry, and my blankets, and it's not going to be cold. He goes "Well are you going alone?" And I said "Well yeah. Why not? I just need to do something." I told him, so I just left.

I posted it and let my friends know and one friend shared it saying "This is what my friend's going to do. She's going to walk to Ottawa and hopefully bring light to this residential school and how it really is, how it really was and she's going to be walking for those little ones."

So she put it out there and then my niece Sasha inboxed me and said "Are you serious aunty? Are you really going to do this?" And I said yeah. "Are you alone?" And I said yeah. "Well not anymore, I'm going to go with you. I'll go meet you in PA." And I said "Okay!" And then the night before, at 11 that night, I had all my things ready to go because I was going to leave that night to go stay in PA. And my step-daughter contacts me and says "Is this like a for real thing? You're going to take off?" I said yeah. And she goes "Well, who are you going with?" I said "So far my niece Sasha. Me and Sasha." She goes "Well I think I need to do something for myself too." Because she's part of the system too and grew up in the system. So she goes "Is it okay if I come take a walk with you, I need to do some healing too." And I said yes!

So there were three of us and then my friend from up north come down and she said "You're really doing this? I thought I'd check it out and see if you're really here." She showed up and she walked with us too, but a family emergency had to turn her back.

After that there was an elder that came and saw me in PA. I guess he heard about it through Facebook. And he said "Before this even happened we knew somebody was



Patricia Ballantyne, third from left, along with supporters, family members and walkers during their stop in Moosomin.

going to walk to Ottawa but we just didn't know who. When my daughter told me about you I had to come pray for you and pray with you, smudge, and do the whole ceremonial thing."

So we did that and it just felt great that I was getting support that I wasn't even looking for, and from there it just took off and along the way we've been picking up people. There's me and my step-daughter and my nephew. My nephew and my step-daughter are from Montreal Lake. Me and my niece are from Deschambault Lake. My driver, the first one that joined us was Betty, she's from Muskoday. Then we picked up Charlene in Regina. And then when we came this way to Carry the Kettle, our elder joined us.

Yesterday a new guy with a red vehicle joined us halfway here. He was heading to Yorkton and he saw us and turned around and came with us. So along the way they're starting to join. But you know what still surprises me—and it's such a good surprise—that as soon as I started walking people were stopping and walking with us. As soon as I left PA, they were giving us water, food, whatever we needed. Because all I came with was my backpack and my tent and my boyfriend was following behind me, but once we got to Regina, he thought "You have a good crowd, you've got good support, I can leave you here and go back to work now." Because he wasn't going to leave me alone on the highway.

Every First Nations community we've passed from PA, they all come out and show their support and they walk with us to a certain point. And then the next reserve does that, and then wherever we end up that evening is where they pull us in and say "You can come stay at our Rec Centre or you can have this cabin here for the night."

Along the way we've had a lot of support, tremendous. The elders come out and they're the ones that always tell us the Creator tells us that you are coming. They pull us into the elder circle and they talk to us, mentor us and tell us "We knew you were coming." And they're able to open up. It's shocking. A lot of their kids say it's shocking to hear that. My mom never talks about things like that. My dad never says things like that. You're doing something.

## So seeing you is encouraging them to open up?

Yes. And with that, little by little I get strength to share more and more of my story. It's not always the same story. There are different things that happened throughout the years and it was horrible. For years I had kept it down inside and didn't think about it and I didn't think it affected me, but now that I think about it, it affected my life tremendously by even not talking about it, not letting my kids know what happened.

I thought not talking about it, it's going to go away. That it won't bother me and that wasn't the case. Over the years I'd have these anger bursts. I'd talk to my sister, she's the

10 years later after I left the res they came back to me and did the same investigation and they still never did anything.

Today, too, I still ask why was nobody charged? You guys obviously knew what was going on, so why wasn't anyone charged? How come there isn't a list of those abusers out there? Why do they get to live happy and free without consequence for what they did to our people?

I want our people to start healing together and that's what I see is that they're starting to open up. Hopefully we get answers by the time we get there. I just want to know. I want to Minister Bennett too about childcare policies that haven't changed over the years. Still those same provincial policies come onto our reserves and we have to follow their policies to a tee, otherwise they don't get the funding. Because they have to have their reports and proposals written a certain way. Parents have to do certain things even though it's not part of their culture or religion, they have to do those programs, and elders, if we use elders it's out of our own pockets. They don't do honorariums or anything. So it's the funding that needs to change where we're allowed to be able control our own programs, our own and make our own child family programs to fit the culture of that community, because every community is different in the way they do things, the way they talk to the youth, the way parents are taught to be parents.

We need to get that back because today's parents really don't know how to be parents because their parents didn't know how to be parents. It was hard for me. When I first had my kid, it was hard for me to show love, compassion and caring because I never had that. I was in the residential school from four years old until I was 15 and I never had that connection with anybody, like my parents. It wasn't until 10 years ago I started having a relationship with my foster mom. Being so angry and feeling misplaced all those years, I wasn't able to trust her. I always blamed her. Why did you send me? Why did you let me go?

Continued on page 26

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**Moose Mountain Pro Rodeo July 24 and 25**

**Free Blake Berglund Concert at Moosomin Lake July 31 • Spy Hill Sports Days August 14 and 15**

# Summer of events after Saskatchewan reopening

*Continued from front*

“So what we have planned that’s securely committed right now is Blake Berglund is coming to perform on Saturday night and we will have a beer garden there also. We’re trying to come up with some other ideas, but that’s what we have confirmed at this point,” said Hebert.

“There will be no cost for the concert. We appreciate the park traffic we have had through Covid and we would like to thank all of the people who have supported our park,” said Hebert.

**Spy Hill Sports Days planning plenty of activities**

The Spy Hill Community Club is excited to hold its annual Spy Hill Sports

Days in August.

President of the Spy Hill Community Club Jeff Odgers says that the club has planned a variety of events.

“We are going to go ahead with the Sports Days rodeo on August 14 and 15. We’re going to have a slow-pitch tournament, a tractor pull, a kids rodeo, and team roping,” Odgers said.

He says that he is currently looking for sponsorship for the event, but understands that many businesses have suffered through the pandemic.

“We were very nervous asking for sponsorship with all the uncertainty, but now as we get closer it looks more like it’s going to come. It’s going to be more challenging but we are hoping to secure



There will be a free concert featuring singer-songwriter Blake Berglund, originally from Kennedy, on Saturday, July 31 at Moosomin Regional Park.

## Daryl Harrison

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some sponsorship.”

One thing that will not happen at the Spy Hill Sports Days this year is the Chariot and Chuckwagon Races. Because many of the competitors come from Manitoba and Manitoba is still under some Covid-19 restrictions, there will be no Chariot and Chuckwagon Races.

“We’re going to have a kids rodeo, team roping, a tractor pull, a slow pitch tournament. That will be enough to draw

in people to make it count,” says Odgers.

Odgers says he is looking forward to the return of the annual Spy Hill Sports Days.

“We’re really excited with the community to get going. This is one of the longest-running sports days and rodeos in all of Saskatchewan and we’re excited to keep this going and be a part of it.”

Slow Pitch is currently open for registration. To register, call (306) 743 7456.



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# Sask opens up, all Covid restrictions removed: Re-Opening Saskatchewan Step Three guidance

Over 71 per cent of Saskatchewan residents have received their first dose of Covid-19 vaccine, and over 50 per cent are fully immunized. With increasing community protection against Covid-19, Saskatchewan has moved to Step Three of the Re-Opening Roadmap, which started on Sunday, July 11 when all public health orders were removed.

This includes the removal of the province-wide mandatory masking order and the removal of limits on events and gathering sizes.

### MASKING

As of July 11, the public health order requiring masking in indoor spaces ended, but masking will continue to be an option for all residents who wish to do so. Unvaccinated or partially vaccinated people should still consider masking.

It is the choice of an individual business or facility to implement their own masking policy. If you enter a facility that requires a mask, patrons must respect the decision of the business and either comply or choose not to visit the establishment.

### BUSINESSES, WORKPLACES AND SCHOOLS

Policies regarding safe businesses and workplaces are determined by individual Occupational Health and Safety plans. Endemic Covid-19 transmission should be considered as part of these plans. Communicate those plans with staff and/or clients to ensure that all are familiar with the policies in place.

Additional information for businesses and workplaces is available at [www.saskatchewan.ca/step-3-business-workers-faq](http://www.saskatchewan.ca/step-3-business-workers-faq)

Prekindergarten to Grade 12 schools will return to regular operations for the 2021-22 school year and licensed child care facilities can return to regular pre-pandemic operations as of July 11.

### FAMILY VISITATION IN LONG-TERM,

### PERSONAL CARE HOMES AND ACUTE CARE SETTINGS

As of July 11, long-term care homes and personal care homes may allow an unlimited number of visitors and family members for their residents, subject to scheduling limitations in a home.

Visitors and families will be screened for symptoms of Covid-19 and will be offered rapid antigen testing in SHA facilities. Visitors and families are strongly encouraged to continue to wear masks during visits and to maintain physical distance, especially if not fully vaccinated. Staff will continue to take recommended precautions to protect residents including staff masking, screening, rapid testing and use of personal protective equipment.



While masks are no longer required in Saskatchewan (unless specified by individual businesses or facilities), they will still be required for all patients and visitors to Saskatchewan's acute health care facilities, such as the South East Integrated Care Centre in Moosomin, above. Masks are not required in long-term care facilities and personal care homes, however they are recommended.

More information on family visitation to care home settings is available at [www.saskatchewan.ca/covid-care-home-visitation-guide](http://www.saskatchewan.ca/covid-care-home-visitation-guide)

Masking and screening will still be required for all patients and visitors to Saskatchewan's acute care health facilities. All measures regarding screening for Covid-19, including screening for symptoms and masking will continue at all Saskatchewan Cancer Agency facilities until further notice.

### CHILDREN UNDER 12, AND THOSE

### WHO CANNOT BE VACCINATED FOR MEDICAL REASONS

At this point in time, there are no Covid-19 vaccines approved for children under 12. All residents 12 and up are encouraged to be fully vaccinated to afford these groups the best circle of protection possible.

Children can contract, transmit and become ill with Covid-19, though the risk for serious health outcomes is lower than older populations. If you are fully vaccinated, all activities with children will be considered lower risk.

While very few people have any contraindications to vaccination, there is a small population who may not mount an effective immune response after a complete vaccine series (e.g. some severely immunocompromised individuals). If you are a close contact of a person who cannot receive the vaccine due to health reasons, fully vaccinated individuals are asked to respect that person's personal preferences for any additional preventative measures.

### LIVING WITH COVID-19 MEANS BEING COVID-19 AWARE

While the public health order will no longer be in place, Covid-19 will continue to circulate, particularly among unvaccinated populations. Being fully vaccinated is the best protection against Covid-19 and all residents will continue to be offered first and second doses through pharmacies and Saskatchewan Health Authority clinics.

As the province continues to offer vaccinations, all residents should continue to self-monitor for symptoms. Stay home if you are sick and seek a Covid-19 test. Information on Covid-19 symptoms and testing is available at [www.saskatchewan.ca/covid19-testing](http://www.saskatchewan.ca/covid19-testing)

All public health agencies respond to localized outbreaks of transmittable diseases like influenza during the course of a year. Public health will continue monitoring and respond to localized Covid-19 outbreaks.

Covid-19 testing will still be available. Testing locations and hours may depend on local rates of transmission and demand.

Contact tracing is a common practice for disease investigation and will continue for Covid-19.

Cases and close contacts who are not fully immunized may be advised to isolate by public health officials. Individuals should follow all advice provided by public health officials.



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5 pm: Rodeo Grand Entry

Wild Pony Races after rodeo

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## SUNDAY, JULY 25

9 am - 12 p.m. Pancake Breakfast at the Friendship Centre

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2 pm: Rodeo Grand Entry

Demolition Derby & Wild Pony Races after rodeo

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The Red Lily Wind Farm just west of Moosomin. A new wind project is planned for the Kipling area, the Bekevar Wind Project, which will generate 200 megawatts of electricity, enough to provide power to 100,000 homes.

**RM of Hazelwood, RM of Kingsley, Cowessess First Nation**

# Bekevar Wind Project to generate 200 MW

BY SPENCER KEMP  
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

SaskPower has awarded its next utility-scale wind facility to Renewable Energy Systems (RES) Canada and Awasis Nehiyawewini Energy Development, a wholly owned Cowessess First Nation entity.

Set to be constructed north of Moose Mountain Provincial Park in the RM of Hazelwood, the RM of Kingsley and on Cowessess First Nation reserve land, the Bekevar Wind Energy Project will supply 200 megawatts (MW) of zero-emissions power, enough to serve up to 100,000 homes.

“Reducing greenhouse gas emissions by at least 50 per cent below 2005 levels by 2030 is a priority for SaskPower,” said Mike Marsh, SaskPower President and CEO. “Incorporating wind power through projects such as Bekevar is a crucial component of our strategy to make significant reductions to emissions while ensuring SaskPower can supply reliable, sustainable, and affordable power to our

customers.”

SaskPower selected RES and Awasis Nehiyawewini Energy Development’s project as part of an open competition. Evaluation of the proposals included best-value criteria such as energy price, environmental site characteristics, Indigenous participation and community engagement plans. Electricity generated at Bekevar will be purchased by SaskPower at an industry leading rate over the 25-year term of the agreement and sets a new low benchmark price for renewable energy in Saskatchewan.

Construction on the project will begin in the summer of 2022, and the facility is expected to be complete by the end of 2023.

Saskatchewan currently has six wind facilities producing a total of 241 MW to the provincial grid. In addition to Bekevar, three wind projects are currently under construction totaling 385 MW: Riverhurst Wind Project (10 MW), Blue Hill near Herbert (175 MW), and Golden South near Assiniboia (200 MW).

## RM of Hazelwood welcomes wind farm

Reeve James Husband of the RM of Hazelwood says the project will see wind turbines erected on the northern side of the RM.

“The plan is, as far as I know, to erect some wind towers in our municipality along Bekevar Road, which is along the north end of the municipality,” he said.

Husband says the project will benefit the municipality with tax revenue and local jobs.

“This is something that’s new to our municipality, but what we do know is that there will be increased tax revenue from wind turbines after the period of tax abatement, which we as a council had granted the wind energy company.

*Continued on Page 8*



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“I know it will save lives”: Dr. Erika Roets

# MDHCF pushing for CT scanner for Moosomin

BY KEVIN WEEDMARK

The Moosomin and District Health Care Foundation has written to Saskatchewan Health Minister Paul Merriman asking that the province fund a CT scanner for the Southeast Integrated Care Centre in Moosomin.

Members of the Health Care Foundation discussed the issue at their last meeting. Dr. Erika Roets told the foundation that the local physicians have been advocating for a CT scanner for a decade.

MDHCF chair Bill MacPherson said that the foundation board has also been trying to get a CT scanner for the last several years and has not been successful.

“A frustrating part for the foundation is that if we were told we could buy it we’d have it here tomorrow,” said MacPherson. “We could get the money if we need the money because everyone here knows we need it. But nobody seems to be listening to us.”

Roets said a portable X-Ray machine purchased for SEICC has saved lives and she has no doubt a CT scanner would as well.

“I can’t tell you how valuable that piece of machinery is. I cannot emphasize it enough,” Roets told the foundation board members. “It has truly saved lives. I’m not a dramatic person, but it has saved lives.”

She said a CT scanner would be even more useful and she has absolutely no doubt that it would save lives. “There is no doubt in my mind,” she said. “I know it will save lives.”

“We need a CT scanner to be able to diagnose a stroke or brain bleed or an aortic aneurysm. Right now if we think it’s a stroke the patient has to go to Yorkton or Regina to have it diagnosed, so we lose valuable time. We’re two hours from Regina, by the time the patient’s here the golden hour’s over and then we still need to STARS lift them or ground transport them to Saskatoon, so another two or three hours. If we can diagnose them here, you would lift them right away to Saskatoon and save time and make a huge difference for people.”

“We wouldn’t just use it for strokes. We would also use it for serious motor vehicle accidents, ATV rollovers, skidoo accidents and accidents like that, horse accidents, farm accidents, all those trauma cases that we deal with here in Moosomin.

“And of course, other conditions, people with complex abscesses in their stomachs and appendicitis that doesn’t follow the



handbook and is not typical. You need a CT-scan to know because nothing else gives you that answer, a surgeon’s not going to touch them without a CT-scan. There are so many conditions that it would help diagnose.

“If you think about the amount of gas and amount of EMS time we’re wasting, sending people for CT-scans, it’s crazy. You have the EMS personnel pick them up, take them to Regina, wait half an hour, have the CT-scan, wait another half an hour to watch they don’t get a reaction, drive back. That’s five to six hours out of our EMS personnel’s time. So there’s an ambulance out of town, not available for anything else, because the ambulance is out of town with a patient for a CT-scan. So now you have another EMS team that has to stand in. It has a ripple effect, it’s not just the scan, it is everything else. If we have a CT scanner here we can make decisions earlier and we can make plans earlier.”

MacPherson said having a CT scanner available in Moosomin would also take patient load off the cities. Roets agreed.

“It will save time, it will save lives and it will save money,” said Roets. “And if you think of the disability after a stroke, the sooner you can dissolve that clot, the sooner the brain gets oxygen and the less damage there is long term. So we’re not just talking about that patient walking again, talking again, but we’re talking about them not needing disability support from the

government, being able to drive, being able to stay and have a quality life. It’s not just about being alive but quality of life too. Post stroke patients are very difficult because it’s so unpredictable what will happen, how much damage there is. So money-wise yes, it will be beneficial. Saving lives, yes. And quality of life, 100 per cent.”

Roets said that more specialists could provide services at SEICC if a CT scanner is available.

The cost of a CT scanner and building modifications to accommodate it would be in the \$1.5 million to \$2.5 million range, the foundation estimates.

“We’re pretty well set up for it,” said Roets. “One of our radiographers actually has CT training. If we do the same thing that we do with the x-rays, they take the images here and the physician’s here and the specialist in Regina or Saskatoon can see it, so we still have that second pair of eyes looking at it.”

MacPherson said the CT scanner would go hand in hand with improvements to Moosomin’s airport, which will allow the Saskatchewan Air Ambulance’s aircraft to transport patients quickly between Moosomin and Saskatoon.

“Our perfect scenario would be to have the grand opening of the airport and then have everybody move to the hospital an hour later and have the grand opening of the CT-scanner,” said MacPherson.

“The two really go hand in hand. Then

our world would be perfect, if we could get those two things done. And there’s no reason it can’t happen. But we need to hear from the province on this.”

The following letter was sent by the foundation to Health Minister Paul Merriman: “We are contacting you on behalf of the Moosomin and District Health Care Foundation, representing fourteen communities that support the efforts of the South East Integrated Care Centre (SEICC).

“For many years the Foundation has been informally lobbying the addition of a Computerized Tomography (CT) Scanner for the SEICC.

“First and foremost, we believe a CT Scanner will improve the level of service to emergency head trauma patients, who currently travel an hour and half to Yorkton, or two and a quarter hours to Regina, to receive their scan. As you are aware, stroke protocol is extremely time sensitive and a local CT Scan would save precious hours. With the proposed new Moosomin airport, the region will soon be able to accommodate Sask Air Ambulance Service (planes), giving us direct access to the head trauma centres in Saskatoon. This new airport, coupled with a local CT Scanner, will work together to speed up diagnosis—vastly improving the prognosis for head trauma. Simply: lives will be saved.

“The SEICC provides healthcare services to communities within a 100 km radius. Moosomin’s 100 km radius population is 55,000. This compares to Estevan’s 100 km population of 45,000, and Melfort’s 100 km population of 19,500. Estevan has a CT Scanner and Melfort is slated for one in the 2020-21 Health Budget, along with \$28.5 million slated for capital equipment for health facilities.

“A local CT Scanner will also reduce the patient load in Yorkton and Regina, while providing an economic payback to SHA (reduced ambulance trips because negative scan results can be identified before the trip is made). Patient convenience is also an important consideration.

“In summary, based on population and distance from existing CT Scanners, we believe that this equipment is warranted for the SEICC and the entire area.

“The Foundation respectfully requests a written response to this letter. We are confident that a CT Scanner is justified, but if the Ministry decides otherwise, we would appreciate understanding the issues at hand.

RM of Hazelwood, RM of Kingsley, Cowessess First Nation

## Bekevar Wind Project to generate 200 MW

Continued from Page 7

“There is also the potential for local jobs and community jobs. We are a rural municipality but if people live in Kipling and work in the municipality, we consider that a community benefit and a community job. We are hoping that the wind energy company will hire as many local contractors as possible. They have suggested that they will do that and we sincerely hope they follow through with that. Other positive impacts are things like the surface lease revenue.”

Husband notes that renewable energy has not been something that council has pushed for in the past, but it is something he feels will thrive in the municipality.

“Our municipality’s stance is that we want to be progressive and we want to invite businesses that can thrive regardless of what sector they fall into,” he said.

“What is good for the community is good for us, it’s what council is supposed to be looking after. If it is going

to be good for the community, council is all for it.”

So far the response from ratepayers has been positive according to Husband, although he says there have been some mixed reviews.

“As far as ratepayers, we’ve had some ratepayers call us and encourage us to be co-operative and some ratepayers have said that they’re not interested in it at all. We’ve really had a mixed bag of opinions and everything in between. But as far as a general feeling for it, I think that there’s some hesitation because it’s new. People don’t really know what it is going to do, but I think for the most part ratepayers have been supportive of it,” said Husband.

### Power line work near Kipling

At the same time, SaskPower will be investing \$272 million to replace and improve aging infrastructure, in-

cluding power lines, including a power line near Kipling.

SaskPower is rebuilding 60 km of distribution line in the Kipling area.

“This project in the Kipling area is going to cost \$1.9 million in total and the work just got underway on July 5,” said Joel Cherry of SaskPower.

“We’re looking to have that work complete by October. Once that work is done, customers in the area should notice improved power reliability.

“In some cases when we’re rebuilding these lines, we’re moving them from fields into road allowances which is also beneficial for our rural customers because it’s less likely to come into contact, and it’s safer as well because you’re not going to risk running into power lines.

“It’s a large, widespread effort we’re undertaking this year. This is just one example of it.”



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# 'Putt for the Pool' aims to raise \$10k for Rocanville Aquatic Centre

BY SPENCER KEMP  
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

A golf tournament in Rocanville is being held in August to raise funds to assist with repairs at the Rocanville Aquatic Centre.

Putt for the Pool will be held on August 7 and is being organized by 17-year-old Ava Reed, who has been working at the pool for four years.

Reed says that the Rocanville Aquatic Centre needs to raise some funds to qualify for a federal grant.

"Putt for the Pool is a fundraiser I am organizing. It's a golf tournament that will raise money for the Rocanville Aquatic Centre, it's been in rough shape for the past few years. We just got a chance for a grant and we need to raise around \$4,500 to be able to qualify for the grant. So we're just fundraising to raise that money and I thought a golf tournament was a fun idea and people like golf," Reed explained.

Reed has been reaching out to local businesses and organizations in and around Rocanville inquiring about sponsorships. She says that she hopes to cover the cost of the golf course rental through sponsorships so that the money raised from the tournament can go directly towards much-needed repairs at the pool.

Sponsorships have opened on four levels, \$100 for Bronze, \$250 for Silver, \$500 for Gold, and \$1,000 for Platinum.

Reed says that she has already seen interest from golfers and sponsors.

"We have to pay for the rental of the course and the meals. I'm asking for sponsorships to hope that everything can be covered and then all the money that we get can go directly to the pool."

In addition to the tournament, Reed says the Rocanville Pool Fundraising Committee is holding a 50/50 that has seen some success.

She says that another will be held during the tournament as well.

"We already have a 50/50 mostly done, we just have a couple more books to sell and then we're going to draw that. Then we're also hoping to do a 50/50 the day of the tournament. So we want to have two 50/50 draws," Reed explained.

So far, Reed says there has been a lot of interest in the Putt for the Pool golf tournament and 50/50 draw.

"Lots of people have shown interest. The 50/50 was pretty much gone in a week and we already have a few teams registered, but it's still pretty early with that."



**Above:** Ava Reed is organizing a golf tournament to raise funds for the Rocanville pool.

While there is still some discussion about prizes, Reed says that there will be plenty to compete for.

"We're still determining what exactly will be our prizes. We need to see how much money we'll be bringing in to determine what goes to prizes. We have a few prizes picked out already though. We're also doing a 'longest drive' and 'closest to the pin' competition and we actually have a Samsung tablet as a prize for that. So we have

some good stuff in there."

Reed says that teams will be able to register up until the day of the tournament on August 7, but encourages pre-registration.

"We need to have our teams registered so the golf course knows how much food to make for everything. We're going to make a banner for all of our sponsorships and then just making sure the golf course knows exactly what we're doing," said Reed.

Those who want to register a team can text (306) 4344 8622 or email Avareed5329@gmail.com.

In total, \$250,000 is needed to fully repair the Rocanville Aquatic Centre.

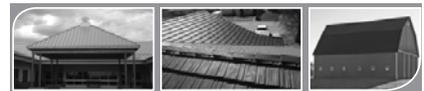
Reed says that she is hoping to raise around \$10,000 through the Putt for the Pool tournament.

She says that the Rocanville Pool Fundraising Committee has held additional fundraisers, including a recent silent auction and barbecue, and plans to hold more in the future with an upcoming music festival.

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## Chief Cadmus Delorme, Premier Scott Moe, and PM Justin Trudeau sign agreement at Cowessess

BY SPENCER KEMP  
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

Cowessess Chief Cadmus Delorme, Saskatchewan Premier Scott Moe, and Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, came together on Tuesday, July 6 to sign a co-ordination agreement that will see Cowessess First Nation be responsible for children in care for the first time since 1951. The co-ordination agreement will transfer jurisdiction to Cowessess.

In March of 2020, the Cowessess First Nation ratified the Miyo Pimatisowin Act to return children to the care of the Cowessess First Nation.

### Cowessess Chief says it is time to heal

"Before treaties, our ancestors roamed this land," Chief Cadmus Delorme said at the signing ceremony.

"There were no children in care, there was no unemployment, everybody had a role, everybody had a duty, and everybody had a purpose. At the time of treaty, Cowessess First Nation, what we envisioned was the following: two canoes going down the river, the Crown—which today is represented by our Prime Minister and our Premier—and the Cowessess First Nation canoe, side-by-side. We were supposed to flow down this river together, every generation exchanging a child to know the ideology of that other canoe and then give those children back so we always coincided. Unfortunately today we inherited a history where that didn't happen. In our Cowessess canoe at one time was the Indian Act which is still here today. At one time the residential school was put in our canoe. At one time the '60s Scoop was put in our canoe. Our Cowessess citizens fought, our leaders fought, to make sure our kids could still dance today.

"Today we all inherited that. Prime Minister Trudeau, Premier Moe, and all their team didn't create this. We all inherited this today.

"Because of that, we have a little bit of loss of control, a little bit of loss of language, a little bit of loss of governance, and a little bit of loss of our social and even our individual lives.

"One of the major things that happened is what you call 'vertical lineage pass-down.' If residential schools, '60s Scoop, or the Indian Act weren't here, kookum would have passed down to mum, mum would have passed down to daughter and daughter would have passed down to granddaughter as it should have been. But because of four generations of residential schools, it became horizontal. Kookum had to stand beside her cousin to survive, mum had to stand beside her sister and cousin to survive, and today that lineage is coming back, that vertical lineage, one day at a time we are gaining control because of the federal government investing with Cowessess, we now farm our lands again.

"Because Premier Moe and the Government of Saskatchewan work with Cowessess for renewable energy, we're about to build a 10-megawatt solar field and we have turbines. We are gaining strength one day at a time.

"But as we move forward, we have a lot of healing to do.

"Today we give birth to a new horizon,



Cowessess First Nation Chief Cadmus Delorme with Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and Premier Scott Moe holding the newly signed agreement.

Chief Redbear Children's Lodge. Today is a historical day because we never gave up our sovereignty to our children. And today, with the Prime Minister of Canada and the Premier of Saskatchewan, we are going to sign a co-ordination agreement. What that means is that Prime Minister Trudeau stands beside Cowessess and invests in us as we heal at our pace.

"Premier Moe stands beside us as Cowessess First Nation and invests at our pace as we grow. The end goal is that one day there will be no children in care. I'm 39 years old and I hope that happens in my lifetime.

"But Cowessess, we have a lot of work to do. Every day we will roll up our sleeves to make sure that every child when we call them home, they know where home is. And that is Cowessess First Nation and they will dance, they will get their education, and they will walk with their chin up and they will be a proud Cowessess citizen."

### Trudeau promises to continue to support Cowessess First Nation

"It is truly an honour to be here on this historic moment," Prime Minister Justin Trudeau said.

"I am very glad I'm joined by Premier Moe, it's good to have you here and it's important that we be here as partners. As a country and as a government we've been reminded over the past few weeks that the path to reconciliation means recognizing past wrongs and working to do better. It is shameful that here in Cowessess and across the country children died because of the policy of residential schools. Later today I will be visiting the site of unmarked graves to pay my respects and sitting down with many of you to hear your stories as survivors.

"The work of reconciliation won't transform Indigenous communities alone and Indigenous people in Canada alone, the work of reconciliation must and will

transform all of Canada and all Canadians, that's the work we have to do together. Of course, as we do that, it needs to start with children. That is the heart-breaking awakening that Canadians have had across the country with the discovery of these graves. That's why we're here today, to do better for this generation and future generations and families. Together with Cowessess First Nation and Saskatchewan, the Government of Canada is signing the first-ever co-ordination agreement respecting First Nations, Inuit, and Metis youth, and families. That has been the work of reconciliation that communities like Cowessess have led on over the past many years, that we can come together and sign this today mere weeks after the tragic discoveries.

"The kids need to be kept by, supported by, protected by their communities. We co-developed legislation called C-92 that will ensure that as we move forward, kids get the support they need, driven by their own communities in their own languages in their own cultures, that finally no kids will be removed from the communities they are a part of. That is the goal. That is why we are signing the agreement, the very first across the country to start today in Cowessess. Never again should kids be taken from their homes, families, and communities. To support this agreement, we are investing \$38.7 million for the implementation of the Cowessess First Nations Child and Family Services system. This is an important step forward and at the end of the day, it will mean fewer children and youth in care. Across the country we are working with other First Nations on similar agreements, my commitment is that we will continue to work with, as a partner, all communities on what they need to keep their children safe and thriving.

"Earlier today, Chief Delorme graciously accepted a braid of sweetgrass in honor of today's agreement.

"It is my pledge to work in partnership and unity with all groups to make this goal a reality. We will continue to walk the path of reconciliation and respond to the priorities of Indigenous people on child and family services reform. We will, every step of the way, be there as partners to focus on what's best for your children, for all of our children. That's what they need, and that's what they deserve."

### Moe applauds Delorme's efforts

"Welcome everyone to celebrate what is truly a historic partnership between three levels of government here at Cowessess," said Saskatchewan Premier Scott Moe. "These have not been easy times, these last number of weeks have not been easy times here in Cowessess, they have not been easy times in Saskatchewan or across Canada. I am here and pleased to be part of this agreement today in your community.

"I'm also here to ensure that this community in Cowessess and other communities across the province know that Saskatchewan people send their love, send their prayers, and send their gratitude to Cowessess. I want you to know that as we walk through the next number of days, weeks, months, years, that we're going to do that together.

"We as Saskatchewan people will be



Saskatchewan Premier Scott Moe exchanges gifts with Chief Cadmus Delorme during the signing ceremony.



Chief Cadmus Delorme and Saskatchewan Premier Scott Moe at the signing ceremony, left, and a dancer, right.

here with you every step of the way, regardless of where that road takes us. Your healing journey is our healing journey as well. As Chief Delorme so eloquently put it, none of us living here today created the residential school system, none of us created the Indian Act, none of us here today.

"But all of us have a duty as we move forward and look ahead to work together, to deal with the consequences and decisions made generations ago. We have a duty, we have an obligation to build a brighter future for all of us. We can do that and we can do that together. It's what brings us together here this afternoon, the desire to build a brighter future together with this community, not even for us, but for that next generation, for our children and our grandchildren. We are very proud to be part of this today. It is truly, as the Prime Minister said, a groundbreaking agreement that will give Cowessess control over child and family services that are delivered to your children and delivered to community members wherever they live. It is an agreement that will ensure the children of Cowessess are raised by their families in their own community, their own culture in accordance with their own traditions. Today is the culmination of many months of negotiations by many levels of government, negotiations that were driven by Chief Cadmus Delorme who was absolutely determined to see this agreement through today and see Cowessess exert its independence in this area, and thank you for your determination, Chief.

"Prime Minister, I want to thank you and your colleagues for the passing of Bill C-92. The legislation opened the door for us to have these negotiations and ultimately have this agreement, this celebration to move forward together here today.

"I am very grateful for our provincial colleagues, my provincial colleagues who worked together on this agreement. It started with Paul Merriman who's since moved off to brighter pastures in the Health portfolio and Lori Carr who brought those negotiations together on behalf of the province, and to all of the provincial officials, federal officials, and all those in Cowessess who have worked to ensure this could happen here today.

"We have been through some trying days in the last few weeks. There are difficult days ahead of us no doubt as we continue to deal with the legacy of residential schools in our nation. Today's announcement is a ray of hope, it's a ray of hope for Cowessess, it's a ray of hope for other Indigenous communities in Canada, it's a ray of hope for our province of Saskatchewan, and I would say it is a ray of hope for our entire nation, and it is no surprise that this hope is originating here in this community of Cowessess. This is a progressive community.

"Cowessess is most certainly a community that is on the move, working in partnership with the provincial and federal governments, and what's happening here has the opportunity to be replicated in other Indigenous communities across the nation.



Cowessess Youth Council Chair Mia Buckles.

"I think that your ancestors are extremely proud of what you have done here today, Chief Cadmus Delorme, and I think that they are proud of this entire community. I think I can speak on behalf of everybody in this entire province when I say we are so very proud of the partnership we have created over the past number of years and the achieve-

ment that we see before us here today. Your ancestors are very proud, Chief, for very good reason."

**Buckles says agreement is a huge first step in reconciliation**

"I think a lot about my people and

the horrors we've endured for decades, centuries even," said Cowessess Youth Council Chair Mia Buckles.

"All the hurt, fear, and guilt that we feel and conceal from those around us, the effects these hardships have had on our ancestors and our present generations are undeniable and indescribable.

"In Saskatchewan, 86 per cent of children in care are identified as First Nations. Eighty-six per cent. One hundred fifty of those children are from Cowessess and it's their time to receive the opportunity to come home and heal with their families on their own land through a holistic approach.

"Cowessess is taking on a huge leadership role for First Nations across Canada in a walk toward lowering these numbers, which also plays a role in lowering incarceration numbers in First Nations.

"Intergenerational trauma is very real, I recognize it in my life, in others' lives around me, it plays a huge role in why so many of our people end up in foster care, incarcerated, addicted, and uneducated.

"This is a beautiful new pathway opening to our children and their children. Our nation has worked extremely hard to create our own family and child-care system and maintain jurisdiction over the care of our children and families.

"I am so proud to say I am from Cowessess First Nation today. After years of our children being taken and separated from our families, culture, and ultimately their sense of self, we are one step closer to breaking one of the many generation curses that bind us.

"With the start of our family and child services system, our children and families affected by intergenerational trauma and other struggles will have an opportunity to heal in every aspect, mentally, physically, emotionally, and spiritually.

"I personally have a large disconnect from my culture.

"I found it really affected my sense of self. I do not know my language, I have minimum knowledge on ceremonies, our stories, and our way of life.

"Chief Redbear Children's Lodge will work proactively to prevent children and families from going into care. They will be provided safe living and access to their culture.

"This is a huge first step that will lead the Indigenous people of Canada into a brighter future.

"Teaching our people our culture and what it truly means to be Indigenous, not the statistics, not the stereotypes, but us.

"A beautiful and powerful nation who we always have been and always will be. We are the leaders in a long-fought battle for the rights and comforts of our people.

"Soon after us, I hope that other First Nations communities will follow in our footsteps and fight to gain the ability to care for and assist their families and children in need to a healthy and happy life.

"We are strong. We are resilient. Our people may have been silenced, pushed to the side, and buried, but we will always come back stronger and louder than ever before."



A dancer at the signing ceremony at Cowessess.



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# Julia Houff qualifies for 2021 National High School Finals Rodeo

BY SPENCER KEMP  
LOCAL JOURNALISM  
INITIATIVE REPORTER

A recent Wawota Parkland School graduate will be heading to the 2021 National High School Finals Rodeo after placing in the recent provincial championship.

Julia Houff placed 5th in the recent provincial championship in barrel racing which qualified her to compete in the 2021 National High School Finals Rodeo in Lincoln Nebraska on July 18.

The 18-year-old athlete says that she entered finals with a strong start in first place and ended in fifth in barrel racing.

"I was actually in first place going into finals, but I didn't have my best finals," said Houff.

"In the end, she just squeaked it out," her father, Travis Houff, added.

Houff first began competing in High School Rodeo around five years ago when she was in Grade 7.

She says that her father was a big inspiration and driving point for her to compete as he used to compete in it himself.

"My dad was big into rodeo. He was pretty good, he was actually the Canadian champion for a few years and so we've been riding horses our whole life. In Grade 7 I started doing high school rodeo and that's just where it started,"



Julia Houff and her horse Flitt are going to Lincoln, Nebraska to compete in the 2021 National High School Finals Rodeo on July 18 after placing fifth in the provincial competition. The duo will later compete in the 2021 Canadian High School Rodeo Finals in August.

explained Houff.

Houff says she first got her horse Flitt three years ago when she was in Grade 9 and has ridden him in competitions each year since then.

Houff says she is looking forward to competing in nationals against riders from the USA, New Zealand, Canada, and Australia.

"I was very excited because I've been working towards going to nationals since my Grade 7 year so this was big."

Houff aims to place in the top 10 of her category.

"I would love to take nationals but I don't know if it's really realistic to say I would. There's a lot of people down there and a lot of people who do rodeo as

their whole life, so they're very good. I don't know if I would be able to accomplish that, but I will try!"

Houff says she is looking forward to the national competition, noting that her older sister made nationals.

"I'm nervous for sure, but I think I'm more excited than nervous."

In qualifying for the 2021 National High School Finals Rodeo Houff also qualified for the 2021 Canadian High School Rodeo Finals which will take place from August 6 to 8 in Swift

Current.

The top five competitors from each province will compete in the Canadian High School Rodeo Finals.

Houff feels that she has a better shot at placing in the top brackets in the Canadian High School Rodeo Finals than she does at the National High School Finals.

"It's a more realistic goal to accomplish for sure, I'm going to do my best."

Houff skipped her graduation ceremony to compete in the provincial competition.

While Houff wasn't able to attend her graduation ceremony in person, her classmates created a cardboard cutout of her in her grad dress that was paraded around town with the other students during the grad parade.

Houff says she didn't realize what her classmates did until days later.

"I didn't even know about it until I saw pictures of it recently. It was pretty funny."

Houff is planning on attending Medicine Hat College where she will take a Business Administration course.

She says that she hopes to be able to continue competing in rodeos but says that her education takes priority.

"It would be fun to do but I don't know if it would be realistic for me. Obviously, if I had an opportunity to do it I probably would take it. But I want to go to school first, for sure."

Houff will be going to Lincoln, Nebraska to compete in the 2021 National High School Finals Rodeo on July 18 and then to Swift Current on August 6 to 8 to compete in the 2021 Canadian High School Rodeo Finals.

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Julia Houff competing in the 2020 Chacachas Open Rodeo

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# Chief Delorme says co-ordination agreement is one step toward a broader vision for Cowesseses

Cowesseses Chief Cadmus Delorme, Saskatchewan Premier Scott Moe, and Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau came together on July 6 to sign a co-ordination agreement that will see Cowesseses First Nation be responsible for children in care for the first time since 1951. The co-ordination agreement will transfer jurisdiction to Cowesseses.

In March of 2020, the Cowesseses First Nation ratified the Miyo Pimatisowin Act to return children to the care of the Cowesseses First Nation.

Chief Cadmus Delorme says July 6 was monumental in marking a major step toward positive change for and a broader vision for Cowesseses First Nation.

Following the July 6 events, Chief Delorme spoke with the World-Spectator and Plain & Valley regarding the co-ordination agreement. Following are his comments.



Chief Cadmus Delorme speaking at the signing ceremony at Cowesseses First Nation.

### How important of a milestone was that event?

It was huge. We have never agreed that children left our jurisdiction due to colonial policy, due to paternalistic attitudes for decades. We tried our best to help children who maybe got removed, or invested in prevention, and now not only do we have jurisdiction back, which was rightfully ours from the beginning, but also true leaders in this province and country stood beside us and invested in us as we shared with the world.

### How was the road to get to this point? How much work went into this and what kind of resistance did Cowesseses face? Or was there any resistance? Did everything sort of fall into place?

This took over 100 hours of meetings to get to this moment. We dedicated every Thursday from August to May during the pandemic looking at a computer, team Canada, team Saskatchewan, team Cowesseses. We dedicated about three and a half hours to the main table, another two hours to sub-committees per week, minus the holidays and Christmas, a little pause during the election of Saskatchewan. It took a lot of hours.

Cowesseses chaired every meeting, Cowesseses chaired every sub-committee and, I wouldn't call it resistance, but there were some moments where we had to educate each other on the bureaucracy approach from Canada and Saskatchewan. They didn't question but they had to explain to us that their bureaucracy is a little different.

Decision making was easy for Cowesseses because our governance is well and healthy and we can make decisions within days, whereas the province and the federal government, it sometimes took them weeks to make a decision. So that just took a little patience, but we got what we felt we wanted right from the beginning.

### Did you ever have any doubt that you would come to an agreement—that the agreement signed on Tuesday would come to fruition?

It wasn't doubt, it was a little frustrating at moments because there was nothing to compare it to. This was created from an idea to legislation with no guidelines in legislation, no steps in the legislation. It just states in there in section

20(2), you have a year to come up with a co-ordination agreement.

We created it from scratch and it was frustrating at times because we would state as Cowesseses "well this is our co-ordination agreement" and Canada and Saskatchewan wouldn't disagree, but sometimes they would try to remind us of the current system, and then we would tell them that is the current system, but this is new. They would comply and say 'well yeah, you're right.'

It was just a little outside the norm and trying to work within that environment, and anybody who works in government knows that bureaucracy and guidelines are tough to change, and so Cowesseses driving this right from the beginning I think helped all three of us realize that change is coming.

### At this point, how much work needs to be done in terms of actually implementing this? How did the nuts and bolts come together so that the children come under the care of Cowesseses? What needs to happen right at ground level?

I like to compare it to a rocket ship going into space and thinking about it as fuel. To get to the outer sphere you're going to use a lot of gas, but once you get to that outer sphere, then you're not going to use so much gas, you're going to feed off the momentum and keep thrusting forward.

*Continued on page 27*



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# After provincial government said it sorted out issue last year: Green calls on province to maintain Welcome Sign

BY SPENCER KEMP  
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

A Fleming resident is calling on the Government of Saskatchewan to take care of the land around the Welcome to Saskatchewan sign on the Trans-Canada Highway at the border of Manitoba and Saskatchewan.

Trevor Green works around the area and he says the lack of maintenance has become an eyesore, noting the unkempt grass and garbage littering the site as well as a dead tree between the sign and the highway.

In 2020 Green called on the government to maintain the sign. After a World-Spectator article, Sask Highways took responsibility for the site, after some initial confusion over which department's responsibility it was.

But now Green says the site is back to what it was like before the maintenance in 2020.

"We farm not far from it and we went through this whole spiel last year and they couldn't find which department was supposed to look after it but then within a day (after the article in the paper) they had a contractor out there that cleaned it all up, then they maybe mowed it twice after that but now we're in summer again and we're back in the same mess," said Green.

He says that when he raised awareness around the site, the government's response and confusion were frustrating.

"It was a typical government situation where the left hand doesn't know what the right hand is doing and they don't know which pocket they are supposed to be in. I said it last year, it's just grass but it just goes to show how ridiculous our government operates on anything. It might be grass today, but it could be infrastructure or anything else."

Green says it is embarrassing for proud Saskatchewan residents to greet visitors to the province with an ill-maintained sign and uncut grass.

"We're supposed to be proud of our province and we have visitors coming through here and this is the first thing they see. There are people there taking pictures every day.

"It's like we're a dirty province or something. That's our entrance and it used to be our tourist information centre and it was great and it was maintained. That is our entrance to our province on the Trans-Canada Highway and that's how we look after it year-to-year. The government pisses away money on so many things, but they can't hire any contractors to look after it. It's peanuts compared to the money that flies out the window for anything else."

He says that the responsibility of maintaining the area around the sign falls on the government and that it should not be difficult to maintain.

"Fleming can hardly afford to contract the guy to cut the grass in town and for Moosomin it's a pretty big pain for the guys in Moosomin to load up a mower, take it down there, and then mow it. Just tender it out to a contractor and tell them to look after it.

"It's the entrance to our province on the Number One highway, look after it. Enough is enough," said Green.



Fleming resident Trevor Green says that the welcome sign on the Saskatchewan-Manitoba border is an embarrassment and requires maintenance. The site is littered with garbage, including empty coffee cups, plastic, and used diapers, has weeds growing out of control and a dead tree. While the site was maintained after a newspaper story on the state of the site in 2020, Green says that it has once again become derelict.



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The piece that will be featured in the 2022 CMHA cash calendar.



Joy Flaman poses with one of her recent works.

## Moosomin artist's work to be featured in CMHA cash calendar

BY SPENCER KEMP  
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER  
A Moosomin artist has had one of her pieces selected to be printed in the 2022 Canadian Mental Health Association's cash calendar.

Joy Flaman began doing stone art in spring and has worked to better her artistic skills.

She says that after submitting her piece, she was overjoyed to hear it was selected to be shown in the CMHA cash calendar.

"I was almost in tears, I was very excited and very honoured. We've been getting that calendar for a few years now and I've won money on it before but I've never submitted a piece before," said Flaman.

She says the piece was made for a family with rocks,

sand, and glass from their favourite beaches in B.C.

"It's a big family that loves to fish together and be outside together."

"The piece was actually made as a mother's birthday gift and the daughter got me pieces of shells, sea glass, and sand from her mother's favourite pieces from B.C. that she's collected over the years. I put those all together and made them all fishing together."

Flaman says she began doing stone art after her daughter was born when she attempted to add on to a piece that she received from a family member.

She says the art offers her a way to meditate and ground herself.

"My husband's cousin gave us a piece of art in this sort of medium when our son was born. One day I went to

go add my daughter to it and as I was looking through the stones I was finding that it was grounding me, it was calming me. I suffer from PTSD from 16 years in EMS and I found it was very grounding with the sound of the rocks, the feel of the rocks, the smell of the rocks. It was peaceful. It makes me happy doing it."

Flaman says the art is not only physical but also spiritual and provides a way for her to cleanse her mind.

She says that she involves smudging in the process of her artistic skills.

"Each piece is smudged. I smudge every morning before I create and when I'm done I smudge again before it leaves my home and goes to its new home," said Flaman.

A photo of her piece will be found in the upcoming 2022 CMHA cash calendars.

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# USask agricultural researcher receives \$2.5 million in support

University of Saskatchewan (USask) researcher Dr. Yongfeng Ai (PhD) has been awarded \$2.5 million through the Canadian Agricultural Partnership to improve the processes of transforming pulses into novel food ingredients, new bioplastics, and high-value biomedical materials.

"Today's investment will stimulate further development and growth in the Saskatchewan pulse and value-added industries by identifying new ways to process pulse starch," said Saskatchewan Minister of Agriculture, the Honourable Dave Marit. "This research will bring us closer to a number of the goals outlined in Saskatchewan's Plan for Growth. These include our targets to process 50 per cent of Saskatchewan pulse crops in the province and increase value-added agriculture revenue to \$10 billion."

The funding is part of Saskatchewan's Strategic Research Initiative Program, which announced its theme of Pulse Starch Utilization in 2020.

"This project will build the university's reputation as a leading research institution, working to highlight Canada's innovation ecosystem on the global stage," said USask Vice-President Research



University of Saskatchewan (USask) researcher Dr. Yongfeng Ai.

Baljit Singh. "Dr. Ai's work demonstrates the clear potential for the development of value-added pulse products to industry and the public at large."

Pulse starches display a wide variety of traits that make them unique from other botanical sources. They can develop into biogels of various physical forms, tolerate high-temperature processing, and are a good source of resistant starch—a new type of dietary fibre and prebiotic. The strong gelling and film-forming ability of pulse starches can make them useful in bioplastics and biomedical materials, such as packaging materials, fabric fibres, hemostasis materials, and wound

dressing.

More importantly, the derived bioproducts are highly biodegradable and compostable, which can make them a sustainable option for producing easily disposable products in the future.

As a faculty member in the College of Agriculture and Bioresources and the Ministry of Agriculture Endowed Research Chair in Carbohydrate Quality and Utilization, Ai will explore these new applications for Saskatchewan pulse starches, and streamlining the conversion processes from newly harvested pulses, including peas, faba beans, lentils and chickpeas, to high-value food, bioplastic and biomedical products.



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# Ducks Unlimited Canada is all a-buzz over pollinators

Conservation group celebrates role pollinators play in healthy, sustainable landscapes



Want to bump up your crop yields? Then consider enhancing the pollination services available to you by adding natural areas on your farm. Research shows that healthy landscapes that host mixed natural areas including wetlands, grasslands, shelterbelts and ditch vegetation all aid in increased biodiversity and safe spaces for pollinators. And more pollinators means increased production of our crops and food.

Ducks Unlimited Canada (DUC) is celebrating the role these creatures, and the habitats they depend on, play in our lives. We're sharing stories, studies and strategies on how and why we need to direct conservation efforts to

help these important species.

"Mixed natural areas, in fact, play a very important role in providing resources to wild pollinators for nesting and foraging, especially when located in cropped landscapes," says DUC research scientist, Jim Devries, who also conducts research on pollinators for the organization. "And these pollinators return the favour. They help increase crop production through increased pollination. Maintaining places for pollinators to reside also benefits other beneficial insects, and biodiversity in general, including habitat for amphibians, mammals and birds."

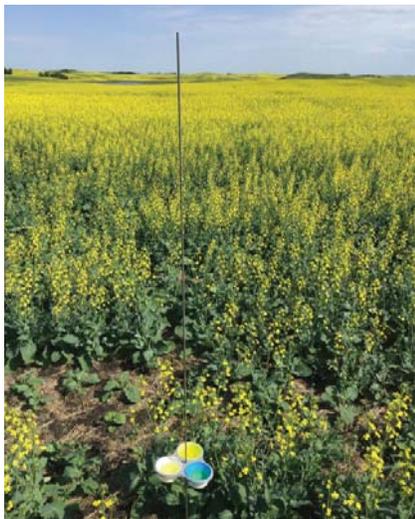
Bees and other pollinators have a natural partnership with agriculture, and with crops like canola and soybeans, in particular. Many studies of insect pollination in canola demonstrate increases in yield. These results make a strong case for setting aside areas that benefit pollinators to further maximize crop production. And when we include mixed natural areas on the landscape, we all benefit from resulting carbon storage, biodiver-

sity, increased soil retention, and water filtration.

"The contribution farmers and ranchers make in providing habitat for pollinators is significant and should be recognized," says Paul Thoroughgood, DUC's agriculture lead. "Natural areas, flowering crops such as canola, and wetlands all play a role in sustainable agriculture by providing for the needs of pollinators as well as the current and future health of our soil and water."

There are almost 1,000 bee species native to Canada and these tiny creatures significantly benefit from wetlands, grasslands and other natural areas. To support our local pollinators, we can help by increasing the type and variety of flowers available to them. Providing a pollen- and nectar-rich mix of agricultural legumes is a good step, and that's why DUC started offering a Pollinator Pak seed blend as part of its new Marginal Areas Program on the Prairies.

Explore the conservation programs that aid in pollinator health at [ag.ducks.ca](http://ag.ducks.ca) or contact your local DUC office to learn about eligible programs options near you.



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# The story may be boring, but the yard is beautiful

With a big 'whump' against hubby's truck window, road kill took on a whole new meaning and the twins (now 10) couldn't wait for Grandpa to prep that prairie chicken for the grill. I mean really—how could one grown man and two youngsters get that excited about a dead bird? The twins were pumped that their dad was right into grilling all things 'wild' and supper that night was, in the twins' minds, better than steak and lobster at a five-star restaurant.

It's been a while since we finished seeding (end of May) so life has been a little less intense and life at the camper on the farm is near non-existent except for a night a week or so when we gather around the campfire and swat mosquitoes and pick woodticks off the dogs. Not that there are many this year for some reason, but the farm grandkids and I get right into it. Ticks don't faze these kids in the least, unlike my early encounters with ticks when I, an Ontario-raised kid (no ticks there back then), froze in place at the thought of a tick on me, let alone at the thought of picking one off a pet. Now woodtick-picking is a form of relaxation. Imagine that!

With seeding behind us, we entered the next season, a season seldom spoken of but one that every farmer (well not me) gets right into. Crop checking. Crop checking starts the very second the air drill is parked in machinery row. I mean, immediately. And will I ever learn when hubby asks if I want to go for a drive that it's not a lovely country drive where we stop to watch the sunset on the horizon – it's more like start and stop at every field and every corner of every field to see if those teeny tiny seeds are germinating. It involves (on hubby's part, not mine) getting down to look close and even do some digging to check on the germination. When someone asked me, after seeing my hubby down on his hands and knees in the field west of town at 5:30 one morning, if things were germinating okay I suggested he not say anything to my husband about how the canola on that field didn't appear to be coming up all that well. And then there's checking for flea beetles on those baby canola plants. Now that takes a "country drive" to a whole new level.

Okay, I get it. This is serious business. Stressful even. You spend tens upon tens of thousands of dollars getting that seed into the ground, checking that the air drill is seeding at just the right depth. Double checking that everything is working okay and heaven forbid you unknowingly have a section plugged and the seed and or the fertilizer isn't even reaching the ground. Now that's a catastrophe in and of itself. Especially when half your land is adjacent to the highway for all the world to see. The way I look at it is stuff happens – you can't ensure everything is 100 percent perfect all of the time. But I

## The Lighter Side of Life... DOWN ON THE FARM

by donna beutler  
FREELANCE PHOTOJOURNALIST  
dl\_beutler@yahoo.ca



dare not say that to the men! Oh no! There can be nothing worse than a bare strip of land where bare should not be. Ever. Anywhere.

Between spraying for weeds and those pesky flea beetles that can outright destroy an acre of canola in a day, and top dressing and fungiciding (not likely a word I'm guessing) and gopher destruction in one form or another, the time has come for us to get our sights on sand beaches and lake water. The fishing rods are packed, the camper is loaded and the grandkids who plan to come out to the lake for a week or two have added to my "lake" grocery list. They had to add chocolate bars since the first 44 I bought disappeared from the camper fridge in the first three weeks of seeding. Grandma has, however, learned her lesson. The chocolate bars for the lake are in the fridge at my house where they will remain until we finally pull out.

After judging 4-H speeches back in February, I finally had an opportunity to watch my farm grandkids' 4-H presentations. As it was done virtually, all I needed was a copy of their videos (I didn't judge their groups) and one lazy Saturday morning, I was able to sit back for an enjoyable few moments to hear what the grandkids had chosen for their topics. First one of the twins, then the other and then their sister (12) began. And wouldn't you just know, this is what I heard: "The day my Grandma burned my 4-H Speech." I thought perhaps that moment in time had disappeared from her memory but apparently not. And wow—she turned that 'oops' moment into a delightful, interesting speech that I was incredibly proud of (despite the fact that I was the centre of the unfortunate topic).

As time marches on and the grandkids could see the end of the school year, we were reminded once again of how Covid has affected our lives and the lives of our kids and grandkids. Our youngest grandchild just

graduated from pre-K. I was a bit choked that I wasn't invited until I heard this from her mom: "Only one person (parent) is allowed to attend Sophie's graduation," she said. "And guess who she chose? Her dad! Imagine. I don't even get to go to her grad!" Thank goodness for photos and videos and all the technology that has helped us during this long year and a half. I will be the first to admit though that I will not miss all those Zoom meetings and I certainly won't miss tossing those masks aside.

One night last week, as the farm grandkids and their parents and Grams and Gramps sat around the campfire at our "farm camping site," we couldn't help but enjoy all the greenery. The green of the crops and the lawn and the trees—wow, it's just nothing short of beautiful. And then we watched the full moon as it sat between a couple of very tall evergreen trees at the back of the yard. "Look at that, boys," I said to the twins. "The trees are framing the moon." And then I said, "And you know who planted every one of those trees?" And the rolling of the eyes began, two sets of eyes, almost identical and then in unison I heard, "Yeah, Yeah, Grandma, you've told us a million times." It seems a lifetime ago in some ways, and just yesterday in other ways—the planting of the trees when I was but 25 years old with three babes of my own underfoot. The story may be boring but the yard is beautiful if I do say so myself. And now it's time to get away from the farm and get a little relax time in. The lake is calling and I am heeding the call. Here's hoping all our farmer friends and all our readers have a moment to take in some downtime and re-connect with family and friends!

*A book of Donna Beutler's amazingly funny columns is available at the World-Spectator for a mere \$10. It's worth many times that amount, we assure you!*

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# Farm debt growth slowed in 2020; Appreciation falls below farm revenue

BY LEIGH ANDERSON, SENIOR ECONOMIST WITH FCC

Canadian farm debt outstanding continued to increase in 2020 as producers invested in land, buildings and equipment. Overall farm debt rose 5.9 per cent to \$121.9 billion (Figure 1)—the lowest increase since 2014 and below the 10-year average of 6.5 per cent.

Strong demand for agriculture commodities, notably grains and oilseeds and increased delivery opportunities supported growth in farm revenues of 8.1 per cent, outpacing growth in farm debt for the first time in the past six years.

As a result, the overall financial picture of Canadian agriculture improved slightly, better positioning the agriculture industry to cover annual debt and interest payments, notably farmland ownership costs. It's important to recognize that this isn't consistent across all sectors and regions of Canadian agriculture—total livestock revenue decreased nearly one per cent in 2020.

Looking forward, we project farm revenue to be record high in 2021 and outpacing expected growth in farm debt outstanding of around six per cent in

2021. However, current drought conditions, high construction costs and other economic factors could impact farm revenue and debt forecasts.

## Managing working capital and farm debt obligations remain top priority

The Bank of Canada (BoC) overnight rate is expected to remain unchanged in 2021 at 25 basis points. The economic recovery looks to be gaining momentum as vaccination rates increase in Canada and around the globe. Expectations are for the BoC to increase the overnight rate in the second half of 2022 as Canadian inflation is trending above two per cent. However, we've already seen upward pressure for fixed interest rate products as long-term bond yields have increased through 2021.

It's important to monitor what the BoC does, and longer-term bond yields as the bond market determines fixed rate lending. Nonetheless, interest rates are expected to increase in the future, increasing debt servicing requirements.

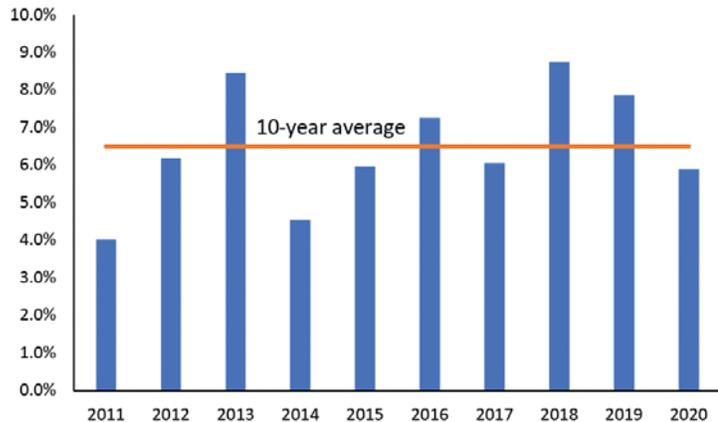


Figure 1. Canadian farm debt growth. Source: Statistics Canada

## Implication of higher interest rates

The current Bank of Canada effective business interest rate of 2.29 per cent would result in \$2.8B in interest payments by

farmers. Assuming no debt increases in 2021, it would only take an increase of approximately 50 basis points (0.5 per cent) in interest rates to bring back farm interest payments to 2019 levels of \$3.4 billion reported by Statistics Canada. The expectation,

however, is that farm debt outstanding will increase approximately six per cent in 2021. The combination of a 50-basis point increase in rates and six per cent increase in debt would result in farm interest expenses rising over \$200 million.

# Channel clearing program now open for applications

The Saskatchewan Water Security Agency (WSA) is encouraging rural municipalities (RMs) and Conservation and Development Area Authorities (C&Ds) across Saskatchewan to take advantage of the largest channel clearing grant program ever provided by the province. Up to \$1.5 million is available in 2021-22—part of the provinces two-year \$2 million funding announced in March.

"We recognize the hard work of our rural communities in Saskatchewan and the impact a blocked watercourse can have, which is why we have increased support for the channel clearing program," Minister Responsible for the Water Security Agency Fred Bradshaw said. "The Water Security Agency has streamlined the program this year and removed barriers to simplify the application process to better support our clients."

The channel clearing program assists RMs, C&Ds and Watershed Associations to remove debris, silt and beaver dams from natural watercourses to lessen the possibilities of blockages that can cause flooding to roadways and

agricultural land.

"Keeping our natural waterways clear of obstructions like sediment and beaver dams is not only good for rural Saskatchewan and producers, but it also helps protect rural infrastructure," Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities President Ray Orb said. "SARM welcomes the WSA's expanded funding for channel clearing this year and making the process to apply easier, which will certainly benefit communities in Saskatchewan."

WSA originally budgeted \$600,000 over two years for

channel clearing. The increase in funding announced in March allowed for the program to grow to \$500,000 for the 2020-21 fiscal year. In 2021-22, funding increased again to \$1.5 million for a total investment of \$2 million over two years.

Constructed works for drainage or moving water are not eligible for the rebate. The deadline to apply is January 31, 2022.

For more information on the program please visit [www.wsask.ca/Water-Programs/Channel-Clearing/](http://www.wsask.ca/Water-Programs/Channel-Clearing/).

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# New USask research has potential to make fava beans a new favourite from farm to fork



Prof. Albert Vandenberg (PhD) in a University of Saskatchewan research field. Christina Weese photo

A once popular high-protein legume crop with potential to make farming more environmentally sustainable is poised for reinvigorated popularity, thanks to an international research team, including plant geneticists from University of Saskatchewan (USask).

While the fava bean plant is high in protein, well-suited to growing in colder climates, and capable of virtually eliminating the need for fertilizer, it has one fatal flaw—for an estimated 400 million people worldwide, eating the bean can have severe health consequences. In people deficient in a certain enzyme, eating the bean causes damage to a person's red blood cells.

In research just published in the journal *Nature Plants*, an international team of researchers including USask plant scientists have identified a key step in how the plant—also known as the faba bean or broad bean—produces the compounds vicine and convicine. In four per cent of the world's population who carry a specific gene, digesting fava beans can trigger the blood disorder, known as favism.

"Fava bean has been a neglected crop because of the favism issue," said Dr.

Albert Vandenberg (PhD), USask plant breeder and geneticist, and co-author of the research. "Now, we can reduce 99 per cent of the vicine and convicine, and using sequencing and genomics, we should be able to zero in, to shut it down, 100 per cent."

The international team also involving researchers from University of Copenhagen and Aarhus University in Denmark, University of Helsinki and Natural Resources Institute Finland in Finland, University of Reading, U.K., and Georg-August-University, Germany, has now identified the key biological pathway that results in vicine and convicine.

While fava beans have been cultivated since the Roman empire, favism has an equally long history, with the Greek philosopher Pythagoras discouraging his followers from consuming the bean as early as the fifth century BCE.

By identifying how the plant produces these compounds, new low vicine and convicine fava beans could be a new, high-value crop for farmers. In addition to being rich with protein, fava beans are exceptionally good at adding nitrogen to the soil.

"This is like a machine for replacing nitrogen fertilizer," said Vandenberg. "It has huge ecological consequences in the future of agriculture, here and globally."

By adding fava beans to regular crop rotation, producers could reduce some of their use of nitrogen fertilizer, Vandenberg said.

"Suddenly, everybody in the world is interested in this," said Vandenberg.

In addition to being eaten as a dry bean, fava beans are also consumed as a fresh vegetable, and are generating interest from the food industry due to growing global demand for efficient, plant-based protein.

This work is the culmination of more than a decade of research and builds on a

previous discovery by Dr. Hamid Khazaei (PhD), Vandenberg's research associate currently at USask and soon to be at World Vegetable Centre-Taiwan, and co-author of the paper, identifying the specific genetic marker for the noxious compounds.

Vandenberg expects seed supplies of fava beans without vicine and convicine in sufficient quantities for commercial production to be available in 2022.

The research was funded by grants from Innovation Fund Denmark, Academy of Finland, U.K. Biotechnology and Biological Science Research Council, VILLUM Foundation, Danish National Research Foundation, Guangzhou Elite, and the German Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture.

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# Wawota performers ready to play this summer

BY SPENCER KEMP  
LOCAL JOURNALISM  
INITIATIVE REPORTER

A musical duo from Wawota is excited to begin performing again after Covid restrictions put their concerts on hold through the winter.

Keith Olson and Garry Dickson perform together under the title 'Remembering the Good Old Times' and play music at seniors at care homes. But because of Covid restrictions, the duo has been unable to play until recently.

A few weeks ago, the two performed at local veteran Gordon Jones' 100th birthday alongside Francis McDougall.

Olson says that the duo was able to play through the summer of 2020 outdoors before it got too cold.

As restrictions in Saskatchewan came to an end on June 11, Olson says he and Dickson have begun booking concerts.

"We did play quite a bit until the fall last year. We played a lot outdoors in a whole bunch of places, but they didn't want us indoors. But we can go to the homes at the end of this month and play, we're playing in Estevan this month at two places, actually," said Olson.

"November the 5th was the last day we played outdoors last year. But in the winter we couldn't be outside and the old folks couldn't be outside either," Dickson added.

"In 2020 we went to play in Carlyle and it was really different. We had to sit outside and play and the residents opened their windows. So we were basically playing to a wall, but the residents could hear it."

Both members of the duo have



Keith Olson (left) and Garry Dickson (right) are looking forward to performing at nursing homes as restrictions ease. The duo were unable to play through the winter of 2020 due to Covid-19 restrictions.

had a very musical past, including recording an album together alongside Olson's father, mother, and brother in 1974.

The two started playing at care homes in 2006 as a way to continue performing music without needing to spend hours at a venue.

"My whole family is musical, and Garry always lived just down the road from our farm so when we got started Garry joined us. He played with us and he was there for our record in '74, so we've been playing a long time," said Olson.

"To play at a dance was just

too long. Playing for four hours was just too much and we couldn't really do it anymore so we decided to try the care home thing and we do an hour there and it's perfect," Dickson added.

The first care home concert for the duo took place in 2006

in Wawota but quickly spread across the province and even into Manitoba.

"It actually started up here in Wawota when we played for the care home here. They liked us so much that other people heard about it and now we go to Redvers, Kipling, all around Saskatchewan and Manitoba.

"There are weeks when we have maybe four bookings in a week," Olson explained.

In 2019 alone the duo performed at 224 gigs across Saskatchewan and Manitoba but were limited in 2020 due to restrictions brought on by the pandemic.

Olson says that the duo does not charge much money for their performances as it is a passion project for both himself and Dickson.

"When we drive 100 miles away from home we try to book two in the same city on the same day. We don't charge very much, we just charge enough to cover our expenses and have a little bit leftover."

"We just enjoy doing it," said Olson.

"We can't retire on it," Dickson added with a laugh.

Under the current restrictions, the duo currently cannot perform in Manitoba which Olson says makes up a large portion of their venues.

"One thing we found is a lot of our work is actually in Manitoba and that's all been shut down. We have a lot of concerts in Brandon, Birtle, and Virden and all those different places. But now we can't get anywhere near the old folk's homes there these days, Saskatchewan is a long way ahead when it comes to Covid," said Olson.



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## Town of Esterhazy

# Town receives nearly \$22 million for new water treatment plant

BY SPENCER KEMP  
LOCAL JOURNALISM  
INITIATIVE REPORTER

The Government of Canada and the Government of Saskatchewan have announced \$81.2 million in joint funding for 23 infrastructure projects across Saskatchewan, including one project in Esterhazy.

When the funding was first made available, the Town of Esterhazy applied in hopes to receive funding for a new water treatment plant but was declined.

Esterhazy Mayor Grant Forster says the town applied a second time with a regional approach and was accepted.

"We needed a new water treatment plant, ours was at the point where it needed to be rebuilt because it is of that age and we weren't going to be able to continue to get it certified by the Ministry of Environment. We applied for it three years ago and we weren't successful the first time around. It's a lot of money and for whatever reason, they decided we weren't worth the project. We redid the proposal and went at it from a regional perspective. We've made the facility so that we are able to provide water for other communities in the area. As an example, if Stockholm needs to up-

grade their water treatment plant or their well dries up, Esterhazy is in a position where we can provide them with water from our system as long as a pipeline gets built between the two communities. So that's the approach we took the second time around. We were successful in getting it and we believe it is because we went with the regional approach," said Forster.

Just under \$10 million was granted to the town of Esterhazy by the provincial government for the construction of a new, regional water treatment plant.

The total cost of the project comes to \$29.9 million. The Federal government will cover 40 per cent of the cost with a grant of \$11.9 million and the provincial government will contribute to 33 per cent of the cost with a grant of \$9.9 million.

The town will pay for the remaining 27 per cent of the project and will contribute \$7.9 million.

"It's a regional water treatment plant to replace our existing water treatment plant because of the age and the state of the facility. We will also allow the region access to it to provide water to our neighbors if needed," said Forster.

The plant will be built on the northern side of Ester-

hazy and is estimated to take around two years to complete with construction expected to start later this year.

"From start to finish it should take about two to two and a half years. We're hoping that we can have shovels in the ground sometime in July, or early August if it's not July. We hope it is fully functional by the summer of 2023 and at the very latest early into 2024," Forster explained.

He says the town has sorely needed a new water treatment plant and the topic has been one that has been discussed by the town council for some time.

"It's something that's been talked about here for a long time, just the need for better quality water and the replacement of the water treatment facility. I know previous councils have looked at a variety of different options and in the end, all of them were pretty expensive for the town to go and do it on their own. This council decided that we were going to take this approach and we started putting away money so we could put a facility up even if we didn't get the grant, but it would have been on a smaller scale. I think that the community has been good with the news," he said.

Forster said the new plant is needed.

"Our water is notorious for being terrible. It's not like it's undrinkable, but it's not pleasing. What we're going to be able to do with this project is provide some really high-quality water to the community."

Once the new plant is up and running, Forster says there will no longer be a use for the old water treatment plant which will then be demolished.

"There's no value in that building any longer. It will stay in operation until we're fully functional with the new system but once we're able to flip the switch and go 100 per cent on the new plant, the old plant will be demolished."

Once the project is complete, Forster says that Esterhazy residents can

expect a small increase in water rates in town, but notes that the quality of water causes less stress and damage to water heaters, which Forster says have a shorter lifespan in Esterhazy due to the current situation.

"We look at it as a break-even situation. You might be paying more every three months for water, but you shouldn't have to be replacing the water heater every three to five years which is what we're hearing from our plumbers as the average lifespan for a water heater in town," Forster explained.

With construction expected to start in mid to late July or early August, Forster says the town is excited to start the project.

"We're pretty excited about it. We're really excited about the quality of

water we'll be getting in Esterhazy," Forster said.

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# Manitoba businesses breathe a sigh of relief as Covid restrictions ease in province

BY SPENCER KEMP

LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

On Saturday, June 26 businesses across Manitoba celebrated eased restrictions.

The loosened Covid-19 restrictions allowed for dine-in services at restaurants and all businesses can now open at 25 per cent capacity.

After extended lock downs, many small businesses in rural Manitoba celebrated the eased restrictions.

## Newly opened restaurant adapting to restrictions

Tamara Bajus and her husband Kevin opened a new business in Elkhorn in the midst of the ever-evolving Covid-19 restrictions.

The husband and wife team opened an ice cream shop and grill named K&T's Kitchen on Main Street in Elkhorn despite the current lock down regulations.

Tamara Bajus says that the duo was able to adapt to the restrictions while opening in mid-June.

"We're just opening up. This past weekend was our second weekend open so we haven't really had to adapt at all. We just opened with what the restrictions were at the time. What we're doing isn't really affected by Covid," said Bajus.

She says that so far the impacts of the pandemic have been minimal and the business has been able to adapt to the restrictions that were in effect.

"It hasn't been too bad. We've had amazing support from the town of Elkhorn and the surrounding areas. It's actually been okay and we've been aware of what we're up against so we just rolled with what it was, we rolled with the punches."

As many businesses celebrate eased restrictions, Bajus and her husband say that K&T's Kitchen will be unaffected as the restaurant offers mostly take-out services.

"Nothing will change for us because we aren't doing dine-in. We don't plan to do dine-in at all, but we will have grab-and-go take-out and ice cream. We will have fresh stuff inside like salads, wraps, and sandwiches. We're hoping to add that in the next few weeks.

"You'll just walk in, grab your stuff, and then you leave."

The only concern that is on the minds of the husband and wife duo is patio dining, but they say it's not yet an issue.

"The only thing we're concerned about is the patio. We might run up against some issues with that but we don't need to worry about it right now because our tables aren't in yet," Bajus said with a laugh.

K&T's Kitchen will remain open year-round and sells burgers and ice cream.

## Virden hair stylist thankful for eased restrictions

Luc Huyghebaert owner of Luc's Style, a hair salon in Virden, says that the restrictions have proven tough for the personal care industry.

He says that he feels it hasn't been fair that small businesses in rural Manitoba received the same lock down measures as in Covid hotspots such as Winnipeg.

"It's been quite the nuisance, especially in this area where we had hardly any cases. Almost everything was linked to Winnipeg but they still shut us down, and of course, if you're not working it's not a good deal, is it?" Said Huyghebaert.

"I don't think it's fair, especially since we're so close to the border. People just hop and skip to the border, to Moosomin, and do their shopping or get their hair cuts."

While the restrictions have eased, Huyghebaert says that the restrictions have caused financial strain on his business.

"It's been tough. There has been some help by the government of course which has been the only way to survive. It's not like when you're working and you have your regular income. You still have bills even if you're not working. Some people think everything is in our pocket but it doesn't work that way. We have to keep up our building, our insurance, our taxes, and everything that comes along with our business."

Thankfully under the new, eased restrictions, Huyghebaert says that he will be able to offer a full service to his patrons as



**Left to right:** Tamara, Tanner, Kyra, and Kevin Bajus pose in front of their newly opened business, K&T's Kitchen, which opened in Elkhorn in mid-June.

he offers one-on-one service, something he notes should have been a factor in the lock down measures put in place by the Manitoba government.

"I'm just a one-man show, so it's just been one person in and one person out besides me. It's different when you have a big salon where you have people in rows sitting there. It's not at all fair for the one-on-one guy to be shut down the same."

Looking across the border at Saskatchewan, Huyghebaert questions if the Government of Manitoba took the right approach to the pandemic.

"It's been weird that we've been shut down more but the virus caught up with us anyways. We have a lot more cases than in Saskatchewan and Saskatchewan didn't lock down. I don't know if this was the way to go or not, but I'm no doctor.

"Hopefully we can get this thing beat soon and we can all have family back over and friends and do business again. It's going to take a long time before things get back to a 'normal' normal," said Huyghebaert.

## Rural salon feeling the impacts of lock downs

Kristina's Salon in Elkhorn was impacted hard by the Covid-19 restrictions that were eased as of Saturday, June 26.

The restrictions in effect meant that owner Kristina Walker could not have any clients whatsoever. Walker says that the harsh restrictions did not seem fair, noting that some areas in North America currently have no restrictions while Manitoba only recently eased theirs.

"I feel pretty disappointed that the Manitoba Government has gone with the choices they had made. We're hearing that in the States there are football stadiums and concerts and football games with 100 per cent capacity and travelling and here you couldn't even get a haircut. We're just on opposite ends of the spectrum and I can't figure out why, especially in this area. We had five cases as of a few days ago so it just doesn't make a lot of sense," Walker explained, also expressing frustration with salons and massage parlors being the first businesses to be forced to close under Covid restrictions.

"We have always, as a small business,

been by appointments only. We rarely do walk-ins anymore. Everything is sanitized, disinfected, and wiped down, and if it couldn't be disinfected it was thrown in the garbage. Nothing was reused. We've been doing these measures as normal practice for us, everything is cleaned. The precautions that we were taking aren't new to us so I don't see why our industry was so quick to be shut down. Especially when we know who is coming in at exactly what time and when they leave."

Like many businesses in rural Manitoba, Walker questions why small businesses in rural communities are treated the same as those in larger centres.

"It's not fair at all. We can't just be lumped into the same category as Winnipeg. Meanwhile you can just head 20 minutes West from here to Moosomin and there are minimal restrictions. We're closer to another province than we are to where these outbreaks are happening. It doesn't make sense, it's not fair that we are in that same category provincially."

While the Government of Manitoba has provided grants and funding the businesses impacted by the pandemic, Walker says that she would have preferred her business to be open.

"Manitoba is the only province that has given out the Bridge Grants and we've gotten the Canada Relief Benefits as well and other things like that, but that money has to come from somewhere so in the end we're going to have to pay for it. I would have much rather had my doors open than be collecting government money," said Walker.

While the Government of Manitoba continues to follow its 4-3-2-One Great Summer opening plan, Walker remains frustrated and confused as to why it is ineffective, comparing it to Saskatchewan's reopening plan that is set to have all restrictions lifted by July 11.

"I'm disappointed. If the plans worked in another province I don't know why they chose the go the route they did here. It really just leaves me speechless," said Walker.

## Virden Boston Pizza taking time to hire and train new staff

Jillian Irvine, owner of Boston Pizza in

Virden, says that the eased restrictions have been welcome news to the business.

She says that while the 25 per cent limited dine-in capacity is low, it allows her a chance to recruit and train new staff.

"We're really happy with the announcement that Manitoba is going to start to reopen. We open on Saturday and it was great to see some familiar faces back in the restaurant. The 25 per cent doesn't give us a lot to work with, but we'll take what we can get and it certainly is helping our staff get into the swing of things and it allows us a bit more time to hire and train some new staff because like most restaurants we did lose a lot of long-term employees throughout the pandemic and we haven't had the opportunity to hire and train new staff in over a year because of all the opening and closing and reopening of the business. We're happy to be back at it," said Irvine.

"At the 25 per cent capacity, we have enough staff to operate at that level. We're just hiring and training as fast as we can to beat the clock so that we're ready as soon as it does move up to the 50 per cent capacity and we have the staff in place to do so. The new hiring grant that the Manitoba government announced last week will be extremely helpful in helping to manage the cost to hire, recruit, and train employees."

She says that prior to the eased restrictions, the restaurant was seeing a significant financial strain as operations were limited but were able to keep afloat.

"We were operating on 20 per cent of our business but we just controlled our variable expenses and took advantage of all the different government assistance programs."

Moving forward, Irvine says there is concern for when the grants and funding are no longer available.

She says that she is worried that the economy will not be in a position to allow for a complete return to normal.

"As we slowly open up the economy and things slowly get back to normal in my mind the biggest fear is just the transition when all the funding ends and hoping the economy stabilizes to allow us to continue our services. That is our fear, that little bit of transition time, but things are looking positive so far though," said Irvine.

# Patricia Ballantyne's Walk of Sorrow stops in Moosomin

Continued from page 3

But then I understood, because they're part of that inter-generational effect. She may have not gone to residential school, my foster dad did, my dad did, my mom did, my late mom and all of them. From my dad, she learnt what the residential school was. And then I learnt because she didn't know what was going on, that it wasn't her fault that I ended up there. It wasn't her fault, it was just a whole system, the way it was run, the way they worked. Because at that time if you were in foster care or if your parents died then they would automatically put you in the residence. Sign you up and put you in the residence and you were a ward of the state.

**As you go through the different communities are you hearing other people open up and tell you their stories?**

Yes. They are. They are and their kids sit around and listen and they're shocked.

Yesterday, one of the community members, when we stopped in Ochapowace, one of the community members came to us the next day and talked to us and said "It's a good thing you came here. It opened up our elders. Those stories, they didn't share any of those stories before when we were talking about residential schools." They're healing, they're starting their healing, but none of them really talked about anything that happened to them and that was the first time they got to hear their elders talk about it and open up and let out their emotions about what happened to them in the residential schools.

I was hopeful. It gave me hope, it gave me strength that I'm going the right way, I'm doing the right thing.

So now as I go, before I even leave this town, already people in Virden, the next town over, they're waiting. When do you think you're going to be here? What time do you think you'll arrive? I don't know, it depends on our walkers. It all depends how the weather and if it starts thundering and lightning then we'll stop but if it's just raining then we'll keep going. But they're all waiting for us.

**Are you surprised by how much support there is? Did you expect that people would be welcoming you along?**

I was actually very shocked and it gives me hope that our people are wanting to learn. The youth that are here with us, they want to learn, they want to walk for their parents, they want to walk for their grandparents, they want to walk against the foster care system.

There are different needs here. There are a few of us that have been to residential schools, a couple that were in the foster care system, and then there's our elder who was in a residential school, and then we have a veteran here from the army that is supporting us and was against residential schools.

So we have different representations, what they're walking for, but it's all about healing, it's all about coming together, learning to open up, learning to talk, learning to be strong, learning not to be scared to tell your story.

Whether you were in a residential school, whether you were in foster care, whether you were in the day school or boarding school. Day school and residential school were the same, they were run by the same people, the churches and Indian affairs.

**So what's your best hope for what your walk is going to accomplish? Ten years from now, when you look back on it, what do you want to tell people about this walk? What do you hope comes from this?**

I just hope that they continue to be open and honest, and let the Canadian non-First Nations know what really happened in the residential schools and start your healing. Once you start talking, you'll be healing. So I'm hoping our people by that time in 10 years are past that healing stage and their children and the next generation too.

Because a lot of times, our people, they are proud people, they are humble people, so they don't speak out openly. But I'm hoping with this they start speaking out and speaking up for themselves, speaking up for their communities, speaking up for their grandchildren because this is what it's really about. It's about the future of our grandchildren and great-grandchildren, because if we're stuck in this same situation now where they're not talking, that's still going to create depression, that's going to create anxiety, that's going to cause alcohol abuse, homelessness, drug abuse. All those



Walkers on the highway east of Moosomin.

social issues we have in our communities is due to that inter-generational trauma they suffered in residential schools.

A lot of times when you go to therapy they say talk about it, it's good for you. I noticed from the time I was a kid when I remember being around my grandparents there was a lot of laughter. But now, all families are disconnected. I want to bring those connections back and healing oneself is going to bring those connections back and the elders will be involved again. Because nowadays, they're not even looking to the elders anymore, even checking them. So I'm hoping this brings them back to that kinship. Rebuild those connections with their families, rebuild our communities.

Once we rebuild our families, we can rebuild our communities and make them stronger. I'm hoping all our social issues will start being taken care of and looked at. It doesn't help anything that our funding gets cut too, our mental health got cut, social programming got cut on our reserves. Without that, how are we supposed to get our youth and elders into counselling, or get more elders to come in to help.

**What's the main message you want to get across to the leaders in Ottawa when you get there?**

Just the policies, the childcare policies need to be changed for our future generations. We need to have a clear understanding and respect for our First Nations people. Don't push us aside when it gets too tough to answer our questions, don't ignore us and let it sit there until it's forgotten, deal with it right now, listen to the people in the communities, not the mental health workers on what they need. The people in the community, our elders, our youth. Sit down with each community, talk to them. Talk to them and ask them what they need. And talk to the elders, they're the best ones who know, because they're the ones who advise us and they're the ones who will know what is best for our community.

**The provincial government said they're willing to put \$2 million into helping research some of the residential school sites. Do you think that's a step in the right direction? Are you happy to see that or do you think they need to do a lot more?**

It is, it is, I am happy to see that, that it's moving fast. Since I started my walk, everything's been moving fast, and even the university scientists and the First Nations people working with them came and found us on the highway to let us know to just keep walking and praying. Because that's what we do, we walk and pray and ask the Creator to bring all our lost loved ones to be found, that's what we pray for. We pray for our elders to start healing.

It surprised us that they came and found us on the highway and told us "Yes, what you're doing is good. It's bringing it to attention. Everything is moving fast and there are more kids out there, we just can't say where and how many right now until we have a precise number." We are finding more.

But then we have to wait until we have

all the grounds covered and then there's so many schools that they have to go to before they can put a number to all these babies that have been found.

**How long is it going to take you to get to Ottawa?**

I'm thinking until mid-August. Because there's people waiting for us to walk for us and we do a relay style so it's faster. We'll go two or three kilometers and then the next one walks. That goes faster, because before when we started with the three of us, we were tired because we were doing six miles, 10 miles. So now that we have more people it's easier on our legs and bodies.

And it's easier on the mind because we all have that support together. We have that support for each other. A lot of times during our walk we get emotional because of all

the things we pray about and let go along the road. So far it's been a good experience that we are supporting each other. And we do see that we are starting to heal slowly in our own ways.

**How do you think this is going to change you? How do you think you're going to be different at the end of this?**

I think it just makes me stronger. It will make me stronger and more vocal. I noticed that I've gotten louder because I'm not a person to speak publicly. With people talking to me it helps me get it out, and I let them know this is what I'm doing for. I'm doing this for healing and hoping that policies will change that.

And I know it's going to just make me stronger and make me more loud for our people.

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# One step toward a broader vision for Cowesseses

*Continued from Page 14*

That's where we're at right now. That's why in our funding agreement there's startup capital. We are creating our team now, we're not rushing it, but we're doing it at a pace where we feel we need to do it now to have a full team ready to do this with all of our over 160 protection files, our 4,300 citizens ready to serve and prevention. We need about a staff of 60, and so right now we have a staff of 20, and so we are building that momentum.

The second will be we need office space and so we are utilizing current Cowesseses office space and we're assessing if our organization will have its own building or are we just going to refurbish something else.

And then thirdly we've got to realize our other departments and services are effected by this. How does it impact education? How does it impact housing?

And so with all of that, that's why we wanted a two year funding agreement. We decided on the two years because in a year and a half we're going to learn so much about what we got and what we need next, and when we get back to the table we'll share what we're missing and what is working.

**How long will it be until the new system is fully implemented and every child is under the care of Cowesseses First Nation?**

Right now we're looking at two years. So right now we have some files in protection and we have all prevention and we have all operations, and so just because the files are not under one of our roofs, we still have final say when it comes to our children.

We just don't want to transfer all files over on one day because we want everything to make a positive impact as they transition over. Some files are easy, some files come with a little more understanding, so we want to make sure we do it in a good way.

**Do you think that the agreement that you came up with could be a template for First Nations across the country? Could you see a lot of others following the same path?**

When you're asking about the co-ordination agreement, absolutely, but when it comes to the laws, every nation is at a different stage in their healing journey.

Our law is called the Miyo Pimatisiwin Act and that is our legislation. In Canadian law, their legislation is called Bill C-92. Our Indigenous law is called the Miyo Pimatisiwin Act which coincides with Bill C-92. So our law is based on our healing journey, our judicial system. So that one could be looked at, but other nations would come up with their own law based on where they're at.



Chief Cadmus Delorme signing a co-ordination agreement with the federal and provincial governments for the implementation of Cowesseses' child and family services.

**How important is this step in coming to whatever your vision is of the future for Cowesseses?**

This is foundational. We strive for self-government, we strive to coexist in a treaty relationship with all Canadians. Cowesseses First Nation, we are rights holders, we are what you could consider a dual-citizen in this country. We have our first people's rights, which we have never given up, but at the same time we are proud Canadians, we have Canadian passports.

It's not like we're trying to ask to get special treatment, we just have to realize the truth in this country is that First Nations people have a fiduciary relationship, have a shared land perspective.

So this is a part of our end goal because we need to gain control of what we have, and controlling the heartbeat to our nation with our children and the best impact and best plan for them, this is what Indigenous people live for. We live for our children, and children yet unborn. So this is foundational to our growth plan.

**What are the next steps to build on that foundation?**

We want to focus on governance. We want a good government structure that is economic friendly to work in

agriculture, to work in industry, to work in all different sectors so we can be more self-sustaining.

We have to exit the Indian Act at our pace. In the Indian Act there is membership. How do you define a Cowesseses citizen? We want to define who we are. We want to make sure that we exit the Indian Act at our pace. We've got a lot of work to do. This is a celebration in the confidence that we can do it, so we're going back to the drawing table and we're going to see what's next.

**How important are some of those economic development issues? I know you've got the solar farm on the go and you've got that wind farm. How important are things like that in getting to where you want to go?**

Economic self-sustainability, that is our biggest focus. We are renewable energy, we have 1.2 MW right now. By the end of the summer we're going to have an additional 10 MW solar field within two years. We're working on that 200 MW turbine field (the Bekevar project—see page 3). We're in agriculture. Cowesseses has a lot of agriculture land. This year we're farming ourselves, under our corporation company of Cowesseses, 4,500 acres. We want to expand that. We have gas stations, we have many things that we want to get into.

This creates jobs. Every child should wake up some time during the week to watch their parents get ready for work, that is huge in strengthening families. Having solar panels makes kids want to get into engineering and science, it's changing the modern focus of education. We're going to have students that want to go to agronomy school.

It's what is going to keep the momentum strong in finding our role in modern day life when it comes to economics.

**What do you see as the future for Cowesseses First Nation? What is your vision?**

Cowesseses First Nation is going to be a major economic player in this province and in this country. Truth and reconciliation, we must all walk it together, and as Canadians reflect right now on the history. It's a tough history to reflect on.

Truth is going to be uncomfortable but as we agree and realize there's one truth, there's going to be one First Nation that is Cowesseses First Nation that's going to be growing, and we're going to be growing at a pace where people are going to be like "I get it. I want to see Cowesseses grow more because it helps in understanding that the truth hurts, but reconciliation is happening."

So we want to be that reconciliation example.

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Tiffany Swallow photos

Above left: Harper Swallow at Melville Beach.

Above right: Griffin Swallow



Alyssa Jones photo

Above left: Maddex, Corbin, Dexton Minty at Bird's Point Beach.  
 Above right: Taya, Oaklan, and Nixon Hockley selling iced tea and cookies on Wright Road in Moosomin, SK



Ali Kowaluk photo

Above: Winston Kowaluk lovin' pop's cows!

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Draw Date: September 10, 2021

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**Draw Date: September 10, 2021**



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<p><b>2017 Jeep Compass</b> STOCK# OT066A <b>\$19,999</b> <b>\$89</b> PER WEEK</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Low kms</li> <li>• Local Trade</li> <li>• Ready for all roads</li> </ul>	<p><b>2017 Dodge Grand Caravan</b> STOCK# 1P125 <b>\$23,539</b> <b>\$89</b> PER WEEK</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DVD</li> <li>• Stow n' Go Seats</li> <li>• 61,000 kms</li> </ul>
<p><b>2016 VW Jetta</b> STOCK# OT144C <b>\$13,455</b> <b>\$59</b> PER WEEK</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Great on Gas</li> <li>• Lots of Room</li> <li>• 74,000 kms</li> </ul>	<p><b>2017 Ford F-150</b> STOCK# 1P127 <b>\$49,827</b> <b>\$189</b> PER WEEK</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lariat Sport</li> <li>• 62,000 kms</li> <li>• 3.5L Ecoboost</li> </ul>
<p><b>2018 Chev Silverado</b> STOCK# 1P094 <b>\$44,637</b> <b>\$169</b> PER WEEK</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Only 26,000 kms</li> <li>• Amazing Condition</li> <li>• 5.3L</li> </ul>	<p><b>2013 Chev Sonic</b> STOCK# 1P033A <b>\$10,900</b> <b>\$59</b> PER WEEK</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LT</li> <li>• One-Owner</li> <li>• Auto</li> </ul>
<p><b>2018 Buick Enclave</b> STOCK# 1T087A <b>\$39,889</b> <b>\$153</b> PER WEEK</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 65,000 kms</li> <li>• Avenir</li> <li>• Great Colour</li> </ul>	<p><b>2017 GMC Sierra</b> STOCK# 1T088A <b>\$34,996</b> <b>\$136</b> PER WEEK</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 5.3L</li> <li>• Elevation Series</li> <li>• Leather</li> </ul>
<p><b>2017 Kia Sorento</b> STOCK# OT247B <b>\$23,073</b> <b>\$89</b> PER WEEK</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2.0L Turbo</li> <li>• Leather</li> <li>• Local Trade</li> </ul>	<p><b>2020 Ford Escape</b> STOCK# 1P115 <b>\$35,359</b> <b>\$120</b> PER WEEK</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 26,000 kms</li> <li>• SEL</li> <li>• 4WD</li> </ul>
<p><b>2018 Ford Escape</b> STOCK# 1T086A <b>\$24,998</b> <b>\$99</b> PER WEEK</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SEL</li> <li>• 4WD</li> <li>• 33,000 kms</li> </ul>	<p><b>2018 Ford F-150</b> STOCK# 1T053A <b>\$54,129</b> <b>\$208</b> PER WEEK</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Heated/Cooled Seats</li> <li>• Twin-Panel Roof</li> <li>• 54,000 kms</li> </ul>
<p><b>2019 Jayco Eagle HT</b> STOCK# 1P164A <b>\$54,900</b> <b>\$189</b> PER WEEK</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Next to new!</li> <li>• Executive Owned</li> <li>• 2 Slides</li> </ul> <p>GRAND DESIGN REFLECTIONS</p>	



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