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# Plain & Valley

September 2022 • Volume 15 Number 9

Covering Southeast Saskatchewan and Southwest Manitoba



Merle Malin of Redvers recently decided to donate a hydraulic lift system to Levi Jamieson of Moosomin. The lift helps people in wheelchairs get onto tractors and combines when farming, it goes as high up as 11 feet. Malin had read in the World-Spectator about Levi, and decided to donate the piece of equipment that he said made farming much easier for him.

## Paraplegic farmer sees need, donates lift

BY SIERRA D'SOUZA BUTTS

LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

When Merle Malin of Redvers read in the World-Spectator about Moosomin's Levi Jamieson a few weeks ago, he knew he could help.

Malin became a paraplegic years ago, after an accident while driving a semi.

He farmed for years as a paraplegic, and had a specialized piece of equipment that he knew would make Levi's life easier, a hydraulic lift mounted in the back of a truck.

The lift is worth around \$50,000. It goes as high up as 11 feet.

Powered by a remote control, it can lift a person in a wheelchair up to the cab of a piece of farm machinery, allowing them to access and use the equipment.

Levi is a high school student who was injured in an ATV accident and lost the use of his legs in 2020. After hearing about Levi through a story in the World-Spectator, Malin thought it would be a good idea to contact Levi

and donate the hydraulic lift chair to him.

"From the paper I saw a photo of Levi with his calf in the Fairmede 4H," Malin said.

"I got in contact with Kevin Weedmark to get a hold of Levi, then I messaged Levi and the rest is history.

"Other than picking apples I don't have a lot of use for the lift anymore, but over the years when I used it, it was a life changer. It made it easier to farm. I thought why not give it to Levi."

Levi's dad said the family was so excited to hear from Malin that they picked up the lift just a few days after his call.

"He called us on the Friday on the long weekend and we were going to the lake," said Darcy Jamieson.

"We came home on the Saturday and phoned Merle, then we were down there Monday on the long weekend. We couldn't get there quick enough."

The Jamiesons said they are really appreciative for Malin's donation.

"I haven't used it everyday yet, but when I get out

more on the farm I will," said Levi.

"It's helped a lot already though. For getting into tractors, it's a lot easier than climbing up on the tractor like a monkey."

He said it has helped him do work around the farm and cut hay for the RM.

Levi's dad said they only make the hydraulic lift in the States now, and that the company who used to make it in Canada no longer sells them.

"MacDon Headers the big headers on the combines, the fella that invented those, invented this hydraulic chair," said Malin.

"He was selling them himself and was in Saskatoon. Through his work of MacDon he knew the people Atom-Jet Industries who thought they could take over after he died from a heart attack.

"Atom-Jet did sell them at one point, but eventually stopped making them."

Levi said he cannot wait to start using it on a regular basis when farming.

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# Glasser's TV Service

# Rocanville revives its Lucky Lottery

BY SIERRA D'SOUZA BUTTS  
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER  
Lucky Lottery, a fundraiser organized by Rocanville Parks and Recreation, is under way.

Individuals have until Sept. 30 to buy their tickets for the chance of winning \$100,000 or other cash prizes of \$1,000 and \$500.

In addition to the grand prize lottery, there is also a 50/50.

"We have brought back the Lucky Lottery as a way for Rocanville to work together to raise money to support all the facilities," said Andrea Logan, Rocanville Rec Director.

"Instead of having all the facilities doing their own fundraisers, we brought this back as a way for the community to work together."

"Based on the success of past Lucky Lotteries, we thought that it would be a great way to raise funds for the rebuild of the Aquatic Centre and give funds to the other recreation organizations in town for their needs."

Tickets for the grand prize lottery cost \$100 per ticket. As for the 50/50 lottery, people can buy a ticket for \$20 or buy three tickets for \$50.

People can buy their tickets online at [www.rocanvillelotto.ca](http://www.rocanvillelotto.ca).

"There is a \$100,000 grand prize lottery, those tickets are \$100 apiece," she said.

"There's also an additional nine draws of \$1,000 and 10 draws of \$500 from that lottery as well."

"We are also selling 50/50 tickets with a grand prize of \$48,500 if we sell out. You don't need to buy a \$100 ticket in order to buy a 50/50 ticket."

Based on the success from former local projects, Logan thought Lucky Lottery would be a great way to raise funds for a major upgrade taking place to the town's Aquatic Centre, along with other recreational facilities and activities in town.

"The lucky lottery has been done in Rocanville in the past and has been successful," she said.



An artist's rendering of what the inside of the upgraded pool would look like.

"The Rocanville Skating Rink Board used this fundraiser for a few years in the past. It generated a significant amount of funds for their improvements."

"We thought that we have so many groups in Rocanville who are all trying to raise money so why not work together and raise funds that can be shared with all of the groups."

Logan said some of the recreation groups that will benefit from the fundraiser are the Aquatic Centre, skating arena, golf club and curling rink.

"Possibly in the future we could add

other groups like the library, soccer fields, ball diamonds and play school," Logan said.

Funds from the Lucky Lottery will be going towards the pool's upgrades as well.

"Hopefully we'll be raising a significant amount so that money will be divided up between those facilities and the pool," Logan said.

"In my opinion, recreation is the heart of your community, recreation is what draws people to your community, it's the selling point for your community. Without recreation, what is the draw for people who want to live here?"

Logan spoke about why people should purchase tickets for the Lucky Lottery.

"Buying tickets is a great way to support this community and all of recreation within the community," she said.

People have until Sept. 30 to purchase tickets for the Lucky Lottery and the 50/50 Lottery Raffle.

The draw will be held on Oct. 1 at Rocanville Golf Course at 11 p.m.

Prizes can be claimed by calling Rocanville Town Office at (306) 645-2022.

Tickets can be purchased online at [www.rocanvillelotto.ca](http://www.rocanvillelotto.ca)

Rocanville Parks & Recreation

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**Grand opening for new clothing store**

A grand opening was held for Haven Clothing in Moosomin on Saturday, September 10. The new clothing store, run by Hannah Herman, sells women's, men's and children's clothing. The business is located Main Street, and is open Monday to Saturday.

From left are Drayson Skulmoski, Moosomin Mayor Larry Tomlinson, and Hannah Herman cutting the ribbon at the grand opening.



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**Next issue of Plain & Valley:**  
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## Zoning for recovery centre okayed

BY KEVIN WEEDMARK

The town of Moosomin's town council has indicated it is willing to modify its zoning bylaw to allow the development of a drug and alcohol recovery centre in a commercial area in Moosomin.

A group in Moosomin is putting together a proposal for a recovery centre to help the province meet its goal of 150 to 200 new treatment spaces across the province.

The province has a current Request For Proposals out, asking groups to submit proposals to develop treatment spaces.

The Moosomin proposal would include a partnership with a private career training company.

A training centre would be set up in Moosomin to train support workers for the Moosomin facility and for other facilities across the province.

The province announced an RFP for 150 to 200 addictions treatment spaces earlier this summer.

"Addressing wait times and access to treatment and supports for substance use disorders is a priority for our government," Mental Health and Addictions, Seniors and Rural and Remote Health Minister Everett Hindley said. "We want to have improved access for Saskatchewan residents facing the challenges associated with addictions."

The Ministry of Health currently funds 475 pre-treatment, detoxification, treatment and post-treatment beds across the province operated by the Saskatchewan Health Authority (SHA) and third parties.

Hindley told the World-Spectator it's important to have treatment options across the province.

"The majority of the overdoses are occurring in our major centres, simply because of population, like Regina and Saskatoon," Hindley said.

"But that doesn't mean that other areas of Saskatchewan are immune to this. We see it in communities that I represent like Swift Current and where you are in Moosomin—in smaller communities, First Nations communities, those in remote and Northern locations as well. So we're really trying to do everything we can with the dollars we have available."

## Ukrainians arriving in Sask eligible for job training

The Government of Saskatchewan has announced it will allow all temporary residents arriving under Canada-Ukraine Authorization for Emergency Travel (CUAET) with a valid work permit to be eligible for Canada-Saskatchewan Job Grant (CSJG) and Re-Skill Saskatchewan Training Subsidy (RSTS) funded training.

"Saskatchewan is committed to welcoming an unlimited number of displaced Ukrainians and ensuring they gain the language, skills and connections to successfully integrate into our communities and workforce," Immigration and Career Training Minister Jeremy Harrison said.

"Now more than ever, with Saskatchewan hav-

ing some of the highest job growth in the country, we need workers and employer-driven training programs such as these to ensure provincial employers have a skilled workforce required to keep building a strong Saskatchewan."

In March 2022, the Government of Canada created a special, accelerated temporary residence pathway for Ukrainians to live, work and study in Canada.

The CUAET allows Ukrainians and their immediate family members of any nationality to apply for a Canadian visitor visa, granting them temporary residency for up to three years.

In addition, individuals can also apply for an open work permit that allows

them to work in Canada.

These changes are accessible for those arriving from overseas or Ukrainians already residing in Canada.

The program is not considered part of a refugee immigration stream.

Saskatchewan employers experiencing job vacancies, skill shortages and a desire to offer employment in support of Ukrainians, may seek provincial training funding for work permit holders arriving under the federal CUAET program.

The Government of Saskatchewan currently provides employer-driven training funding through the CSJG and RSTS pro-

grams.

The invasion of Ukraine by the Russian army has forced millions of Ukrainian people to flee their country in search of safety.

More than 1,500 displaced Ukrainians have arrived in Saskatchewan since the conflict began, including those who arrived on the two humanitarian flights with Solidaire and Open Arms.

"As the situation in Ukraine continues to evolve, the Government of Saskatchewan will continue to look for opportunities to support the people impacted," the province's immigration ministry said.

**Steven Bonk, MLA**  
for Moosomin Constituency

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# 10 year old from Esterhazy shares aspirations of becoming a Mountie



Above: Kohl with Cst. Amanda Herring from the Esterhazy detachment. Left: Kohl at the RCMP Heritage Centre in his homemade RCMP uniform.

how to take finger-prints and footwear impressions at a crime scene.

"The uniform took Kohl and his grandpa over two years to complete. At home, I often catch him shining his boots or making sure his uniform kit is in order for the day," said his father, Dean.

Cst. Amanda Herring from the Esterhazy detachment is very active in the schools in her community and inspired Kohl to pursue his dream of becoming a police officer.

"He always greets me at the school with a big smile. It's the kids like Kohl and their enthusiasm that make me love the work I get to do in our local schools," said Cst. Herring.

"I want to be an RCMP officer one day. I think it would be really cool to be able to help people and protect people in your community," said Kohl. "I think I would like to patrol in a small town near home. That way I don't have to ticket my friends and family."

Assistant Commissioner Rhonda Blackmore heard about Kohl and took it upon herself to meet with him at the RCMP Heritage Centre following his day at camp. They spoke about his love for the RCMP and his future aspirations of becoming a member.

"I think he will make a fine RCMP officer one day, he has a contagious passion for wanting to help people and he already has so much knowledge of the RCMP at a young age. We look forward to seeing what the future brings with Kohl and his journey to becoming a Mountie," said, A / Commr. Rhonda Blackmore.

When asked, Kohl said that the coolest thing about the RCMP is the amount of jobs that are out there.

"There is no other police service like the RCMP. There are so many career options—Traffic Services, Police Dog Services, Emergency Response Team, Underwater Recovery Team, you name it! Take my advice and apply today."

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# Travis Sanheim visits Elkhorn as part of the NHL Goals and Dreams Ambassadors Program

BY ED JAMES  
 NHL hockey player Travis Sanheim was in Elkhorn on August 23 to give out 24 sets of hockey equipment for young hockey players as part of the National Hockey League Players' Association (NHLPA) Goals & Dreams fund.

Sanheim grew up in Elkhorn, and today plays for the Philadelphia Flyers. The equipment was donated to the Elkhorn District Community Centre (EDCC) to be used by Elkhorn Minor Hockey players.

Later that day, the EDCC unveiled a new sign in Sanheim's honor on the side of the rink.

The players' charitable initiative is designed to assist grassroots hockey programs. Qualified programs receive complete sets of brand new hockey equipment from the NHLPA Goals & Dreams fund, to be distributed to deserving youth in their community.

For more than 20 years, NHLPA members have been donating equipment to programs in their NHL cities and hometowns around the world.

Each year, on top of donating equipment, NHLPA Goals & Dreams Ambassadors also make visits to their home towns to meet young hockey fans, distribute the gear, sign autographs and answer both hockey and life questions. The Players enjoy the opportunity to meet and interact with young aspiring hockey players and provide a little insight into the life of an NHL player.

In the rink waiting room in Elkhorn on August 23 were stacks of boxes full of new hockey equipment, excited children and parents, along with Sanheim.

Sanheim was a graduate of Elkhorn School in 2014 and has been playing hockey since he was three.

In rink waiting room, a number of young children and parents were busy opening up some of the many boxes, trying to find the right size of equipment for their children and then trying the equipment on to see if it fits.

Of the 24 complete hockey kits that were there, one parent said that everything but

the mouth guard was provided. It was all new, quality equipment with most of it made by Canadian companies.

While Sanheim was helping kids into their kits, he was also busy signing autographs on hats and jerseys.

Soon several of the children were outfitted and had a group photo with Sanheim.

All of the gear will be returned to the rink board at the end of the season, or when the children grew out of it, so that others can share in it. The gift of this gear and the passing on of it will help those families who might not have the resources to buy the required hockey equipment.

"I learned a lot about hockey and sportsmanship in Elkhorn from my earliest days," says Sanheim. "I still keep in touch with my friends who played the game over the years in Elkhorn. This program is meant to keep hockey alive in smaller rural Canadian communities and to help with the cost of equipment."

He added that he sees hockey, not only as a sport, but that it's about friendship, physical fitness and learning skills and discipline. "Sports of all types are good for people of all ages, based on your skill and health levels. I hope the event this evening will promote fitness and health," he said.

After the event was over inside the rink, outside there was a small crowd waiting for Sanheim to come out.

Boyd Canart, the president of the EDCC, made a speech, not only to thank Sanheim for the new gear, but to honor him with a large sign which was placed over the front door of the skating rink.

When Sanheim unveiled the sign, there was a photo of him as a youth in his Elkhorn hockey uniform and an action shot of him with the Philadelphia Flyers, showing how far he had come from his home town of Elkhorn.

Sanheim was very touched by the sign and thanked the community, posing for photos with family members, former Elkhorn hockey team members, and young, future hockey players.

*Continued on page 11*



Travis Sanheim helping Owen Johnson of Elkhorn tie his skates.



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**The second annual Jacey Lee Memorial Barrel Racing event** took place in Spy Hill on Saturday, August 27. The event was started in 2021 in memory of Jacey Lee who passed away suddenly and unexpectedly at the age of 25. Jacey's mother, Michelle Fredbjornson, started the event in honor of Jacey, who loved barrel racing. In its first year, hundreds of riders signed up for the event, prompting Fredbjornson to make it an annual event.

The second annual event consisted of 5D open, 3D youth, and Pee Wee barrel racing.



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# SECPD prepared to welcome students of Ukrainian families into the school year

BY SIERRA D'SOUZA BUTTS  
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE  
REPORTER

The Southeast Cornerstone Public School Division (SECPD) has taken an initiative to welcome and help children of Ukrainian families ease into the upcoming school year.

"We expect there are going to be some children across Southeast Cornerstone, we've had some indication that we've got certain families who will be coming," said Aaron Hiske, Superintendent of Education at SECPD.

"We're not exactly sure how many kids until school starts, once everyone is registered we'll see exactly what that number is, but we do know we'll have some."

"Right now there are some students who have enrolled already, but most of it is word of mouth (of how many will be coming)."

Since Russia's invasion of Ukraine, more than 1,500 displaced Ukrainians have arrived in Saskatchewan, and over 6,100 have arrived in Canada.

With families of younger children expecting to start school in less than a month, Hiske said SECPD has an easy process for parents to register their kids.

"They will just need to fill out a registration form which is available online for their particular school, or they can go to the school as well," he said.

"We open up on August

25, we'll have staff in buildings for people to get some face-to-face help and to fill in those pieces. It's very simple just like for any other resident who would apply and get enrolled."

He commented on the different approaches SECPD is taking to help children from Ukraine who may face any language barriers in school.

"We've got an English as an Additional Language consultant who works with all of our newcomer families and will be available division wide," he said.

"We've arranged through the school to have her meet with families. We do not know the kids' current levels of English, but our consultant has developed an evaluation process that students can go through to

have an idea of the language level for that student. This helps inform teachers and staff what sort of initial support students will need.

"She'll be going across the schools in the division, also now that we've been able to use Teams in the last few years, it makes things a bit easier. She can also virtually attend calls to provide support."

"We've also made arrangements with the schools in the division, I know they've already put on a couple of different events for newcomer families in August, in the Weyburn and Estevan area, to help them work through the process, we did have a presentation from the school division at those events as well."

Hiske was asked if schools in smaller communities will

be getting the same support as schools in larger communities.

"We have the same resources, obviously we need to focus our resources on where the largest number is, but it's designed to be on an individual basis for students," he said.

"Whether we have one student or ten students the general idea around ESL and TSL (Teacher and School Leader Incentive Program) is that it's a great fit for either individuals or groups of kids."

Hiske spoke about the advantages for having chil-

dren from Ukraine enrol into schools in the southeast area.

"Like the enrolment of many new Canadians across the system it brings us diversity, that gives us an understanding of the different cultures and allows us to connect with different perspectives, and develop a goal of common understanding. I think it's a good thing."

A second humanitarian flight from Ukraine to Saskatchewan arrived on August 10, bringing in approximately 230 Ukrainian citizens to the province.

On Friday, August 12, Premier Scott Moe joined representatives from Solidaire and Open Arms, two international humanitarian organizations, to sign a memorandum of understanding (MOU).

The MOU is a pledge by the three parties to partner on a total of five humanitarian flights aiming to bring more than 1,000 Ukrainian citizens from Warsaw, Poland to Saskatchewan by March 31, 2023.

The five flights include the two flights that departed Poland for Saskatchewan on July 4 and August 10, 2022.



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The TSS Initiative is a partnership between Saskatchewan's Ministry of Government Relations, SUMA, SARM and New North.

For more information, visit [saskatchewan.ca](http://saskatchewan.ca).



# Wiggles & Giggles daycare opens in Whitewood

BY SIERRA D'SOUZA BUTTS  
LOCAL JOURNALISM  
INITIATIVE REPORTER

After years of collecting donations and making grant applications, the staff of Whitewood Wiggles & Giggles Childcare Centre Inc. are happy to finally have their new daycare open in town.

The childcare centre is located on Southesk Street, right across from Whitewood School.

"I'm so proud that our community came through and pulled this off because it was definitely a community spirit effort," said Patsy Thompson, Chairperson of the Board of Directors.

"The RMs of Silverwood and Willowdale have been amazing. It wasn't hard to get support because everyone was right on board, and they're still supporting us."

Thompson said the majority of the toys and equipment in the centre came from donations from the community.

"We officially became a non-profit organization in April 2018 and started fundraising for the centre immediately," she said.

"The support received from our local private citizens, businesses and surrounding communities have been amazing. With Prairie Valley School Division, RM of Silverwood and Willowdale, Mosaic and Nutrien mines, and a generous donation from SECON enabling us to partner together.

"We had been working with the Ministry of Education Early Years Branch over these last few years in developing a safe and inviting place for our community families to bring their children to be cared for. We had been awarded a capital grant from the ministry to top our funds and start the project."

The childcare centre is licensed for 36 spaces, including spots for six infants, 13 toddlers and 17 pre-schoolers.

The centre also has a basement intended for a before and after school pro-

gram, along with a kitchen for the breakfast and lunch program.

Thompson said there was a need in the community for a dedicated daycare centre.

"There's only private home daycare in town now, I used to have a licensed daycare in my home, but

I closed in 2010 and there hasn't been a licensed place since then. The family homes are tremendous, but the need for a licensed daycare has always been here," she said.

Currently the centre's hours of operation run from 8 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. and will eventually expand

to 6 a.m. to 6:30 p.m., once one more teacher is hired. "It's qualified staff that we need to hire in order to do that," she said.

"Our current staff participated in Professional Development training which included First Aid and CPR, SunSafe, a parent involvement course that

was recommended by the Ministry of Education, as well as curriculum development by our director."

Nichole Kessel, Director of Whitewood Wiggles

& Giggles Childcare Centre Inc. said parents have found the location of the centre to be very convenient.

*Continued on page 12*

## FOR SALE BY TENDER

Sealed, written tenders to purchase the property situate in the RM of BRENDA-WASKADA and described below will be received by:

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Attention: Warren G. Barber, Q.C.

- Parcel One: N ½ 21-4-25 WPM – 320 acres
- Parcel Two: Part N ½ 17-4-25 WPM Lying North of Railway Plan 11 – 117.39 acres
- Parcel Three: NW ¼ 16-4-25 WPM – 160 acres
- Parcel Four: SW ¼ 21-4-25 WPM – 160 acres
- Parcel Five: NW ¼ 20-4-25 WPM – 160 acres
- Parcel Six: SW ¼ 20-4-25 WPM – 160 acres

\* all acreages shown are taken from the current Manitoba Provincial Assessment Reports

### CONDITIONS OF TENDER

1. Interested parties must rely on their own inspection and knowledge of the property and not on the above or any other particulars or representations made by or on behalf of the estate of Francis Wayne McInnes.
2. Tenders may be made on one or more parcels and must be received on or before **noon on Tuesday, October 4, 2022.**
3. Each tender must be accompanied by a **\$2,500.00** deposit cheque payable to Meighen Haddad LLP. Deposits accompanying unacceptable bids will be refunded.
4. Highest or any tender not necessarily accepted.

### TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF SALE

1. The bidder whose tender is accepted will be required to complete an agreement covering terms and conditions of sale.
2. In addition to the deposit, the balance of the accepted tender must be paid within thirty (30) days from the date of notification of tender acceptance, or evidence provided that the purchase funds will be available under conditions acceptable to the Vendor. If the balance of the accepted tender is not paid within the set time limit the deposit paid may be forfeited as liquidated damages and not as a penalty.
3. Possession is not authorized until acceptable arrangements for full payment are made following acceptance of tender.
4. All mines and minerals will be reserved from any transfer.
5. Successful bidders will be responsible for real property taxes commencing January 1, 2023.

For further information or an appointment to view, contact Sharon McInnes @ 204-264-1498.



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# Travis Sanheim visits Elkhorn

Continued from page 7

Later after the formal events, there was an impromptu street hockey game held in the street in front rink. What could be more appropriate?

"What a great day for our community," Canart commented after the event was over. "Two years ago, Travis contacted Steven Malcolm, who was the president of EDCC at the time to inform him that the NHL Goals and Dreams would be sending 24 sets of hockey equipment to our facility. This would allow for kids to join the sport without the financial barrier of having to purchase equipment. Due to Covid, we delayed the unveiling until Travis could join us.

"It was special to see the kids' faces light up when Travis walked through the doors to a crowd waiting patiently to celebrate his accomplishments.

"The excitement was palpable as he helped tie skates, fit helmets, and hand out equipment to the young kids while asking if they were excited to play hockey—many were too excited and nervous to answer.

"Our board was also able to acknowledge Travis' generosity with a sign that will hang over the rink doors for years to come.

"We are very grateful and would like to thank Travis' family and friends for joining us today as we celebrated his accomplishments."

**Right:** Travis Sanheim with members of his family after the presentation of the sign on the front of the rink in his honor.



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The childcare centre also has its own break-fast and lunch program, where kids and staff can make lunches together. They also plan to hire a chef in September.



Whitewood Wiggles & Giggles Childcare Centre Inc. has a dedicated infant room, along with a toddler and pre-school room.



The new facility incorporated ramps for parents with strollers. It is also the back entrance to the playground area that is planned to be built.

# Wiggles & Giggles daycare opens in Whitewood

Continued from page 10

"We just opened last week, but so far parents love it. They're loving everything, the program, the menus, the staff and the happiness here," she said.

"Everyone comes in happy and leaves happy, we haven't had one tear yet."

Thompson said there are already 24 families enrolled. The daycare accepts children from ages as early as six weeks to one month after their 13 birthday.

"We still have landscaping to complete with continued fundraising projects lined up and are hopeful to have it completed by next spring," Thompson said.

"Our long term sights are set on working with the school to plant and maintain a shared garden adjacent to the centre and developing a partnership with them, within our centre and the school.

"We are still accepting donations of any kind to support the ongoing costs associated with this service in our community."

The centre plans on having a grand opening next year in the spring, after the landscaping and driveway is completed.

Thompson said next year they also wish to celebrate the fifth year of their non-profit organization.



Whitewood Wiggles & Giggles Childcare Centre Inc., officially opened on August 2. The new childcare centre has various rooms for kids aging from six weeks to 12 years old, and is working towards having a before and after school program.

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**Minot PBR is final championship event in series**

Minot Y's Men's PBR is back and looking a little different, as it is the final stop in the King of the North Showdown. The series started this year in early June and ends in Minot in September. The best bull riders from around the world will be competing for the "King of the North" title and a \$100,000 bonus paycheck during the final championship. The rider finishing in second place will walk away with a brand-new \$25,000 Capri Camper.

"This bull riding event is not like your average rodeo, think of it as a rock show meets western entertainment," says Adam of Libby Productions. Teaming up with Chad Berger, local 12-time stock contractor of the year, Berger has over 350 Bucking Bulls who travel to events from his ranch in Mandan, North Dakota. Forty competitors ride these bulls in the first round, then the top 10 riders ride the wildest bulls of all in the final round.

Watch this all take place at Minot Municipal Auditorium on Friday, September 23 and Saturday, September 24. The doors open at 5:30 pm and the show starts at 7 pm. Experience two days of bull riding fun and watch the crowning of the King at Minot PBR. Tickets are available online now at <https://minotpbr.com/>



Colorful characters at Norsk Hostfest.

**Norsk Hostfest back after two years**

The biggest Scandinavian festival in North America is back after two years. The Norsk Hostfest brings Scandinavian culture, cuisine, and music to Minot for four days. The festival starts at 1 pm on Wednesday, Sept. 28 through late evening on Saturday, Oct. 1, and takes place at the North Dakota State Fair Centre.

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Barrel racing at the Badlands Circuit Finals Rodeo in 2021.

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# Morris marks 40 years at Canada Post

BY SIERRA D'SOUZA BUTTS  
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

Candice Morris of Reston celebrated working 40 years at Canada Post with her friends and family recently in Reston, Manitoba.

"It's exactly 40 years today. I was part-time when I first started. I have four daughters so the job was great while I was raising them," Morris said.

"I've always loved the job it's been a good job, everything changes all the time everyday. There's something always going on, it's not a boring job."

Morris said her daughters had people mail her 40 cards to celebrate this important milestone.

"When I first started I was young, I got married and we moved here to Reston. We started out farming, I got the job and have just always been around here," Morris said.

"We moved to Saskatchewan (at one point), but I drove back because it was only a 20 minute drive. We've moved to Cherry Point now where we live at the lake, I still drive so I always drove to come to work."

"I've always loved this job I feel like the furniture because I've been here for so long. I've had a few girls come and go, Sharon who was helping out today, we've been working together for 38 years."

Morris said she built great friendships throughout her time working at Canada Post in Reston, especially with her friend Sharon Henderson.

"There have been about 10 other people who have come and gone as casuals, Sharon and I worked as the part-timers," she said.

"Reston's a nice little town, it's a good place to raise kids, it's a nice community. It did not feel like 40 years of work."

"Time has just gone by really fast, I've worked with good people so I've enjoyed coming to work everyday. It's not boring, I don't get up in the morning and feel that I have to go there."

From her 40 years of working, she was asked if there are any memories that come to mind.

"Sharon and I were working together and it was Gary Smith's birthday, he owned a store at the time in town," she smiled.

"We went to the bakery and grabbed a cupcake with a candle. As we saw him coming in the office, we put the cupcake in his mailbox and lit it, then sang happy birthday to him when he opened up his mailbox."

"He told us not to quit our day jobs, he loved every



minute of it.

"We had another young man who bought his grandpa's farm and said he would've really liked his grandpa's mailbox, so I gave it to him."

"He was so excited it made his day. It's the little things like that which people appreciate."

Sharon said the two of them were known for putting special gifts in the boxes when it was peoples birthdays in town.

"People who have been gone out of those mailboxes, they've passed away or moved, it was kind of weird because we would still remember which parent or grandparent's mailbox number was," Sharon said.

"It's a small town. Everyone knows everybody, and everyone's really friendly and respectful. It's just a good place to be."

Getting to know everyone in the community is one of the many benefits of being in a small town, Morris said.

"You know everyone personally when you're working in a small town, and everyone knows you. We've all grown up and grown old together," she said.

"I'm happy to be here, it's not a retirement it's a celebration of 40 years."

**Left:** Randy and Candice Morris were happy to celebrate with their friends in Reston, Manitoba.

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# Vehicle donated to Ukrainian family

BY KEVIN WEEDMARK

A Ukrainian family that settled in Wawota has been given a vehicle by McMillan Motor Products of Kipling.

Volodomir and Liuba Krushelnyskiy and their children arrived in Wawota just over a month ago.

The local committee that helped them find a place to live and get settled in the community also helped arrange a vehicle for the family.

Meredith Swanson of the local committee said the first Ukrainian to arrive in the area following the Russian invasion has been given a car to use by his employer, and when the second family arrived he started approaching local dealerships for a vehicle.

"Andriy works for my son, Darren, Darren gave him an Audi that he can use as long as he's working for him," Swanson explained. "He's now able to buy a car on his own, but he's still driving the Audi that Darren got him. To me, the most important thing you need to have for new people is to have transportation. How do you get a job, how do you function without wheels? I think that is really important so I started asking around, and we have been fortunate to have a local business provide a vehicle for them."



## Vehicle donated for new Canadians from Ukraine

From left are Wawota resettlement committee members Al Chubak, Kevin Kay, Meredith Swanson, Treena Epp, Cathy Hamilton, and new Canadians Sasha, Liuba, Nazarii, and Volodomir Krushelnyskiy, who arrived three weeks ago from Ukraine. In the background is the Nissan Armada donated to the family by McMillan Motor Products.

### 'A mission to help'

The owner of McMillan Motor Products, which supplied the vehicle, says it was simply the right thing to do.

"When people are leaving everything they have because of circumstances beyond their control, we have a mission to help people in those circumstances," says Mark Olson, the owner of McMillan Motor Products.

"Meredith Swanson (in Wawota) reached out to see if there is anything that we could do to help in terms of transportation because they don't have any and they have no funds or ability to go to work without a vehicle.

"We had this vehicle here and we thought it would be a good thing to donate it to them.

"It's what we are here for is to help each other out. It's the right thing to do."

### Help from community

The Wawota committee has had a lot of support from the community, with offers of housing and donations such as furniture.

Volodomir and Liuba are living in the United Church manse in Wawota, which had been vacant. The church is offering the home rent free initially, and then at a reduced rent.

"Both of them are learning English very well," said Swanson.

### Happy to be in Wawota

Volodomir and Liuba say they are enjoying Wawota.

"I am very very happy," said Volodomir. "Thank you to everyone very much," added Liuba.

"In Ukraine we lived in a big city. Wawota is a very quiet peaceful town. My son can go to school. People have been very helpful, donating things for us, a sofa, a table."

He said it was a fairly simple process to get the paperwork to come to Canada.

"For my open visa, I and my son were approved very quickly, maybe two to five days, but my wife maybe three or four weeks, and Sasha we waited for two months. For me and my son it was very quick—I don't know why.

"We flew from Warsaw into Toronto and we got a work permit very quickly, maybe 10-20 minutes to get the work permit. Very quickly and very good. Next we flew into Regina and Andriy and Kevin (Kay) picked us up.

"My wife is working at the daycare, and I am training as a truck driver. Both in Ukraine and Poland I worked driving a truck." He will be working for QLine Transport.

Liuba is a pharmacist, and will look into how her credentials will transfer to Canada, once she improves her English language skills.

Volodomir said he is very thankful.

"People have helped me and my family and have helped me and my wife find a job and helped my son learn English! I am very happy!"

### More Ukrainians coming to Wawota

Kevin Kay of the local committee said more Ukrainians are on the way. "We do have more coming, and we just made contact with two sisters and a daughter that are planning on coming in September. We've had contact and lost contact with two or three others, but there are at least three we are looking at right now," he said.

Kay says the local group's mission of helping Ukrainian families is going better

than they had hoped.

"We originally got together as a group and we saw these pictures of the kids with suitcases walking over to Poland and into Warsaw. We initially thought about children, but then realized what better way to help children than to help a whole family to come, and so we went up and talked to the Ukrainian Congress in Saskatoon and they have connected us with families and it has worked out just fantastically well. So we're just really pleased with how well it has come together and is continuing to come together, so it is exciting!

"It was Meredith's initial idea, and I jumped on board and I have some connec-

tions. People are in need, the war is real in Ukraine and we have got to help these people. Anything I can do to help out I am ready to do. Anything."

"It is so nice to know that they are here where it is quiet and calm and there is no threat to their life," adds Swanson. "They're just living their life and enjoying it. That is the most important thing in my opinion.

"And the more people we can have here, the happier we will be! It is good for our town, our schools. We will have three new students and we have another gentleman coming in and he's got three children so our school's population has expanded."

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# St. Anthony's Hospital in Esterhazy patiently waits for government to fund new hospital

BY SIERRA D'SOUZA BUTTS  
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

The town of Esterhazy has raised their portion for funding a new hospital and has had the money in the bank for over a decade now, but is waiting for the provincial government to approve building the new facility.

"From all the donations and fundraising we've raised \$10 million, which is what we think is our 20 per cent," said Don Hood chairman of St. Anthony's Health Foundation.

"The cost will end up a bit higher when we get close to building it because of what's going on with inflation.

"We're continuing to raise money for the hospital, we have two foundations one is the St. Anthony's Health Foundation and the other is Esterhazy and District Health Care Foundation."

The Charity Golf Tournament, along with donations from the community has also helped significantly for raising money for the new hospital in town.

"We're able to raise \$160,000 a year without the golf tournament, when we have the golf tournament we raise \$200,000 to \$220,000," Hood said.

"We haven't held a golf tournament in the last three years, but we've continued to raise money. We're putting that money raised into equipment that is transferable into the new hospital and care home."

Back in July 2022, Saskatchewan Rural Health Minister Everett Hindley, Saskatchewan Health Authority (SHA) officials and Melville-Saltcoats MLA Warren Kaeding visited Esterhazy.

During the visit they met with the hospital's foundation to discuss the potential of a new integrated health facility.

"The minister came and a number of people from SHA came as well," Hood said.

"It was wonderful having them in town, we got to talk about how this area, Esterhazy and Moosomin, is very different than typical rural Saskatchewan.

"They had a tour of the potash mine, they understand that potash reserves here are good for 50 years plus, that applies to Esterhazy like the Mosaic mine and the Nutrien mine."

Hood said because of the potash mines, communities such as Esterhazy and Moosomin will continue to grow, and that developing a strong health care facility in Esterhazy will support the area's growth.

"Rural Saskatchewan, unfortunately, over time will deteriorate and shrink, and this area, Esterhazy, will not," he said.

"This area will maintain its position and grow, which I think we were able to get that across to the minister, because the potash mines will be here for 50 years, and that's not just Esterhazy that's Esterhazy and surrounding communities, the same thing applies to Moosomin.

"As you know over time oil and gas will become much less drilling and production so communities who are relying on that are going to struggle, farms are getting bigger all the time which gives you less rural population and



The community of Esterhazy has been raising money for a new hospital for over 10 years and is waiting for the provincial government's support for the project.

it's just a struggle for rural Saskatchewan."

Hood was asked when he thinks the Government of Saskatchewan will be able to provide their portion for funding the new hospital in Esterhazy.

"We're anticipating that in the March 2023-2024 provincial budget that we'll be included for planning and doing work on where the new hospital and care home will be, and what the structure will look like" he said.

"Having a hospital is important for a community that's going to survive and grow. The building is badly outdated, people in wheelchairs can't access the bathroom because there's no accessibility in any of the rooms.

"This is a hospital and care home, the care home is in poor condition too, they're both obsolete for what we're trying to do with them today."

As of now, Esterhazy's Health Foundation is waiting for the province's 2023-2024 budget to see if there will be funding dedicated to building a new hospital in town.

"We're waiting for the March budget and we expect to be in there," he said.

"Finally, thanks to the World-Spectator for running the articles and doing the interview with the minister, those were all helpful to making people and government aware of our needs, we appreciate it."

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# Painting Your Future



The sun rises on an industrial worksite that is home to District Council 17 IUPAT Painters



**Above left:** DC17 painters specialize in applying a variety of protective coatings as seen here with a member applying thermal spray aluminum metalizing **Above right:** DC17 Painters hard at work painting a storage tank

Looking for work? Finishing high school and don't have a clear picture of your career? Did you suffer a slow-down due to the pandemic? Do you already have a job but are looking for a change of pace or the next new, interesting opportunity?

There is a skilled labor shortage in Canada. Every day employers are actively recruiting people to fill positions in the skilled trades. The shortage is only going to increase as a large population of skilled trade workers are getting ready to retire. Across North America approximately 40% of tradespeople will need to be replaced within the next 5-10 years; that's almost half of the workforce! Specifically, in Canada, it is estimated that 255,000 skilled construction workers will need

to be recruited in the next 10 years to fill the vacancies.

One of the most promising trades is that of a Red Seal Painter. Painters are constantly battling the effects of corrosion. Corrosion is a natural process that occurs everywhere. It is estimated that corrosion will cost the economy \$276 billion annually to preserve our infrastructure such as bridges, buildings, roads, power supplies, etc. There are specialized coatings that are applied to mitigate the disastrous effects of corrosion, and painters are certified to apply these coatings. Billions of dollars are invested every year to prevent bridge collapses, building failures, and structural deterioration. Painting is a trade that will be in demand for the foreseeable future as gov-

ernments and owners fight to protect their investments against corrosion.

Think the trades are boring and consist of repetitive tasks that you will perform every day till the end of your career? I don't think so! Painting offers work in a wide variety of environments from residential construction, commercial high rises, public facilities such as sports facilities, swimming pools, and community centres to the industrial sector where employees apply corrosion resistant coatings on bridges, refineries, tank farms, and mines. I am challenged every day at my job with new and interesting problems to solve, new people to meet and work with, and research to keep up with the new and advanced products that are

constantly coming out with new technology. This trade is constantly evolving and can provide a challenging work environment where one will never stop learning.

So how do you get a job as a Painter Decorator? The process has become easier over the years; especially if you are unionized through the International Union of Painters & Allied Trades (IUPAT). We have people approach us all the time asking how do I get into the painting trade? With painters in such high demand it is quite easy to match a prospective apprentice with a company. All that is required is an eagerness to learn and your local union will work with both your needs and a prospective employer to place you in a position that works best for all involved.

Maybe at this point you're thinking the trades aren't quite for you? Well I thought that as well before entering the workforce and here I am 10 years into the trade. It started off as a way to make ends meet while I attended university and turned into a full-blown career. It has offered more opportunities than I could have ever imagined. My career as a painter has developed my leadership skills, strengthened my work ethic, enhanced my problem-solving skills, and afforded me the opportunities to travel all over the world to learn about and apply these specialty coatings.

My only regret is that I did not enter the painting trade sooner. A skilled unionized trade such as painting affords many opportunities to a person. Whether it be a filler while deciding on a career path, a way to fill summers between semesters, or a route into a serious career you really can't go wrong investing your time into a career as a painter decorator. Let's say you do change your mind. What has it cost you? You have learned a new set of skills in an in-demand career with little to no monetary investment on your part. Yes, you read that correctly, the majority of training required to excel as a Painter Decorator is supplied by unions, employers, government organizations and grants, etc. As a unionized Painter Decorator you will also have access to highly specialized courses that are provided to you for no cost. These courses focus on specialized skills required for our trade, certifications that allow you to work on exclusive jobs, and supervisory courses which aim to see you excel in your career as a Painter. District Council 17 of IUPAT also offers an apprenticeship training program open to all members across the prairie provinces. Not a fan of academia? That's alright! The majority of material learned in the painting trade is hands-on

training provided in both a classroom environment and through a mentorship with an experienced journeyman to teach you the skills needed to be a successful painter.

Compare that to a student loan where you are faced with costs between \$40 000 to \$80 000 to achieve an undergraduate degree once cost of living is factored in. On top of that, there is no guaranteed job once you finish your university degree. You may face years of unemployment or the cost of going after a master's degree to land that dream job you're after. Or, perhaps a university degree is the way you want to go? Why not fund it with a career in Painting and Decorating and come out with little to no debt and a Red Seal trade in your back pocket?

Not only is training provided but so are other additional benefits. As a member of the IUPAT you are eligible for benefits packages that help cover the costs of dental, eye, chiropractic, massage, alternative health, physiotherapy, counselling, and much more. You are also eligible for enrollment in the union's pension plan to help you prepare for retirement.

Worried you will not fit in? The construction industry is already a diverse atmosphere and employs people from all backgrounds, ethnicities, countries, etc. There are even federal initiatives in place to encourage the hiring of new apprentices with a focus on women, indigenous people, newcomers to Canada, and other minority groups. The workforce has changed since I entered the trade. There's a strong presence of minority groups representing the workforce. Furthermore, there are committees established to promote the rights and benefits of these minority groups provincially, federally and internationally through the IUPAT.

A career as a skilled painter presents many opportunities for personal and career growth. The added benefits of job placements, benefits packages, benefits, inclusive environments, and challenging atmospheres are some of the most attractive highlights of this position. The trades are booming.

The International Union of Painters and Allied Trades has been representing painters in Saskatchewan from 1906 to present day. The union has survived and adapted through all types of economic and technology changes and adversity. Continue to thrive with us as a painter decorator. Speak to your local International Union of Painter's and Allied Trades representative today!

- Shauntelle Hollett

## International Union of Painters & Allied Trades



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**Above right:** Prism performing at this year's Rockin' the Park.

**Above:** Rock Candy performing.

**Below:** Snake Oil performing.



### Rockin' the Park in Esterhazy was a hit

A evening full of live performances and activities happened at Rockin' the Park at Esterhazy's Regional Park on August 27. Blu Beach Band, Rock Candy, Snake Oil and Prism all performed at this year's event. The Rockin' the Park Recreation Foundation sold around 550 tickets for the event, which raises money for recreation in projects Esterhazy. There was also face painting and bouncy castles for children to enjoy.

**Below:** Blu Beach Band performing at Rockin' the Park.



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# Canola 4R Advantage offers incentives to increase value and efficiency of nitrogen use

On August 11, the Canola Council of Canada (CCC) unveiled a new program offering financial support to help growers initiate or advance 4R Nutrient Stewardship on canola acres.

The program, named Canola 4R Advantage, will reimburse growers for up to 85 per cent of eligible costs, up to \$12,000 per farm per year. Funding for Canola 4R Advantage has been provided by Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada through the Agricultural Climate Solutions – On-Farm Climate Action Fund (OFCAF).

“Canadian canola growers are leaders in sustainability, and we’re excited to launch this program to keep building on this excellent track record,” says Jim Everson, CCC president. “Expanding the use of 4R Nutrient Stewardship is an important opportunity to improve fertilizer efficiency, which is good for both farm productivity and the environment.”

The CCC has chosen to focus its program on precise, efficient and sustainable nitrogen management using 4R principles. “4R practices help growers ensure they apply the right source of fertilizer at the right rate, right time and right place for optimal results,” says Charles Fossay, canola grower near Starbuck, Manitoba and director of Manitoba Canola Growers and CCC. “This maximizes the crop’s access to nutrients while minimizing any losses as nitrous oxide emissions.”

Canola 4R Advantage will provide incentives for canola growers to use best management practices (BMPs) in four areas: soil testing, enhanced efficiency fertilizers, preferred application and field zone

mapping. To be eligible for these incentives, a grower must have a 4R Nutrient Stewardship plan that has been verified by a Certified Crop Adviser or Professional Agronomist who has earned the 4R designation from Fertilizer Canada.

“These BMPs fit in well with canola production across the Prairies and are effective ways to use fertilizer efficiently and get more return from that investment,” says Roger Chevraux, canola grower near Killam, Alberta and chair of Alberta Canola. “And by working with a 4R designated agronomist, growers get guidance from certified experts and their acres accounted for and recognized under the 4R Nutrient Stewardship program.”

Canola 4R Advantage will begin accepting applications on August 17 through a digital platform linked to the CCC website. In the meantime, growers and agronomists can review program details and eligibility criteria at [canolacouncil.org/4R-advantage](http://canolacouncil.org/4R-advantage)

“We’re pleased to support Canada’s canola farmers by funding Canola 4R Advantage through the On-Farm Climate Action Fund to expand the use of 4R Nutrient Stewardship practices. This is an important opportunity to build on canola’s leadership in sustainable growing practices,” says Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food Marie-Claude Bibeau.

The CCC is one of 12 partners selected across Canada to deliver OFCAF, which is designed to support farmers in adopting beneficial management practices that store carbon and reduce greenhouse gases. Up to \$17.4 million in funding is currently ap-

proved for the two-year Canola 4R Advantage project. The CCC is also partnering with Fertilizer Canada to provide training, information resources and knowledge transfer activities to growers and agronomists.

The Canola Council of Canada is a full value chain organization representing canola growers, processors, life science

companies and exporters. Keep it Coming 2025 is the strategic plan to ensure the canola industry’s continued growth, demand, stability and success – targeting 52 bushels per acre to meet global market demand of 26 million metric tonnes by the year 2025. For more information, visit [canolacouncil.org](http://canolacouncil.org) or follow CCC on Twitter @canolacouncil.

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# Sask government found out reason for water testing through World-Spectator

BY SIERRA D'SOUZA BUTTS  
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

Saskatchewan's Environment Minister says he found out what the federal government was testing for in water bodies on private land in the province through the World-Spectator, after the federal government didn't share the information with the province, after accusations federal employees trespassed to do the testing.

A Pense farmer had indicated in August that federal officials were on his land in August testing water in a dugout. He said they indicated they were testing for pesticides.

Saskatchewan Water Security Agency Minister Jeremy Cockrill wrote a letter to the federal government indicating that based on the Pense report and two others, the province believed the federal government was testing for pesticides and/or nitrates.

The federal environment minister responded by calling the provincial allegations misinformation and speculation.

But the World-Spectator investigated and determined the Environment and Climate Change Officials were doing the testing on behalf of Health Canada, and found out from Health Canada that the testing was indeed for pesticides.

"There should be some level of communication there. Maybe a simple phone call would've avoided a lot of concern and miscommunication, and quite honestly just a further erosion of trust," Environment Minister Dana Skoropad told the World-Spectator Tuesday.

"I found out from the World-Spectator story what the testing was for," Skoropad said.

"I myself had no communication with anyone from the federal level in regards to this issue," Skoropad said.

"My concerns and certainly our government's concerns, I would argue that we should not be finding out through the media information like this, that there shouldn't be such a lack of communication, but that seems to be the tendency in dealing with this government, communication is coming by all-means except the channel it should be coming from, which should be directly from them."

The day after the Saskatchewan government first raised its concerns, Environment and Climate Change Canada told the World-Spectator that it had stopped testing until it can determine the legality of its procedures. In a letter to the provincial government two days later, Federal Environment minister Steven Guilbeault reiterated that the federal government has stopped the testing.

Skoropad said the province hasn't been given any indication of how long

that review will take at the federal level.

"I don't have an answer for that at all, but I would say that Minister Guilbeault at the very least would owe the people of Saskatchewan, the producers and landowners of Saskatchewan a very clear, concise explanation as to why initially the concerns that were raised, were dismissed as misinformation, or as simply being incorrect," Skoropad said.

"I think the people of Saskatchewan need that answer, I can't speak to how this is going to play out beyond the suspension of these activities, but I think that, at the very

least, needs to happen right now."

What is Skoropad's reaction to the information that the federal government was indeed testing for pesticides?

"I hearken back to the whole point of communication and that communication should've happened," he said.

"We certainly have our folks on the ground who are looking at our water quality and that's incumbent upon us as government to be watching and looking at what water bodies are like in the province. But, it's just the simple fact that there was no communication there, that's the

problem."

Skoropad said communication between federal and provincial governments are important for working together.

"We should be pulling the same direction," he said.

"That would be the first thing. We really should be pulling the same direction, sometimes it feels like we don't know what way the rope is being pulled. This feeds into a larger concern that I have in my ministry, which is the tendency of the federal government to unilaterally make decisions, and create policy with little to no consultation or engagement with

the province, who should be equal partners in this.

"Certainly in areas where it's provincial jurisdiction, there should be at the very least, those conversations. Once again, we should be pulling the same direction and it just doesn't feel like that's the case."

"This issue has really shined a light on the lack of consultation and lack of communication that is present.

"These are certainly concerns that we have expressed time and time again. There's so many different touch points on this, the water resource jurisdiction, the trespass, but it

really comes down to that communication issue or lack there of."

Despite this being a rare incident between the federal and provincial environment ministers, Skoropad said lack of communication seems to be a common theme among ministries in the government.

"Whether there have been federal folks on land where they weren't authorized to do, that certainly would be new to a lot folks. Now that this is in the media it's gotten its fair share of attention, but as far as the lack of communication goes, I just want to point to a couple of things.

*Continued on Page 33*

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# Three generations at the USask Crop Development Centre

BY COLLEEN MACPHERSON

The history of the Crop Development Centre (CDC) at the University of Saskatchewan is a celebration of plant breeding and how new varieties indelibly changed agriculture in Saskatchewan, and around the world. It is also the story of individuals connected through teaching, learning and mentorship. The experience of Dr. Bob Baker, Dr. Pierre Hucl and Dr. Curtis Pozniak is but one example of the best students and mentors creating the best next generation, not unlike plant breeding itself. We have no idea how they have calculated that emissions factor or if they have taken into account the practices that farmers are already doing to reduce emissions, whether it's topography, soil type, crop rotations, all those types of things that affect emissions. We just have no idea how they're benchmarking any of their calculations."

## Dr. Robert (Bob) Baker Emeritus Professor

When Bob Baker, a research scientist with Agriculture Canada in Winnipeg, was offered a position as a wheat breeder at the CDC, he saw it as an opportunity to move back home to Saskatchewan. More importantly though, it was a chance to pursue his passion for teaching.

Baker, who grew up near Pierceland, joined the CDC in 1978. "Although there were only about seven or eight professional people on staff, it was a time of growth for the centre," he said. "We were introducing pulse crops in those days, doing a lot of field research. It was quite a rewarding place to work."

It was also rewarding for Baker to supervise grad students who ultimately numbered more than a dozen before he moved to the then-titled crop sciences department in 1988 to take on heavier classroom teaching responsibilities. "For some reason, I loved teaching. I really enjoyed explaining difficult concepts to students, but I had no formal training as a (grad student) supervisor beyond what I had gone through at the University of Minnesota as a PhD student.

"Every student/supervisor relationship is a separate event," added Baker, "but I think a key element to a successful relationship is the design of research experiments. It's important to look at the question being asked, and to help students set up a research protocol that has a decent possibility of answering that question."

One of his most successful students was a young man from Ontario named Pierre Hucl. "His CV looked good and so I took him on," said Baker. "With Pierre, what I found very early on that the best approach was really to stay out of his way and let him get on with it. He was very self-motivated but I hope I did a reasonable job as his supervisor; you'll have to ask Pierre about that."

Although his wheat breeding program was not overly successful, Baker's research into the interaction between genotype and environment built his reputation, as did his classroom teaching; he is still occasionally recognized by former students, most recently a pharmacist who took his undergrad statistics class.

Baker said he marvels at the talent he saw among CDC grad students, "many of whom have gone on to do great things. I feel very satisfied that I had a little part to play in their success."

## Dr. Pierre Hucl Professor, Dept. of Plant Sciences and CDC

When Pierre Hucl was doing his master's in plant science at the University of Guelph, he reviewed a number of papers on quantitative genetics, "and one was by this guy named Dr. R.J. Baker who was doing all the things I was interested in so I wrote him a letter asking if he was looking for students." A November 1982 trip to Saskatoon to meet Baker was a bit of a shock, weather wise, he recalled, "but it was a good fit for the two of us."

The CDC had a lot of students when Hucl joined; he spent the first few months at a desk in a hallway "but I was happy to have a spot." As a grad student, "I was pretty independent, but Bob was great as a supervisor. His door was always open, and he never kicked me out. We also have the same birth date so it's one of those cosmic things."

After a stint with the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool, Hucl returned to the CDC in 1990 as a wheat breeder who, with his own grad students, emulated Baker in his approach. "I certainly have an open-door policy like Bob, and he was always very well organized so I did pick up on that from him too. I think it's important when you have new students who've never done research to have the project well mapped out because it's not textbook learning."

For Hucl, first impressions are important taking on students but he also keeps a close eye on master's students in the plant sciences department. "They're a known quantity and that helps because it's such a unique relationship—students are apprentices doing a paid job, and the supervisor is boss and mentor, and in some cases your friend, or not. It's a real balancing act."

That balance worked well with Curtis Pozniak who, on Baker's recommendation, arrived at Hucl's door in 1999 hoping to get into grad studies. "I had a project breeding



CDC wheat breeders: Dr. Curtis Pozniak, Dr. Bob Baker and Dr. Pierre Hucl.

for herbicide tolerance in wheat. Curtis' background was not perfectly aligned but there was something more to him, something in his thinking process, his need to understand principles and methodologies in his research, which is one reason he's been so hugely successful. But Bob was the same; he spent a large part of his career studying other people's statistical methods and debunking a lot of stuff."

Having spent 13 years as grad chair, Hucl appreciates

good student/supervisor relationships because he's seen his share of troubled ones. "As chair, I tried to mentor junior faculty based on my own experience, but you sometimes also have to be an arbitrator when conflicts arise, you sometimes have to have difficult conversations, and ultimately, you have to make an assessment about whether the relationship is salvageable or not."

Continued on page 31



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# Our agri-food is about to get a whole lot smaller

It's tomato season, and Canadians love their tomatoes. It is by far the most popular vegetable at the grocery store. According to Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, the average Canadian consumes at least six to seven kilos of tomatoes per year. More than 12 kilos per capita of fresh and processed tomatoes are made available to Canadians every year. We do waste a lot but have plenty to go around.

Tomatoes are the fifth largest vegetable crop in Canada, after corn, beans, peas, and carrots. For greenhouse-grown vegetables, though, tomatoes are the top crop in Canada. After peppers, tomatoes are the leading vegetable exported by our own growers here in Canada.

But we also import a lot of tomatoes, mainly from Mexico and the United States. Surprisingly, import and export rates are very similar across Canada. Many provinces have made efforts to increase the number of controlled-environment agriculture projects to grow more food domestically.

California provides a lot of processed tomatoes to Canada, as it is the largest producer in the world. Sauces, salsa, soups, you name it—many products with tomatoes end up on our Canadian grocery shelves. But California is

in trouble with its water supply. It's running out of water, and we are now constantly hearing more about farmers having difficulty growing anything in these drought conditions.

Recent reports suggest California is experiencing the worst drought in 1,200 years, impacting many crops, including tomatoes. Some are even speculating that we could run out of spaghetti sauce. Prices may rise, but it is highly unlikely that Canada will run out of spaghetti sauce. For one, we have many great local products often overlooked by consumers only looking for certain brands. Also, we produce a lot of tomatoes here in Canada, and sauces are easy to make. We should be concerned about many things, but not about running out of spaghetti sauce.

That said, the troubles in California will lead to massive changes in how we grow, import, and export commodities – the way farmers' fields connect with what we consume every day. And the change is happening very quickly.

For growers and producers, coupled with mother nature's wrath is carbon energy, once invisible and now significantly affecting costs. Spending energy to produce, process, and transport food is



Sylvain Charlebois

about to get more expensive. Putting a price on carbon will get companies to strategize differently. Producers and processors are now compelled to think differently about how they service markets, including Canada. In other words, our agri-food world is about to get much smaller.

Case in point: this summer, we learned that California giant Driscoll's signed a partnership with farmers to grow berries right here in Canada. Driscoll's is one of the largest fruit growers in the world and has had to face water scarcity issues. In the deal, while Canadian farmers in British Columbia and Quebec are taking on the task of growing for Driscoll's, they've also received Driscoll's know-how, including genetics and growing expertise. This is worth a lot of money and time. Driscoll's smart move will actually allow both Canadian growers and consumers to gain.

Essentially, the business fundamentals are changing for companies like Driscoll's. It not only

needs to get closer to markets it wants to service, but it also needs precious resources that were once abundant in California. Climate change is undoubtedly changing tomato-growing economics. Such a partnership

between our farmers and the California giant is a perfect example of on-shoring business, and you can expect to hear about more such moves in years to come.

Global agricultural trading in the future won't necessarily just be about trading bananas, beef, wheat, and apples; it will be about intellectual property, genetics, and branding. Since trade is ultimately about sharing, what we share will change. While it will get

less tangible, the focus will be more on finding the most economically sustainable method to supply a market. Exporting actual food products may no longer be the best option moving forward.

This is the one type of globalization we will continue to see in years to come.

Dr. Sylvain Charlebois is senior director of the agri-food analytics lab and a professor in food distribution and policy at Dalhousie University.

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# 'The only people in the world that can bankrupt my business'

## What one farmer said when he had the chance to address ag ministers from across Canada



What would you say to all of Canada's federal, provincial and territorial agriculture ministers if you had a chance to speak with them?

Moosomin farmer Kristijan Hebert of Hebert Grain Ventures spoke to the assembled federal, provincial and territorial ministers recently.

Kevin Weedmark interviewed Hebert and the complete interview follows.

How did it come about that you made the presentation to the agriculture ministers? How did that happen?

The Ag Minister and his Chief of Staff invited me in to do a seven or eight minute presentation and then an hour and a half long panel, to the national meeting of Federal, Provincial, and Territorial Ag Ministers.

There was myself and a livestock farmer, Murad Al-Katib out of AGT, and an individual out of B.C. So it was a really good, widespread panel to get different opinions.

The fertilizer emissions targets came up but I would say that it was more of a broader level, sustainable farming, climate positive practice type idea.

What was the main point that you were trying to get across to the ministers that day?

I used my presentation piece to outline what we're already doing, but my biggest message to them was that I don't get anxiety ever, almost never, but sitting in a room of Ag Ministers I can have anxiety because they're actually the only people in the world that can bankrupt my business and I said that to their faces—that poor policy could ruin agriculture, so they need to take their jobs seriously and they need to get input from grass-roots, not just from mid-level type organizations, which is where a lot of their information comes from.

Another point I made is the one thing we learn when coaching minor sports is that you praise in public and criticize in private.

I feel that currently our national media outlets and our federal government don't have that figured out.

They criticize on the world stage saying that we need to be better and our targets need to be more aggressive, and the praising might happen at home but not very often.

I just want them to point out that until somebody's willing to be Big Brother and call China and Russia and some of those countries to action, the one per cent or whatever change we want to do in Canada is going to be pretty minimal.

On the other point, I think we're missing one of the biggest opportunities in history. If we, on a public global stage, actually outlined everything we do and how that compares and benchmarks to the rest of the world, I think we have the ability to bring in billions of dollars of international investment.

I think we could sell carbon as a commodity, no different than wheat, canola, or cattle. But our government is not currently taking the path to capture that opportunity. They're almost trying to send kids to their bedroom for doing something wrong. So I just pointed that out and said, first of all, thanks for finally caring about the environment. Farmers have had to care about it for centuries because if we do a bad job on the land as a farm, all we're doing is hurting our grandkids.

We have a legacy statement on our own farm that my job is to pass the land, the financial statements, the community and the industry on and in a better state, generation after generation.

So I'm really happy that they're part of the club now that cares about the environment, but don't make farmers feel like environmental pirates when we've been implementing practices for years—things like zero till, soil testing etc. to get better all the time.

Hearing some of the concerns from the farmers, do you think those concerns are warranted based off the discussion paper on fertilizer emissions?

I think it's a catch twenty-two. The discussion paper to be honest is reasonably logical when it comes to 4R and soil testing, variable rate, treating your nitrogen.

I would say the issue right now is farmers and agricultural organizations, we don't really trust the federal government to only do that.

The carbon tax was supposed to start at how many dol-

lars per ton and what is it now. So, the view from farmers is if we give them any ground now, what is it going to be in the future?

It's really turned into quite a political issue. If you read the discussion paper, it says it's a 30 per cent reduction in emissions, not a 30 per cent reduction in fertilizer, but because of leadership races and elections, that's getting thrown around very differently.

Another point of it is, and my main point to them was, if we are going to look at an emission target, it should be based on per metric ton output, not per acre.

We sell output around the world. That is what we should be benchmarked on.

If you go back the last decade we are down well over 30 per cent on emissions because our yields in production have increased so much and currently in the report I think that is one of the biggest weaknesses is that they are measuring total fertilizer purchases and calculating off of that.

Continued on page 28

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# APAS says it wasn't consulted on fertilizer emissions

BY SIERRA D'SOUZA BUTTS  
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

Bill Prybylski, vice-president of Agricultural Producers Association of Saskatchewan (APAS) said the association is unclear how the federal government came up with the national target for reducing levels of GHG emissions from fertilizer usage by 30 per cent from 2020 levels by 2030.

"We certainly have some concerns, there's a lot of uncertainty to what this means for producers," said Prybylski.

"We don't really know how our emissions are right now in the Prairies compare to the rest of Canada, we don't know if the modelling they're using is even relevant to our individual operations on the farm, we don't know what the consequences of our actions are, or where the emissions savings are if we do some of the practices that we're already doing. We don't know what those numbers are, so we need to know if the government's modelling is correct.

"Other than the uncertainty surrounding it, our biggest concern is no federal or provincial policy should ever affect production. If in fact this emissions production target comes down to reduced fertilizer usage, that certainly is going to affect production which is very concerning."

Prybylski spoke about how the planned reduction in fertilizer emissions can affect Saskatchewan and Canada's overall production of food.

"Certainly any reduction in the overall use of fertilizer is going to mean a reduction in productivity. To be fair this mandate is only a reduction of fertilizer emissions, and if there are ways to reduce emissions without reducing the amount of fertilizer used, that would be very acceptable," he said.

"I think farmers would accept that quite happily because it's going to mean lower costs for their farms, but in fact if it comes down to having to reduce the amount of fertilizer used overall, that is certainly going to negatively affect our ability to produce the crops that the world needs right now."

Prybylski was asked how APAS would work with the federal government on reducing GHG emissions in Canada's agriculture sector.

"It comes down to research. We've not seen any of the research as to where this 30 per cent has come from," he said.

"We certainly would be willing to come up with farmers' names, we'd be willing to co-operate with the federal government to do the research to see what these emissions levels are at right now.

"From my circle of farmer acquaintances I know of nobody that has ever had any research done on their farms to know what nitrous oxide emissions are created on their farms. I have no idea where the government is coming up with the numbers they're using to calculate the emissions.

"It's our understanding that they're using the total of fertilizer sales then multiplying it by emissions factor, and we have no idea how they have calculated that emissions factor or if they have taken into account the practices that farmers are already doing to reduce emissions, whether it's topography, soil type, crop rotations, all those types of things that affect emissions. We just have no idea how they're benchmarking any of their calculations."

## Farmers already doing their part in reducing GHG emissions

Prybylski said farmers have already adapted practices that create less greenhouse gas emissions.

"Soil sampling is one, farmers are only putting as much fertilizer as they need to achieve their target yields. Especially with the cost of fertilizer being as it is, farmers can't afford to be putting on more fertilizer than they absolutely have to, so soil sampling certainly is important," he said.

"New technology in the seeding equipment with the use of sectional controls and GPS guidance makes a difference. With sectional control, farmers are only putting



Vice-president of APAS Bill Prybylski spoke about the concerns he is hearing from farmers about the federal government mandate for reducing greenhouse gas emissions in Canada's agriculture sector.

the fertilizer on once and not overlapping. Given the variability of our soils, we have the ability now to only put the amount of fertilizer that is needed on every acre rather than using uniform application across the whole farm.

"With direct seeding putting down all the fertilizer with the seed, rather than broadcasting and with crop rotations, the use of pulses and forages in a rotation that's using less fertilizer, all these are things that farmers are doing already, but have not been recognized for it."

Aside from reducing fertilizer usage, there are other ways farmers can reduce GHG emissions, Prybylski said.

"The agriculture industry as a whole has done a lot over the last 20 years to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and not because of a government mandate, but because it makes sense for our farms," he said.

"The technology used for seeding now has made significant reductions in GHG emissions. Direct seeding for example, one pass across the field to put the seed and

fertilizer into the ground as opposed to years in the past where farmers would be tilling the soil three or four times a year before they could get a crop in.

"That itself has eliminated a lot of greenhouse gases, it has reduced the use of fossil fuel usage, and the lack of tillage that has helped sequester the carbonated soil rather than releasing it into the atmosphere."

"Improved crop varieties has made a difference in the amount of greenhouse gas that's emitted from the crops from those particular crops," said Prybylski.

"There's better fertilizer management, better manure management from livestock operations, all those types of things, I believe, have made a huge impact on the amount of GHG emissions from agriculture."

APAS plans on writing a letter to the federal government that expresses their concerns regarding the mandate.

"We certainly will respond to the government's request for consultation. We're in the process of putting together a response that will be submitted to the federal government," he said.

"For the most part the letter is not necessarily opposing it, but really questioning the methodology used to calculate the 30 per cent and how it's going to affect our producers, and how the plan will be implemented across the country.

"We recognize that here on the Prairies we've done a lot to mitigate greenhouse gas emissions, again not because of the government mandate, but because it made sense on our farms.

"Compared to other areas of the country where maybe they are still broadcasting huge amounts of nitrogen fertilizer that's being broadcast on top of the soil, obviously that would have a lot more emissions.

"I think for the biggest part not knowing where the numbers are coming from is a concern to us and whatever happens, whatever policy is put into place, it cannot affect productivity.

"APAS will definitely support and welcome farmers' concerns, we will do our best to make sure that whatever policy comes to play, will be in the best interest of producers."

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# 'The only people in the world that can bankrupt my business'

## What one farmer said when he had the chance to address ag ministers from across Canada

Continued from page 26

Say 10 years ago, canola average yields were 26 or 27 bushels an acre, and now they're 42 or 43—we have hit the reduction target simply by increasing output per unit.

That was my big point to them. I don't disagree with looking at ways to be better, we're always going to look at that. I don't disagree that they suggest to farmers that soil testing and 4R are a good thing, I think they are. And I think as an industry we have to make sure we point that out that most of us have taken up these things, but there are a lot who haven't and we need to continue to improve.

I would say the biggest worry right now with the current federal government is that we just don't necessarily trust if we give an inch, they won't try and take a mile. It's not feeling very collaborative and that to me is the issue.

I wouldn't say that with our provincial government I think Minister Marit and the premier currently are huge supporters of Western Canadian agriculture and Saskatchewan in particular and I think you look at the trips and the offices they have been setting up in Dubai and the Emirates specifically to really promote Saskatchewan products and our emissions per unit of output versus the world.

I think they are putting a lot of time and effort into it and starting to see some big wins, but I wouldn't say we are getting that feeling federally yet.

**Talking to the ministers and looking at the discussion paper, do you get a sense that the politicians and the bureaucrats really understand farming?**

I think provincially our minister and our top bureaucrats have a fairly good grasp on agriculture, but even they will admit they don't understand all of the most progressive ideas yet. I look at one type of fertilizer I am using now, it's a phosphate made completely from plants on the edges of the city pulling human waste out of the water, so talk about a perfect story. We're pulling human waste phosphate out of urban sewer droppings in the water streams and using them to grow crops, but there's new technology like that coming all the time.

I think federally there's some questions especially on the understanding of Western Canadian Broadacre Agriculture that there's enough advice or feedback loops, etc., to fully grasp that.

I think it is really important we all push them. It is fine to have the global strategy to reduce emissions, there's a whole bunch of points to that, no different than calling out different countries that need to meet targets before we make a big affect.

The biggest thing is when we go to implement these policies, whether it is agriculture or any other policy, is to have regional theories. My farm here is significantly different than a farm in Southern Ontario and we need to realize that. You can't have blanket approaches—they ruin and cripple different parts of industries.

**Where are you hoping this goes, best case scenario for the federal policy?**

In a perfect world hopefully it takes a little while to get implemented and we see the voluntary carbon market come in that you are seeing in the U.S. already.

I think as farmers we need to understand that consum-

ers are willing to invest money in ESG strategies and carbon strategies. I think the private market will have a way to use some of that shareholder money and invest it back into agriculture.

I do think there is a huge opportunity here to have carbon selling be part of a farm's net worth, and really the one best thing about farms is that all the revenue they create literally gets invested rurally.

One of the things I said to the feds, this might be an opportunity to revitalise rural economies that you are missing. Did we get the point across enough? I don't know, but I do have to say they hosted a really good meeting of federal, provincial and territorial ministers in Saskatoon. They took them to the Ag in Motion show and walked them around to check out combines and they had a group of Saskatchewan producers say some pretty blunt things.

It wasn't hidden in an Ottawa back room boardroom, it was pretty up front, and they had a lot of people there. Hopefully, we got our point across.

I actually encouraged the federal minister and her chief of staff that they are more than welcome to come to my farm any time to walk around if they want to ask questions and try to understand more. And even though I don't necessarily always agree with the current federal regime's current ideas, I definitely want to understand why they're doing what they're doing.

**Do you think there is a general understanding among the public and the federal politicians of the net carbon impact of farming?**

No, I don't. I don't think that there has been enough money invested into the science and the data behind it

yet. I think there is a lot of theory, and I think we could do benchmarks to compare our carbon footprint per unit of output of wheat versus Europe's, but with what's actually going on in the soil, I think it is a huge area where government and universities could actually allocate research dollars to better understand the soil.

**Where do you see the future of farming in terms of emissions and fertilizer use. How do you see that changing?**

I think the biggest thing is in the future we are definitely going to have the data set to measure what is actually going on. Then hopefully, real data is what the decisions come from.

I think we need to be opportunistic. Companies such as Nutrien have significant ESG strategies now, and significant dollars that can be invested in them. There's ways as farms we can work with that, and I think we need to promote everything that we are doing well. You could even argue that we are a net carbon sink in a lot of cases, but in most cases because of the amount of zero-till in Canada our net emissions are significantly lower than compared to the rest of the world. That is something we should be selling to the world, not highlighting what we could do better. We can always be better, but let's highlight all the things we are already doing better.

I think Canada and Saskatchewan, especially, we're still thought of as a little bit luddite-like and plaid shirts around the world, and that doesn't always attract a lot of international investment. When you have the population we do, international investment is pretty important.

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# Bold USask projects aim to advance MS therapy, agriculture innovation

Three interdisciplinary health and agriculture projects led by University of Saskatchewan (USask) researchers have been awarded \$250,000 each under a federal program that aims to foster innovative high-risk research with the potential to yield significant and impactful results.

Recipients of the New Frontiers in Research Fund (NFRF) Exploration Grants are:

- Dr. Graham George (DPhil), professor in the Department of Geological Sciences in USask's College of Arts and Science;
- Dr. Leon Kochian (PhD), professor in USask's College of Agriculture and Bioresources, and Canada Excellence Research Chair in Global Food Security;
- Dr. Tim Sharbel (PhD), professor in USask's College of Agriculture and Bioresources.

## Studying role of metals in neurological disease development

George and his collaborators are investigating whether dysregulation (deficiency or excess) of essential metals is linked to the development of such diseases as multiple sclerosis (MS) caused by demyelination—damage to the protective myelin sheath that covers nerves.

The research is a bold new approach, which builds on a hypothesis that imbalance of metals such as iron, zinc and copper might be important in MS, said George.

"We propose to develop new methods for super-resolution visualization of metals using the synchrotron," he said. "If metals are involved in MS and other demyelinating diseases, our study may lay the groundwork for developing potential therapeutics to prevent, delay or reduce severity of demyelination in certain subsets of MS patients."

Improved therapies are urgently needed for MS, which is a leading cause of disability in young adults worldwide. Saskatchewan and Alberta are hotspots for the incurable disease in Canada, which itself has a disproportionately high incidence rate of MS compared to the rest of the world.

George's collaborators are: Dr. Bogdan Popescu (MD, PhD), assistant professor in USask's College of Medicine; Dr. Ingrid Pickering (PhD), professor in geological sciences; and Dr. Yanbo Zhang (MD, PhD), associate professor of psychiatry at the University of Alberta.

## Getting at the root of climate-resilient plants

As climate change causes more prolonged and severe droughts and floods that threaten global food security, Kochian's group is studying plant roots at the molecular and functional levels to develop climate-resilient crops that absorb water and nutrients more effectively and sequester more carbon in soil.

In developing climate-resilient crops, plant breeders so far have focused mostly on the genetic traits of plant shoots, which are readily visible. However, breeding plants for improved root traits has lagged because it's tougher to study root systems in the soil.

Work by Kochian and others worldwide has led to the development of root growth and imaging platforms that enable scientists to determine the complex genetics that control efficient root system architectures in thousands of plants, which Kochian calls "the foundation for breeding better root systems."

"In collaboration with university computer scientists, deep learning and artificial intelligence methods are being employed that help us, in a more automated fashion, to process and analyze the root images more quickly and use molecular breeding and gene editing to improve the plants' use of water and nutrients," he said.

Collaborating on the project are: Dr. Ian Stavness (PhD), associate professor of computer science in USask's College of Arts and Science; Dr. Curtis Pozniak (PhD), professor in USask's College of Agriculture and Bioresources and director of USask's Crop Development Centre; and research associate Jordan Ubbens from computer science.

They have pioneered a method to use images of shoots to phenotype plants' response to drought and flood stresses. Their goal is to employ deep learning technology to extend phenotyping to both the roots and shoots of plants in the lab and develop algorithms that would enable breeders to use images of shoot architecture to predict when plants in the field have larger root systems.

## No seedy sex please, we're breeding a better canola

Sharbel's project holds the potential to spur a revolution in crop production, starting with Canola, by applying to plant breeding the findings of 20-plus years of lab research in Germany and Canada to understand naturally occurring axillary seed formation (apomixis) in plants.

"When applied to crops, our cutting-edge engineering biology approach would be a highly disruptive, billion-dollar technology that would greatly facilitate the production of new varieties with novel traits to feed our rapidly changing world," said Sharbel.



Dr. Graham George (DPhil), Dr. Leon Kochian (PhD) and Dr. Tim Sharbel (PhD).

His research group is working with the Institute of Synthetic Biology—at the CEPLAS-Cluster of Excellence on Plant Sciences at the University of Düsseldorf in Germany—and the National Research Council's (NRC) Saskatoon division to develop a "mini chromosome" that would deliver into Canola plants several apomixis-candidate genes they have identified.

"The impact on breeding programs would be enormous, as it would allow us to immediately fix any desired genotype in a single generation," Sharbel said.

This would give Canada's Canola industry an enormous advantage in both time and costs to create diverse varieties with desirable traits focused on specific environmental, agricultural or economic needs, something that until now has not been achievable using other modern breeding methods, he said.

Sharbel's collaborators are: Dr. Martin Mau (PhD), research scientist at USask's College of Agriculture and Bioresources, and Drs. Xingliang Ma (PhD) and Pankaj Bhowmik (PhD) at the NRC Saskatoon.

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Horses in a sunny field between Welwyn and St. Lazare with rainy skies to the north.

Sunnette Kamffer photo



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# Three generations at USask Crop Development Centre

Continued from page 24

Being the CDC is a relatively small group, Hucl believes success for both students and supervisors “boils down to drive and work ethic. You have to be a ‘get on with it’ person.”

## Dr. Curtis Pozniak Professor and Director, CDC

Curtis Pozniak had a plan—get an agronomy degree and “make my way back to the family farm near Rama”. But

he caught the bug for plant breeding doing summer jobs and that ultimately turned into “a bit of a fairy tale—farm boy makes good.”

Pozniak’s search for a grad studies position started with Dr. Bob Baker, then chair of the grad committee in the Dept. of Plant Sciences, who sent him to see Dr. Pierre Hucl. “Pierre and I chatted about a project he had in mind and it sounded like a perfect fit so I started working on my master’s in 1999.”

He described Hucl’s approach to supervising him as the model for his own mentoring—“hands off but guiding, just a little push from behind.” And it worked well; a year and a half into his master’s, Pozniak was encouraged to move directly to a PhD program, a rare occurrence “but the faculty I respected were saying it was a good idea so I thought, why not?” He was hired as the durum and high-yield wheat breeder even before he defended his PhD, and in 2003, began building his renowned research and breeding program. In July of last year, Pozniak was named director of the CDC.

As a supervisor, Pozniak first relies on a student’s CV to demonstrate interest “but what I’m really looking for is a passion for what they do coupled with common sense, and the ability to filter out noise and focus on the prize. That can be hard to identify in a CV.”

Pozniak believes the best students are the ones who move the bar set by their mentors, “and that kind of drive is evident almost immediately.”

In his years mentoring students, Pozniak said he has learned valuable lessons from them in return. “What I’ve experienced is that we all learn differently and you have to tailor the way you supervise to the individual. I took my own experience with Pierre as normal but that won’t work for everyone.”

He has also come to accept that everything does not have to be perfect. “In my own PhD, I really strived for perfection but I recall a very frustrating experiment that wasn’t working and I simply would not drop it. Finally Pierre said, ‘I’m dropping it for you.’ It’s important to remember that grad school is a training experience.”

Despite the added director duties, Pozniak’s research continues, as does his supervision of students. And while things like technological advances mean those destined to be plant breeders must learn how to use new tools, “but the basic building blocks Bob Baker taught me when I took his quantitative genetics class and the advice Pierre provided along the way remain. The fundamental principles are ultimately the same—you cross the best with the best, put them out in the field and select the best.”



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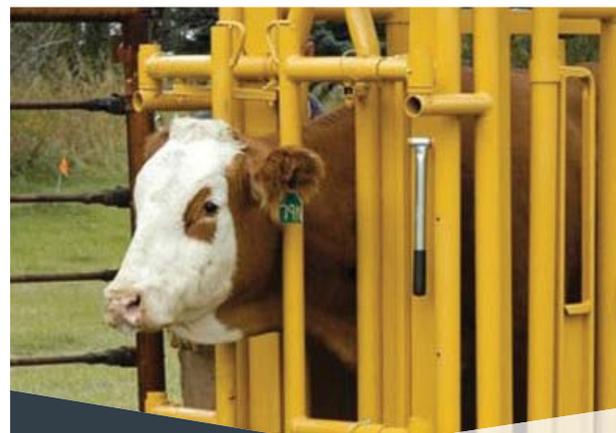
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# Lack of communication:

- Sask. environment minister says no communication from feds
- Dana Skoropad says he found out about pesticide testing from World-Spectator

Continued from Page 23

"The lack of communication, the lack of engagement is a recurring theme, if you look presently at my ministry and various ministries in government, and if you look at the policy stacking that has taken place, if you look at the clean fuel standard, if you look at how much engagement has taken place when that was brought for-

ward to us in a Discussion Paper.

"If you look at the clean electricity standard, you look at the cap on oil and gas emissions, you look at the fertilizer emission reductions, you look at the methane emissions reduction, changing those goal posts—it's a challenge, it really is."

## Environment ministers meeting

A few weeks ago, federal, provincial and territorial environment ministers met for the 2022 Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment.

"I'm in Whitehorse right now, we finished our first day of meetings today. I'm very hopeful that we will be discussing a number of issues of concern," Skoropad said.

"Many of the policies that I've identified, the whole concept of the unilateral decision making policy, the lack of communication, that trust relationship that's

been eroded, I'd like to speak about those issues.

"At first glance, it doesn't necessarily appear that we'll be addressing the elephant in the room at this meeting, but that certainly won't stop me from pushing hard to make sure that Saskatchewan and our specific concerns are heard at this table.

"I would like to have a conversation and quite honestly get an explanation, as to why we continue along this policy stacking path, why we continue along the unilateral decision making path, why we continue along the path of little or no engagement, why we continue down the path what in many cases what we see as arbitrary goal post moving, those conversations I'm pushing to have addressed."

Does he think other provincial ministers share his concerns?

"Quite honestly my feeling is we certainly are not alone on this."



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# Risk mitigation scores remain elevated in Canadian agriculture

BY AINSLEY MACDOUGALL,  
ECONOMIST AT FCC

Risk is unavoidable in agriculture, making risk management a key contributor to a farm's success. In 2020, we analyzed the risk management strategies of Canadian farm operations in a survey about risk perceptions and producers' implementation of relevant risk management strategies. The last two years have brought new challenges: inflation and rising interest rates, the war in Ukraine, supply chain disruptions, and beyond. So, time for an update!

**HOW WE MEASURED**

In July, we used the FCC Vision Panel to understand the influence of the evolving operating environment on risk mitigation strategies.

We grouped risks into five categories:

- Production
- Market
- Financial
- Human resources
- Legal

Each theme includes multiple specific risks. For example, financial risks include interest rate, working capital, debt repayment, and operating costs.

We constructed a scorecard that measures how producers within a sector match their level of concern (on a scale of 0 to 3) with available risk management tools (for example, I have a business plan, off-farm income, utilize accrual accounting to make decisions).

The individual scores are weighted based on the

	TOTAL RISK	FINANCIAL RISK	PRODUCTION RISK	MARKETING RISK	HR RISK	LEGAL RISK
Grains and oilseeds	83% (0)	85% (-1)	88% (-1)	86% (+2)	74% (-2)	79% (-2)
Livestock	79% (+2)	81% (+7)	91% (+9)	73% (-4)	71% (-4)	76% (-1)
Hogs	88% (+5)	89% (+14)	98% (+9)	83% (+1)	85% (0)	78% (-6)
Sheep and goats	74% (-2)	76% (0)	86% (+4)	66% (-9)	68% (-2)	71% (-11)
Beef	78% (+2)	81% (+7)	91% (+10)	72% (-5)	68% (-5)	76% (+2)
Supply Management	82% (-2)	84% (-3)	91% (+2)	73% (-4)	78% (-5)	82% (-1)
Poultry and eggs	81% (-5)	80% (-11)	90% (-3)	72% (-2)	80% (-6)	77% (-8)
Dairy	82% (-1)	85% (0)	91% (+4)	74% (-5)	77% (-4)	84% (+2)
Greenhouse, vegetables and fruits	84% (-2)	83% (-3)	87% (0)	80% (-6)	85% (-3)	86% (+2)
Fruits and tree nuts	84% (-4)	85% (-4)	89% (-2)	75% (-9)	82% (-5)	85% (+1)
Greenhouses and horticulture	88% (+2)	82% (-4)	86% (+2)	86% (+3)	94% (+6)	88% (+4)
Vegetables and melon	81% (-4)	81% (-2)	83% (0)	81% (-10)	79% (-8)	87% (+2)
Grand Total	82% (0)	84% (0)	89% (+2)	80% (-1)	75% (-3)	79% (-1)

**Table 1:** Risk scores by sector and categories (change relative to 2020 between parenthesis)  
Sources: FCC Vision Survey and FCC Economics

respondents' risk tolerance level, defined as risk averse, risk neutral, or risk preferring. A score of 100% would indicate that, for every risk identified, there is an appropriate strategy to mitigate. Conversely, zero would indicate there is no appropriate risk mitigation strategy.

**OVERALL RISK MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES FOLLOW 2020 RESULTS**

The overall risk score in 2022 remains at 82% (Table 1). Production risk scores increased (+2 overall) but were offset by small declines in legal, HR, and marketing risk scores.

**3 TAKEAWAYS FROM THE SURVEY**

Here are three takeaways from this year's analysis compared to 2020 survey data.

**1. Production risk management continues to improve**

Our score suggests that 89% of production risks are mitigated by Canadian producers, a gain of two percentage points from 2020. This gain is led largely by the livestock sector, though the supply management score also increased. Small declines were recorded for grains and oilseeds, fruits and tree nuts, and the poultry and egg sectors' sample size was too small for these

results to be statistically significant.

**2. Human resource risk remains the lowest-scoring risk category**

The approach to human resource risks remained a significant challenge and declined slightly compared to 2020. There are opportunities for Canadian farms to mitigate risks in this area by creating a transition plan, purchasing insurance against employee injury or other options that can assist farmers even when family labour is available. Labour shortages are a growing concern in Canadian agriculture and require new and inventive strategies to attract and retain workers.

**3. Risk management strategies differ by sector**

The livestock sector showed the most opportunity for increased risk mitigation efforts in 2020, and it narrowed the gap in the total risk score with other sectors in 2022. Financial and production risk scores took a noticeable jump in 2022. Financial risk mitigation strategies at a time of high inflation, rising interest rates and higher feed prices and mixed margins are certainly relevant.

Legal risk mitigation scores highest for the greenhouse, fruit, and vegetable sector. The complex retail marketing options and absence of futures contracts in

this sector, especially considering the pandemic's impact on distribution, could necessitate more detailed and frequent contracts. This would make legal risk strategies more important, resulting in higher risk scores.

One puzzling difference between the 2020 and 2022 results is the marketing risk score that declined across multiple sectors and as much as 10 percentage points for vegetables and melon production. The marketing risk category encompasses those risks associated with price fluctuations, changes in the Canadian dollar, and supply chain challenges. The decline in the score may be due to the unique nature of marketing risks' complex mitigation strategies in these sectors, or producers' choice to prioritize other risk categories. For example, farms impacted by flooding, fires and droughts this past year would likely place greater importance on addressing production and financial risks first, before considering marketing risk mitigation strategies.

**BOTTOM LINE**

Farm operations are deploying various strategies to mitigate risks. Looking backward at their effectiveness might reveal business areas on a farm that require more attention given risks in agriculture are ever evolving. Being critical of past risk management effectiveness while challenging the operation to account for new emerging risks should provide benefits going forward.

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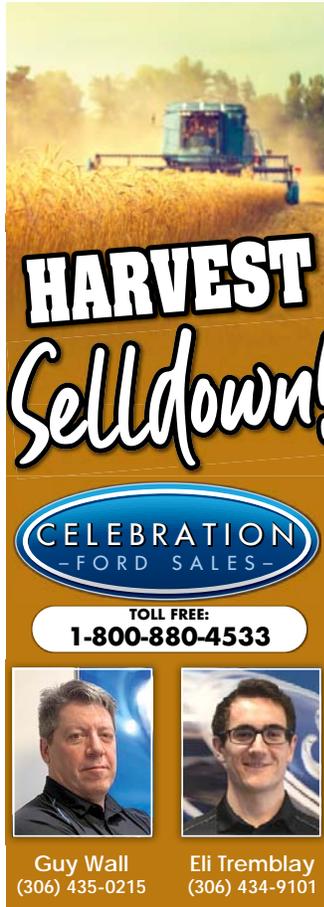
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