



Police arrest five in Bangor, Yorkton raids

By Ryan Kiedrowski
Grasslands News

Gunshots, a SWAT team, multiple police vehicles and ambulances with lights and sirens are not typically associated with small-town Saskatchewan life, but for residents of Bangor, it's what Friday, April 24 looked like.

Sources close to Grasslands News reported up to 12 RCMP vehicles, two SWAT trucks and two ambulances entering the Village of Bangor. Their target was a residence north of the community hall, with the aftermath akin to something out of a movie.

"They totally destroyed that gate - they drove right through it - and the house is just destroyed," described one witness. "The doors were pulled out, the windows were gone."

While details were initially scant, police did confirm being in Bangor and Yorkton on the afternoon of April 24.

"Saskatchewan RCMP advise there is an increased police presence in both Bangor and Yorkton in relation to an ongoing investigation," RCMP said, advising the public to avoid the areas where police officers were present, and to follow any direction they provide.

"We will provide an update on this investigation as soon as we are able," RCMP said. "If an imminent risk to public safety is identified, we will notify the public."

By Monday afternoon, Saskatchewan RCMP's Yorkton Saskatchewan Trafficking Response Team released more details on the events of the previous Friday, confirming they had arrested five people and laid over 60



JACOB MILLER | GRASSLANDS NEWS

Melville Dance hosts annual recital

The Melville Dance Association held their annual recital on April 25 and 26 at St Henry's Senior School. The recital saw 32 performances from the young dancers. Pictured are the Grade 8 Ballet group performing *Bedroom Dreams*. See page 15 for more pictures from the recital.

charges in relation to the drug trafficking investigation.

"On April 24 Saskatchewan RCMP's Yorkton STRT executed search warrants at four residential properties in Saskatchewan communities," RCMP said. "The searches took place in Yorkton, Bredenbury, Bangor, and the RM of Orkney, and were conducted as part of an ongoing drug trafficking investigation."

Also responding were Saskatchewan RCMP's Swift Current STRT and Moose Jaw Crime Reduction Team, as well as Yorkton and Esterhazy RCMP, assisted with

the execution of the search warrants.

"Collectively, during the searches of the properties, officers located a number of illicit substances and weapons," RCMP noted. "The illicit substances seized by officers included approximately 340 grams of cocaine; 1,035 grams of methamphetamine; 251 grams of psilocybin; 49 grams of heroin; 25 LSD blotters; 2,282 pharmaceutical-style opioid pills; 23 grams of dimethyltryptamine; 1.1 kgs of illicit cannabis; 5,000 illicit cigarettes; and 5,000 pharmaceutical-style Xanax pills."

-SEE OVER 60 CHARGES LAID, 28

Census participation vital for local communities

Funding for communities dependent on it; forms being sent to residents May 4

By GNG Staff
Grasslands News

Every resident counts — and local officials say failing to take part in the 2026 Census could come at a cost to communities across the Grasslands News coverage area for years to come.

With census forms set to be sent to households beginning May 4, municipalities are stressing that the results will directly determine how much funding communities receive over the next five years. From infrastructure and emergency services to schools and healthcare, the numbers collected will shape decisions that impact daily life across the region.

"Every single person matters when it comes to the census," officials note. "If people are not counted, communities risk losing out on funding and services they depend on."

Conducted every five years, the Cen-

sus of Population provides a detailed snapshot of Canada's population and changing society, collecting demographic, social and economic information from households across the country. The upcoming count will mark Canada's 24th national census.

At the same time, the Census of Agriculture will also be conducted, gathering detailed information from every agricultural operation in the country — a component officials say is especially important in rural regions like southeast Saskatchewan.

Local officials say one of the most immediate impacts of census participation is on funding. Census figures are used by provincial and federal governments to determine allocations for essential services such as roads, schools, healthcare, emergency response and recreation programs. An undercount can lead to reduced funding, leaving communities at a disadvantage.

The data is also critical for planning. Accurate population and housing information helps municipalities across the region guide infrastructure upgrades, address housing needs and support economic development. From growing centres to smaller communities, reliable numbers ensure decisions are based on real conditions rather than estimates.

Officials note that the information collected also supports broader socioeconomic analysis, helping governments and organizations understand trends affecting families, neighbourhoods and businesses. That data is used to plan services ranging from employment programs and education to public transportation and healthcare.

For the region's strong agricultural sector, the Census of Agriculture plays an equally important role. Conducted since 1921, it provides a comprehensive snapshot of farming in Canada, collecting information on all aspects of agricul-

tural operations. The data helps inform business decisions, shape government policy and guide programs that directly impact farmers and rural communities.

Representation is another key factor. Census results help ensure communities in southeast Saskatchewan are properly reflected when decisions are made at higher levels of government. Strong participation strengthens the region's collective voice and helps prevent smaller centres from being overlooked.

The census is designed to be quick and confidential, with strict protections in place to safeguard personal information. Residents will be able to complete their forms online or by other available methods once they receive them.

Local leaders across the region stress that participation is essential to maintaining strong, vibrant communities.

Residents are encouraged to complete their census forms promptly after receiving them beginning May 4.

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Carry the Kettle

Teen gets maximum youth sentence for his part in homicides

By Ryan Kiedrowski
Grasslands News

The gallery in Courtroom 7 at Regina Provincial Court was filled with grieving friends and family of Shauna Fay on April 24. A canvas portrait of Fay was on display in the courtroom; showing the young woman standing in a lush green field, arms reaching for the sky with an expression of sheer joy on her face.

This is how those close to Fay – and she had many that loved her – remember the forever 47-year-old from Indian Head. Fay was one of four people killed on Carry the Kettle Dakota Nation on Feb. 4, 2025.

“This is definitely the most devastating connection I will ever lose in my life. I have lost half of me. My heart is absolutely shattered and broken,” noted brother Jay Fay, who read his victim impact statement – one of 27 filed with the court – during sentencing proceedings. “Witnessing the pain and sorrow my family and friends are left to deal with sure does hurt. It sure is such a shame to see such an angel that was on a mission to heal the world be simply deleted from us all.”

While family and

friends explained how losing Shauna affected their lives and communities, a 17-year-old boy sat in the prisoner’s dock listening to how his role in the events of that fateful night took away the life of this beautiful young lady.

“You are a young lad; you have so many years ahead of you. You have so much opportunity,” Jay told the teen. “I hope you utilize all of the programs and opportunities to make better decisions in the future. I have no resentment and harbor no anger or hatred towards you. We have too many crazy cats and dysfunctional people in this world already. I hope you can break the cycle of dysfunction and become an example of change.”

A first cousin – Shannon Fay – told of how Shauna’s passing affected so many in the Katepwa Lake community.

“Shauna Fay thrived in her community and brought joy and warmth to many with her caring nature, her acceptance of others without judgment, and her enthusiastic embrace of the culture and heritage of those who surrounded her,” Shannon said during her victim impact statement. “Over the years, Shauna worked, played, volun-

teered, and shared her musical talents throughout the Katepwa Lake area. The impact of Shauna’s untimely death sent shock, sadness, and heartbreak into our community so profound that it’s truly bottomless.”

Jim Runge was another close friend who shared how vibrant and positive Shauna was, and how the homicides have changed feelings of security in the area.

“Shauna loved all walks of life for who they were; bringing peace, hope, and love to our lives as well as our community,” Runge said, reading from his victim impact statement. “On Feb. 4, 2025, a blanket of fear was descended on Carry the Kettle Dakota Nation, surrounding towns, and rural communities.”

He added that even today, there’s an unease of “who might arrive to your place,” and “feelings of loss to everyone’s own personal security” prevalent.

“To the people that Shauna knew, her life meant everything,” Runge said.

The boy being sentenced was 15 years old at the time of the murders on Carry the Kettle that also claimed the lives

of Tracey Hotomani, 34, and Terry “Fats” Jack, 51 – both from Carry the Kettle; plus, Sheldon Quewezance, 44, of Zagine Anishinabek. In an agreed statement of facts, the four victims were all at Jack’s residence on Carry the Kettle on the night of the shootings.

During the boy’s previous proceedings on Feb. 25, Court heard the other teens involved – males aged 18 and 17 – attended Jack’s home to buy drugs. The pair were subsequently injured in a fight that broke out, resulting in cash and one of the accused’s cell phones stolen. The duo then went to the younger teen’s home, who supplied the older youths with a handgun and rifle. The pair of older teens then returned to Jack’s residence, allegedly wearing masks and carrying loaded weapons, in an attempt “to scare” people and retrieve the stolen items.

Court documents noted the 18-year-old fired on Fay when she answered the door at 6:45 a.m., and the 17-year-old also entered the home. The pair then shot Quewezance, Hotomani, and Jack while the younger teen remained outside the residence; eventually running away

after hearing the gunshots.

According to a witness, those gunshots stopped at 7:04 a.m.

“Forensic autopsies determined that all four victims died as a result of gunshot wounds. No other significant injuries were reported,” according to the statement of facts.

Although the youngest boy was not carrying a weapon, providing guns to the older boys constitutes a manslaughter conviction. At the end of the Feb. 25 court date, the youngest teen entered guilty pleas to four counts of the lesser manslaughter charges instead of four counts of first-degree murder as initially charged. A pre-sentence report and psychological report were also ordered in advance of sentencing.

After reviewing the joint submission from the defence and Crown, Justice James Korpan sentenced the 17-year-old to two years in custody plus one year supervision on the four counts of manslaughter. He will not receive credit for the pre-trial custody served since Feb. 18, 2025, and a focus on treatment will be included in the one-year supervision order post-release.

“He engaged in illegal acts which resulted in four deaths,” Justice Korpan said, noting that the manslaughter pleas had raised dissatisfaction from some people. “However, he did not intend for anyone to die.”

Justice Korpan noted that the teen provided the guns to the others in the belief the weapons would be used to intimidate – not to kill.

“The consequences are the most severe imaginable. Accordingly, the most severe sentence is warranted,” he said.

All three teens have been in custody since their arrests, the older two facing four counts each of first-degree murder and a 67-year-old man charged with accessory after the fact.

The 18-year-old is awaiting a trial date for his matters, and the other 17-year-old was scheduled to appear in Regina Provincial Court on April 29. The older man will return to Indian Head Provincial Court on May 19 for his matter to be spoken to. He was granted bail at King’s Bench in Regina on April 23, released on conditions that include no contact with any of the victims’ family members and for him not to possess weapons.

Report from the Legislature

Saskatchewan continues to move forward with targeted investments and initiatives that strengthen health care, support innovation, and grow the economy. These efforts are focused on delivering practical results for people and communities across the province.

Momentum in the province’s economy remains steady, supported by strong performance in trade and ongoing collaboration across key sectors. The recent *Food, Fuel and Fertilizer Global Summit* highlighted Saskatchewan’s role in global

trade diversification and economic security. The event brought together leaders from around the world to discuss opportunities in agriculture, energy and fertilizer production, while reinforcing the importance of expanding markets and strengthening long-term economic resilience in a competitive global environment.

Alongside these discussions, work continues to strengthen innovation and support emerging industries. Innovation Saskatchewan is expanding the Saskatchewan Technology Startup Incentive

program to help accelerate life sciences innovation in the province. This expansion will support early-stage companies, attract new investment, and help turn Saskatchewan research and ideas into real-world solutions. More information on STSI program guidelines and eligibility is available at www.innovationsask.ca/programs/stsi.

In health care, progress continues through initiatives focused on improving access, services and patient outcomes. A new organ and tissue awareness campaign has been launched to encourage more residents to register and have important conversations with their families about donation. Anyone over the age of 16 is eligible to register their decision to be an organ and tissue donor. For more information, search “Organ and Tissue Donation” at www.saskatchewan.ca.

Access to specialized care is also improving through recent

developments in breast health services. The Regina Breast Health Centre recently marked its one-year anniversary, reflecting improved access to diagnostic services and a more patient-focused model of care. The centre has helped reduce wait times and improve the overall patient experience, ensuring more women can receive timely assessment and care closer to home.

Your Saskatchewan Party government will continue focusing on practical investments that strengthen the economy, improve health care access, support innovation and build safer, stronger communities across the province.

If you have any questions about a provincial program or service, please contact us. We look forward to hearing from you.



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Entrepreneurial efforts support with Yorkton event

By Calvin Daniels
Grasslands News

Entrepreneurs from Yorkton and area had an opportunity to learn about business supports they can access, as well as to network with others at a recent event in Yorkton.

Hosted by Community Futures Ventures 'Fueling Futures Yorkton: Funding & Support for Entrepreneurs in Saskatchewan' was well-received said Priya Timiri, General Manager with Community Futures Ventures. She said more than 50 entrepreneurs, some already in business and others still looking at their options attended.

"It was not just inside of Yorkton," she said, noting for example one person travelled from Grenfell to gather information.

That was the focus of the April 22 event, said Timiri.

The event brought together a number of organizations which support entrepreneurs across Saskatchewan in a variety of ways. The representatives from those

organizations were able to share information about loans, grants, and business supports available to help entrepreneurs launch and grow successful businesses.

One particular benefit was an opportunity to meet the support reps and ask them questions specific to the attendee needs.

It was also an evening where the fledgling entrepreneurs had a chance to network with each other, said Timiri, adding that helps build a community of local supports too.

Timiri said the evening was certainly a success, and she said they have hopes it will be a repeated event in 2027.

This year's event was in partnership with representatives from Entrepreneurs with Disability Program, Futurpreneur, Women Entrepreneurs of Saskatchewan, Business Development Bank of Canada, Clarence Campeau Development Fund, Saskatchewan Indigenous Enterprise Foundation, Saskatchewan Indigenous Enterprise Foundation Inc. and the SK Startup Institute.



PHOTO COURTESY COMMUNITY FUTURES VENTURES

Making connections

Community Futures Ventures hosted 'Fueling Futures Yorkton: Funding & Support for Entrepreneurs in Saskatchewan' to connect entrepreneurs with businesses and organizations that could help in developing business.

Jail time for Regina man who stole from 43 communities

By Ryan Kiedrowski
Grasslands News

A six-year crime spree that saw thefts from 43 communities across Saskatchewan has concluded with jail time for a Regina man. Michael Arsenault, 57, was arrested earlier this year, facing 62 counts of break and enter; 12 counts attempting to break and enter with intent; and two single counts possession of property under \$5,000 obtained by crime, and possession of property over \$5,000 obtained

by crime.

"In May 2025, Saskatchewan RCMP's South District section dedicated an investigative team and launched a broader probe into a series of property crimes reported across the district," noted RCMP. "Investigators identified 74 reports of break-ins they believed to be connected. These reports occurred in 43 communities and the surrounding areas in southern Saskatchewan between September 2019 and February 2026."

Through investigation, po-

lice noted around \$50,000 cash was stolen in total, plus other items such as gift cards, debit/credit cards, alcohol, and antique coins.

"The type of buildings broken into included - but are not limited to - local businesses, town offices, post offices, community centers, and more," RCMP said. "At this time, investigators are not aware of any homes being broken into."

Communities in the Grasslands News readership affected include public buildings in

Lipton (Oct. 24, 2019), Cupar (Oct. 31, 2019), Spy Hill (Nov. 7, 2019), Qu'Appelle (Nov. 14, 2019), Whitewood (Sept. 13, 2025), and Theodore (Dec. 16, 2025).

"At the core of this investigation are the communities who have been impacted. This may not be a violent crime, but it's a crime that is extremely damaging to those communities who lost valuables and funds and felt their safety has been compromised," said Inspector Jillian McLaren, Saskatchewan RCMP South District Operations Of-

ficer. "I'm incredibly proud of the work done by our team for working together, connecting the dots, laying charges, and restoring a sense of security for these communities."

Arsenault made his first appearance in Regina Provincial Court on Feb. 18, with a sentence handed down April 23 in the same courthouse on a 76-count information. He will serve 1,719 days (approximately 4.71 years) in a federal penitentiary plus restitution and DNA orders.



Town of Fort Qu'Appelle

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Email: manager@fortquappelle.com Website: www.fortquappelle.com

Elm Pruning Ban

Reminder that it is prohibited to cut or prune Elm trees from April 1 – August 31.

Campground Reservation Site

Are you ready for some fun in the sun?! The Fort Qu'Appelle Campground opens to the public on May 15, 2026. To reserve a site, please visit: www.fortquappelle.com then click the Campground Tab and follow the on-screen prompts.

Looking for something to do in Fort Qu'Appelle?

Check out our Events Calendar on our website!

There's always something happening in the community — don't miss out!

Visit our events calendar here: www.fortquappelle.com Under the Discover Tab.

Tourist Centre

The busy tourist season will soon be upon us and the Town of Fort Qu'Appelle will be opening our tourist centre the long weekend in May. The Town will be providing space for any local area artist to display two (2) of their works for sale. Space will be limited; therefore, works larger than 36 inches by 30 inches cannot be displayed. Artists will be responsible for hanging their own pieces and for the sale of the artwork. You will need to supply business cards for further contact with customers.

The artists will be required to sign a waiver which can be seen at the Town Office. Inquires can be directed to the email below.

Don R. McLeod, RMA - Chief Administrative Officer - cao@fortquappelle.com

Office Closure

The Town Office will be closed Monday, May 18, 2026, in observance of Victoria Day. Regular hours commence Tuesday, May 19, 2026.

Spring Yard Clean-up

The Town will be offering yard debris and tree branch pick-ups on May 13, 14, 26 and 28. Leaf pick-ups are on May 13 & 14 and branch pick-ups are on May 26 & 28. Please have leaves bagged and neatly stack your tree branches in a pile and the Town will haul it away! Please have bags out for 7 a.m.

Lakeview Cemetery Spring Clean Up

Our staff is preparing the Cemetery grounds for spring and summer. Please remove all personal items placed in attached monument vases by May 15.

Correspondence to the Town

Please note that all correspondence submitted to the Town for consideration by Council must include the sender's signature and return address. Unsigned correspondence will not be accepted or forwarded to Council for review.

Why Completing the Census Matter to Our Community

The upcoming 2026 Census is more than just a headcount—it's a vital tool that directly impacts funding, services, and planning in our community.

✓ Funding for Local Services Census data helps determine how much funding we receive for roads, schools, healthcare, emergency services, and recreation programs. If residents don't participate, our numbers go down—and so does our funding.

✓ Planning for Growth Accurate population and housing data allows us to plan for the future: infrastructure upgrades, housing needs, and economic development all rely on solid census information.

✓ Representation and Advocacy. The census gives us a voice. It helps provincial and federal governments understand our needs and ensures we're not overlooked when decisions are made. Completing the census is quick, confidential, and essential. When everyone participates, everyone benefits.

Let's make our community gets the support it deserves – complete your census in 2026!

Council Meeting

Your Town Council is gearing up for upcoming meetings, and you're invited!

Thursday, May 14 and 28 – 7 p.m. – Town Office is the date, time and place.

Doors are open, seats are waiting, and your council is ready to get to work! Come see local decision-making in action – your voice matters, and your presence makes the difference!

Garbage & Recycling

Garbage and recycling dates for March are as follows:

Area A Garbage – May 8 & 22 | Area B Garbage – May 1, 15 & 29
Area A Recycle – May 1, 15 & 29 | Area B Recycle – May 8 & 22

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Email Changes

We changed our e-mail addresses:

Don McLeod, CAO – cao@fortquappelle.com

Samantha Gillies, Assistant CAO/Office Manager – manager@fortquappelle.com

Tiffany Koch, Utilities – utilities@fortquappelle.com

Donny Rokosh, Public Works – publicworks@fortquappelle.com

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manager@fortquappelle.com

Lifetime smoking ban is being considered

Ottawa proposing to permanently ban tobacco sales to people born after 2008

By GNG Staff
Grasslands News

The federal government is examining the possibility of a sweeping new tobacco policy that would permanently ban the sale of cigarettes and other nicotine products to Canadians born after 2008.

Health Minister Marjorie Michel said Tuesday she is reviewing the idea, which mirrors recent legislation in the United Kingdom aimed at creating a "smoke-free generation."

"I am looking into it right now," Michel told reporters on Parliament

Hill. "We saw what the U.K. did, but I am looking into it with all partners for now."

The proposal would mean that anyone born after a certain date would never be legally allowed to purchase tobacco products, even after reaching adulthood — a measure supporters say could significantly reduce long-term smoking rates.

The discussion follows action overseas, where British lawmakers recently passed the Tobacco and Vapes Bill, which would prohibit the sale of tobacco to anyone born after Jan. 1, 2009. The leg-

islation still requires final approval before becoming law.

Officials with Health Canada declined to say whether a similar policy is actively being developed in Canada but reiterated the federal government's focus on reducing nicotine addiction, particularly among youth.

In a statement issued last week, the department said Ottawa has invested \$66 million annually since 2018 in programs aimed at helping Canadians quit smoking and reducing tobacco-related harm.

Canada has set a national target of cutting tobacco use to less than five per cent by 2035. According to recent survey data, about 11 per cent of Canadians aged 18 and older reported smoking in 2024.

Vaping remains a growing concern among younger age groups. Data from Statistics Canada suggests roughly one in 10 Canadians aged 20 to 24 use vaping products daily, compared to about one in 50 among those aged 25 and older.



RYAN KIEDROWSKI | GRASSLANDS NEWS

Vandalized

The RM of Sherwood office was the target of graffiti over the weekend, noticed early Monday morning April 27. The RM Council had come under fire for recently approving Bell Canada's proposed AI data centre just outside Regina.

Research published by the federal government examining a "smoke-free generation" policy suggests the long-term impact could be significant. The study estimates that over 50 years, such a ban could reduce health-care costs by \$2.3 billion while adding nearly 480,000 quality-adjusted life years — a measure used to assess overall health outcomes.

While the policy could result in lost tax revenue and economic impacts on the tobacco industry, the report concluded that the health benefits would outweigh those losses.

Federal Justice Minister Sean Fraser said he has not yet discussed the proposal in detail with Michel but signalled support for efforts to curb tobacco use among youth.

"I think obviously

doing whatever we can to reduce the consumption of tobacco products amongst young people is extremely important," Fraser said, adding he expects to speak with the health minister about the issue.

No timeline has been set for any potential legislation, and federal officials say consultations with partners and stakeholders would be required before moving forward.

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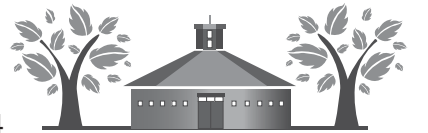
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Help Shape the Town's New Strategic Plan

The Town of Indian Head is developing a new four-year strategic plan and wants to hear from the people who live, work, and invest in this community. This survey will be available until Monday, May 4 at midnight. Paper copies are also available in the Town Office if you prefer.

Find the survey here: <https://bit.ly/indianheadcommunitysurvey>

The survey takes approximately 10–15 minutes to complete. Responses are collected by Spark Solutions, an independent consultant retained by the Town. Your responses will remain anonymous. Responses may be shared, as written, in a summary report to Town Council.

If you have questions about the survey or the strategic planning process, please contact Meagan McEwen at indianheadcdc@sasktel.net.



2026 Property Assessment Roll is Now Open

The Town of Indian Head's 2026 assessment roll will be open for public inspection at the Town Office from April 24 to May 25, 2026. In 2025, the Saskatchewan Assessment Management Agency (SAMA) conducted a town-wide reinspection of all properties in Indian Head to ensure property details are accurate and up to date, with these updates reflected in the 2026 assessment and taxation roll.

If you believe your property has been incorrectly assessed, you may file an appeal with the Board of Revision by submitting a notice of appeal to the Town Office by May 25, 2026. Residents are encouraged to review their assessment notice and available resources or contact SAMA for more information before the appeal deadline.

Swimming Lesson Registration Opens Soon!

We're excited to announce that 2026 Swimming Lesson Registration will open May 4th at 9 a.m. Check out the lesson schedule on the Indian Head Swimming Pool Facebook page. Private lesson registration will open the last week of May (more details coming soon!).

Please Note: Some advanced levels (Swimmer 5 & 6, Rookie/Ranger, Ranger/Star) require 90 minutes per day, and participants must attend both sessions. We can't wait for another great summer at the pool!

Household Hazardous Waste Collection Event Scheduled in Indian Head

On Thursday, May 28, there will be a Household Hazardous Waste & Batteries Drop Off Day in Indian Head, hosted by Product Care Recycling. This initiative aims to divert potentially harmful items away from our Transfer Station and ensure they are disposed of responsibly.

For a full list of what will be accepted, as well as answers on how to recycle other household products, please visit the Product Care website: <https://www.productcare.org/products/hhw/saskatchewan/>

Help Keep Indian Head Blooming this Summer

The Town of Indian Head is seeking volunteers to help keep our beautiful hanging baskets and planters thriving throughout the summer!

Basket & planter watering takes place on weekends, and we're looking for two volunteers per day. Each shift is approximately 1.5–2 hours, making it a simple and rewarding way to give back to your community.

Visit the Town website for the link to sign-up! By volunteering, you'll play an important role in keeping our downtown vibrant, welcoming, and full of colour for everyone to enjoy.

Register for the Town Wide Garage Sale May 23

Don't forget to sign up for the Town-Wide Garage Sale in Indian Head! The sale day is Saturday, May 23rd from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Please register by May 15th. Contact Meagan at 306-695-2742 or email indianheadcdc@sasktel.net if you have any questions or to get your house put on the map! Maps will be available at Bigway Foods, Pharmasave and at the Town Office or on our website. Plan to spend the day in Indian Head visiting our downtown shops and restaurants!

Upcoming Community Events

April 27 - May 3 – Smile Cookies for the Library

May 2 – Minor Ball Bottle Drive

May 4 – Swimming Lesson Registration Opens

May 4 – Public Survey for Strategic Plan Deadline

May 23 – Bell Barn Lobster Supper

May 23 – Town Wide Garage Sale

May 28 – Household Hazardous Waste Collection Day

Do you have a great community event coming up? Let us know about it! You can have your event featured on our Community Events webpage by emailing your details and poster to indianheadcdc@sasktel.net. Don't forget to schedule your community event on our sign at least one week before your event date.

www.townofindianhead.com



Sask updates childcare plan; some providers not pleased

By Ryan Kiedrowski
Grasslands News

The Saskatchewan government is defending a shift in its \$10-a-day child-care program as necessary to sustain the system, while opposition critics and front-line providers warn the changes could add costs for families and strain already stretched centres.

Education Minister Everett Hindley announced a series of policy adjustments during a press conference April 23, saying the province is moving from rapid expansion to a focus on long-term stability.

"The Canada-Saskatchewan Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care Agreement is about making childcare more affordable, more accessible, and more sustainable for Saskatchewan families and for the childcare sector," Hindley said.

He pointed to progress since the agreement was first signed in 2021, noting the province reached its \$10-a-day child-care target ahead of schedule.

"Back on April 1st of 2023, our province achieved \$10 a day regulated childcare for children under six, which was well in advance of the original timeline," he said.

Hindley said the sector has expanded significantly, with more spaces and workers entering the system.

"As of this past December, Saskatchewan has achieved 92 per cent of its new space creation target," he said. "Since March of 2021, the total number of early learning and childcare spaces has grown by 146 per cent, the number of certified early childhood educators has grown in the sector by 52 per cent, and the average ECE wages have increased by 43 per cent."

The five-year extension of the agreement came into effect April 1, with families paying \$10 per day or \$217.50 per month for full-time childcare.

"Beginning April 1st, children in Kindergarten who turn six on or after that date will remain eligible for a \$10 per day rate until the end of the school year in June or until they turn seven years old - whichever comes first," Hindley stated. "This was a change that Saskatchewan strongly advocated for because we know it's important to families and that other provinces have this provision as well."

Despite that growth, Hindley said funding pressures are forcing a change in approach.

"The federal funding under the agreement is not sufficient to meet the long-term costs of the expanded system," he said.

"While the new agreement includes a three per cent annual escalator beginning in 2027-2028, there is no increase in federal funding for Saskatchewan in the current 2026-2027 fiscal year. In addition, the agreement includes a federal adjustment that calculates funding each year based on Saskatchewan's growth and the population of young children relative to other provinces and territories. And as a result, even with the escalator in place, Saskatchewan may not necessarily see an overall increase in federal funding."

Among the changes set to take effect July 1 are limits on funding tied to licensed spaces, a standardized 10-hour day for care, targeted expansion of new spaces, and guidance allowing operators to charge for services beyond core care.

Hindley said the province is trying to respond to concerns raised by operators.

"We have been hearing from childcare operators, from communities and from parents as well in the sector, that this isn't perfect," he said. "We need to try and find a way to make some changes and to implement some changes here."

He added that affordability is a concern with help for those with the lowest fees.

"The Ministry of Education will increase childcare fee schedules for facilities with the lowest childcare fees, and that's what we refer to as the bottom 20 per cent, effective July 1st," Hindley said. "This will address the funding gap between new and legacy

operators. Those facilities will be contacted directly starting in May, and the fee schedules will be automatically adjusted for those operators effective July 1st of this year."

But providers say the changes will have real-world consequences.

Cara Werner - Executive Director of Dream Big Child Care in Rocanville, and Chair of Child Care Now Saskatchewan - said the announcement came with little warning and raises new uncertainty.

"It was nine o'clock this morning, we got it," Werner said of the government's email to operators that she received as Hindley was speaking with reporters. "I feel like that's kind of par for the course, though - we kind of expect to have this lack of communication with the ministry."

Werner said the changes could undermine affordability by opening the door to new fees.

"These changes fly directly in the face of the agreement that they just signed with the federal government saying that they would maintain that \$10 a day childcare," she said. "This now is showing that they can start charging extra fees to parents."

She also raised concerns about reduced supports and funding pressures.

"We're going to have some of our training supports cut for educators," she said. "We're going to be losing some of our parent fee reduction grant funds. So, this is not good news for centers. This is not good news for parents."

Werner said directors



RYAN KIEDROWSKI | GRASSLANDS NEWS

Critical of childcare

Prior to the government announcement April 23, NDP Education Critic Joan Pratchler met with Grasslands News for her thoughts.

may be forced to pass costs on to families.

"Do you charge those extra fees to parents? Are we going to have to charge extra fees to parents just to keep our doors open?" she said. "Now we're making less on our parent fee grants - there's just so many 'up in the air's right now."

There are 53 families with 77 children that utilize the Rocanville centre, which is licensed for 45 spaces. Dream Big Child Care was looking at expansion, but that growth might be paused.

"Right now, it looks like we're putting space creation on hold," Werner said. "It looks like there's not going to be funding for more expansion for the time being, aside from the centers and the spaces that are already in the process of being created," Werner explained. "Since we're not one of those - from the communication today, it looks like we won't be receiving money for expansion."

Dream Big Child Care employs nine full-time educators and 11 casual part-time support staff, but the impact could be felt beyond the centre and into the community at large.

"If we can't provide it, that's people that are no longer moving to Rocanville," Werner said. "That can affect the economy in town as well."

Opposition NDP education critic Joan Pratchler echoed those concerns, accusing the government of failing to listen to front-line providers.

"I have a simple question for the Minister of Education: why are you ignoring the people that work in the childcare sector?" Pratchler told Grasslands News during a news conference.

She cited a letter from Kelly Swayze, Director with Carnduff Community Daycare, describing frustration within the sector.

"The ministry has left directors who are experts in the field and manage these programs daily feeling disrespected, discouraged and unheard," Pratchler read.

She said providers are not asking for less work,

but for a greater role in decision-making.

"We're not looking for less work," Pratchler quoted. "We are asking for a seat at the table that our experience has earned."

She called on the government to establish a formal advisory body made up of child-care providers.

"When experienced directors say that they feel ignored, disrespected and shut out, that is a failure of leadership," Pratchler said.

She also pointed to financial strain facing centres, particularly those with fees frozen since 2021.

"They are having financial challenges because they've had to have their fees frozen since 2021," she said. "Things have gone up and so they're feeling that crunch."

Pratchler warned that closures in rural communities could have cascading effects.

"If they're at the brink of closing, you know what that means in small towns?" she said. "You've just added 80 to 100 km every day, twice a day for those families."

"You want to shut down a town? You mess with their health care, you mess with their education, you mess with your childcare," she added.

Hindley said the province does engage with the sector, pointing to an existing committee required under the federal agreement.

"It's called an Implementation Committee; it's actually a requirement as per the agreement," he said. "The federal government is part of that, and it does involve a broad swath of providers that are part of that committee."

Officials said engagement sessions and consultations will continue as the changes roll out.

Assistant Deputy Minister Sameema Haque said the ministry aims to minimize impacts on operators while improving consistency. She said most centres already operate within the new 10-hour standard.

"I would say that about 90 per cent of our centers operate 10 hours or less,

so this should have a minimal impact," Haque said.

On funding changes tied to space usage, she said the goal is fairness. She used an example of children attending on different days but using the same spot.

"For a full-time attendee, the ministry is paying the full fees for that spot," Haque said. "In this case, the ministry will still be paying the full fee for that spot, it's just only for the one child that is attending, whether they're attending 10 days or more. But a second child, we still used to do that and use that spot if the operator has the same staffing ratio and is meeting all the regulatory requirements."

Operators are left to obtain the additional revenue through parent fees, but as Haque explained, "we feel that we are fully funding that space through that one grant, just like any other space in that center. In order to have fair and equitable funding across the sector, that is the initiative."

Still, providers say key issues remain unresolved, including calls for a wage grid and more consistent funding.

"We've been asking for that equitable funding model," Werner said. "We've been asking for a wage grid. We've been asking for transparency and communication with the ministry, and there's still things that unfortunately have been falling on deaf ears."

Pratchler said she will be watching closely for further action from the government.

"I hope to be hearing that he's got emergency funding for a situation just like this," she said. "I hope that he's got a plan for an equitable funding formula for our care providers."

"I hope that he's going to listen to the providers in a meaningful way," she added.

For now, both operators and families face uncertainty as the new measures take effect this summer, with debate continuing over whether the changes will stabilize the system or deepen existing challenges.



RYAN KIEDROWSKI | GRASSLANDS NEWS

Minister's update

Education Minister Everett Hindley delivered an update on the province's \$10 a day childcare plan to reporters on April 23.

OPINION

"For the cause that needs assistance;
for the wrong that needs resistance;
the future in the distance and
the good that we can do."

Debate is healthy— calling for death is not

There's a line in public discourse that should be obvious, but increasingly feels blurred: disagreement is part of democracy; calling for someone's death is not.

In an era where every comment can reach millions within seconds, the responsibility carried by celebrities, influencers and high-profile commentators has never been greater. Platforms like X and television aren't just places for conversation anymore—they are amplifiers. Words spoken there don't stay among friends. They travel, they stick, and sometimes, they incite.

The recent controversy involving Jimmy Kimmel and Donald Trump underscores just how volatile things have become. During a parody segment tied to the White House Correspondents' Dinner, Kimmel joked that Melania Trump "had a glow like an expectant widow." Many saw the line as distasteful, particularly because it appeared to allude—however indirectly—to harm coming to her husband.

The context made it worse. A shooting incident at the White House Correspondents' Dinner was widely reported as the third attempt on Trump's life. In that kind of climate, even remarks framed as humour can land very differently—and far more dangerously—than intended.

But this moment should not just be about one comedian, one joke, or one political figure. It should force a broader reflection on how far rhetoric has drifted.

Because beyond satire and criticism, there is a darker trend creeping into public dialogue: the normalization of language that hints at, jokes about, or outright calls for violence against those we disagree with.

That is where the line must be drawn—clearly, firmly, and without exception.

Free expression is a cornerstone of democratic society. It protects the right to criticize leaders, challenge ideas, and even offend. Whether it is the President of the United States, the Prime Minister of Canada, a provincial premier, or a local councillor, public figures must expect scrutiny. That is healthy and necessary.

But free expression was never intended to shield threats or incitement. When people with massive audiences casually reference violence—whether framed as humour or exaggeration—they risk something far more serious than backlash. They risk being taken literally.

And in a polarized climate, that risk is real.

It only takes one unstable individual, one person convinced they are justified, to turn words into tragedy. When influential voices flirt with violent language, they are not just venting frustration—they are potentially lighting a fuse.

This is not about silencing debate. People have every right to strongly oppose politicians, policies, or public figures. They can argue, protest, campaign, and vote. They can ridicule and criticize. That is all fair game.

But calling for someone's death—or even joking in a way that normalizes the idea—crosses into dangerous territory that should not be tolerated.

And it shouldn't matter who the target is. Whether it's a U.S. president, a Canadian prime minister, or any public figure, the standard must be the same.

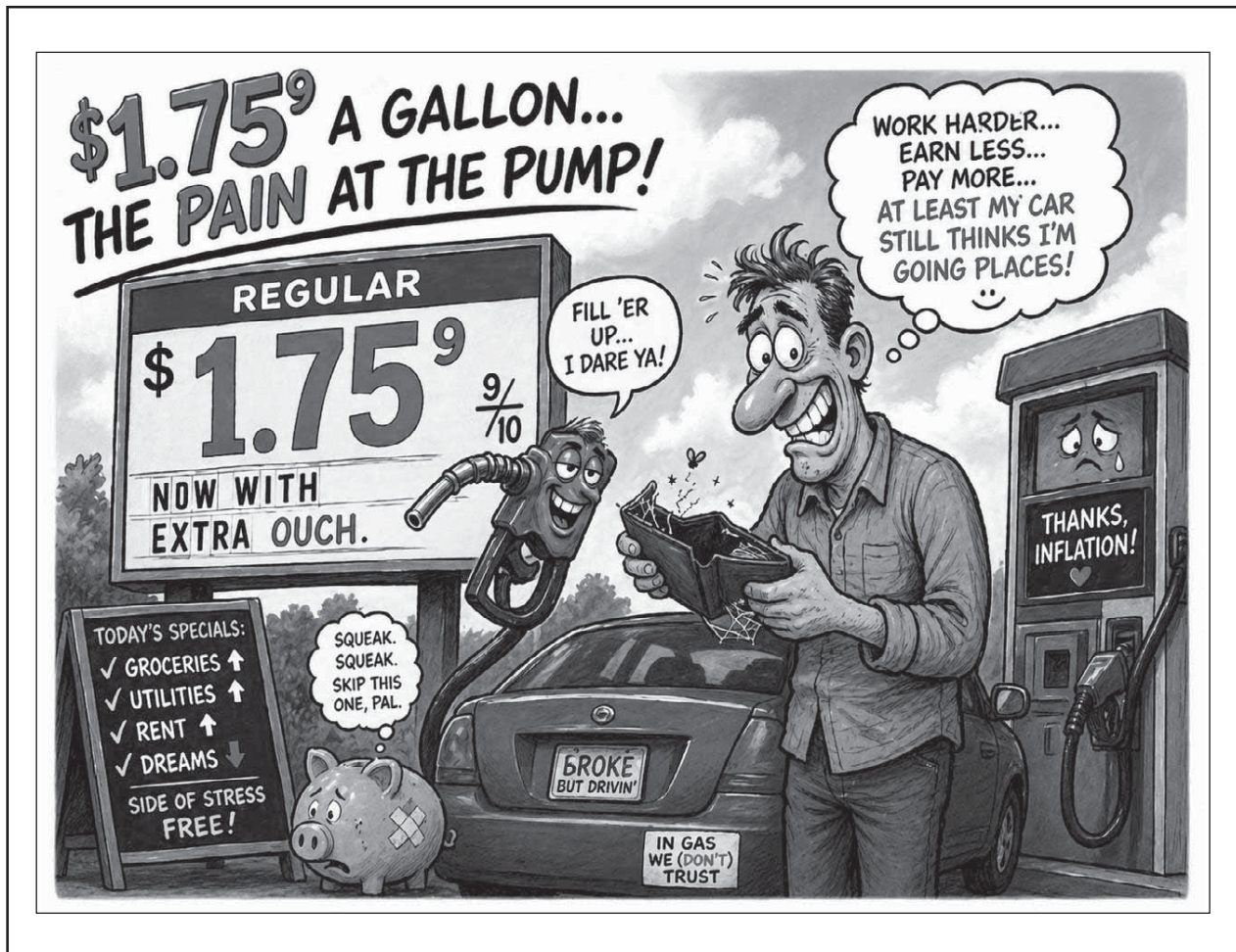
That raises a fair question: should there be consequences beyond public outrage?

If an average person made a direct threat, there could be legal repercussions. Yet too often, those with large platforms seem to operate in a grey area, shielded by fame or the defence that their words were "just jokes." That double standard deserves scrutiny.

Tone matters. Words matter. And when those words reach millions, they carry weight whether intended or not.

If we want to cool the temperature of public discourse, the expectation should be simple: argue hard, criticize freely, but never advocate harm.

- Chris Ashfield, Grasslands



Voters push back as trust erodes over floor crossing

Across Canada, a shift is beginning to take hold. Voters are no longer just voicing frustration over politicians who cross the floor—they are starting to push back, organize, and fight for accountability.

What was once accepted as a political manoeuvre is now being challenged as a breach of trust.

The latest flashpoint involves Marilyn Gladu, who left the Conservative Party in April to join the Liberals under Mark Carney. The reaction from constituents in Sarnia—Lambton—Bkejwanong has gone far beyond online criticism.

They are organizing.

They are fundraising.

And they are preparing legal action.

A group of residents has launched a legal campaign alleging fraudulent misrepresentation, breach of fiduciary duty, promissory estoppel and unjust enrichment—serious claims that will ultimately be tested, or not, in court.

Whether that lawsuit proceeds or succeeds is almost beside the point.

What matters is why it exists at all.

People are not just upset about one decision by one MP. They are reacting to a system that allows the balance of power in Ottawa to shift without a single voter casting a ballot. In this case, the concern is not only that an MP changed parties, but that such moves can contribute to a government strengthening its

position without seeking a renewed mandate.

That strikes at the heart of democratic accountability—and increasingly, public confidence in the system itself.

Because the concern does not stop at what has already happened. It extends to what could happen.

If left unchecked, voters may begin to question whether candidates could run under a party banner they know is more likely to win in a given riding, only to switch allegiance after the election. Even the perception that such a strategy is possible is damaging. It opens the door to the idea that election outcomes can be manipulated after the fact, undermining the very foundation of trust that democratic systems rely on.

Supporters of floor crossing will argue—correctly—that MPs are elected as individuals. They are not legally bound to their parties, and circumstances can change. Conscience, principle, or disagreements within a caucus can all be legitimate reasons for an MP to sit as an independent or even join another party.

But there is a difference between what is legally permissible and what is ethically sound.

Voters do not cast ballots in a vacuum. Party affiliation matters. Platforms matter. Leadership matters. When a candidate campaigns under one banner and then adopts another after the election, it is reasonable for

constituents to feel that the contract—informal as it may be—has been broken.

The solution is not complicated.

If an MP wishes to change parties, they should be required to face their constituents in a byelection.

Let voters decide.

If the move is justified, if the MP can explain their reasoning and earn renewed support, they will be returned to office with a stronger mandate than before. If not, the riding has the opportunity to choose someone who better reflects its views.

That is how democracy is supposed to work.

Without that safeguard, public trust erodes. Cynicism grows. And increasingly, as seen in this case, citizens look for other avenues—petitions, protests, even lawsuits—to try to reclaim a voice they feel has been taken from them.

This is not about one MP or one riding.

It is about a principle: that political power should flow from the people, not shift behind closed doors.

If Canada's political leaders want to rebuild trust, they would be wise to listen to what constituents are saying—not just in Sarnia—Lambton—Bkejwanong, but across the country.

Because at the end of the day, a vote should mean something.

And so should the trust that comes with it.

- Chris Ashfield, Grasslands



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• Kipling Clipper
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Acoose stays focused on supporting others

By Calvin Daniels
Grasslands News

At some point in her personal journey, Iris Acoose says she knew she wanted to be a support to others.

Today she does that through her work with the Yorkton Tribal Council, Indian Residential School Resolution Health Support Program.

"I have been a Resolution Health Support Worker since 2007 - 19 years, providing emotional and cultural support to individuals, families, and communities, facilitating workshops, Healing Circles, Kairos Blanket Exercises, information and support sessions, coordinating events like Orange Shirt Day, Indian Residential School Gatherings and Round Dances," Acoose, who was born in Broadview August 1949, told Grasslands News.

But it was a long and not always easy journey to her current position with YTC.

"I lived on the Zagime Anishnabek First Nation until the age of six. The summer that I turned six, I was taken to the Marieval Indian Residential School by my mother and grandmother," she explained.

"I attended the Indian Residential School for six years, going home mostly in the summer months for the holidays.

"While I was at the school my family relocated to Melville, and in 1963 I attended at the St. Henry's School."

Acoose - daughter of Fred and Harriet Acoose - said her time at the school impacted her in terms of understanding who she was.

"My experience at the

Marieval Indian Residential School played havoc with my self-identity, self-image and self-esteem, and familial and cultural connections," she said. "There were many years of struggling with the effects, years of soul searching, and finding and reaching out to individuals who were available to provide enlightenment and support."

Acoose's own efforts to come to terms with her residential school experience eventually led her to take the step of helping others.

"At some point in my journey, I knew that I wanted to be a support to others. I especially wanted to work with our people," she said.

"I could not understand why our people were not seen, not acknowledged, not allowed and/or welcomed to participate in the larger scale of our country's reality. The times we were seen or acknowledged always seemed to be in a negative sense, (such as) conflict with the law."

Acoose said she wanted to give back in some fashion, and effect some change too.

"I wanted to help change where we were at as individuals, families and Nations," she said. "Early in life, I wondered why I never seen any of our people in the teaching positions at any of the schools I attended, and I wondered why I didn't see our people in all the other professions, businesses -- I didn't see our people hardly anywhere until the mid-60s.

"In the mid-60s seems like there were more of our people taking their rightful place."

It has been a journey

that has seen Acoose - the mother of three, grandmother of 11 and great grandmother of 18 -- moving as she found her way to eventually return home.

"I am grateful for family and friends, for the knowledge, wisdom, and abilities developed over the years; for the resources and people that have been and continue to be a part of my journey," she said.

Throughout her adult life she made her home in Prince Albert, Saskatoon, and Edmonton.

"In 2002 I decided to move back home to the Zagime Anishnabek First Nation, and shortly thereafter I was elected as a Band Councillor," said Acoose.

Some of the work Acoose has done has included being a Native Court Worker and Regional Director for Native Court Worker Services of Saskatchewan, in the Prince Albert, Regina and Saskatoon, providing support to individuals who came into conflict, with the law, being a Case Management Officer and Addictions Counselor at a Federal Institution for federally sentenced men, Staff Training Officer for the Correctional Service of Canada, Senior Trainer at the Nechi Institute on Training, Health Promotion and Research. Facilitating the Substance Abuse Program for Federally Sentenced Women, at the Edmonton Institution for Women, Population Health Strategist at HIV Edmonton, supporting and developing the Aboriginal portfolio. Zagime First Nations Band Councillor and Indian Residential School Resolution Health Support Program.

At the heart of much of the work has been the lingering trauma of residential schools on individuals, families and communities.

"The Indian Residential School Agreement was the largest class action in Canadian history, elements of the agreement included an Endowment to the Aboriginal Healing Foundation, Health Supports like the RHSP, the Common Experience Payment, Independent Assessment Process, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, and Commemoration. Resolution Health and Cultural Support Workers provided support throughout the application and implementation of these processes," explained Acoose.

"The Indian Residential Schools were in operation in Canada for over 160 years.

"Generations of our First Nations people were affected by their experience at these schools."

The process of dealing with the trauma is ongoing, said Acoose.

"Healing from the trauma of these experiences will take at least as many years as the schools were operational, 160 years, and the number of years following each of the survivors' journeys after leaving the schools," she said.

Are we seeing progress in terms of dealing with the lingering effects?

"I do believe that we are moving forward, the Indian Residential School Experience has been acknowledged, apologies made, monetary compensation made and we have, and have work to do, on the 94 Calls to Action," offered Acoose.

And just as importantly



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Supporting others

Iris Acoose works with the Yorkton Tribal Council, Indian Residential School Resolution Health Support Program.

people are telling their stories.

"People are willing to talk and want to be heard, that is part of the healing process," said Acoose.

"However, at some point in time we need to act. There are numerous programs and supports in place for people, there are workshops, gatherings, conferences, language and cultural programs, land-based teachings, work is done with the Elders and Knowledge Keepers in the lodges and ceremonies, and they are there, and need to be, for those who want them."

Acoose said good intentions must be followed by actions which ultimately

makes things better.

"My thoughts about Truth and Reconciliation, there is much work to be done," she said. "Our stories need to be heard; the truth needs to be spoken. Starting from a place of truth provides the opportunity for all concerned to do the work that is spelled out in the 94 Calls to Action and move forward in a spirit of reconciliation.

Acoose said she remains focused on being part of the process.

"At times people ask me when are you going to retire, my response is I haven't thought about it," she said. "There is much work to be done, and I like the work I do."



In the swing

The 'Spring Swing Thing' concert was held Sunday at the Anne Portnuff Theatre in Yorkton. The afternoon affair featured the Saskatoon Junior Jazz Band with YRHS Jazz and Yorkton's All That Jazz Big Band with vocalist Stephanie Andres.

CALVIN DANIELS | GRASSLANDS NEWS

More than \$3.4M in gaming grants flow to communities

Communities receiving funds include dozens across southeast Saskatchewan

By GNG Staff
Grasslands News

More than \$3.4 million in charitable gaming grants has been distributed to community groups across Saskatchewan, with a significant share supporting organizations in southeast and east-central communities served by Grasslands News Group.

The fourth-quarter funding for 2025-26, announced April 29, reached more than 1,500 organizations provincially, including local groups in Balcarres, Balgonie, Broadview, Cupar, Dysart, Emerald Park, Esterhazy, Fort Qu'Appelle, Grayson, Grenfell, Indian Head, Ituna, Kennedy, Kipling, Lebret, Melville, Montmartre, Moosomin, Neudorf, Odessa, Pilot Butte, Qu'Appelle and surrounding areas.

"These gaming grants go to groups engaged in a diverse

range of activities, including arts, culture and sport, hospital foundations, service clubs and more," said Minister responsible for Lotteries and Gaming Saskatchewan Jeremy Harrison.

Figures from the Saskatchewan Liquor and Gaming Authority show funding flowing into a wide range of grassroots organizations in the region, from minor sports to seniors' groups, libraries, churches and community halls.

In Balgonie, organizations received more than \$12,300, largely supporting Prairie Storm minor hockey and ringette programs. Esterhazy groups saw over \$21,400 distributed, including strong support for the Lions Club, Legion and gymnastics programs. Indian Head organizations received more than \$7,500, with funding directed to minor hockey, child-

care, dance and service clubs, while Melville groups were allocated over \$12,200 supporting minor hockey, childcare, the Millionaires junior A club and local service organizations.

Moosomin organizations received just over \$6,100, including support for arts, service clubs and the Legion, while Pilot Butte groups saw more than \$6,200 in funding, largely tied to youth sports programs. Broadview received over \$6,000, primarily through the Lions Club, and Cupar organizations were allocated more than \$4,700 across healthcare, minor sports and community groups. Kipling groups received just over \$4,100, including funding for the fire department, childcare and minor ball, while Fort Qu'Appelle saw more than \$3,600 distributed across arts, heritage and service organizations.

Smaller but still meaning-

ful funding allocations were also seen in communities such as Balcarres, Dysart, Emerald Park, Grayson, Grenfell, Ituna, Kennedy, Lebret, Montmartre, Neudorf, Odessa and Qu'Appelle, reflecting the broad reach of the program into even the smallest centres.

Across the broader coverage area, funding also touched communities including Whitewood, Wolseley, Yorkton, Springside, Theodore, Vibank, Wawota, White City and Stoughton through regional organizations and nearby allocations.

The grants are tied directly to charitable gaming activities such as bingos, raffles, break-open ticket sales and poker tournaments. Organizations receive funding equal to 25 per cent of net revenue raised, up to a maximum of \$100,000 annually.

That structure ensures local fundraising efforts are

reinvested directly back into communities, helping keep programs affordable and sustainable—particularly in youth sports, recreation facilities and community services that rely heavily on volunteers.

The latest funding round reached more than 280 communities across Saskatchewan, with major urban centres also seeing significant allocations, including more than \$885,000 in Regina and over \$714,000 in Saskatoon. Regionally, Melville and area accounted for more than \$150,700 in funding, reflecting the strong participation of local groups in charitable gaming programs.

Officials say the program remains one of the most direct ways community organizations can leverage local support into stable funding, with the impact seen across nearly every corner of southeast Saskatchewan.

Yorkton author pens new children's learning book

By Calvin Daniels
Grasslands News

A new children's book by Yorkton's Twila Napoleoni introduces youngsters to Spanish.

The book León es Lion launched recently and the ebook can be downloaded from sites such as Amazon.

"This will help bring traction to my book and helps other families find it," she explained.

"But in the end, I would love to get the physical copy into parents' and children's hands. There is something very special and organic about cuddling up and reading a book with your child."

Napoleoni said the book is one which has sort of percolated in her mind for years before becoming more than an idea.

"This book started years ago when my daughters were very little," said the author. "As a mom and educator with a bilingual family, I was always com-

ing up with ways to teach our daughters both their father's native tongue (Spanish) and mine.

"I'd often make things up - from bilingual lullabies to little rhymes. It was fun!

"This rhyme flowed out of that era and the abundance of learning that was taking place in my daughters' little minds."

Of course, the idea evolved somewhat.

"I was also fascinated with sign language and the beautiful role it played to bridge our two languages together," said Napoleoni. "As this rhyme came into being, I would research the sign to go with it, thus instilling three languages to one concept.

"Through it, my daughters had 16 animal names -- plus a few extra words -- which they memorized in both Spanish, English, and Sign. Because I wanted my family more immersed in learning Spanish, I opened up my home to teach a Spanish class for toddlers -- which

the year after moved to the Family Resource Centre."

The move led to another step -- the eventual book.

"That is when the illustrations came to life," offered Napoleoni. "Each animal is cut from different kinds of papers I had. And if I didn't have a colour I wanted, we finger painted one!"

A book was born.

"That first year, I printed enough books to give to each of the families that were in that class, but it was a basic photobook type of print," said Napoleoni. "That's probably when the idea came to actually publish my book.

"However, amidst the business of life and raising a family, this idea didn't get worked on as much as I wanted."

Then time opened for Napoleoni to finally focus on the book project.

"This past spring I had a break in my schedule and decided it was time to bring this project to fruition," she said.

Napoleoni said the book is one which is simple in its approach to education, but it works too.

"It's a simple little whimsical book whose rhyme sticks," she said.

"I love hearing stories over the years from the parents of those first students who could recite the whole book by heart!"

"I love instigating learning in little lives and I'm so happy that this

book -- that blessed a few -- can now have a farther reach. It's important to note that, because sign language played such a big part for me to bridge Spanish and English, the book contains a QR code to a video I created which helps with pronunciation and teaches simple ASL.

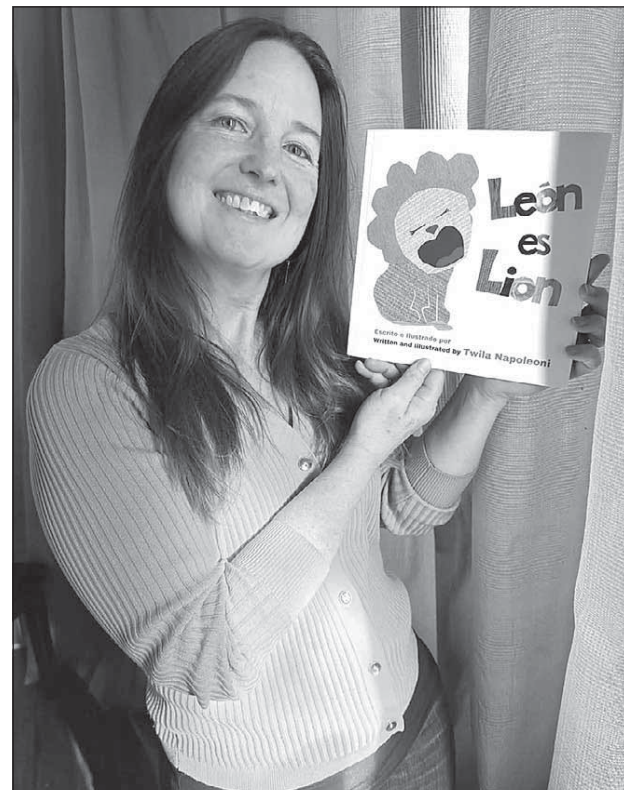
"I've also intentionally created the book so En-

glish speakers can learn Spanish, and Spanish speakers can learn English."

Napoleoni now hopes to grow the project.

"My next step after this is creating a board book of León es Lion," she said. "I want to get this book literally into the hands of my small readers and board books do that so well.

"After that, I have in mind a few more books to put out -- both in this series and others. It's been a learning curve to get my book past the initial creation stage, but I've grown a lot through the process and am grateful for the encouragement of family and friends as I launch this book from a dream to reality."



Twila Napoleoni with her book León es Lion.

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Meeting space in Sask. Leg. now Hall of Valour

By Ryan Kiedrowski
Grasslands News

A ceremonial room inside Saskatchewan Legislative Building has been formally renamed the Hall of Valour, in a move the provincial government says will honour past, present, and future members of the Canadian Armed Forces while reinforcing calls for greater national recognition of military bravery.

Premier Scott Moe joined Provincial Military Liaison Blaine McLeod, veterans, and serving members on April 22 for the unveiling of the renamed Room 218, which features displays recognizing 15 Saskatchewan recipients of the Victoria Cross.

"The brave men and women of our Canadian Armed Forces are deserving of our gratitude, whether they have served in times of conflict or peace," Moe said. "The Hall of Valour stands as a lasting expression of our remembrance and appreciation for that service. It is an immense privilege to live in a Canada that is strong and free, and the seat of Saskatchewan's government will honour that privilege by recognizing all who serve."

Moe said the renaming serves a dual purpose – recognizing veterans and supporting a broader push to revisit how Canada awards its highest military honour.

"I think two reasons come to mind, although there are many," he said. "The first is to honour our veterans, honour those that have served. Second, this is part of a larger process to reinstitute the opportunities that we have as Canadians to honour with that very prestigious honour, the Victoria Cross, more individuals in the future."

The Victoria Cross, first established in 1856, is the highest award for valour in the Commonwealth. Canada created its own version in 1993, but it has never been awarded.

McLeod said momentum is building to change that, pointing to a petition recently presented in Ottawa calling for an independent military honours review board.

"Thousands of Canadians have served since World War II and hundreds have



RYAN KIEDROWSKI | GRASSLANDS NEWS

Remembering the brave

Retired Brig.-Gen. Cliff Walker speaks during the official renaming of Room 218 to the Hall of Valour at the Legislative Building, as Provincial Military Liaison Blaine McLeod and Premier Scott Moe watch on.

made the ultimate sacrifice for their country," McLeod said. "Now is the time to restore the honour of the Victoria Cross and recognize the bravery and valour in the presence of the enemy demonstrated by armed forces personnel as Canada continues to stand on the global stage, ready to defend our sovereignty as a nation."

The province has taken a leading role in that effort. A motion introduced in the Saskatchewan legislature in December calling for a federal review process passed unanimously, and officials say multiple provinces have since followed suit.

Retired Brig.-Gen. Cliff Walker called the renaming a significant milestone in a decades-long push to better recognize military service.

"Today, for the first time in well over 100 years, a room in the legislature will be named in honour of 15 of the most courageous people who have ever lived on this land," he said.

Walker noted that the last Canadian Victoria Cross was awarded more than

80 years ago, despite what he described as numerous acts of bravery since the Second World War.

"Since 1945, numerous young Canadian soldiers have performed deeds of valour without once being recognized with the Victoria Cross," he said.

He added Saskatchewan's efforts could lead to new recipients being recognized.

"I think that we may well see a 16th addition to the photographs in this room in the not-too-distant future," Walker said.

The Hall of Valour itself builds on an installation first unveiled in 2018, featuring portraits and replica medals of Saskatchewan's Victoria Cross recipients. The room is used frequently for government meetings, receptions, and public events — a deliberate choice, Moe said, to ensure visitors encounter the display.

"When people come to the Legislative Assembly, there is a very large chance that they are going to be in what was room 218," Moe said. "That's why those 15 shadow boxes are on display here, so

that anyone that comes to this building has the opportunity to read, to see, and to honour them."

The date of the unveiling was also chosen for its historical significance, marking anniversaries tied to Canadian military service, including the Second Battle of Ypres in 1915 and the Battle of Kapyong during the Korean War.

Moe referenced the experience of Canadian soldiers during those conflicts, quoting a Saskatchewan soldier Alex White's account from the trenches at Ypres in 1915. This particular event was known for Germany's first mass use of poison gas on the Western Front.

"There's a great smoke coming. I can't take my breath. Orders to the Canadians to stand fast," Moe said, recounting the diary entry. "Canadians faced heavy losses but held the line until reinforcements arrived."

He said such examples highlight the importance of continued recognition.

"The bravery and resilience of our armed forces and every individual that has served are just as essential today as they were in every battle that came before," Moe said.

In the legislature later that day, Moe told MLAs the Hall of Valour honours "the significant contributions of servicemen and women of our great province and nation."

McLeod echoed that sentiment, describing the renamed room as both a tribute and a reminder.

"When people come to their legislature, they will remember," he said.

Walker said the designation will leave a lasting legacy within the building.

"Many years from now, when all of us are gone, future generations will think that this chamber has always been named thus," he said. "This is a singular honour for everyone present to be here when Room 218 was officially dedicated as the Hall of Valour."

The room's entrance now bears its new name in bronze lettering alongside a plaque recognizing the courage and sacrifice of Canadian soldiers, stating that their service "has preserved our freedom" and serves as a reminder that democratic institutions are protected by those willing to defend them.

Tommy Charles and his band were rocking at the final Arts Council concert

By Connie Schwalm
Grasslands News

Last Friday, April 24, Tommy Charles and his band brought around 100 people into the Community Centre in Kipling to enjoy a high-energy final concert of the season. Charles is well-known in Alberta

and making his mark in this province, bringing his clean, classic country music sound reminiscent of Marty Robbins and Conway Twitty to small-town stages through his current OCAS tour.

Matty O'Connell with the Kipling and District Arts Council notes that the show was an excellent way to end the season.

"It was a great performance" says

O'Connell. "We had a lot of comments mentioning that this was our best show of the season, and one fellow saying this was the best show he'd seen in years."

O'Connell goes on to say that Charles was engaged with his audience, and intent on giving them an evening to remember.

"I thought that Tommy did a really great job of mixing his own music with

covers that people love and enjoy" he observes. "You could also tell that he was reading the room quite well and making changes. He mentioned during one set that he'd thrown some curve balls at his band. But they navigated the evening well and kept the audience engaged."

"Overall, we had tremendous comments about the show and people left feeling excited about next season.



CONNIE SCHWALM | GRASSLANDS NEWS

Country classic

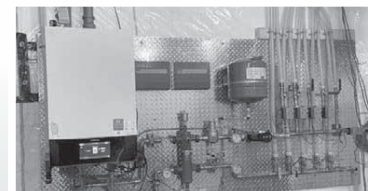
Tommy Charles and his band took to the stage for the final concert of the Arts Council season Friday evening, offering up a blend of original music and country favourites.

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It's cookies for cancer time

By Calvin Daniels
Grasslands News

The 2026 edition of the Brayden Ottenbreit Close Cuts for Cancer 'Smile Cookies for Cancer' campaign kicked off Monday.

"We're very happy with the ninth year of partnership with Tim Hortons," said Leone Ottenbreit with Brayden Ottenbreit Close Cuts at a press conference. "It's a fundraiser for us."

In its eighth year – 2025 – the campaign raised \$22,000, with the total over the eight years at \$88,000, said Ottenbreit.

While Ottenbreit said they do not like to set goals for the fundraiser, she did say if they could "get past \$100,000 (overall program total) this year, that would be fantastic."

The money raised goes to support local cancer patients and their families through the Brayden Ottenbreit Close Cuts for Cancer Local Cancer Initiatives Program. The local initiatives are targeted to help local cancer patients and their families.

The support can help families in a number of ways, from covering the cost

of the first night's stay at the Regina Cancer Patient Lodge or Ronald McDonald House in Saskatoon or help young cancer patients attend a medically supervised summer camp.

Tim Hortons' manager Vishal Sharma said he has been pleased with the support the cookie campaign has received. He said the effort is as successful as it is because of the support of volunteers decorating the cookies, and businesses and individuals who buy the \$2 cookies which goes to such a good cause.

The first-ever Smile Cookie campaign in 1996 raised funds to support Hamilton Children's Hospital. Since then, the annual charitable campaign has raised a total of more than \$150 million for charities and community groups that are selected every year by Tim Hortons restaurant owners. Last year, Smile Cookie raised more than \$22.6 million, supporting over 600 charities and community groups across Canada and in the United States. Recipients include local hospitals, community care organizations, food banks and schools.



Calvin Daniels | Grasslands News

Making cookies

Carol Stringfellow and Birget Mass decorate Cancer 'Smile Cookies for Cancer' at Tim Hortons in Yorkton Monday.

Most popular baby names in 2025

By GNG Staff
Grasslands News

Familiar favourites continued to dominate baby name choices across Saskatchewan in 2025, with Noah and Olivia once again topping the list for boys and girls.

Figures released by eHealth Saskatchewan show the two names maintaining their popularity, reflecting ongoing trends among new parents across the province.

Noah led all boys' names with 49 registrations, narrowly ahead of Jack at 48. One of the most notable developments on the boys' list was the continued rise of Muhammad, which tied for third place alongside Oliver and William with 44 registrations each. The name has climbed quickly since first appearing on the top 20 list in 2023 and continues to gain broader acceptance across diverse communities.

Several other names are also gaining momentum. Hudson and Theodore continued their steady rise up the rankings, while Weston made its first-ever appearance on the list in 13th place. Grayson returned to the top 20 after being absent since 2021. In contrast, Henry — last year's top boys' name — dropped to 11th place, highlighting how quickly preferences can shift from year to

year.

On the girls' side, Olivia reclaimed the top spot after briefly giving it up to Sophia in 2024. The name has now ranked as Saskatchewan's most popular girls' name in nine of the past 10 years, underscoring its long-standing appeal and consistency among parents.

Lainey saw one of the most dramatic increases, jumping from 20th place last year — its first appearance on the list — into a tie for second place with Nora at 37 registrations each. Amelia, Evelyn and Sophia rounded out the upper tier of names, showing a mix of classic and modern influences that continue to resonate.

Other perennial favourites remained firmly in the rankings, with names such as Emma, Charlotte,

Ellie and Lily continuing to be popular choices among parents, suggesting a preference for timeless names alongside newer entries.

The rankings are based on a preliminary count of 13,408 live births registered in Saskatchewan during the 2025 calendar year, compared to 13,207 in 2024. The figures do not include babies born outside the province.

The annual list offers a snapshot of evolving naming preferences, blending traditional choices with emerging trends that reflect the province's growing diversity and changing tastes.

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Police make many arrests, lay charges

By Ryan Kiedrowski
Grasslands News

Grenfell man charged after suspected abduction

A high-speed chase with a large police presence kept residents in the Fort Qu'Appelle area on high alert April 22, resulting in two arrests.

"Shortly after 1 p.m. today (April 22), Broadview RCMP received a report of a person possibly forcibly confined in a blue SUV that left a business in the Grenfell area," noted RCMP. "The vehicle was located in the Indian Head and then Fort Qu'Appelle detachment areas driving at a high rate of speed."

Police followed the SUV, which stopped north of Fort Qu'Appelle, with RCMP arresting the two occupants – a man and a woman – without injury or incident.

Just after 2 p.m., a community safety alert went out to residents of Standing Buffalo and Pasqua First Nations of a blue Chevrolet Equinox possibly heading to their communities from the File Hills area.

"There are unconfirmed reports of a possible hostage situation," noted the alert. "File Hills RCMP are asking the public to be vigilant."

The public was advised to stay indoors, not approach the vehicle, report any sightings to police, and keep doors locked.

One resident confirmed that the vehicle was stopped on Redman Road moments after the message was posted.

In an update, police confirmed the male occupant of the vehicle is facing charges.

"Through coordinated efforts, Broadview RCMP worked alongside Saskatchewan RCMP Combined Traffic Services, White Butte RCMP and Yorkton RCMP Police Dog Services, Indian Head RCMP, and Fort Qu'Appelle RCMP throughout the investigation, resulting in an arrest," RCMP said.

James Delorme, 44, of Grenfell has been charged with two counts fail to comply; and single counts each of assault, forcible confinement, dangerous operation of a motor vehicle, operation while prohibited, and flight from peace officer.

He appeared in Broadview Provincial Court on April 23, with a bail hearing set for April 29.

The female passenger has since been released, and Broadview RCMP continue to investigate.

Accused in Rocanville drug bust continue before courts

What began as a wellness check in Rocanville turned into Moosomin RCMP seizing a stolen truck from Manitoba plus a large amount of illicit drugs, with two people arrested to boot.

Echo Tacan, 24, and Shelby Ducharme, 29, were each charged with four counts possession for the purpose of trafficking (methamphetamine, cocaine, fentanyl, and hydromorphone); plus single counts possession of property obtained by crime over \$5,000, and unauthorized possession of a firearm.

Ducharme was additionally charged with single counts possession of a firearm when knowing possession unauthorized, and weapons possession contrary to order.

The pair made initial appearances in Yorkton Provincial Court on March 27, and they both continue to navigate the court system. Ducharme's matters have since been adjourned to May 11 in Yorkton to review disclosure. Tacan appeared in Moosomin Provincial Court on April 28 for a bail hearing, which was adjourned to May 1 in Yorkton. The charges stem from police being called to check on an individual parked in a truck on Francis Street in Rocanville on March 26.

"Officers responded and located a female inside the truck and a male in close proximity to the vehicle," RCMP noted. "After confirming their well-being, officers determined the male was wanted on warrant by Moosomin RCMP and the female was wanted on warrant by Esterhazy RCMP. Both of them were arrested by Moosomin RCMP at the scene."

Investigation also revealed the truck was previously reported as stolen in Virden.

"During a subsequent search of the truck, Moosomin RCMP located and seized a firearm and ammunition, as well as approximately 56 grams of methamphetamine, 43 grams of cocaine, 47 grams of fentanyl, and 340 pharmaceutical-style pills," said RCMP.

Arrests made in Anderson homicide

The Regina Police Service has made two arrests in relation to an

ongoing homicide investigation. The second homicide in Regina thus far in 2026, the victim was Myles Anderson, 36, who was facing charges stemming from an incident on the George Gordon First Nation.

"On Friday, April 24, a search warrant was executed on a residence in the 1600 block of Toronto Street," RPS noted. "Police located 29-year-old Blayne Okemaysim inside the residence and took him into custody."

He made a first appearance in Regina Provincial Court April 27 on a single count charge of second-degree murder.

Police made a second arrest in relation to the murder as 26-year-old Jordan Goodpipe was also arrested and charged April 27 with second degree murder. His first appearance on this charge in Regina Provincial Court was scheduled for April 28.

Back on April 13, RPS were called to the 3100 block of Fifth Avenue for a report of an injured male around 1:15 a.m.

"Life-saving measures were attempted by officers until EMS arrived and declared the victim deceased on scene," noted RPS in a statement. "The area was secured and the Regina Police Service Major Crimes Unit, the Regina Police Service Forensic Identification Unit and the Saskatchewan Coroners Service were called in."

Anderson was set to appear in Punnichy Provincial Court a day after his death on charges of arson, break and enter to steal a firearm, theft under \$5,000, unauthorized possession of a firearms, unsafe storage of a firearm, and possession of property obtained by crime under \$5,000.

He was arrested by Punnichy RCMP in relation to a fire on the George Gordon First Nation. RCMP were called to a residence around 6:45 a.m. on Feb. 1, responding along with local fire services. While no injuries were reported, the house was heavily damaged. Later the same day, police received reports of a man walking with a firearm on the First Nation, just before 1 p.m.

Anderson is remembered as "an amazing father, partner, son, brother, nephew, pop-pop and artist, leaving behind beautiful memories and family who loved him dearly." He was described as "a resilient, courageous, kind-hearted soul who was full of jokes and always loved to make those around him laugh and smile."

Gene Hauta

It's a Strange World



Three people, including a 10-month-old girl, were **killed when high winds toppled a 100-foot tree** in northern Germany during an Easter egg hunt. Around 50 people from a nearby residential facility for new mothers, pregnant women, and children were attending the event in woods near the town of Satrupholm. Four people were pinned under the tree.

A 21-year-old woman and a 16-year-old girl were treated by first responders but died at the scene, while the woman's 10-month-old daughter died later in the hospital. The facility is part of the state-funded child welfare system and supports pregnant women and new mothers who need help.

Meanwhile, a different twist in Long Beach, CA, as an **Easter egg hunt took a tragic turn** after a family discovered possible human remains in DeForest Park. Colorful Easter eggs could be seen scattered across a dirt path just feet away from what a family believes is a human skull, possibly that of a young child.

A celebration at one of Haiti's most famous historic sites turned deadly over Easter, with authorities fearing at least **30 people were killed in a crowd crush**. The stampede unfolded at Citadelle Laferrière, a 19th-century mountain fortress and UNESCO World Heritage site in northern Haiti, during an annual Easter gathering that had been heavily promoted on social media. It appears that the crush started near the entrance, as some people were trying to enter and others leave, and worsened when heavy rain hit the crowded site.

A California hospice where nearly all "terminal" patients were still alive after five years has become the latest flashpoint in a widening Medicare fraud crackdown. Federal agents arrested Gladwin and Amelou Gill, a married physician and psychologist who co-own 626 Hospice, accused of billing Medicare \$7.45 million for patients prosecutors say shouldn't have qualified for end-of-life care. The broader operation involved 15 defendants, more than half tied to alleged hospice schemes. Some suspects were allegedly running scams from behind bars. **Among the suspects are nurses and other health care professionals**. Reportedly, the defendants recruited beneficiaries who were not terminally ill, and paid them to pose as patients receiving hospice care, billing Medicare for millions of dollars on false and fraudulent claims submitted by fraudsters.

An 18-month-old's **encounter with a wolf** has led to criminal charges for the toddler's parents after the incident at ZooAmerica in Hershey, Pa. Police say the child slipped under an outer fence, crawled to the wolf habitat's main barrier, and put their hand through the metal fencing, where a wolf latched on. Bystanders stepped in and helped pull the child away, and the toddler suffered only minor injuries. Parents Carrie Sortor, 43, and Stephen Wilson, 61, were charged both with one count of child endangerment. It appears that the pair were seated 25 to 30 feet from the toddler and appeared to be focused on their phones.

The public has made up for two **unappreciative hikers who needed an hours-long rescue** on England's highest peak, then scurried off without paying their hotel bill or returning borrowed gear. Wasdale Mountain Rescue Team says it was called to help the two young men in dangerous winter conditions. The operation took seven hours and was deemed 'avoidable' by the team, which noted one of the hikers had a prior leg injury and was using a hospital crutch. After they were brought down, a hotel manager offered them snacks and a room at 35% off. Explaining that their money was still in a tent at their campsite, they took off without paying or thanking anyone. The team says that in the morning the men did not thank hotel staff and pushed for breakfast and a further price cut before leaving. "We avoid judging those we rescue," a rep said, "but struggle to understand when the rescued take advantage of hospitality provided by our supporters in the valley." Since the situation was explained, the public has responded with donations of more than \$6,800.

In Westlake, Ohio, a police check on the **welfare of a citizen turned amusing** when they discovered why a 91-year-old woman failed to answer her scheduled call from the city's automated check-in system, and then didn't pick up when a dispatcher tried her phone. The woman's daughter confirmed she should be home, but officers got no response at the door. Everyone was concerned because her car was in the garage. The police used a garage code to get inside...where they found her perfectly fine in her bedroom, engrossed in a "bubble pop" video game, intent on topping her high score!

Until next time...stay off your device and keep reading. Between the lines is good advice these days...

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Young talent showcased at festival finale in Indian Head

By Sarah Pacio
Grasslands News



Brynn Ager performed the musical theatre piece "Shy" and received multiple awards.

PHOTOS BY SARAH PACIO | GRASSLANDS NEWS

Performances at the Mainline Music Festival Finale indicate that there is a bright future for fine arts in rural Saskatchewan.

The finale was held at The Grand Theatre in Indian Head on Wednesday, April 22, following a week of adjudication at Memorial Hall. Several youths from Indian Head, Wolseley, Grenfell and area shared songs, stories and poems they had diligently memorized in the months leading up to the festival. The concluding program showcased promising young talent and celebrated the students' success at the festival, with numerous awards distributed in various categories.

The finale began with presentations by Julia Miles and Joni Lamb who had received the highest marks during the festival, each achieving a 93 per cent. To open the finale, Julia Miles gave a spoken word recitation, sharing an excerpt from *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy*. Joni Lamb then sang "Morning Person," which had been entered under the festival's musical theatre category. Both young ladies received multiple awards at the festival. They also received recommendations to attend the provincial festival in June, along with Brynn Ager, Eden Arkinstall, Natalie Malo, Jasper Beliveau and Morgan Drinnan.

Several more performances followed at last Wednesday's finale, featuring piano solos and duets, poetry recitations, and vocalists. Selections included traditional pieces as well as original compositions. The audience listened attentively to the clear young voices who shared their songs and poems with expression and careful articulation. Listeners responded with enthusiastic applause to encourage each young artist.

Performances were interspersed with presentations for first and second place awards, distinction awards, and recognitions sponsored by Wolseley Lions Club, Indian Head Legion and Air Cadets Hawk Squadron.

At the conclusion of the program, bouquets were presented to Valentina May and Penny Miles in appreciation for their leadership and dedication over the past several years that has ensured the Mainline Music Festival continued its long legacy.



Jasper Beliveau performed "Pick a Pocket or Two" and received a first-place Musical Theatre Award in his age category.



Jessie and her brother Jack Wicks received a second-place award for their piano duet at the Mainline Music Festival Finale



Seven youth from Mainline Music Festival will advance to the provincial competition. Left to right, are, Julia Miles, Natalie Malo, Joni Lamb, Eden Arkinstall, Mainline Music Festival President Valentina May, Morgan Drinnan, Brynn Ager and Jasper Beliveau.



Joni Lamb sang "Morning Person" at the Mainline Music Festival Finale. She earned top marks and received multiple awards at the festival.



Valley Voices Choir, directed by Jenn Litzenberger, sang "Whisper" and received a first-place Choral Group Award.

MP Belanger tours Yorkton's out-of-date wastewater treatment facility

By Calvin Daniels
Grasslands News

Following a visit last week by Federal MP Buckley Belanger, Secretary of State for Rural Development, Yorkton Mayor Aaron Kienle says he is feeling more confident federal dollars will be forthcoming for a much-needed new wastewater treatment facility for the city.

Kienle said he was aware the visit was pending "after a one-off I had in Regina," he said, explaining he had a one-on-one with Belanger while attending the recent SUMA convention.

While noting "we had very few days notice" of the visit Kienle said it was still appreciated, especially considering that while running late in terms of arrival Belanger still made time for an hour tour of the existing wastewater facility which no longer meets capacity needs or regulatory requirements.

Even before the facility tour

Kienle said Belanger had been told of the city's need for the facility and support from other levels of government given the expect cost of around \$200 million.

"I really felt like he got a good sense from information we gave him," said the Mayor.

However, having a live walk through certainly was an opportunity for city officials to reinforce the need, said Kienle.

"I think there's a greater understanding," he said.

While no suggestions of actual dollars from either the federal, or provincial governments have been made, Kienle said he has a positive feeling dollars will soon be announced.

In the meantime, planning for the new facility are ongoing.

Kienle said the remainder of 2026 "will basically be used to get us to full design," on the proposed plant, which would then allow the construction phase to begin in 2027 once dollars are secured.



PHOTO BY ERIN GULYAS | GRASSLANDS NEWS

Seeking federal support

The Yorkton's Wastewater Treatment Plant was recently toured. Left to right, are, Connor Hunt, Director of Environmental Services, City of Yorkton; Federal MP Buckley Belanger, Secretary of State for Rural Development; Yorkton Mayor Aaron Kienle and Yorkton Councillor Randy Goulden.

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Time taken to remember during National Day of Mourning on April 28

By Jacob Miller
Grasslands News

Far too many families see a normal workday turn into the worst day of their lives.

Residents and workers of Melville took time to remember and mourn those who lost their lives on the job during the National Day of Mourning event on April 28 at Melville City Hall.

The event was led by City of Melville Safety Officer Shelby Hahn with guest speaker Fire Chief Aaron Buckingham.

"We stand here today, not only to mourn, but to remember with purpose, to carry these forward, to let them change how we think, how we act and how we protect one another, because grief may



AARON BUCKINGHAM

be the legacy of a moment, but the action can be ours today," said Hahn.

"No job is worth a life, no task's worth a future, and no shortcut is worth a family's forever."

Hahn told the crowd that the day is not meant to be a celebration, as they are facing something that many people try to look past.

"A shift started, a routine task began, and a moment passed. Everything changed. Grief is the legacy of a moment, a moment is all it takes," said Hahn. "One decision, one distraction, one failure in a system that was supposed to protect someone, and that moment doesn't end when the sirens stop. It doesn't end when the paperwork is filed, and it doesn't end when the headlines fade. It lives on

in empty chairs at kitchen tables, in birthdays that feel incomplete, in children who grow up with stories instead of memories, in families who carry a weight that never truly lifts."

Hahn said that in 2025 there were 27 workers in Saskatchewan who were killed on the job.

"27 lives, 27 families were changed forever. Some were lost in an instant, through vehicle collisions, equipment incidents or falls, others were taken slowly through occupational diseases like cancer caused by the very work meant to provide for their families," said Hahn. "Beyond those lives lost, there were over 17,000 workplace injury claims in this province in just one year, thousands of moments where people went wrong, thousands of people who lost lives and were disrupted, some permanently."

Hahn added that they can point towards declining injury rates and progress that has been made, but the numbers don't tell the whole story.

"Behind every statistic is a person, a co-worker that never made it home that day, a parent who was someone's whole world. And that is the hardest truth, one that should sit heavy with every one

of us," said Hahn. "Most of these accidents were preventable, and that's what makes this day so important, and that's also what makes it so difficult, because this is not just about remembering the past. It's about confronting the choices that we make today."

Mental strength

Fire Chief Buckingham spoke to the crowd about mental health and heartache when being involved or knowing someone who was injured or killed in a workplace accident.

"My message to you this morning is a simple one," said Buckingham. "We may look at each other as strong and resilient people, and we can be, but underneath that shell can be a lot of stress and a lot of heartache."

Buckingham told the crowd that his stress and heartache lives with him every day.

On July 27, 14 years ago, Buckingham responded to a call that changed his life forever. Buckingham said that he was on an accident scene where he lost six teenagers in one car accident, where they spent hours, nine hours on the scene, and by the time it was done, six families were devastated in a heartbeat.

"I remember the day, and it's the week that I leave town. You won't find me in Melville on July 27. You won't reach me by cell phone. I will be in a place where there is no cell service and I can't look at social media, and I can't be reached at all, because

those days of that week are for me to recuperate," said Buckingham.

Buckingham said that the accident had a ripple effect across the entire community. "One of those children that lost their lives in that accident was my cousin's son. One of those girls was my daughter's dance teacher, and we knew these people. It was a pretty difficult day," said Buckingham.

Buckingham added that he has never been back to the area where the accident occurred.

"If I have to go that way, I go a different way. It's healthy to recognize that because I know one day I'll have the strength to go back to that spot. But recognizing it and dealing with that is a big thing," said Buckingham. "We can all lean on each other. We've all lost loved ones, friends, family, whether it was in a workplace accident or any other way, those things can leach right into your everyday work."

Buckingham then highlighted the occupational hazards in the firefighting occupation.

"When we talk about occupational hazards in the fire world, occupational cancers are a real thing," said Buckingham. "We try desperately to make sure that we're protecting each other in every way, and last March I buried a 45-year-old girl who I loved very much. She was one of my firefighters, and she passed away from cancer, with a young family and it was a tough day."

Buckingham said that people look at firefighters, police, and people of authority as heroes, but they are people as well. "We are just doing what we have a passion to do, but underneath that it can be very difficult to cope with things that we see and do every day. It can happen, not just in the emergency services world, but in our world no matter where we are," said Buckingham.

"My ask of you today is to look out for one another, to ask people how they're doing and truly take the time to listen. It's one thing to ask someone how they are. It's another thing to actually listen to what they're saying. My ask of you all is to take care of each other and know that underneath a smiling face or a handshake or a hug, sometimes there's deep hurt behind that, and we need to be able to respect that in each other."

Buckingham added that he is glad to say that in his 30 years of service the stigma around mental health is changing.

Mayor Kirwan spoke about the good work the city has been doing with Safety, praising Hahn for the City's robust safety program. Kirwan also told a story of when he was a firefighter, and one of their firefighters were injured on the job.

After the ceremony, guests were asked to tie white ribbons to a tree outside city hall in memory of those who were lost and as a personal commitment to those that are still with us to do better.

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Grade 1 Ballet

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The Grade 1 Ballet class performed *The Toy Box*. Dancers included Braelyn Benoit, Hadley Bruce, Janica De Perio, Janelle Delesoy, Reidyn Freeze, Reese Hoffman, Savannah Keller, Ava Kirkwood, Dylan Malone, Ryleigh Orden, Journey Padar, Abigail Rondeau, and Kylie Tubman.

Jazz 2/3

JACOB MILLER | GRASSLANDS NEWS

The Jazz 2 and 3 class performed *Kitchen Heat*. Dancers included Kirianna Ottenbreit, Leah Swanson, Kassidy Zacharias, Penelope Garlock, Cassandra Gasenzer, Nevaeh Giesbrecht, Madelyn Holliday, Lily MacPherson, Danica Mancego, Elizabeth Peters, and Kylee Syrota.



Grad Solos and Grade 4

JACOB MILLER | GRASSLANDS NEWS

Top left: Sarah Powell performs her Grad Solo. Top Centre: The Grade 4 class performs *Sunrise on the Porch* with dancers Shyvahn Galger, Isa Garlockm Alice Heinmiller, Paisley Kilbach, Chelsea Lukash and Kendall Stott. Top right: Delaney Alspach performs her Grad Solo. Bottom left: Mya Adams performs her Grad Solo. Bottom middle: Peyton Murrary performs her Grad Solo. Bottom right: Desirae Rowan performs her Grad Solo.



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SPORTS

'Rat Find' sport makes debue at Parkland Outdoor Show

By Calvin Daniels
Grasslands News

The annual Parkland Outdoor Show & Expo was a doggone good time – literally for those taking in the 'Rat Find Demos'.

'Rat find' sports, such as Barn Hunt demoed at the Yorkton show, are dog scent-work activities where dogs search for safely contained rats in tubes.



Preparing the hunted
Andrea McEwen places a rat into a protective tube prior to a rat find demo. The event was part of the Parkland Outdoor Show & Expo that was held in Yorkton from April 24 to 26.

Andrea McEwen, one of the demonstrators at the Thriving K-9 sponsored demonstrations, said in Canada there are at least three associations which are involved in 'rat find' sports.

"All have some different rules," she said.

In the case of barn hunts they "are held either indoors or outdoors," details www.ratscanadadogsports.com. "The land or building used is defined by fences or walls. Depending on the level of difficulty, many tubes may be used. These can be empty or containing either rats and/or rat litter. Tubes are hidden between bales of hay or straw. The tubes must be in plain view of the handler and the judge, being more or less visible depending on the competition level.

"The team is allocated two minutes to find the rats. The handler and the dog enter the ring at the same time. The handler can give one verbal command then must remain silent for the first 30 seconds while the dog hunts (the amount of time changes per level). Afterwards, the handler may encourage and direct his dog verbally. The handler is responsible for making the timer stop, calling 'Rat!' to the judge, when he believes that his dog has found a rat. If an incorrect tube was identified, the timer will continue despite being a non-qualifier. If a dog eliminates in the ring it will be disqualified."

The sport is garnering a lot of eyes – in part thanks to demos like the one in Yorkton, said McEwen who hails from Carlyle.

"There's a lot of interest in Canada," she said.

Kelsey Kaban, a sport participant from Esterhazy, echoed that interest in the sport is growing, adding that includes participation in Saskatchewan.

"It's big in Saskatoon and Regina," she noted.

For the demonstrations, and many events, three tubes are hidden in a maze of straw bales, said McEwen. One will be empty, a second will have the scent of a rat but still be empty, and the third will contain a live and safely ensconced rat. It is the challenge for competing dogs to find the rat containing tube as quickly as possible, while also exhibiting other skills, such as willingness to crawl through a tight space on its search.

In large events multiple live rat tubes might be hidden.

"The more rats the bigger the area," added McEwen.

The sport is open to all dogs, although the largest breeds probably can't make the crawl space manoeuvres needed. Still, in Yorkton among the 13 participating canines there was a diverse range of breeds including miniature bull terriers, a Dutch shepherd, a Labrador, a Duck Tolling Retriever and a Beauceron.

"It's definitely something all breeds can participate in," said McEwen, who then added it is a sport which comes more naturally to terriers which have been bred to seek out rats.



Preparing the hunted
Kelsey Kaban places a tube on course in preparation for the dog and its handler to find within the two-minute limit.



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Flin Flon Bombers end 33-year drought with SJHL title

Whitewood's Brehaut part of championship run

By Ryan Kiedrowski
Grasslands News

The Flin Flon Bombers are champions again, and the moment is still sinking in. "Amazing. It's been a surreal moment. It's been a relief. It's been joy. It's been a lot of different emotions over the last 72 hours for sure," said general manager and head coach Mike Reagan after his club captured the Saskatchewan Junior Hockey League title, ending a championship drought that stretched more than three decades.

The victory not only delivers a long-awaited title to the northern Manitoba community but also sets the stage for a milestone season ahead. The Bombers will celebrate their 100th year in 2026-27, now with a championship banner to carry into the centennial campaign.

"Yeah, I mean, we're going into our 100th year next year, so it's very exciting," Reagan said. "To bring a championship into that 100th year is amazing. I think it's just going to add to the excitement."

Flin Flon's playoff run came despite a roster that has battled injuries for much of the second half. Reagan said the team is now in a rare position as it prepares for the Centennial Cup national championship.

"We've been fighting injuries for probably about two months now and it's — it sounds crazy to say this — but we're the healthiest that we've been in the last two months here heading into the Centennial Cup," he said. "We're going to have all hands-on deck, which is extremely exciting for us."

The Bombers earned the title in decisive fashion, wrapping up the final quickly after a gruelling postseason that included a seven-game series earlier in the playoffs. Reagan said the extra time since the final has allowed players and staff to celebrate before shifting focus.

"The last three days we've been able to enjoy this," he said. "Now we can get



PHOTO COURTESY SJHL | GRASSLANDS NEWS

Top SJHL team

The 2026 Canterra Seeds Cup Champions are the Flin Flon Bombers, seen here celebrating after their big win. The Bombers defeated the Yorkton Terriers 2-0 in game four of the SJHL final in Yorkton on Thursday, April 23.

back to work, and we've got a full week of practice here that we can really get the guys' minds focused again on trying to win a national championship."

That next challenge will come in Summerside, P.E.I., where Flin Flon will represent the SJHL against the top Junior A teams in the country. Reagan said depth will be critical in a tournament format where a single off night can end a season.

"If you have an off night there on the wrong night, you're done," he said. "You got to be at your best every night. I think that's where our depth hopefully is going to pay off for us."

The Bombers' championship season did not come without adversity. The club opened the year 6-0 before dropping six straight on the road, raising questions about whether a young roster was ready to contend.

"At that point, we were kind of questioning whether we were ready for the

moment yet," Reagan said.

The turning point came in emphatic fashion — an 11-0 win in Yorkton.

"That kind of turned our season around and it's just kind of fitting that we were able to win the championship in Yorkton where everything turned around for us," he said.

From there, the Bombers surged, losing just a handful of games in regulation the rest of the way and building momentum that carried through the playoffs.

"Momentum's such a crazy thing," Reagan said. "When you get it, you just want to ride it as long as you can."

Among the contributors to that depth was rookie forward Hudson Brehaut, a Whitewood product who played a key role in the Bombers' run.

"Huddy had a terrific year for us," Reagan said. "A speedster, brought a lot of energy, brought a lot of speed to our lineup, high compete, just overall had a

great season."

For Brehaut, the championship marks a milestone in his first full SJHL season.

"Oh, man, it's been crazy. It's a dream come true," he said. "When I started at the start of the year with these guys, we had one goal and that was to win the championship. And now that we finally got that done, it's for sure an exciting feeling - but we're not done yet."

Brehaut said the pace of the playoffs made the achievement feel almost unreal.

"I don't know if it's fully sunk in yet. Everything's just happened so fast," he said. "We just went and played our game and yeah, it was pretty sweet to win."

The transition to junior hockey also brought challenges, including the physical grind of a full season and a concussion suffered during the playoffs.

"It was tough, being able to want to play, but you can't," Brehaut said. "And just for me during the year, it's a lot of games. Your body can get sore; just prepping your body every night."

Despite that, he said experience gained from joining the Bombers during last year's playoff run helped him adjust.

"That helped me so much, just because I knew what to expect," he said.

Now, like his coach, Brehaut is focused on what comes next.

"Next goal is to win that," he said of the Centennial Cup. "Making sure I keep that goal in mind and work towards that."

The Bombers are expected to be well supported on the East Coast, with players' families and fans planning to travel.

"We have fans everywhere and they travel real well," Reagan said. "I'm expecting close to 100 people there."

For a team that has already delivered a long-awaited championship to its community, the opportunity to compete for a national title is the next step — and one they intend to approach with the same momentum that carried them to the top of the SJHL.

Yorkton Terriers swept in SJHL final in front of home-town crowd

By Calvin Daniels
Grasslands News

While not technically a must-win — Yorkton trailed the best-of-seven only 2-0 — when the Terriers took to their home ice April 22, it felt like the home side had to win.

Flin Flon Bombers 6 at Yorkton Terriers 3 - April 22

The Terriers' opposition at the Westland Insurance Arena were after all the SJHL's regular season best Flin Flon Bombers who had outscored Yorkton by a combined 10-3 margin in the opening two games of the series.

With 2,104 watching on, the Terriers faithful hoped for a hot home side start, but that did not materialize.

The Bombers started the scoring as Reid Arberry potted one only 1:01 into the contest. It was the lone goal of the frame.

In the second period, the Bombers struck early again as Joey Lies made it 2-0 for the visitors scoring a powerplay goal at 2:28.

Terriers' fans were finally given some hope as Tyler Palin scored at 9:13 to cut the Bomber lead in half. But, 48 seconds later Wyatt Stinton scored and it was 3-1 Flin Flon. A later powerplay effort from Landon Alexander at 17:24 made it 4-1.

In the third period the Terriers' fans were given another shot of hope as William Leonard scored just 1:09 in to make it 4-2. But goals by Jack Martin at 9:27 and 24 seconds later by Connor Miller and the Terriers were down 6-2.

Gabriel Courchesne would add an unassisted, short-handed goal for York-

ton at 10:12, but that would be it as the Bombers won 6-3 to go up 3-0 in the series. Charlie Tritt was in the Bomber net for the win facing 29 shots.

Callum Creig started and was tagged with the loss after giving up six goals on 29 shots in the Terriers' net. He was lifted for the final 9:51 in favour of Alexandro Montoya.

Flin Flon Bombers 2 at Yorkton Terriers 0 - April 23

Thursday the teams met in Game 4, again on Yorkton ice, and this time it was win or the season was over for the home side.

The Terriers switched things up for the crucial contest starting Alexandro Montoya in net, and it was a move which looked like it might make the difference. Montoya matched Bomber' netminder Charlie Tritt's efforts turning away every shot in the first period.

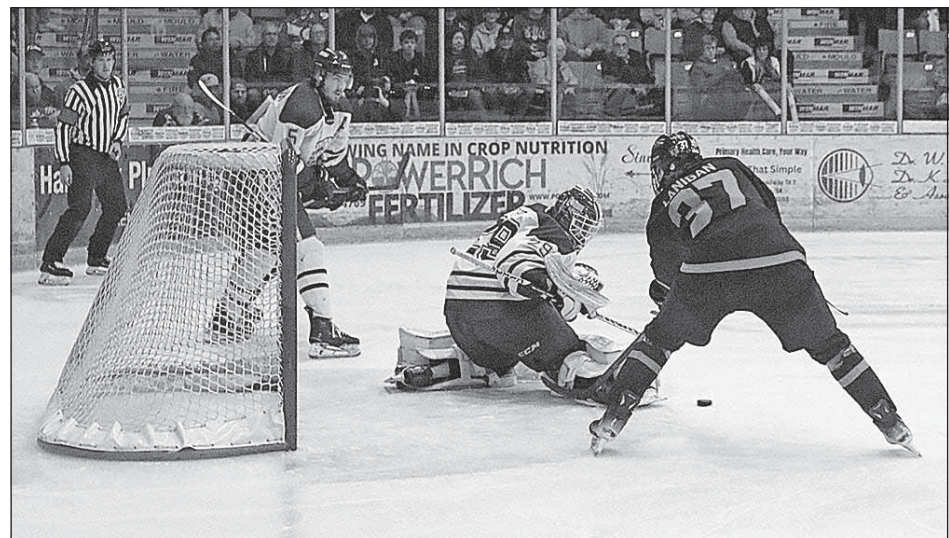
Then the pair matched their effort through a scoreless second period.

Finally, 2:38 into the third a goal was scored, as Daniel Morozov gave the Bombers a 1-0 lead. The goal would prove the game-winner as Tritt completed a shut-out — his second of the series — stopping all 25 Terriers' shots.

Morozov would score again at 9:44 to round out a 2-0 win and completing a four-game sweep of the Terriers. Flin Flon outscored Yorkton 18-6 in the four games.

The Bombers will now represent the SJHL at the 2026 Centennial Cup being held in Summerside, PEI from May 7-17.

The Bombers will start the Cup schedule May 8, versus the representative from Ligue de hockey junior AAA du Québec (LHJQ).



CALVIN DANIELS | GRASSLANDS NEWS

Aiming to score

Yorkton Terriers' Cash Lanigan tries to sweep one around Flin Flon Bomber netminder Charlie Tritt in SJHL semi-final action Wednesday, April 22. The Bombers won game 3 by a score of 6-3.

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Sports column – Darcy Gross

Gross Misconduct

Right on schedule, the NHL playoffs have delivered their annual controversy.

This time, the Edmonton Oilers find themselves in a deep, deep hole, thanks to a goal call that helped hand the Anaheim Ducks a key win – and left just about everyone else wondering what, exactly, was seen, and by whom.

Oilers fans have reacted the way fans tend to react this time of year: loudly, passionately, and with no shortage of disbelief.

And in this case, they have a point.

After all, nothing quite captures the spirit of playoff hockey like a game being decided by an official peering through traffic, making a split-second judgment, and hoping the camera angles sort it out later.

To be fair, even among the outrage there's a reluctant admission creeping in: the puck might have crossed the line.

Might have.

But "might have" is doing an awful lot of heavy lifting here, especially in a league that insists on definitive standards when it comes to scoring goals.

The rule is not complicated. The puck must completely cross the goal line. Not partially. Not "close enough." Completely.

And yet, on this play, the puck ended up lodged beneath the skate of goaltender Tristan Jarry – hidden from view, frozen in a place where certainty and common sense go to die.

From more than 20 feet away, without a clear line of sight, the referee signalled a goal anyway.

This is where the problem begins.

Because once the call was made on the ice, the rest of the process became almost inevitable.

Video review, for all its technological precision still hinges on one key phrase: "conclusive evidence." If you don't have it, the original call stands. Simple as that.

And there wasn't any.

No angle definitively showed the puck fully crossing the line.

There was no telltale strip of white ice between the puck and the goal line – the visual cue officials often rely on in these situations.

There was, in short, nothing that should reasonably eliminate doubt.

But doubt, as it turns out, isn't enough to overturn a call. It only matters if the call on the ice leaves room for it.

Had the referee waved it off, chances are we'd be talking about a "good no-goal" and moving on.

Instead, a moment of certainty – misplaced or otherwise – locked in a decision that video review could neither confirm nor correct.

That's not so much a system working as designed as it is a system exposing its own limitations.

The result? The Ducks take a 3-1 series lead, and the Oilers are left to stew over a moment they can't change and can't fully explain.

Of course, it would be convenient – tempting, even – for Edmonton to frame this entire series around one controversial call.

It's the kind of narrative that just about writes itself: robbed by the officials, undone by circumstances beyond their control.

Reality, as usual, is less charitable.

Connor McDavid, arguably the world's best hockey player, has been battling injury.

Leon Draisaitl, one of the league's most dominant players, has been trying to rediscover his rhythm after some time away from the ice.

The Oilers, for all their offensive firepower, have struggled to match Anaheim's pace and urgency for long stretches.

Then there's the defence, which spent much of the regular season outperforming expectations and has since regressed at precisely the worst moment.

And behind them, a goaltending situation that has offered more questions than answers.

In that context, the disputed goal feels less like the cause of Edmonton's problems and more like a symbol of them – uncertain, frustrating, and ultimately out of their control.

Still, that doesn't make it any easier to accept.

Because in a league that prides itself on the best officiating – where inches, angles, and split-second timing determine outcomes – this was a moment defined by doubt.

A goal awarded without clear sight, upheld without clear proof, and debated without any real resolution.

The NHL, of course, will move on. It always does.

Another game, another series, another controversy waiting just around the corner.

For the Oilers, though, the question lingers a little longer.

Not just whether the puck crossed the line – but whether it ever truly mattered.

Neuls headlines award winners as Spitfires celebrate return season

By GNG Staff
Grasslands News

The Grenfell Spitfires capped off their return to the ice with a night of celebration, handing out team awards following what players and supporters alike described as a successful comeback season.

The club, back in action after a one-year absence, held its windup and awards night this week, drawing players, families and fans together to reflect on the year that was.

Leading the way on the awards list was Donovan Neuls, who turned in a standout season and was recognized as the team's Most Valuable Player. Neuls also captured Top Scorer honours, the Hardest Worker Award and the Fan Favourite title, the latter voted on by supporters.

Kyle Bocek was another multiple winner, earning Rookie of the Year and Playoff MVP honours after a strong debut campaign and impactful postseason performance.

On the blue line, Tanner Kyle and Taylor Fisher shared Top Defenceman honours as co-winners, recognized for their steady play and contributions at both ends of the ice.

Brett Ducek was named the team's Most Gentlemanly Player, while Skyler Reeve received the Grant Reiger Memorial Unsung Hero Award. Reeve was unable to attend the ceremony due to work commitments.

Awards were presented by a mix of former players, team supporters and community members, highlighting the strong connection between the Spitfires and the community.

Team officials extended thanks to fans and supporters who followed the club throughout the season, noting the atmosphere both at home and on the road as a key part of the team's return.

With a full season back under their belts, the Spitfires now turn their attention to building on the momentum heading into next year.



Most Valuable Player
Dean Amy presents the MVP award to Donovan Neuls, who also won awards for Top Scorer, Hardest Worker and Fan Favourite.

SUBMITTED | GRASSLANDS NEWS

Gilbert Dash named SaskSport Athlete of the Month

By Connie Schwalm
Grasslands News

March was a hectic month for Gilbert Dash.

But he notes that "the entire winter was busy".

"January and February were very busy preparing for the Paralympics. There was a lot to do, because the world is so good and you need to try and gain every small advantage you can as you get ready to go. So, along with everything else that you have to take care of before you travel, we did a variety of things such as watching videos of the other teams in order to learn more about them and how they play. Of course, March was where everything culminated. It was an amazing month."

SaskSport recently announced that Gilbert Dash was named their Athlete of The Month for that "amazing month" of March.

"March was a historic month for Gilbert Dash as he claimed a Paralympic gold medal in Italy and earned Athlete of the Month honours," SaskSport said in its announcement. "Dash started his month making his debut at Milano Cortina 2026, with Team Canada going 11-0 and being the first wheelchair curling team to go undefeated in Games history." As well, SaskSport noted that Dash and his team "attended the 2026 Saskatchewan Wheelchair Curling Provincials in Saskatoon and placed first after going 2-1 to secure the right to represent Saskatchewan at the 2026 Canadian Wheelchair Curling Championship."

"It was great to receive that recognition from SaskSport," says Dash. "There were so many deserving athletes who could have been named, including several other athletes who medaled at the Olympics and Paralympics. So, to be named Athlete of the Month from among athletes like that is amazing – even to be nominated is a huge honour."

Since coming home from his gold medal triumph at the Paralympics, Dash was also among the 27 athletes recognized for their performance at the 2026 Winter Olympics and Paralympic Games during a visit to the Saskatchewan Legislature. Dash points out that he was both honoured by that recognition and happy to have a chance to discuss the issue of accessibility with Premier Moe.

"It was really nice to be invited to the Legislature," he says. "We had the chance to meet several MLAs, have our photos taken, and be recognized during the session. Then Angela, my sister Crystal and I were invited to have a private discussion with Premier Moe. He talked about working with Rick Hanson (who did the Man in Motion Tour) about developing accessibility codes for the province. He mentioned that they wanted it to be more than just the recommendations from engineers and architects – they wanted the new codes to reflect what people like Rick Hanson could tell them was really needed."

Once Dash and his team have returned from the 2026 Canadian Wheelchair Curling Championship in Boucherville Quebec, being held this week from April

27 to May 2, he will be attending an event to honour him that will take place on May 9 at the Kipling Community Centre.

"I don't know what to expect that day, how many people will be able to come. But I'm really honoured that they want to have an event for me like that. I've had a chance to spend a little bit of time in Kipling since I got home, and it has been great to be able to talk with different people. So, it will be nice to relax with people from my hometown, visit for a while and just enjoy the afternoon. I'm really looking forward to it."

Fort Qu'Appelle golfers gearing up for Katepwa Ladies season

By GNG Staff
Grasslands News

The Fort Qu'Appelle area golf scene is set to return to the fairways, as the Katepwa Ladies Golf Club prepares to tee off its 2026 season.

Organizers say anticipation is building for another strong year of participation at Katepwa, with both returning members and newcomers encouraged to get involved.

The club's annual spring general meeting and opening round are tentatively scheduled for May 14, weather permitting. The day will begin with the general meeting at 9 a.m. at the tournament shack, followed by a 10:30 a.m. shotgun start to officially launch the season.

Club officials note the league continues to focus on fostering a welcoming and social environment for golfers of all skill levels, while also providing regular weekly play throughout the summer months.

Anyone interested in joining or learning more about the Katepwa Ladies Golf Club can contact organizers by email at katepwalgc@gmail.com.

With the season opener approaching, local golfers are now keeping a close eye on spring conditions, hoping for favourable weather to get the 2026 campaign underway on schedule.



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Sports Column

McDavid the best — and most valuable

By Bruce Penton

Sports Columnist

The debate rages on among hockey fans about the merits of the Hart Trophy winner as the National Hockey League's most valuable player.

Is it the best player in the league? Or should it go to the player 'most valuable' to his team; in other words, how would that team fare without that specific player?

If the award goes to the best player, no voting is required; just give the Hart to Connor McDavid of the Edmonton Oilers. Like Bobby Orr and Wayne Gretzky in bygone eras, McDavid is head and shoulders above anyone else in the league.

But should he be named the most valuable player? According to NHL literature, the MVP award is presented to the player deemed most valuable "to his team."

An AI overview says "criteria (for the Hart) focus on a player's total impact, often combining high-level scoring, critical team contributions, and performance on potential playoff-bound teams."

Take McDavid away from the Oilers and what's left? Not a bad roster, featuring Leon Draisaitl, Ryan Nugent-Hopkins, Zach Hyman, Evan Bouchard and

Darnell Nurse. Remove another top contender, Nathan MacKinnon of Colorado, and the Avalanche are still loaded with the likes of Martin Necas, Cale Makar, Brock Nelson, Nazem Kadri and others. Nikita Kucherov, of Tampa Bay, who finished third in league scoring, was in on 44 per cent of his team's goals, but McDavid either scored or assisted on 48 per cent of the Oilers' tallies. Besides, Kucherov has a talented group behind him — Jake Guentzel, Brayden Point and Brandon Hagel, among others.

Most valuable? San Jose Sharks' fans would suggest their team's young superstar, Macklin Celebrini, should be considered for the award, considering his 115 points were almost double that of the No. 2 player on the team, Will Smith, who had 59. The exploits of Celebrini, who won't turn 20 until mid-June, however, weren't enough to pull his team into the playoffs, but his time will come.

And how about Matthew Schaefer — the stud defenceman of the New York Islanders, who will be a landslide winner of the top rookie award and will also gain voter support in the best defenceman category? Again, his terrific play had 'superstar' written all over it, but the Islanders still came up short in the playoff run.

Most valuable? It will be a close race this

year and McDavid will probably emerge the winner, because some of the voters will interpret the award as "best player" as opposed to "most valuable." The Oilers star will get many of those 'best player' votes and deserves to receive a good chunk of the 'most valuable' votes, too.

Without McDavid, the Oilers — who lost as many games as they won this season — would not be taking part in the Stanley Cup playoffs. Tampa Bay and Colorado, where the other two top contenders ply their trade, would still be among the post-season contenders.

So there's the decisive fact: It's McDavid — McD is the MVP.

fark.com headline: "Howie Rose to retire as Mets announcer after this season. Mets to mark the occasion by blowing a six-game lead with nine games left in the the season."

Steve Simmons of the Toronto Sun: "Department of Ripoff: The normal return train from Penn Station to the Meadowlands in Jersey will rise from \$12.90 to \$150 during the World Cup."

Jack Finarelli of sportscurmudgeon.com, after news that Rams' receiver Puka Nacua had been accused of biting a woman on New Year's Eve: "Put Nacua in contact with any three random kindergarten teachers who have experience in convincing children not to bite the kid sitting next to them. He'll become a bet-

ter person for it."

Headline at theonion.com: "Shaq Warns Young Players Not To Do Movie About Genie"

@LenHoc on X: "BREAKING: LIV Golf changing format from 72 holes to none."

Yahoosports.com, just before the NFL draft was held in Pittsburgh, a co-headquarter of the Kraft-Heinz company: "Heinz is offering the No. 57 over-all pick a lifetime supply of ketchup."

Comedy guy Torben Rolfsen of Vancouver: "The Kings beat the Canucks to vault into a playoff spot. Our gift to L.A.: Hollywood North, Hockeywood South."

Another one from Rolfsen: "Calgary Flames were the first team in a decade without a 50-point scorer. Flames, Canucks, Blackhawks ... they all score less than Borat at Lilith Fair."

From Super 70s Sports: Retired Hall of Famer Larry Bird to Charles Barkley during an NBA game in the 1980s: "Chuck, I need to talk to you. Y'all got a white guy trying to guard me, that's disrespectful. There's not a white guy on the planet that can guard me."

From theonion.com: "Carlos Alcaraz Credits Success To Tennis Being Easiest Game In The World. 'All You Do Is Smack A Ball And There's No Basket Or Tackling Or Anything,'"

Care to comment? Email brucepenton2003@yahoo.ca

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Bowling Scores - Yorkton

MONDAY GA	WEDNESDAY GA	GRUNERUDS, 455.
Men's High Single and Triple, Cam Louttit, 314, 804.	Men's High Single and Triple, Cam Louttit, 295, 763.	Most Pins Over Average, Ron Blommaert +74.
Ladies' High Single and Triple, Violet Woychesko, 192, 547.	Ladies' High Single and Triple, Debbie Hanchuk, 208, 517.	HANCOCK PLUMBING
Most Pins Over Average, Cam Louttit +68.	Most Pins Over Average, Debbie Hanchuk +78.	Men's High Single, Devon Cross, 285. Men's High Triple, Cam Louttit, 759.
TUESDAY YBC	HOSPITAL	Ladies' High Single and Triple, Sharla Schrader, 230, 650.
Men's High Single and Triple, Liam Hutchings, 210, 613.	Men's High Single and Triple, Cody Lacelle, 273, 705.	Most Pins Over Average, Darrell erlitz +111.
Ladies' High Single and Triple, Audraya Keyowski, 159, 446.	Ladies' High Single and Triple, Tracy Horneman, 183, 487.	SATURDAY YBC
Most Pins Over Average, Liam Hutchings +67.	Most Pins Over Average, Cody Lacelle +70.	Men's High Single, Ryker Balabuk, 258. Men's High Triple, Joshua Wyse, 559.
STS	LEGION	Ladies' High Single and Triple, Elyssa Thompson, 208, 494.
Men's High Single and Triple, Cam Louttit, 250, 727.	Men's High Single and Triple, Ron Blommaert, 221, 578.	Most Pins Over Average, Ryker Balabuk +102.
Ladies' High Single and Triple, Bernie Draper, 244, 538.	Ladies' High Single, Lavern Dumka, 168.	
Most Pins Over Average, Bernie	Ladies' High Triple, Marcia	

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Angling certificate to profit fish hatchery upgrades

By Alan Hustak
Grasslands News

It has often been said that the whole point of fly fishing for trout is to see the fish suck in the fly and thrill the angler with tension as the fish fights the rod. Landing a trout is a moment of beauty. Seasoned anglers will tell you there is a part of every fisherman that roots for the fish.

Recreational fishing is a multi-million dollar industry in Saskatchewan and the Fish Culture Station at B-Say-Tah plays a vital role in supporting it by stocking the lakes with Brook Trout, Rainbow Trout, Splake Trout and Walleye.

The number of stocked water fish from the hatchery has, however, declined by 27 per cent over the past two years, from 8.7 million in 2024 to 6.3 million in 2026 and upgrades to increase those numbers are in the works.

The facility is managed by The Saskatchewan Wildlife Federation in partnership with the Province of Saskatchewan and the Federation has plans to invest \$700,000 in initiatives such as habitat restoration, conservation programming and fish stocking. To help finance the improvements, Saskatchewan's fishing season begins May 5 in the southern management Zone, May 15 in the central management zone and May 25 in the northern management zone.

Environment Minister Darlene Rowden has announced that this year the province will introduce a \$20 Angling Habitat Certificate that is expected to raise \$2.1 million to support the Federation's long range improvement plans.

The money collected will not go into general revenues but directly to the Fish and Wildlife Development Fund

"The work done here is highly specialized and supports the full life cycle of fish from managing broodstock, egg collection and fertilization to rearing and release," she said. "Each year millions of fish are raised here and released into the lakes and rivers throughout Saskatchewan."

In addition to the Angling Habitat

Certificate more than 170,000 licenses are expected to be sold this year.

Kevin Murphy, Saskatchewan's deputy minister of resource management told Grasslands News that the hatchery is preparing for the roll out over the next two months to get the trout and walleye into the waters around the province. "We use trucks and we work with conservation officers to seed the waters. We find that aircraft drops affect survival rates, so we use trucks," he explained.

When a fish is released depends on its size and its species.

The Dominion Fisheries Commission opened the fish hatchery on Echo Lake in 1915 because it declared "the importance of hatching fish by artificial means cannot be emphasized too much in a country where a growing population is making an increasing demand on the demand."

The hatchery was given a \$2 million facelift in 1983, and management was turned over to the Fish and Wildlife Federation. The fish culture station used 1.3 million gallons of water each day that comes from an underground river that supplies the stainless-steel breeding tanks with ideal temperatures for rearing fish.

Ironically, fish from the hatchery on Echo Lake don't seed the chain of Qu'Appelle Lakes with game fish. "The Qu'Appelle Lakes are rarely stocked. They are self-sustaining," explains Nelson Bergh who has managed the hatchery for the past 20 years. Burgh says each day is different, but he especially enjoys "taking care of the quantity of small fish and taking care of their life cycle."

The fish hatchery is also a tourist attraction. Although it was closed for the season on Friday local MLA's Brad Crassweller and Travis Keisig were on hand with the minister to conduct a school tour.

"The success of the hatchery is a strong example of what can be achieved through collaboration," said Rowden. "Through partnerships, science and continued investment we are supporting both conservation and recreation across our province."



ALAN HUSTAK | GRASSLANDS NEWS

Raising fish

Fish Hatchery Manager Nelson Burgh and Saskatchewan's Environment Minister Darlene Rowden inspect a trough of 75,000 brook trout being spawned at the hatchery on Echo Lake.

Sponsorships provide swim passes for local families

Wave Makers Initiative

By Sarah Pacio
Grasslands News

Preparations are underway for swimming season in Grenfell, and a new initiative offers an opportunity for pool pass sponsorships.

Season Plans

Weather permitting, the outdoor swimming pool at Grenfell Recreational Park on Lake Street will be open from the last weekend in May until the end of August.

This spring, the town hired a pool supervisor to oversee daily operations and supervise staff. Additional interviews were conducted over the past few weeks, and nine lifeguards have been hired, with a potential for two more pending interviews. The summer student grant program administered by the government provides partial funding for these positions. Schedules for pool programming, including swimming lessons, are still being finalized and will be posted in the coming weeks.

This year there will be three options for entry fees: a day pass, a coupon booklet or season passes. A day pass for ages six and over is \$10; children ages five and under can swim for free. A booklet of 25 passes is available for \$200. A non-transferable season pass for an individual costs \$135. There is also a \$275 non-transferable family season pass for up to five people from the same household.

Season passes and booklets can be purchased at the Town Office. Daily admissions will be accepted at the lifeguard booth inside the pool fence. The town is also exploring options for pool fees to be paid online, but nothing was confirmed

as of press time.

Pool Pass Sponsorships

A new opportunity is available for pool pass sponsorships this year. It was set in motion by The Leaf Boutique in co-operation with the Town of Grenfell and Grenfell School. Leaf Boutique owners Crystal Singular and Christian Kardash are encouraging other local businesses to follow their lead and sponsor a pool pass for a local family through the Wave Makers Initiative. Anyone interested in participating can contact the Town Office to purchase a season pass or 25-pass booklet on behalf of a local family. Passes will be delivered to the school in Grenfell where staff will distribute them. The deadline for supporting the Wave Makers Initiative is May 20.

Capital Investments

Municipal leaders recognize that some aspects of pool infrastructure are nearing the end of useful life and are taking steps to ensure continued operations. In January, council approved the purchase of a new floating tarp at a cost of \$12,392 plus taxes. The tarp is used to cover the pool each night during the summer. Delivery is expected within the next two weeks.

The town budget for 2025 allocated \$200,000 to replace the pool liner but the project was delayed, so the funding will be carried over to this year's budget. The amount may be increased since additional expenses are anticipated to repair concrete, replace skimmers and other equipment. Council is aware that further upgrades may be required in the coming years due to aging infrastructure and will explore options to address those needs.

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Melville's St. Henry's Bowling League Results



League Champs and A Roll-offs
League Champs and A Roll-offs in the St. Henry's Bowling League were Just 4 Fun with 10,586. Pictured are, Bernie Senft and Angela Morgan.

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Team High Single and B Roll-offs
Team High Single and B Roll-offs in the St. Henry's Bowling League were A Team with 10,485. Pictured are Gordon Ostlund, Linda Bender and Pat Brown.

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Team High Triple
Team High Triple in the St. Henry's Bowling League were CCT with 3,902. Pictured are Chris Cheveldae, Julie Smidt, and Joe Wu.

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Ladies and Men's High Single
Men's High Single, Triple and Average was Joe Wu with single 323, triple 761 and average 189. Ladies High Triple and Average was Pat Brown with triple 761, average 189. Ladies High Single was Linda Bender with 303.

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Sunny Side Up

Grandchildren bring sunshine and rain

By Kathleen Gibson
Grasslands News

Our daughter Amanda, one long-ago day, presented the Preacher and me with a small jewellery box. We opened it cautiously. Inside lay a tiny, uncooked, black and white bean.

I remember the overwhelming joy. The happy dance of anticipation.

Early in our grandparenting, I often referred to our grandchildren as our "human be'ins," which soon shortened to "the Beans." The bean in the box could mean only one thing—another grandchild on the way.

Grandchildren arrive as bundles of sunshine. Rays of hope, delight and laughter. With the passing of each birthday in those younger years, grandparents' hearts swell with increasing love, joy and pride.

But it would be a mistruth to represent that important relationship as only brightness, without acknowledging other emotions. Disappointment. Hopes dashed. Rejection faced. As grandchildren grow, grandparents inevitably struggle to keep up with the new generation whose opinions, practices, perspectives and even vocabularies are vastly distant from their own. Today, social media has increased the divide, magnifying generational frustration, sometimes severing familial relationships.

We have six grands now, ages (at this writing) 10 to 21. I would be lying to say we haven't experienced some of those challenges. I would also be speaking an untruth if I didn't add that despite those, God has taught and blessed us. (He has also deepened our prayers in both frequency and fervor.)

No one told me, before becoming a

grandmother, that it was possible to love our grandchildren as much as we love our own children. The heart expands to make room, I learned. But no one prepared me for the fear.

Our children make parenting decisions and mistakes different from our own. And despite wisdom gained through experience (wisdom we feel could save trouble and heartbreak) grandparents must zip their lips unless asked for guidance, relinquish control, and trust God to lead where they can't. (Honestly, the Preacher is better at zipping than I.)

If we all survive any troubled waters, our grandchildren grow up and out too quickly. Hopefully, ragged relationships are mended with prayer, time and forgiveness before the new generation begins the next cycle of parenting and grandparenting.

The Preacher and I attended our eldest grandson Benjamin's college graduation a few days ago. This young man whose birth we also had the joy of attending 21 years earlier (which I announced in Sunny Side Up) walked down the aisle in a black flowing robe, mortarboard securely on his head, tassel swinging.

We are grateful. Proud. Amazed. We know there will be wrong turns, mistakes and stumbles. We all make those. But our first grandchild will have company on that road. We pray for Jesus' hand in his, Holy Spirit wind at his back, and angels at every crossroad. This wisdom from Proverbs 3: 5,6 remains solid guidance:

"Trust God from the bottom of your heart; don't try to figure out everything on your own. Listen for God's voice in everything you do, everywhere you go; he's the one who will keep you on track."

(MSG translation)

White Butte RCMP charge youth following online threats

By GNG Staff
Grasslands News

White Butte RCMP charged a youth after receiving a report of threats made on a social media platform.

White Butte RCMP received the report on April 14, and investigation de-

termined the online posts were made by an individual with an address in White City.

On April 17, officers with Saskatchewan RCMP's White Butte Detachment and Regina Serious Crimes Unit, and the Saskatchewan Internet Child Exploitation Unit, exe-

cuted a search warrant at a residence in White City.

Officers arrested a male teenager, who cannot be identified as per the Youth Criminal Justice Act. As a result of investigation, the teenage male is charged with one count, counselling to commit an offence; and one count, uttering threats.

He made his first court appearance in Regina Provincial Court on April 20 with a bail hearing scheduled for April 23. With his bail denied on that date, the youth was remanded to have his matter spoken to on April 30.

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WHITWOOD & AREA Churches Welcome You

NEW LIFE COMMUNITY CHURCH
Worship Service ~ 10:30 a.m.
Thursday - Prayer Meeting 7 p.m.
Wednesday Kids Club - 3:30 p.m.

EVANGELICAL MISSIONARY
Sunday School - 10:30 a.m.
Sunday Service - 10:30 a.m.
Wednesday Youth Group - 7 p.m.
Rev. Dr. James R. Graham

ST. JOSEPH'S ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH
Father Tomy Mandapathil
Sunday, May 3:
9 a.m. Mass

ST. MARY'S ANGLICAN CHURCH
Sunday, May 3:
10:30 a.m. Morning Prayer
Rogation Sunday Blessing of
Seeds, Plants & Earth

ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH, WAPELLA
Sunday, May 3:
12 Noon Communion Service

WHITEWOOD UNITED CHURCH
Sunday, May 3:
No Worship Service

Indian Head Church Welcomes You

ST. ANDREW'S UNITED CHURCH
801 Buxton St. - Indian Head, SK
306-695-3838
Sunday Services 11 a.m.
Service Leaders
Don Jewitt
Jani Francis



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Kipling Churches Welcome You

KIPLING CHRIST LUTHERAN CHURCH
417 3rd Street South
Office: 306-736-8268
Sunday Services 10 a.m.
email: pipestoneparish@sasktel.net

KIPLING UNITED CHURCH
102 Nelson Ave. - 306-736-2237
email: kwpc@sasktel.net
Services Held: 1st Sunday with
Jennifer Yasinowski and
3rd Sunday with Monica Dayman
at 9:30 a.m.

KIPLING PEOPLE'S CHURCH
701 3rd Street - 306-736-8992
Website: kiplingpeopleschurch.com
Pastors: Kevin & Merodee Hassler
10:30 a.m. Sunday Worship and
Children's Ministry

ST. ANNE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH
418 First St., Kipling
Priest: Father Joseph Villamartin
306-538-2163
Saturday, May 2:
5:00 p.m. Mass

CALVARY BAPTIST CHURCH
400 3rd St. South, Kipling
306-736-2447, Doris
306-424-2604, George
11 a.m. Worship Service

BEKEVAR PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
102 Nelson Ave.
(in Kipling United Church)
Sunday Worship
in person 11:30 a.m.
Rev. Devon Pattemore
Lay Person/Service Leader
306-736-2479
bkbernat@gmail.com

PARKLAND BIBLE CHURCH
309 3rd St. South, Kipling
306-736-2421
parklandag@sasktel.net
Pastor Stephen Luff
Sunday: 10 a.m. Sunday School
11 a.m. Worship Service
Wednesday: 10 a.m. Mom's Group

Fort Qu'Appelle Churches Welcome You

ST. JOHN'S ANGLICAN CHURCH
Sunday Worship 11 a.m.

202 Bay Ave. S.,
Phone - 306-551-6213
Hall Contact - 306-563-7451

ST. ANDREW'S UNITED CHURCH
194 Bay St., Fort Qu'Appelle
Rev. Jo Mader, 306-332-4455
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- 2 Corinthians 5:17 NIV

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160 Betts Ave, Yorkton, Sask
"Services In English"
www.stmarkyorkton.ca

Saturday May 2nd - Vespers 6:00 PM

Sunday, May 3rd - 10:00 AM

Sunday of the myrrh bearing women

Christ is Risen! Indeed He is Risen!

Priest: Rodion Luciuk Phone: 306-786-6216 Cell: 306-621-5341



St. Mary's Ukrainian Catholic Church

155 Catherine St., Yorkton, SK
306-783-4594

Pastor - Fr. Basil Malowany

Phone: 306-783-4594 or 306-783-7778

Saturday - 5 PM (English)

Sunday - 9 AM (English & Ukrainian)

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4TH SUNDAY OF PASCHA

10:00 am - Divine Liturgy (Yorkton)

3:00 p.m. - Provody (Memorial Gardens)

Monday, May 4 - 7:00 p.m. - Parish Council Meeting

Church of God in Christ Mennonite

Saltcoats, SK

SUNDAY SCHOOL EVERY SUNDAY: 10:00 AM
SUNDAY MORNING WORSHIP SERVICE: 11:00 AM

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Pastor Laurel Wiebe - 306-898-2099

Pastor Tim Warkentin - 306-217-8222

CLASSIFIEDS



ONE AD, SEVEN NEWSPAPERS: All classified ads appear in the Fort Qu'Appelle Times, Indian Head-Wolseley News, Kipling Clipper, Melville Advance, Whitewood-Grenfell Herald Sun, Quad Town Forum and Yorkton This Week.

Obituary Ken "Kenny" Atkinson

Dec. 3, 1946 – April 18, 2026

Ken "Kenny" Atkinson, 79, passed away peacefully on April 18, 2026 in Calgary, AB. He was 79 years of age.

Ken was born on Dec. 3, 1946, in Prince Albert to Howard and Helen (nee Johnson) Atkinson.

Ken lived a full and vibrant life that took him through Yorkton, Peace River, Edmonton, and ultimately Calgary. Along the way, he built not only a successful career as a salesman, but a reputation as someone who could connect with anyone—always ready with a story, a laugh, or a perfectly timed sarcastic remark.

Ken was a devoted husband to his wife Barb and a proud father to his daughters, Lana (husband Mike) and Rhyna (husband Lance). He was a loving grandfather to Kyle, Quinton, Mackenzie and Jaxon, who brought him immense joy and pride. As well as a few family additions Serena (Kyles wife), Andreas (Mackenzie's Fiance), and Sarah (Jaxon's girlfriend).

Deeply rooted in his community, Ken was an active member of the Kinsmen Club and the K40s, and was honoured as Citizen of the Year in Yorkton – recognition of the lasting impact he made on those around him.

Ken had a passion for sports and simple pleasures. He was a devoted fan of the Blue Jays and rarely missed a chance to watch a game. He loved golf – whether watching it or out on the course himself – and especially cherished time spent golfing with his beloved wife Barb. Ken accomplished a hole in on one of the "Old Timers" golf trips. In his younger years, he also enjoyed time on the ice as a goaltender.

Known for his kindness, humour, wit, and unmistakable sarcasm, Ken had a way of making people feel welcome and leaving them smiling. He will be deeply missed and fondly remembered by all who knew and loved him.

A visitation for relatives and friends was held on Thursday, April 2 and funeral services were held on Friday, April 24, 2026 both from the Yorkton Memorial Gardens Family Centre with Crystal Bailey, Certified Celebrant officiating. Organist, Shani Aplan accompanied Ken's sisters, Shawna Atkinson, Deb Baker and Faye Gelinis in the singing of the hymn 'In The Garden'. Tributes and words of remembrance were given by Ken's sisters, his brother Randy Atkinson, George Flunder, Ken Pilon and Barry Sharpe. Interment followed in the family plot in the Garden of St. Mark in Yorkton Memorial Gardens with Lance Coleman serving as the urnbearer. Honourary Bearers were members of the Yorkton Kinsmen K40 and the Old Time Terriers. Memorial donations can be made to the Yorkton Kinsmen Club or to the Telemiracle Foundation as gifts of remembrance. Condolences can be sent to the family on ken's tribute page at baileysfuneralhome.com

Arrangements were entrusted to Bailey's Funeral and Cremation Care.

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\$65 for the first 200 words - .20¢ per word thereafter
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1-844-464-6397

Obituary Rose Marie Damm (nee Beutel)

Oct. 9, 1941 – April 21, 2026

Rose Marie Damm (nee Beutel). Our mother, grandmother and a friend to many passed peacefully at Foothills Hospital, Calgary, AB, after 84 rich and full years!

She was born in Lipton, SK, moving to Sinteluta as a child, and then to Indian Head following Dave's passing. Like her parents, Rose was an entrepreneur from the day she was born, owning and operating several businesses, including the Sinteluta Savings Centre, the Loonie Toonie Store, and a Watkins franchise.

Gramma Rose always maintained beautiful homes, yards and gardens. She loved to volunteer, particularly with the Catholic Church and community organizations, loved cooking (and was renowned for her perogies!), playing cards, curling and travel, taking many trips south to the US with Dave. Her last trip before falling ill, and something that always brought her joy, was going to the casino for her 84th birthday!

Mom had lived with dementia for the past 15 years, but still lived a full life, with many friends and lots of laughs, always helping out the fellow residents of her seniors residence until she was hospitalized.

She maintained her wicked sense of humour and love and caring for others right to the end. She absolutely adored her grandsons, Cole and Reid, and pulled up stakes, moving "lock, stock and barrel" to Cochrane, AB in 2008, right after her first grandchild was born! Rose remained active for over a decade at Big Hill Lodge in Cochrane, and since last August, at Bow View Manor, along the banks of the Bow River, in Calgary.

Predeceased by her husband Dave, her parents, Albert and Emma, brothers, Ernest, Garnett and Frank (and her close friend and sister-in-law Marie).

Rose will be lovingly remembered, and is survived by her son Mark and his partner Orla, her special friend Erin and grandsons Cole and Reid, her brother Norman and his partner, Rose, and several nieces and nephews (the outlaws and in-laws!) on both sides of the Damm and Beutel families.

Cremation and interment in Sinteluta Cemetery next to her beloved Dave will follow at a later date.

Rose's family wishes to express their deepest thanks for the amazing care provided by the Internal Medicine, Hospitalist and Palliative Teams, and particularly Dr. Workun and the nursing staff, of FMC Units 46, 31 and 81.

If friends so desire, memorial contributions to the Sinteluta Hall Board, Sinteluta, SK S0G 4N0, or to The Calgary Health Foundation - Foothills Medical Centre, Calgary, AB, may be tokens of remembrance.

Arrangements entrusted to Tubman's Funeral Home in Wolseley, SK.



Obituary Frances Elizabeth Shuflita

Sept. 29, 1942 – April 22, 2026

Frances Elizabeth Shuflita (Kuchareschen) passed away on Wednesday, April 22, 2026, at the age of 83.

Frances was born on Sept. 29, 1942, to Frank and Esther (nee Gazdewich) Kuchareschen in the Glen Elder district near Norquay, SK.

Frances was predeceased by her parents and her husband, Edward. She is survived by her brother, Ludwig Kuchareschen; her son, Allan Shuflita (Renee Holtkamp); grandchildren Julia Zazula, Dayton, Tristan, Grayson, and Dawson Shuflita, and great-grandchildren Bryden and Blake.

Funeral service was held on Tuesday, April 28, 2026, at Matthews Funeral Home, Melville, with the Rev. Fr. Melchor Samonte officiating. Interment took place in St. Henry's Parish Cemetery, Melville.

Funeral arrangements were entrusted to Matthews Funeral Home, Melville.



Obituary Raymore Lynn Danylko

June 29, 1948 – April 5, 2026

The family of Ray Danylko of Yorkton, beloved husband of Marion Danylko, sadly announce his passing on Sunday, April 5, 2026. He was 77 years of age.

Raymore Lynn Danylko was born in Yorkton on June 29, 1948 spending the majority of his younger years living in Calder. In 1965 Ray met his beloved wife, Marion. They were later married on Aug. 5, 1969. Together, they welcomed their first son, Brenton, in 1970 and a few years later in 1974, their second son, Bradley. There was nothing Ray cherished more than the moments he spent with his family, especially his grandchildren who brought him endless happiness and pride. He was best known for his sense of humour and found joy in pulling pranks on family and friends.

Ray was a dedicated and hard-working radiator repairman since 1966. In 1981 he opened up his own repair shop, Ray's Radiator, where he worked alongside his son Brent until his untimely passing. One of his greatest gifts was his ability to connect with others. Through his business, many of his customers quickly became lifelong friends. No matter where he went or who he met, Ray had a way of starting conversations and forming connections. With his network of friends, the shop office always had a familiar face at coffee time. You could always rely on a phone call from Ray, checking in and seeing what you were up to. He had a passion for the outdoors and enjoyed gardening, hunting, fishing, camping, and working on his trikes. He loved spending the weekends at the cabin where he was always accompanied by his faithful furry companions (Teddy, Springer, Cindy, Shadow, Madee). Wherever Ray went, you could always count on his loyal dog being right by his side.

Raymore survived by his wife Marion, sons Brent (Tammy), Brad (Cheryl), grandchildren Logan, Tori, Courtney, and Holly, as well as many other friends and family. He is predeceased by his parents Harry and Saidie, in-laws Bill and Margret, and his brother Rodney.

A Celebration of Life was held on Saturday, April 25, 2026, from the Yorkton Memorial Gardens Family Centre Crystal Bailey, Certified Celebrant officiating. Courtney Danylko and Holly Danylko read the poem 'In Our Hearts'. Logan Danylko and Tori Danylko delivered the eulogy. The interment followed in the Garden of St. Mark, Yorkton Memorial Gardens with Logan Danylko, Tori Danylko, Courtney Danylko, and Holly Danylko serving as urn bearers. Donations in memory of Ray Danylko may be made to Jowsey House at the Yorkton and District Nursing Home for Palliative Care or to the Canadian Cancer Society as gifts of remembrance. Condolences may be left for the family at www.baileysfuneralhome.com

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Obituary Darren Edward Large

July 4, 1971 – April 23, 2026

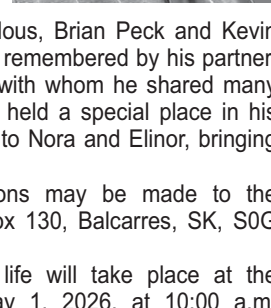
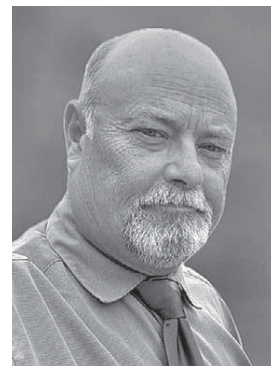
It is with profound sadness the family announces the sudden passing of Darren Edward Large on Thursday, April 23, 2026, at the age of 54 years.

Darren was predeceased by his father, Ronald Large; uncle and aunt Stan and Jaqueline Aldous; and cousin Scott Aldous. He is survived by his sons, Levi and Spencer, and their mother, Crystal Large; his mother, Audrey Large; cousins Cheryl and Sheila Aldous, Heather and Drue Aldous, Brian Peck and Kevin Peck and family. He is lovingly remembered by his partner, Trina Switzer, and her family, with whom he shared many meaningful moments. He also held a special place in his heart as an honorary grandpa to Nora and Elinor, bringing warmth and joy into their lives.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the Balcarres Fire Department, Box 130, Balcarres, SK, S0G 0C0.

A celebration of Darren's life will take place at the Balcarres Hall on Friday, May 1, 2026, at 10:00 a.m. Interment will take place in the Balcarres Cemetery.

Arrangements are entrusted to Matthews Funeral Home, Melville.



Obituary

David Allen Kolman
Oct. 16, 1950 – April 8, 2026



David Allen Kolman (known as Allen), age 75, formerly of Whitewood SK passed away on Wednesday, April 8, 2026, at Royal University Hospital Emergency Room in Saskatoon SK.

Allen was born in Whitewood Hospital on Oct. 16, 1950, to Wellington Kolman and Dorothy Kolman (Turner, Westcott). He was the youngest of four children. At the age of 11 his father passed away. He continued to grow up on the Kolman family farm north of Whitewood and attended school in Whitewood. He completed two years of post-secondary education in Saskatoon SK before returning to the family farm in Whitewood. He married Karen Jordens in 1972. They had two children, Jacelyn and David Jr, who grew up on the family farm.

Allen grain farmed but his true passion was the Purebred cattle business, specifically Simmental and Black Angus. He often admitted that the grain farming was done only to supplement his love of the competition in the show ring. He was extremely successful. His involvement with cattle took him to many locations where he met many people and always spoke of them fondly until his death. Even after he left farming, he continued to assist other cattlemen with their animal grooming and faithfully attended all the larger cattle shows, especially Agribition, right up to his passing.

Allen and Karen sold the family farm in 1998 and moved the family home into the town of Whitewood. During these years Allen worked for Sharpes Soil Services in Stockholm, hauled water for the oil rigs, and then worked at Seed-Hawk near Langbank. His final, and most enjoyable job, was working for Neil Davis driving a gravel truck. He loved that he met and interacted with so many people. Allen only stopped working for Neil due to severe health issues that had developed.

Having been forced into retirement he joined a group of like-minded golfers who met daily at noon to golf at the Whitewood Golf Course. It was during this time that he scored a hole-in-one which was one of his proudest golfing achievements. He enjoyed celebrating the event with his golfing buddies. He also enjoyed his coffee time at the Can-Am and at L And A Family Diner (Archie's). Allen was often the life of the party. He lived his life to the fullest.

In 2024 a decision was made to relocate to Saskatoon for better access to medical care.

Once settled in Saskatoon his love of golf continued, and he joined the Wildwood Golf Course. Through his golfing he once again met like-minded friends who not only golfed daily but also met for coffee once a week. It was a celebration when he scored his second hole-in-one. His love for watching hockey and curling continued until his passing.

Beyond all of Allen's life-long accomplishments, his pride for his two children surpassed anything else that had taken place in his life.

Allen was preceded in death by his parents, Wellington and Dorothy Kolman; in-laws Wilfred and Irene Jordens; brother and sister-in-law Gerald and Carole Westcott; and Sister Mona Palmer (Westcott).

Allen is survived by his wife Karen and two children; his daughter Jacelyn (Lars) Larson and grandchildren Hannah and Erik of Saskatoon; his son David (Natasha) Kolman and grandchildren Sarah and Annabel of Regina; his sister and brother-in-law Gwen and Ray Westcott of Lanigan SK; as well as many nieces, nephews and cousins.

A graveside service will take place in Whitewood on Saturday, July 25, 2026. Further details will be made available prior to this date.

Obituary

William Schindel
Dec. 31, 1929 – April 19, 2026



William Schindel was born on a family farm on Dec. 31, 1929, and passed away at St. Paul Lutheran Home in Melville, SK, on Sunday, April 19, 2026, at the age of 96 years.

William, known as Willie to most, was the eldest of eight children born to George and Katherine (Schneider) Schindel. He was a true pillar of the Schindel family, and, from an early age, he assumed and carried responsibility with quiet strength, setting an example of hard work, integrity and determined perseverance that guided those around him.

William married Esther Miller on April 2, 1954, and together they began a life rooted in love and dedication. They were blessed with two daughters and later with grandchildren and great-grandchildren whom he deeply cherished.

Born and raised near Birmingham, SK, William also raised his own family there, remaining connected to the land and community throughout his life. A lifelong farmer, he was known as a tireless worker a man of the soil and truly "salt of the earth". William took great pride in everything he did and believed things should always be done "just so", a reflection of both his high standards and his deep sense of responsibility. Those standards were definitely reflected in how he cared for his animals, especially his beloved horses in earlier times, his vehicles and his farm equipment.

In the fall of 1991, Dad and Mom retired to Melville, and the farm was sold to family. Dad made frequent trips back, sometimes daily, proving that part of his heart had been left on that land. Once he didn't drive anymore, he would frequently ask the question, "What's happening at the farm today?"

After many years in their home on Jubilee Crescent, it was time to downsize and move to Legion Manor in 2007, where they frequently enjoyed social events with their new neighbours in the common area. And, now within walking distance to the public library, Dad got his first library card and became an avid reader. After Mom's passing in 2022, he remained at the Manor until his move to St. Paul Lutheran Home in April 2025.

Faith was central to William's life. As a faithful servant of God, he attended the Pentecostal Church in Melville where he found strength and fellowship. Throughout his life, he was led by his strong Christian values, and his Bible was never far from his reach.

William was predeceased by his wife of more than 68 years, Esther; his parents; siblings Jack (Marjorie) Schindel, Reinhold Schindel, Arthur Schindel, Fred Schindel, Caroline (Donald) Reinheimer and brother-in-law Albert Steffan. Also gone ahead are Esther's parents, her siblings and their spouses.

William will be mourned and missed by daughters Ruth (Wayne) Gaura and Gail (Wayne) Hoffman; grandchildren Stefanie (Scott) Viczko, Brandon Hoffman, and Austin Gaura (Ashley); great-grandchildren Kallie, Mason and William; and step-great-granddaughter Reagan. Also surviving are his sister, Martha Steffan; brother Ervin (Lorraine) Schindel; sisters-in-law Evelyn Schindel, Gloria Schindel and Margaret Baron; as well as numerous nieces and nephews and their families.

William will be remembered for his unwavering faith, strong work ethic, honesty and steadfast devotion to family. His legacy lives on through those values that he modeled and the lives he touched. Dad's long life was a remarkable journey. We take solace in the promise of his new heavenly life and that he and Mom are together again.

William's family appreciates and thanks all those involved in his care this past year.

A private service for immediate family was held Saturday, April 25, 2026, with interment taking place in the Melville City Cemetery.

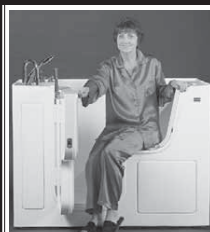
Arrangements were entrusted to Matthews Funeral Home, Melville.



TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN;

FOR THE PUBLIC-RECORD OF THE PRIVATE-REGISTERED-TRUST-SECURITY-INTERNATIONAL-CONTRACT-TREATY(S), EFFECTIVE--01-APRIL-2026-@-0117-HOURS. THE GRANTOR: ROBERT MALYK, AND SUCCESSORS AT THE MALYK/POWERS-TRUST(S)-MEETING-IN-LAS-VEGAS, NEVADA, USA - APPROVED-APPOINTED-AND-ACCEPTED-DURABLE-GENERAL-FINANCIAL-MEDICAL-AND-FULL-POWER-OF-ATTORNEY THROUGH THE: PRIVATE-REGISTERED-TRUST-SECURITY-INTERNATIONAL-CONTRACT-TREATY(S)-000-049-002/RF725892427, ET AL., TO; THE PRINCIPAL-TRUST: ROBERT MALYK-RF725892435US; HIS-SPOUSE/EXECUTOR-RF725892444US: BEVERLEY MALYK; THEIR-FIRST-BORN-SON-RF725892458US: ERIK POWERS; THEIR-SECOND-BORN-SON-RF725892461US: PAXTON MALYK; THEIR-THIRD-BORN-DAUGHTER-RF725892475USL: FARRAH ALEXANDRA MALYK; PAXTON'S-WIFE-RF725892475US: BREANNE MALYK; THEIR-FIRST-BORN-SON-RF725892461US: KRUZ MALYK; THEIR-SECOND-BORN-DAUGHTER: RACIE MALYK; THE MALYK/POWERS-FAMILY'S-ATTORNEY-IN-FACT-RF725892427US: POWERS, ERIK; THE MALYK/POWERS-FAMILY'S-CHIEF-FINANCIAL-OFFICER-RF725892413US: ERIK POWERS-PRIVATE-BANKER-CFO; AND OTHER-SUCCESSORS-IDENTIFIED-IN-SUCCESSION-LIST-RF725892435US/S-000-049-000/RF725892400US. THE POSTMASTER/MAIL-CARRIER: Erik-Wild: Powers OF THESE CONTRACT-DOCUMENTS IS REGISTERED THROUGH CLAIM-OF-LIFE THROUGH THE GLOBAL-POSTAL-UNION-IN-JOINDER WITH THE -TITLE -4 FLAG WITH THE AUTHORIZATION-GRANTED FOR THE USE-OF-THE-FLAG-AND-QUANTUM-GRAMMAR@/CORRECT-GRAMMAR-FOR-CONTRACTING BY THE POSTMASTER-GENERAL: Russell-Jay: Gould.

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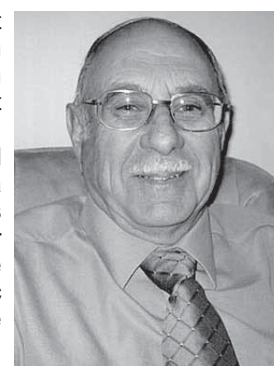
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Obituary

Gordon Hamblin
Jan. 18, 1936 – April 22, 2026



It is with great sadness that the family of Gordon Hamblin announces his passing on Wednesday, April 22, 2026, at the age of 90 years.

Gordon was a devoted farmer in the Qu'Appelle area for over 60 years and was raised with a deep respect for the land. He dedicated his life to farming, embracing organic practices long before they were widely known.

Above all, he was a loving father, grandfather and great-grandfather. His family meant everything to him and he took great pride in watching it grow. His lessons of hard work will live on through them. He will be deeply missed and fondly remembered by all who knew him, including his loyal companion Princess.

Gordon was predeceased by his loving wife Hilda and his parents Clarence and Mary.

He will be lovingly remembered by his children: Greg (Colleen) and their children: Ariel (Lyla and Jasper) and Nicky; Gwen (Greg) and their children: Jessica (Matthew) and Adam (Ebonie) (Colton and Elizabeth); Jen and her children: Autumn, Elijah and Chantelle (Lydia). He is also survived by his brother Robert (Lorraine) Hamblin and several cousins, nieces and nephews.

The family would like to thank the staff of Echo Lodge in Fort Qu'Appelle for the wonderful care that Dad received over the past couple of years.

As per Gordon's request a private family interment will take place on Friday, May 15, 2026.

In lieu of flowers, donation in memoriam may be made to the Regina Humane Society, 4900 Parliament Ave., Regina, SK S4W 0T7.

Online condolences may be made at www.tubmanfh.com



Obituary

Rudolph (Rudy) Otto Loewen

April 4, 1938 – March 25, 2026

Rudolph (Rudy) Otto Loewen, late of Wroxtton, SK, passed away Wednesday, March 25, 2026, at his residence in the RM of Wallace, SK. Born April 4, 1938, at Minnedosa, MB to Andrew and Tina Loewen.

Rudy grew up in Moore Park, MB. Attended Bible College in Winkler Bible Institute, studying music and Bible teaching courses. He married L. Roberta Toews April 10th, 1965. They farmed and started a family at Moore Park, MB. In 1976, Rudy and Roberta moved to Marchwell, SK. They farmed until 1984, and then sold the farm and bought an acreage in Wroxtton SK. Rudy was renowned for farming, singing, mechanical abilities and volunteering in youth ministry.

Rudy was survived by seven siblings: (Anne, Bill, Sue, Helen, John, Linda and Rose); his wife Roberta (of 60 years); children: Dean (Jennifer), Joan (Allan Norberg), and Teresa (Trent Davenport); 12 grandchildren; and 18 great-grandchildren. He was predeceased by daughter Trinda, his parents, and brother Henry.

A celebration of life was held on Saturday, April 18, 2:00 p.m. at Christie's Funeral Home. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to ShareWordGlobal.com (formerly Gideons).



CHRISTIE'S
FUNERAL HOME
& CREMATORIUM

PUBLIC NOTICE Tax Enforcement Property

RM of Abernethy No. 186

Pursuant to Section 31 of the *Tax Enforcement Act*, the RM of Abernethy No. 186 is offering for sale by "Sealed Tender" the following property obtained by Tax Enforcement:

Lots 14-15 Block 1 Plan X3298, Lorlie (sold together)

Property is sold on an "as is" basis. There are no warranties offered or implied on the condition of the property. Tenders shall not include Goods and Services Tax. The successful bidder will have 30 days to provide payment to complete the purchase. No conditional bids will be accepted. Highest or any tender not necessarily accepted. Tenders must be received by 3 pm Thursday, May 28, 2026 and must be submitted in a sealed envelope marked:

Property Tender
RM of Abernethy No. 186
201 Main St., P.O. Box 249
Abernethy, SK S0A 0A0

Issued at the RM of Abernethy this 1st day of May, 2026.

Karissa Lingelbach, Administrator

Obituary

Bonnie Currie

Feb. 12, 1950 – April 24, 2026

Bonnie Currie, of Fort Qu'Appelle, SK, passed on April 24, 2026, at the age of 76 years.

Bonnie was raised on the family farm near Edgeley, SK with her parents, Dave and Mary Williams and her siblings Betty, Jim and Esther. She loved the farm and would visit it many times over the years.

She attended school in Edgeley and then Fort Qu'Appelle until receiving a teacher's degree from universities in Saskatoon and Regina. Bonnie worked in the Lebret school and briefly in Calgary, for Alberta Government Telephones. She returned to the valley and was offered a job at Parkland Community College, where she taught adult education for many years. When she retired, she would often be approached by former students, who always gave her a big hug and told her how much she meant to them.

Everyone knew that if they needed someone to volunteer for a project, all they had to do was ask Bonnie. Even when she was sick with cancer and the beginnings of dementia, she still looked after the flowers in front of the Town Office. Bonnie supported children through the Christian Children's Fund for over 33 years. She was a long-time Legion member and received a certificate of merit in recognition of her service with the Fort Qu'Appelle Legion.

Bonnie was an excellent curler and loved golfing with the Monday morning ladies at Echo Ridge and then meeting on the deck for coffee. She enjoyed raking sand traps on the weekends that Wayne worked. Bonnie was a wonderful cook and baker. Her family had many great meals together on special occasions.

Bonnie loved her husband Wayne and son Danny and his wife Tara, but she had a special place in her heart for her grandson Hunter. Her sister Esther was so kind to her and visited her almost daily at Echo Lodge. She is also survived by her sisters Betty Buote and Esther (Dwight) Greig and brother Jim (Nadine) Williams.

She was predeceased by her parents Dave and Mary Williams and brother-in-law Leonard Buote.

Bonnie will be missed by everyone that knew her.

The family would like to thank the staff of Echo Lodge for the care and compassion they provided to both Bonnie and Hannah during their time at Echo Lodge.

A private interment will take place at a later date.

In lieu of flowers, donations in memoriam may be made to Echo Lodge Auxiliary, Box 1790, Fort Qu'Appelle, SK S0G 1S0.

Online condolences may be made at www.tubmanfh.com



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YOUR WEST CENTRAL Voice (Kindersley) is hiring an LJI Reporter for west central Saskatchewan and east central Alberta. The job is a contract position until March 2027 with the possibility for continuing employment. Full description at jeffgaulin.com. Apply with resume and writing samples to kate@yourwest-central.com

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Town of Kipling Assessment Roll

Notice is hereby given that the assessment roll for the Town of Kipling for the year 2026 has been prepared and is open to inspection by calling the office of the assessor at 306-736-2515 from 8:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. and 1:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. on the following days:

Monday to Friday (except Public Holidays)
May 1, 2026 to June 2, 2026

A Bylaw pursuant to Section 214 of the Municipalities Act has been passed and the assessment notices have been sent as required.

Any person who wishes to appeal against his or her assessment is required to file his or her notice of appeal with:

Western Municipal Consulting Ltd.
Nicolle Hoskins
Board of Revision Secretary
By Email: secretary@westernmunicipal.ca
OR to: P.O. Box 149 Meota, SK S0M 1X0
by 4:30 pm on the 2nd day of June 2026.

Dated at Kipling this 1st day of May, 2026.

Brenna Ackerman
Assessor

ASSESSMENT ROLL NOTICE

RM of Stanley No. 215

Notice is hereby given that the Assessment Roll of the Rural Municipality of Stanley No. 215 for the year 2026 has been prepared and is now open to inspection at the office of the Assessor from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. and from 1 to 4 p.m. on the following days during normal office hours: Friday, May 1, 2026 to Friday, June 5, 2026.

Office Hours: Monday to Thursday 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. and 1 to 4 p.m.
Closed Fridays

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

Any person who wishes to appeal against his or her assessment is required to file his or her notice of appeal, along with a \$200.00 appeal fee which will be returned if the appeal is successful, with:

The Secretary of the Board of Revision for RM Stanley No. 215
Western Municipal Consulting Ltd.
P.O. Box 149, Meota, Sask. S0A 1X0
by the 5th day of June, 2026.

Dated at Melville, Sask., this 30th day of April, 2026.

Rhonda Schmaltz, Local Assessor

NOTICE OF PREPARATION OF ASSESSMENT ROLL

TOWN OF FRANCIS

Notice is hereby given that the assessment roll for the Town of Francis for the year 2026 has been prepared and is open to inspection in the office of the Assessor, 113 Main Street, Francis, SK Wednesdays from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. from April 22, 2026 to May 27, 2026.

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

Any person who wishes to appeal against his or her assessment is required to file his or her notice of appeal with: The Assessor, Town of Francis, Box 128, Francis, SK S0G 1V0, or electronically to: secretary@westernmunicipal.ca by the 26th day of May 2026.

Dated this 22th day of April 2026

Melody Dixon-Lye,
Assessor

NOTICE OF CALL FOR NOMINATIONS Town of Balcarres Municipal By-Election

Municipality: Town of Balcarres
Office to be filled: Councillor
Number to be elected: One (1)

PUBLIC NOTICE is hereby given that nominations of candidates for the above-noted office will be received by the undersigned at the Town of Balcarres Municipal Office, 209 Main Street, Balcarres, Saskatchewan, during the following times:

Nomination Period: May 5, 2026, to May 19, 2026, during regular business hours 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Nomination Day: May 20, 2026, from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., local time

Nomination forms may be obtained at the following locations:
Town of Balcarres Municipal Office, 209 Main Street, Balcarres, Saskatchewan
Municipal website:

HYPERLINK "<http://www.townofbalcarres.ca>" "t" "new" www.townofbalcarres.ca

Nomination Requirements:

Nominations must be made on the prescribed forms and accompanied by a completed **Town of Balcarres Public Disclosure Statement** and a **Criminal Record Check**.

A nomination is not valid unless it is signed by the candidate and the required number of nominators and submitted to the Returning Officer during the nomination period.

Returning Officer
Gail E. Sloan
Town of Balcarres Municipal Office
209 Main Street, Balcarres, SK S0G 0C0

Dated this 1st day of May, 2026.

Grandparent scam continues to target SK residents

By GNG Staff
Grasslands News

Police are again warning the public about a surge in so-called “grandparent scams,” as victims across the province continue to be targeted with increasingly sophisticated tactics.

The warning comes after several recent incidents in Saskatchewan, including one confirmed case in the Battlefords area earlier this month where a victim handed over cash to a scammer. In that instance, the fraudster instructed the victim to use a specific name and “passcode” as part of the exchange.

Authorities say the

scam has evolved, with some suspects now directing victims to deposit money into cryptocurrency machines using a provided barcode, allowing funds to be transferred quickly and with little chance of recovery. Investigators have also noted scammers are using the names of legitimate lawyers in an effort to appear credible.

In the White Butte detachment area, police received two separate reports this week of residents in the Pilot Butte area being targeted. In both cases, the scammer attempted to arrange an in-person meeting to collect money, though no

payments were made and the incidents were reported to police.

Police say the scam relies heavily on creating panic and urgency, often with callers claiming to be a grandchild or other family member in immediate trouble and in need of money for bail or legal fees.

“Scammers are very convincing and will try to pressure victims into acting quickly without verifying the situation,” police noted in a release.

The scheme, commonly referred to as the “grandparent scam,” involves fraudsters impersonating a loved one — often using information gath-

ered from social media or other online sources — and claiming to need urgent financial help. In some cases, scammers may send a courier to collect cash directly from the victim’s home.

Authorities stress that despite the name, anyone can fall victim.

Police are reminding residents that legitimate law enforcement, courts or lawyers will never call to request money for bail or fines. Any such payments are handled through official channels, such as at a courthouse, and not through third parties or home pickups.

Residents are urged to remain cautious if they

receive unexpected calls requesting money, particularly if the caller insists on secrecy or immediate action.

Police recommend taking time to verify the situation by contacting the family member directly using a known phone number, and to never send cash or transfer funds to someone they do not know.

Anyone who believes they may have been targeted or victimized is encouraged to contact police

by calling 310-RCMP, or 911 in the case of an emergency.

Officials say continued awareness and vigilance remain the best defence against falling victim to these scams.

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Over 60 charges laid after Bangor, Yorkton, and two rural residences raided

-continued from front

Also seized at the properties were a loaded handgun, a crossbow, brass knuckles, a firearm suppressor, a firearm magazine, bear spray, a baton, ammunition, five vehicles, and a sum of cash.

As a result, RCMP arrested three adult males and two adult females at the scenes of the search warrants.

Grant Ivie, 43, from Bangor is charged with six counts, possession for the purpose of trafficking; two counts possession of a prohibited weapon when knowing possession unauthorized; single counts trafficking, possession of property obtained by crime over \$5,000, conspiracy to commit drug trafficking, unauthorized possession of a restricted firearm, possession of a loaded restricted firearm, unsafe storage of a firearm, weapons possession contrary to order, and possession of a firearm with a tampered serial number.

Jacob Stonehouse, 24, from Yorkton is charged with six counts trafficking; single counts possession for the purpose of trafficking, conspiracy to commit drug trafficking, and possession of property obtained by crime over \$5,000.

James Robinson, 25, from Yorkton is charged with seven counts possession for the purpose of trafficking; three counts possession of a weapon for a dangerous purpose; single counts trafficking, conspiracy to commit drug trafficking, possessing cannabis for the purpose of selling, possession of property obtained by crime over \$5,000, and unauthorized possession of a

prohibited weapon.

Kristen Frankow, 29, from Bangor is charged with six counts, possession for the purpose of trafficking; two counts possession of a prohibited weapon when knowing possession unauthorized; single counts possession of property obtained by crime over \$5,000, conspiracy to commit drug trafficking, unauthorized possession of a restricted firearm, possession of a loaded restricted firearm, unsafe storage of a firearm, and possession of a firearm with a tampered serial number.

Cheryl Carlston, 51, from Bredenburg is charged with single counts possession for the purpose of trafficking, conspiracy to commit drug trafficking, possessing cannabis for the purpose of selling, possession of property obtained by crime over \$5,000; sell, offer for sale, transport, deliver, distribute, or have in her possession for the purpose of sale a tobacco product, or a raw leaf tobacco that is unstamped; possession of unstamped tobacco, and possess, store, transport or sell tobacco that is not marked in a prescribed manner.

The five individuals who were arrested and charged appeared in Yorkton Provincial Court on April 27. After a bail hearing on April 29, Carlston was released with her next court date being May 25. Stonehouse will have a bail hearing May 6 while Frankow, Robinson, and Ivie had theirs set for April 30; all back in Yorkton Provincial Court.

RCMP continue to investigate. "Ten different types

of illicit substances were removed from Saskatchewan communities during this investigation," noted Sgt. Greg Smith, the unit commander of Saskatchewan RCMP's Yorkton STRT. "Multiple arrests were made simultaneously - within minutes of one another - and more than 60 charges have been laid. This was made possible due to the RCMP's coordinated and intelligence-informed enforcement efforts. This investigation highlights that illegal drugs and weapons are not only big-city issues - the presence of these dangerous items is not influenced by the size of a community."

The events of April 24 were not in connection with other recent drug investigations and arrests made throughout the southeast.

Back to Bangor

According to a source, the Bangor residence has been the centre of mystery for those in the village since a tall chain link fence went up about 14 years ago; complete with black panelling inserted to prevent anyone from seeing inside the yard. Around three years ago, the yard was dug up in order to place a sea-can below the surface and a cover-all building erected above the site. However, RCMP have since noted that "no buried sea-can was located."

Locals long believed the residence was linked to the drug trade, with people reporting hearing multiple gunshots fired during the April 24 event. There's been no reports of injuries so far, but there have been unconfirmed

reports of up to four dogs being put down during the raid. RCMP later confirmed with Grasslands News that no dogs were euthanized as a result of the operation.

One witness stated an approximately 40-year-old man and 12-year-old youth were seen trimming grass at the residence, but that the occupants generally kept to themselves - and Bangor residents did not bother them.

"We all kind of knew there's something going on here," a source said. "When this happened, there was a lot of local people saying, 'it's about time'."

Another source Grasslands News spoke with noted the people "definitely stood out around here," especially after putting up the eight-foot-tall fence around the property.

"All you could see was cameras and stuff up in the trees, every which angle," they said. "A bunch of big dogs and 'no trespassing' signs everywhere. You could tell they didn't want no neighbors or anybody popping by. You weren't stopping over there for a coffee!"

Hours after the raid, the nearby Bangor Community Hall hosted their 19th annual Ladies Night Out, with funds going to the Morris Lodge for a new walk-in tub. An air of relief accompanied the event as locals learned of the forced eviction of a questionable element.



RCMP | GRASSLANDS NEWS

Massive Haul

Shown in a handout from RCMP are some of the drugs and weapons seized during the April 24 raids.

In addition to the large police presence in both Bangor and Yorkton, Grasslands News learned of another meeting place in a rural property 12 miles north of Bangor. A witness observed the large procession of police vehicles leaving the farm, headed toward Bangor moments before the raid.

"It is important to remember that there is the potential for dangerous illicit drugs to be circulating in any community, including small towns," RCMP stated. "Saskatchewan RCMP's SERT and frontline officers at de-

tachments are continually working on intercepting and mitigating those risks."

"When it comes to criminal activity in small towns, we know that no one knows a community better than the people who live there," RCMP noted. "Where something seems off, residents are the first to notice. Reporting those concerns - whether it be a suspicious person, vehicle, or behaviour - can progress an investigation and help officers understand crime patterns in the area."

Explore health and wellness options at Expo on May 9

By Jacob Miller
Grasslands News

If you are looking to improve your health, then the upcoming Health and Wellness Expo is for you.

The Melville Branch of the Canadian Mental Health Association is hosting their first Health and Wellness Expo on May 9 at the Cornerstone Event Centre at the CN Community Centre in Melville. The event runs from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. and features health and wellness vendors and presentations.

Grasslands News spoke with event organizer Doug Hanley about the upcoming expo.

"Every year the Melville Branch of the Canadian Mental Health Association try to find a different way to celebrate Mental Health Week in Saskatchewan, and this year this was one of the ideas that we came up to celebrate," said Hanley.

"We have all sorts of different groups coming from mental health to physical health, to even spiritual health. All different ways of keeping yourself well."

Hanley said that they have tried to combine traditional health and non-traditional health and wellness people.

"There will be some traditional stuff that would include getting your blood pressure taken, to non traditional like

aura scans and crystals," said Hanley. "We try to include a bit of everything for everybody."

There are a total of 35 vendors set for the event from Melville and the province. Some vendors will also be hosting presentations throughout the day.

"They'll be scheduled sort of every half hour throughout the day, and they'll be in a separate part of the CN Community Center," said Hanley. "If people are interested in those presentations, they can go to that area of the community center and listen to a group presentation." The schedule of presentations will be available close to the day of the event.

Hanley added that there is still a very large stigma surrounding mental health and that he hopes the event helps with that.

"When we're celebrating Canadian mental health, there is still a very large stigma. It's getting better, but there is still a stigma surrounding mental health, so we're trying to let people express themselves and learn more about mental health," said Hanley. "We're also combining it with physical and spiritual health as well this year, and hopefully we've got a good turnout, and that people want to keep themselves well."

The free event runs from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. and is open to all.



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- The Walking Stick Mobility Store
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- Hope Heals
- Bioflex by Megan
- Heart and Soul In Balance
- True North Wellness & Hypnotherapy
- Sask Health Authority
- Haylee Bindig - RMT
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Mystic Crystal Tattoos will be doing a limited number of mental health related tattoos on site!

Ag NEWS

SPRING EDITION

B Section May 1, 2026

GNG
NEWS

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Monette farms restructuring

By Ryan Kiedrowski
Grasslands News

Monette Farms sought court protection under the Companies' Creditors Arrangement Act due to an urgent liquidity crisis tied to the maturity of its primary debt facility and the immediate capital demands of the 2026 growing season, according to an affidavit sworn by CEO Darrel Monette.

"Priority is to protect the productive capacity of the farm and manage obligations — including land rent — in an orderly, predictable way," Monette said in a letter to landowners and leasing partners. "CCAA is not bankruptcy or a shutdown. It is a federal restructuring framework with oversight intended to give a viable business time to develop and implement a plan, while continuing normal operations where possible."

The affidavit states the company's \$950-million senior secured credit facility matured April 15, leaving "no further funding" available at a critical time in the farming cycle. As a result, the group "urgently require[s] liquidity to pay for critical supplies and to continue operations," particularly with seeding season imminent.

Monette Farms argues it is insolvent, with insufficient cash to meet obligations as they come due, despite having assets that exceed liabilities on paper. The company warns that without court protection, creditor enforcement would trigger a "disorderly liquidation and material value destruction."

A central factor in the filing is the time-sensitive nature of large-scale farming. The affidavit emphasizes that missing the narrow spring seeding window would significantly reduce crop yields or prevent planting altogether, eliminating revenue for the year and damaging land value. It describes the situation as a "binary outcome—either seed now or lose the year."

The company also cites broader operational risks. Unseeded or unmanaged farmland could lose market value, suffer soil degradation, and become less attractive to buyers. Additionally, failure to operate could lead to the loss of licences, damage to supplier relationships, and layoffs among hundreds of employees across Western Canada and the United States.

Financial pressures were compounded by recent performance challenges. While revenue increased significantly through expansion, profitability declined due to higher costs, poor crop prices, spoilage, and lower yields. Expansion into higher-cost segments like produce and cattle also weighed on earnings.



Animal sale

The Melville and District Agri-Park Association hosted their annual Animal Sale on April 25. For sale was a number of different animals including chickens, rabbits, pigs, and more.

JACOB MILLER | GRASSLANDS NEWS

In response, Monette Farms is seeking an initial court order that would stay creditor actions, allow operations to continue, and approve debtor-in-possession financing. The proposed DIP facility would provide up to \$90 million in funding to cover immediate operating needs, including seeding costs estimated at more than \$40 million annually.

The company is also asking the court to appoint a monitor and maintain the status quo on key licences and assets while it restructures.

Looking ahead, Monette Farms plans to return to court in early May to seek an extension of creditor protection and expanded financing. Within 45 days, it intends to launch a sale and investment solicitation process to sell assets, attract investment, or refinance debt.

The stated goal is to "right-size" the business, reduce debt, and repay lenders through asset sales while preserving as much operational value as possible. The company argues that immediate court protection is necessary to stabilize operations, complete the 2026 growing season, and avoid a forced liquidation at reduced values.

Too much, too fast?

While the challenges Monette Farms stated are not new to producers of all sizes, the situation is unique in how they grew the operation. The majority of Monette's expansion seems to have taken place in the last 15 years or so, and may be a case of 'too much, too fast'.

"I think it's a problem that's unique to them, and to any of these large operators that start having multiple locations in the province, or in the country, or down in the states even," said Blake Duchek, who has a 10,000-acre operation in the Atwater/Stockholm area. "The big difference between these large operators and a multi-generational farmer is that their families set their roots down here back 100, 150 years ago - farmed in the same area and they're large - but they're based out of their own home yard."

"It just seems to work better because the owners are present in some form all the time," continued Duchek. "The employees all are based out of the same area, and they got a solid employee base."

Diversified operations that include some sort of side business with a little distance from farming also seems

- SEE MONETTE FARMS, 2

An agricultural supplement

Sask. ag processing hits record \$8.4B as sector surges

By GNG Staff
Grasslands News

Saskatchewan's value-added agriculture sector continues to expand, with new figures showing it reached a record \$8.4 billion in revenue for the 2024-25 fiscal year.

The total marks nearly a doubling of the sector's value over the past decade, reflecting sustained growth in food processing and agricultural manufacturing across the province.

David Marit said the milestone puts Saskatchewan on pace to meet its long-term targets.

"Thanks to the strength of this sector and the quality of our crops and livestock, Saskatchewan is on track to achieve its Growth Plan target of \$10 billion in value-added agriculture revenue by 2030," Marit said in a release. He added that recent plant openings and expansions signal strong investor confidence and position the industry for further gains.

According to preliminary estimates from Statistics Canada, food manufacturing accounted for roughly 95 per cent of the province's total value-added revenue in 2024-25. The sector has seen significant gains over time, with food manufacturing value increasing by about 150 per

cent between 2012 and 2024 — a rate that outpaces other provinces.

Warren Kaeding said the sector plays a key role in both the provincial economy and global food supply.

"With more than 300 food processors employing over 5,000 people, value-added agriculture is playing a vital role in providing food security to over 160 countries," Kaeding said. "It also strengthens Saskatchewan's economy by keeping

more value in the province, increasing investment and creating jobs."

Growth in canola processing is also contributing to the sector's expansion. The province is moving toward its goal of processing 75 per cent of its canola production domestically, supported by projects such as Cargill's new facility in Regina and the expansion of Louis Dreyfus Company's crush plant in Yorkton.

Monette mega-farm faces restructuring

- continued from front

to perform better as Duchek pointed out.

"Some other farms, they manufacture equipment or do construction work; hauling gravel or hauling grain - they have some side businesses, and they do really well because those side businesses can carry them through some tough years," he told Grasslands News. "During those tough years when you don't have a side business, that's when you need the equity in your land to maybe secure a line of credit. But if you've used all your equity up in your land already - it looks like that's what Monette's have done - you got no equity to secure any financing to carry through a bad year."

What triggered the liquidity crunch with such urgency was the April 15 maturity of around \$830 million in secured lending in a Senior Facilities Agreement. A further \$30 million loan from Farm Credit Canada also matured the same day, which had \$12 million outstanding.

Since the application filing at Calgary King's Bench on April 21, Monette has received \$40 million in the form of debt-or-in-possession financing, which will assure this year's crop is seeded. He is seeking a further \$50 million in the form of a revolving loan.

Monette Farms is one of the largest private farming operations in North America, managing around 492,000 acres with operations in Saskatchewan, Alberta, Manitoba, B.C., Montana, Colo-

rado, and Arizona. Interests range from grain production and seed processing, as well as produce crops and ranching operations. From humble roots as a family farm near Swift Current established in 1912, they employ 425 people (rising to around 600 in peak seasons). In the first half of the 2010s, operations expanded in the Swift Current, Stewart Valley, and Regina areas before expanding beyond provincial borders starting in 2019.

Recently, the Canadian Grain Commission stated they aren't renewing Monette Seeds Ltd.'s primary elevator license at Swift Current effective May 1, given its ties to the overall Monette group court filing. Producers with ties to Monette Seeds are advised to contact FTI Consulting, who is the court-appointed monitor.

In total, there are 18 companies included in the court filings, being Monette Farms Ltd., Monette Farms Ontario Corp., NexgenSeeds Ltd., Monette Produce Ltd., Monette Seeds Ltd., Monette Land Corp., DMO Holdings Ltd., DMO Holdings USA, Inc., Monette Seeds USA, LLC., Monette Farms Arizona, LLC., Monette Farms USA, INC., 1012595 DE Inc., Monette Produce, LLC., Goat's Peak Winery Ltd., Monette Farms BC Ltd., Monette Farms Land GP Ltd., Monette Farms Land II GP Ltd., and Monette Farms BC GP Ltd.

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Fertilizer costs and global uncertainty could influence Canadian seeding decisions

By GNG Staff
Grasslands News

As the 2026 growing season approaches, Canadian farmers are finalizing planting plans amid an unusually high level of uncertainty. Rising fertilizer prices, combined with global instability, are expected to play a significant role in shaping seeding decisions across the country.

While many acres are already committed due to crop rotations and exist-

ing contracts, a portion of farmland remains flexible. This “swing acreage” could shift in response to increasing input costs and changing market conditions, potentially altering the overall crop mix for the year.

According to Statistics Canada's release in March and an April 22 news release from Farm Credit Corporation's Senior Economist, Leigh Anderson, early projections indicate that Canadian farmers intend to

seed more canola, corn, barley, flax, and soybeans in 2026, while reducing acreage for wheat, oats, lentils, and peas. However, these projections were made prior to recent geopolitical developments that have contributed to rising fertilizer prices. As a result, final planting decisions may differ from initial expectations.

Historically, acreage changes between crops have been relatively modest. However, analysis suggests that up to 5.5 mil-

lion acres—representing about 7.3 per cent of total field crop area—could still shift before seeding is complete. These adjustments are expected to favor crops with lower input costs or stronger profit potential.

Soybeans are one crop that may benefit from current conditions. Because they require less nitrogen fertilizer than crops like corn, soybeans are becoming more attractive in a high-cost environment. This trend is particularly relevant in regions such as Manitoba and eastern Canada, where producers may be more exposed to fertilizer price fluctuations. As a result, soybean acreage could expand further, potentially at the expense of crops like spring wheat.

Canola is also expected to remain a strong contender for acreage in 2026. Improved market access increased domestic processing capacity, and supportive price conditions are all contributing factors. In addition, growers often prioritize fertilizer use on canola due to its profitability, which could further support acreage growth. Spring wheat, on

the other hand, faces increased competition and may see the largest decline among major crops.

Other crops present a mixed outlook. Lentils and durum wheat are under pressure from ample global supplies and weaker prices, though their relatively lower fertilizer requirements may limit acreage declines. Peas remain uncertain, influenced by both market opportunities and existing stock levels, while still playing an important role in crop rotations.

Oats and barley are also difficult to predict. Oats are relatively inexpensive to grow but face pricing challenges, while barley could see support from expanding livestock demand and its lower fertilizer needs. Together, these smaller crops still represent a meaningful portion of potential acreage shifts.

Beyond traditional crop choices, broader land-use changes are also possible. Canada's cattle herd is beginning to expand, which could lead to an increase in hay production. Some marginal cropland may be converted back to hay land to support livestock

feeding needs, particularly if strong cattle prices continue.

At the same time, higher input costs and tighter profit margins could result in more land being left unseeded. Historically, unseeded acreage can vary significantly depending on weather and economic conditions. This year, some producers may choose to leave marginal land idle rather than absorb higher production costs.

Overall, while large-scale changes in seeded acreage are not expected, there is enough flexibility for farmers to adapt to current economic pressures. Shifts toward crops like canola and soybeans appear likely, while wheat and other higher-cost crops may see reduced planting.

With weeks remaining before seeding begins in earnest, market conditions, input costs, and weather will continue to influence final decisions. The coming planting season will be closely watched as producers respond to one of the more complex economic environments in recent years.



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Past and future farm income forecast global markets affect stabilized industry

By GNG Staff
 Grasslands News

Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada's Farm Income Forecast has released a 2025-2026 Farm Income Forecast, a key tool for monitoring income and is used to understand the short-term outlook for primary agriculture in the farming sector.

Net Cash Income, which is the difference between cash receipts and operating expenses at the industry level, is the main metric that AAFC uses to measure farm income. After seeing a decline of 15 per cent in 2024, NCI is forecast to have largely stabilized in 2025 and is expected to see a modest increase in 2026, although both years would remain below the previous five-year average.

Farm income is forecast to have stabilized in 2025, while average net worth is expected to have increased

NCI is forecast to have levelled out in 2025 at \$19.6 billion, although this would be five per cent below the previous five-year average. Overall receipts and expenses are forecast to have both increased, largely offsetting each other.

A key driver of the increase in farm cash receipts is an expected 12 per cent growth in livestock receipts, due in large part to a strong price-driven increase in cattle receipts, as well as hog receipts. This increase is expected to have more than offset a one per cent decline in crop receipts and a 14 per cent decline in direct program payments.

Operating expenses are forecast to have stayed high, but overall growth is expected to have remained below the significant increases of 2021 and 2022, with the anticipated increase of four per cent in 2025. Some key expense items,

such as interest and to a lesser extent, feed, are expected to have declined while others, such as livestock purchases, fertilizer and labour, are forecast to have increased.

Average Net Operating Income per farm, which measures producers' revenue minus cash expenses at the farm-level, is forecast to have increased by 14 per cent to \$142,000 in 2025, influenced by the same drivers as NCI. While there can be variability by farm type, all farm types except grains are expected to have seen an increase in 2025. The direction and size of changes in farm-level measures of income (like average NOI) can sometimes differ from sector-level measures (like NCI) due to differences in data and methodology.

Average per farm net worth is forecast to have modestly increased by three per cent in 2025 to \$4 million, as the in-

crease in assets is expected to have been larger than the increase in liabilities.

Outlook for 2026

The forecast for 2026 is subject to significant uncertainties, such as continued volatility in global markets, as well as the potential impact of weather events. In particular, uncertainty around the trade environment could have a significant impact on the 2026 forecast results. This forecast is based on market, growing and trade conditions as of December 2025.

That said, NCI is forecast to increase three per cent to \$20.2 billion in 2026, slightly below the level of the 2020-2024 average. Growth in livestock receipts is expected to mostly level out but still increase, while the record grain crop of 2025 should support increased marketings and crop receipts in 2026. These increases are expected to more than offset modest growth in expenses and further declines in program payments. A comparable increase of three per cent in average NOI per farm to \$146,000 is also expected, and average net worth is forecast to further increase by three per cent.

For more information and supporting documents, please contact AAFC at aafc.info.aac@agr.gc.ca.

2025 Income

The Canadian farm income in 2025 has been characterized with a continued, though potentially slowing, decline in Net Cash Income (NCI), pro-

- SEE FARM INCOME, 5



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Past and future farm income forecast global markets affect stabilized industry

- continued from page 4

2019-2023 averages. While Q1 2025 saw a 3.1 per cent increase in cash receipts to \$25.6 billion, driven by a 14 per cent rise in livestock, overall net income is down due to rising costs.

A 2025 Income Comparison (Preliminary/Forecasted) revealed:

- NCI Projected to fall by 15 per cent in 2025 (based on early-year forecasts) following similar declines in 2024, driven by lower crop prices.
- Farm Cash Receipts (Q1 2025): Increased 3.1 per cent to \$25.6 billion, fueled by strong livestock receipts (+\$1.3B) while crop receipts remained flat.
- Livestock & Crop Split: Livestock sector (cattle and hogs) showed strength in early 2025, while crop receipts saw little growth.
- Farmland Values: Projected to continue growing by 9.3 per cent in 2025, indicating that despite lower operating income, asset values remain strong.

Key Factors Affecting 2025 Performance were forecast to be the trade uncertainty created by potential U.S. tariffs and China's anti-dumping investigation into Canadian canola posing significant risks. Reduced crop insurance payments (down 25.2 per cent in Q1 2025)

suggest lower systemic risk, but lower overall income and overall input costs remaining high, pressure has been put on the margins.

2024 Facts

Net cash income dropped 15 per cent in 2024 to \$19.7 billion with 2025 data showing a similar trend of high receipts offset by high costs, with continued volatility.

According to farm income information released in December 2025 by Statistics Canada, farm income dropped while farm debt saw a big increase from 2023 to 2024.

In 2023, Canadian farmers owed a total of \$146 billion. In 2024, that had jumped to nearly \$167 billion. In Saskatchewan, farm debt increased from \$21.5 to \$24.4 billion.

Across the country in 2024, chartered banks held 39 per cent of the farm debt, followed by federal agencies, mainly FCC, at 27 per cent and credit unions at 15 per cent. The numbers are a bit different in Saskatchewan where federal agencies are the biggest debt holder at 39

per cent, followed by chartered banks at 23 per cent and credit unions at 19.

This is a function of interest rates as well as debt levels and debt levels are steadily increasing.

Realized net income for Canadian farmers, excluding cannabis, was \$9.7 billion in 2024 down 23 per cent compared to the previous year. Saskatchewan posted the largest decline of any province, dropping \$1.3 billion.

Interest expenses as a share of total operating expenses are on the rise. Back in 2015, interest expenses were 5.9 per cent of total farm expenses. By 2020, that had climbed to 7.3 per cent. In 2023, the percentage was 9.2 and in 2024 interest expenses accounted for 11.5 per cent of total operating expenses.

While some observers point to rising farm debt levels as a concern, others point out that debt is just keeping pace with the total value of farm capital, which in Canada increased from \$855 billion in 2023 to \$912 billion in 2024. About 88 per cent of farm capital comes from land and buildings.



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Goodon Industries expanding to Redvers

By Nicole Taylor

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

A new business will be opening its doors soon in Redvers. Goodon Industries will be expanding to Redvers and building a new 60-by-100-foot shop on Highway 13 on the north side of Redvers.

“We are expanding our overhead door company and opening up shop in Redvers. We’re very excited about being a part of the community,” said Eric Kennedy with Goodon Industries.

“Goodon Industries has been around for almost 60 years, and we’re mainly in the construction business of supplying post-frame buildings. We also have expanded into supplying overhead doors

for our buildings. This warehouse that we’re building in Redvers is going to be a hub for the overhead door part of the company. It’s going to help service not only Saskatchewan, but Manitoba, and even western Canada as a whole. A lot of stuff is going to be coming out of Redvers,” he said.

“The location in Redvers is going to start by being a hub where doors are going to come in, and then they’re going to be shipped out from there, and there will be some employees there. But in the future, I could see it becoming more of a front-end sales location as well.

“The doors are going to be packaged there and shipped out from there in Redvers. So doors will come in on a semi, much like raw materials. Somebody

there will be putting those together and getting them ready to be shipped out for the building that they’re designated for.

“So far it will just be the one building at that location, but there’s definitely room for growth for sure. For employees, it will be small to start. We’ll have between one and three employees.”

Kennedy says there were a number of reasons to choose Redvers as a place to expand to.

“We chose Redvers because we do have a lot of business in that area. Our sales guy has some roots there, so he’s able to help us out. Redvers was an easy choice based on our relationship with our customers there, and its close proximity to the Manitoba border. We currently don’t have a hub there, so we’re pretty excited to get that going. We’ll be able to make things more efficient and provide better service to our customers.

“We’re an international company, and we have locations in North and South Dakota, Minnesota, Montana, Manitoba, Alberta, B.C., and now one in Redvers.”

Kennedy says work on the new building in Redvers will be happening soon.

“We will be starting on the building definitely in the next month,” he says.

He says Goodon Industries is familiar with rural communities like Redvers.

“It honestly feels great to expand to southeast Saskatchewan. Our head office is actually in Boissevain, Manitoba, and that’s a town of around 1,500 people. So to open up another hub in a small community like Redvers is something that we take a lot of pride in. We’re a bigger company with a small-town feel within

our business, so it was an easy decision.

“Everybody has been phenomenal when we were speaking with the town, and we couldn’t say anything nicer about everybody that’s been involved. We’re super excited to get started.

“We’re looking forward to growing and providing some jobs in the Redvers area. We’re looking forward to being a really big part of the community. We’re going to make sure that we do Redvers justice and do as much as we can for the area.”

Goodon Industries will be building its shop on land that has been vacant in Redvers for about five years.

Mayor Brad Bulbuck says he’s excited to see the business come to Redvers.

“I’m excited,” he says. “It’s going to provide traffic in and out of Redvers, not only from the deliveries, but from the pickups. There’s going to be exposure to Redvers and what our community has to offer. So that’s always exciting.

“We’re excited to have them, and we’re excited to see some traffic and some product moving in and out of there.”

The lot the Goodon Industries purchased was a tax title property and Bulbuck says it’s good to see it being purchased and used by a large company looking to expand.

“We’re pretty excited, because with the construction of the water treatment plant and what’s happening with Goodons, we’re obviously very excited to see something happening in the community. Everybody gets a smile on your face when they see progress. It makes everybody happy.”



Rendering
A rendering of the Goodon Industries building that will be built along Highway 13 in Redvers.

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- ✓ *\$37 million for agriculture research*
- ✓ *Fully funds animal welfare enforcement for livestock and companion animals*
- ✓ *Expanded mental health services for agriculture workers and their families*

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SaskAgMatters to manage Farm Stress Line

By Ryan Kiedrowski
Grasslands News

A new partnership aimed at strengthening mental health supports for Saskatchewan's agriculture sector is expanding access to services while working to break down long-standing barriers that have prevented producers from seeking help.

As of April 1, SaskAgMatters Mental Health Network Inc. has taken over management of the Farm Stress Line, integrating it into a broader, coordinated system designed for producers, their families and employees.

The updated service offers "24/7 confidential access to crisis line counsellors trained in agriculture," along with follow-up sessions with Saskatchewan-based registered mental health professionals who understand the industry.

Federal Agriculture and Agri-Food Minister Heath MacDonald said the changes are intended to better match supports with the realities of farm life.

"Farmers withstand unique demands and challenges that affect not only their physical health, but also mental well-being," MacDonald said. "This partnership ensures that when members of our agricultural community reach out, they are connected with a mental health professional who truly understands their reality."

The initiative is backed by \$200,000 per year over two years from the federal and provincial governments through the Sustainable Canadian Agriculture Partnership.

Provincial Agriculture Minister David Marit said the enhanced services build on a long-standing support system.

"People working in agriculture face stressful work conditions affecting their livelihood and wellbeing," Marit said. "They need support from mental health professionals who understand the industry and who will ensure confidentiality for those who reach out. The Farm Stress Line has a proud history of supporting the agricultural community, and these improved services will help protect the health of people working in the sector."

The toll-free number for the Farm Stress Line will remain unchanged, allowing callers to seek help for issues ranging from financial stress and family pressures to anxiety, depression and burnout.

For SaskAgMatters, the expanded role reflects years of work to address gaps identified by producers themselves.

"We have a doctoral level researcher. We have people from the industries. We have ranchers and producers," said board chair and co-founder Cynthia Beck. "And we recognize that there was a need out there for creating awareness around mental health and agriculture but are actually doing something about it."

"Talking about it is not enough. We're at the next stage. We need to do more."

Beck said research conducted through the Farmer and Rancher Mental Health



RYAN KIEDROWSKI | GRASSLANDS NEWS

Producers helping producers

A barrier to some producers to open up about their struggles is 'farm credibility,' which is why SaskAgMatters has legit farmers like Cyle Stewart (left) involved as a director. He was on hand with board chair and co-founder Cynthia Beck during Agribition last November to spread the word about accessing supports.

Initiative identified key barriers to care, including cost, time constraints and a lack of "farm credibility" among service providers.

"Producers identified that there are certain types of services that they're looking for," she said. "There were certain barriers to accessing care, like number one, the cost or the financial constraints of like having to leave the farm or finding someone to stay on the farm while they go."

"Another barrier that was identified was that producers wanted to get help from someone who had an understanding of their agricultural background lifestyle. So that's called farm credibility."

To address those issues, SaskAgMatters covers the cost of therapy and offers flexible delivery options.

"We pay for producers, their family members and their employees to receive six hours of free therapy annually," Beck said. "We're reducing the time constraint barrier because all of our therapists provide sessions by telephone, virtually."

"All of our therapists have an agricultural background."

The organization also places a strong emphasis on confidentiality, which stakeholders say is critical in a sector where stigma remains a challenge.

"As a producer, it's tough to be knowing that you're getting help or you're needing help," said director Cyle Stewart. "So, through SaskAgMatters, that's one of the things that we tried to establish was that you can remain anonymous until you meet with the councillor."

Stewart, who ranches in southwest Saskatchewan, said conversations with other producers revealed how widespread mental health struggles can be —

and how often they go unspoken.

"The more I talked to producers who were friends, the more it seemed evident that there was a common theme among producers, but no one really wanted to talk about it or get help," he said. "Or there were the barriers that Cynthia had described, which was holding them back."

Beck said while progress has been made in reducing stigma, internal barriers still prevent many from seeking support.

"I find that we have started to move the needle on stigma and reducing stigma quite a bit in the last five to seven years specifically," she said. "I think that there will always be stigma."

"There are two types of stigma - there's the external stigma that we perceive from the environment and the people around us but there's also internal stigma that we have to overcome ourselves. And I think quite often it's the internal factor that impacts us more and prevents us from help seeking."

As part of its broader efforts, SaskAgMatters launched a "Not One More" campaign focused on suicide awareness in agriculture.

"We just want to create awareness of, hey, you're not alone, and there is help out there," Beck said.

The campaign comes amid concerns about declining numbers of producers and the pressures facing those who remain.

"Right now, we have less agriculture producers coming into the industry than we do who are exiting," Beck said. "And then when we get to people like my generation in our 50s, there's quite a few of us."

"If we're looking at projections by 2050 and they're talking about us having to feed 9 billion people, well, we have a decreasing population of agriculture producers to meet that need," she continued. "So, we're launching the Not One More campaign to create awareness around agriculture and suicide."

While the Farm Stress Line offers immediate crisis support, Beck emphasized that reaching out does not have to be formal.

"It could be chatting with a neighbor. It could be chatting with a crisis line if you want to. It could be calling one of our therapists, any of those," she said.

"There's also the National Farm Crisis Line... and then each province has organizations that also are doing the same thing."

The organization's approach — allowing direct contact between clients and therapists — is designed to further protect anonymity.

"We value anonymity and confidentiality so greatly that we don't hear from producers at all," Beck said. "Anyone accessing our services directly contact the therapist. And all we receive is the invoice to pay for the therapy."

Despite that, she said there are signs the model is working.

"In 2025, we provided therapy sessions to approximately 150 producers," she said. "We're well over 200 hours of therapy that we've paid for so far in this year."

She added that some participants have chosen to "pay it forward," sharing their experiences and supporting others.

"One of the very first people who received services... chose to speak at an event to talk about how their suicide was interrupted," Beck said. "And then every time they speak at events, they gather donations and they pay it forward."

For Stewart, involvement in the initiative is both personal and practical.

"I lost a friend to suicide, and I'd gone through some producer struggles like most people have," he said. "After talking to other producers, I realized that it was a huge network of people dealing with similar things."

Providing his perspective as a producer and desire to help others drew Stewart to become involved with SaskAgMatters.

With the Farm Stress Line now integrated into a broader system of care, organizers say the goal is simple: make it easier for producers to get help when they need it — and ensure they are understood when they do.

"People working in agriculture... need support from mental health professionals who understand the industry," Marit said. "These improved services will help protect the health of people working in the sector."

The Farm Stress Line toll-free number remains the same at 1-800-667-4442, plus the National Farmer Crisis Line (also available 24/7) is 1-866-FARMS01, and the Suicide Crisis Helpline can be reached by call or text at 988.

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Churchbridge crossing death sparks call for rail safety

By GNG Staff
Grasslands News

A fatal rail crossing in Churchbridge has become the focus of renewed calls for safety improvements, as a grieving husband brought his concerns directly to the Legislature this week.

Matthew Thompson travelled to Regina on April 28 seeking answers following the December death of his wife, Alyssa, who was killed in a collision at the Lovel Street rail crossing—just 35 days after the couple's wedding.

The crossing has long been identified by residents as a dangerous location. A previous incident in 2023 claimed the life of one man and left two children injured, prompting calls at the time for additional safety measures. Those requests, community members say,

went unanswered.

The tragedy has now drawn the attention of the Opposition at the Legislature, where Carla Beck's team is pressing for immediate action to address rail safety concerns in smaller communities.

"This loss is heartbreaking — and it was preventable," said Darcy Warrington. "When communities have been raising concerns for years and nothing changes, that is a failure of leadership."

Warrington said the situation in Churchbridge highlights a broader issue across rural Saskatchewan, where municipalities often lack the financial capacity to install upgraded rail crossing protections such as signal lights and crossing arms.

Hugh Gordon echoed those concerns, saying families in smaller centres deserve the same level of safety as those in larger urban areas.

"No family should have to come to the Legislature

to beg for basic safety measures," Gordon said. "The government must act now to prevent another tragedy."

The Opposition is calling on the provincial Minister of Highways and Infrastructure to meet with Thompson and to work alongside federal partners, municipalities and rail companies to accelerate upgrades at high-risk crossings.

Among the measures being proposed are the installation of modern warning systems, identification and prioritization of dangerous crossings, and the development of stable, shared funding models to ensure smaller communities are not left to bear the cost alone.

For residents of Churchbridge, the renewed attention comes amid lingering frustration that earlier warnings were not acted upon—frustration now sharpened by a loss that many believe could have been prevented.

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Federal government touts 'Canada Strong' plan

Conservatives warn of rising costs

By GNG Staff
Grasslands News

of the economy.

"Canadians expect us to be good stewards of our economy," Champagne said. "Our fiscal position is strong and allows us to build a Canada that is strong and fair."

The minister highlighted ongoing efforts to boost economic growth, including support for 15 major projects expected to generate more than 60,000 jobs and \$126 billion in investment, as well as new industrial strategies in defence and automotive manufacturing.

The defence strategy alone is projected to support 125,000 jobs and generate \$125 billion in economic benefits by 2035, while the automotive sector — employing roughly 500,000 Canadians — remains a key focus for growth and protection.

Despite those projections, Conservative Leader Pierre Poilievre criticized the update, calling it "credit card budget-

ing" and warning it will drive up inflation, interest rates and the cost of living.

Poilievre has targeted the Canada Strong Fund in particular, arguing the government is borrowing heavily to finance new spending rather than reducing deficits.

The Conservatives are calling for stricter fiscal controls, including capping the deficit, cutting government spending and reducing taxes. Their proposed "Canada First Economic Action Plan" includes eliminating the carbon tax on farmers and fuel, cutting red tape to speed up development and removing sales tax on new homes.

The party has also argued current federal policies are contributing to an "entrepreneurial drought," with business closures outpacing new startups.

The spring update comes at a time when Ca-

nadians continue to face high living costs, placing affordability at the centre of the political debate.

While the federal gov-

ernment maintains its plan will strengthen the economy and create opportunities, the opposition contends it risks

adding to financial pressures — setting up a continued divide over how best to manage Canada's economic future.

The federal government says Canada's economy is on solid footing and poised for long-term growth, as part of its 2026 Spring Economic Update, while the Opposition Conservatives argue the plan risks worsening affordability and increasing federal debt.

Finance Minister François-Philippe Champagne tabled the update in the House of Commons on April 28, outlining what the government describes as a strategy to "build Canada strong for all" amid global uncertainty.

In his speech, Champagne pointed to geopolitical instability, supply chain disruptions and rapid advances in technology — including artificial intelligence — as forces reshaping the global economy, arguing Canada must adapt quickly to remain competitive.

"We're building big, we're moving fast, and the good news — we're just getting started," he told the House.

The update builds on Budget 2025 and includes major investments in infrastructure, housing and workforce development, alongside measures aimed at easing cost-of-living pressures.

Among the headline initiatives is the proposed \$25-billion Canada Strong Fund, a sovereign wealth-style fund intended to invest in major Canadian projects and industries. The government says it will also include a retail investment component, allowing Canadians to directly participate and benefit financially.

A national workforce strategy — "Team Canada Strong" — aims to recruit and train up to 100,000 skilled trades workers by 2030-31 to address labour shortages and accelerate construction of housing and infrastructure.

Champagne said the government is balancing those investments with fiscal restraint, noting the deficit for 2025-26 has been revised down by more than \$11 billion and that Canada currently has one of the fastest-growing economies in the G7.

He also said the government remains on track to balance day-to-day operating spending by 2028-29 and to steadily reduce the deficit relative to the size



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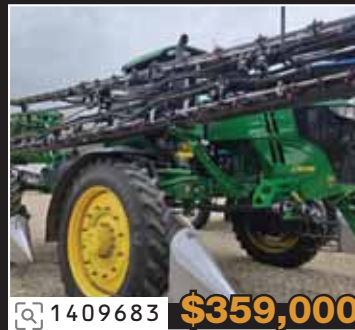
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