

# Plain & Valley

Covering Southeast Saskatchewan and Southwest Manitoba

June 2009 • Volume 2, Number 6

## Moosomin relay raises \$115,000

BY KEVIN WEEDMARK

Moosomin's Relay For Life raised more than \$115,000 for the Canadian Cancer Society on June 5 and 6.

Thirty-three teams took part in Moosomin's relay, which included 82 survivors and 466 participants.

While Moosomin's first Relay For Life four years ago has always been remembered as the rainiest night in Moosomin's history, this year's event will be remembered as the coldest June night in history, as teams huddled around campfires trying to keep warm and a thick layer of frost covered every solid surface. The temperature dipped below freezing for much of the night.

Brooke Claffey, the special events co-ordinator for the Regina unit of the Canadian Cancer Society, said she was impressed by Moosomin's relay and its fundraising

Indian Head's Relay set for Saturday, June 13

total. "It's absolutely exceptional," she said. "I had no idea what to expect from Moosomin and I am absolutely blown away by how it all came together and how much it raised."

"I can't believe how wonderful the community was to work with and how supportive everybody was. The site was absolutely gorgeous. The town crew was wonderful to do all the work they did to help set up."

Moosomin Relay For Life chair Sheena Metzger said she was proud of how well the event did.

"I was really proud to see what our town can put together," she said. "Everyone seemed to really enjoy the event. A lot of people liked the Hope sign made with luminaries. The bands played despite

their frigid fingers. Everything went as perfect as it could. I think it came together smoothly."

Moosomin Relay For Life teams chair Sharen Hogarth said she was happy with how the event went as well. "I think it came together very well, despite the cold," she said.

"No one could believe how much money came in, especially since we only had \$58,000 in the bank on Thursday night."

"A lot of money came in the night of relay, though. We were selling luminaries until 9:30."

Claffey is looking forward to the Indian Head Relay For Life coming up this weekend. Indian Head's relay starts Saturday, July 13 at 7 p.m. and continues until 7 a.m. Sunday.

"They're at the PFRA site, which is absolutely beautiful," Claffey said. "They have a lot going on for entertainment. It will be another great event. The smaller communities put on wonderful relays. I can't get over how everyone gets together and gets it done."

"Everyone wants to work together on these projects. That's what's wonderful about them." There are 10 teams signed up for Indian Head's Relay For Life.



Moosomin's Relay For Life attracted 33 teams June 5 and 6. Above, Cancer survivors make the first lap of the track. Left, Hope is spelled out in luminaries. Below, the Beckett Brigade, one of the teams.



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## Furry and feathered friends

One of the highlights of Rocanville, Sask.'s Community Day on Saturday, June 6 was a petting zoo. Children were delighted to cuddle bunnies, kittens, puppies, and chicks, and to pet baby goats and piglets.

At right: Celine Fafard cuddles a rabbit.

Below: Jordan Pepin takes care to keep a puppy warm under his sweater.

At very bottom: Elise Park holds a baby chick.



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# Pipeline crews begin moving into area

BY CHRIS ISTACE

The influx of temporary residents in the area associated with Enbridge's Alberta Clipper pipeline project has begun.

Employees with Waschuk Pipeline—the Red Deer, Alta. company contracted to build the Alberta Clipper—started moving into the Moosomin area on June 13 in preparation for the project's expansion near Wawota, Fairlight and Maryfield.

As of Monday, workers were laying pipe between Glenavon and Kipling.

While communities have attempted to provide more accommodations for the workers, particularly those with recreation vehicles and camping trailers, Waschuk general superintendent Dave Prosofski says they still need more.

"It's going to be very tight," said Prosofski, who added that employees are staying in Moosomin, Rocanville, Fleming, Wapella, Whitewood and Broadview. Some of the communities have opened up more land to provide additional parking spaces for trailers.

"Our next step is to send out advertisements in the local newspapers to see if anyone has any more accommodations."

Prosofski said they are seeking anything from hotel and motel rooms, to apartment suites, basement suites, or simply rooms with beds.

"We've worked through there several times over the past 35 years and the townspeople have always been quite willing in the past to take in a few people," he said.

Enbridge is constructing a \$2.4 billion crude oil pipeline stretching 1,607 kilometres from Hardisty, Alta. to Superior Wisconsin. About 700 kilometres of the pipeline will run through Saskatchewan.

In this area, the Alberta Clipper will run northwest to southeast by the communities of Kipling, Kennedy, Kelso, Wawota, Fairlight, Maryfield and into Manitoba.

Surveying and clearing work on the pipeline's right of way began last month, but the project is currently ramping up as the line moves toward Kipling.

At the project's peak of activity, an estimated 500 to 600 workers will be in the area, but many will be staying in Virden.

Prosofski said about 250 workers will be accom-

## Alberta Clipper expected to reach Wawota-Fairlight in mid-July

modated in and around Moosomin. Some have rooms booked at the motel in Rocanville, but most are staying in trailers. The workers are expected to stay in the area for three to three and a half months.

Many area camp sites, including Fieldstone Park located just north of Moosomin, are booked solid.

Fieldstone owner Barry Pavone said their facility is not totally full, but they have accepted as many crew members as they can handle.

"We've kept sites available for overnight and seasonal campers," said Pavone. "We wanted to make sure that local people still have a place to come

to."

Some communities are making arrangements to establish temporary RV sites to tap into the eco-

350 foot by 270 foot plot of land south of the new Trans-Canada Highway and just north of the former Fas Gas fuel station.

*"We've worked through (the Moosomin area) several times over the past 35 years and the townspeople have always been quite willing in the past to take in a few people."*

—Dave Prosofski

nomic benefits of having them stay there.

Prosofski said Wapella has established about five more temporary sites, while in Moosomin, the town plans to excavate a

A portion of the project, which is expected to accommodate about 50 more trailers, is being paid for by Waschuk Pipeline.

"It all seems to have

worked out well," said Moosomin mayor Larry Miskiman. "Waschuk is pleased, Enbridge is pleased and the men are pleased that they can come to a place that will meet their needs very adequately."

Miskiman said the town didn't want to pass up the opportunity these workers provide locally.

"We want to try and accommodate them because the workers that are coming are family oriented people and they help the economy substantially," he said.

For Prosofski, the Moosomin development will help greatly.

"With the town proceed-

ing with the temporary trailer park, it's really going to lighten the load," he said.

Waschuk is also setting up a marshalling and warehouse yard in Moosomin. It is located on private land near the town shop just off of Wright Road on the southwest corner of town.

The yard will contain busses that will transport crew members to the work site every morning.

Prosofski said work on the Alberta Clipper will continue through the summer, with the main crew reaching the Wawota-Fairlight area in mid-July.

The pipeline in the area is scheduled for completion in November.



Submitted photo

Communities in the area are seeking ways to accommodate crews working on Enbridge's Alberta Clipper pipeline project, who began moving into the area last weekend.



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# My stove's not too good

I've been cursing it for years. The door doesn't close properly, the timer has never worked and the temperature is unreliable.

I've burnt perogies on minimum, I've scorched eggs on low, and on the other hand, I've sat half the day waiting for water to boil on maximum.

If I didn't know better, I'd say my kitchen stove was possessed.

Every now and then, when it doesn't like what I'm cooking, or when it has a personal conflict with a particular metal spoon or fork, it'll send me a shock that raises the hair on the back of my neck and makes my lips tingle with fear.

In fact, the only way to truly make my stove happy is to mix with a wooden spoon at all times. However, if you can't find a wooden spoon when the perogies are turning a deep shade of black or when the eggs are in flames, then by all means, use a metal fork. But, STAND BACK. That means all parts of your body.

If your hip happens to rest against the stove's edge, or, heaven forbid, your forehead comes in contact with the metal hood of the exhaust fan above, look out. You're in for a 220-volt shock that will not only have you living in fear of your possessed stove for the rest of your life, but you may also have a permanent twitch in your left eye whenever you hear the word "cook."

Did I mention the door? I think I did, but please, let me reiterate. My oven door weights approximately 575 pounds. This is not an issue when its hinges are functioning and bear most of the heavy load. But did I mention that the hinges are so old that our friendly neighborhood repairman says he can't fix 'em. So, one hinge has unhinged—permanently. Hence, when you open the oven door, you must support it with your knee in an attempt to evenly distribute approximately 287.5 pounds of weight.

And, there's more. When you do get the door down, and back up safely, it doesn't close all the way. You see, you have to give it a little "hip-check" so that it closes tightly, and so the "magnets" which hold the door closed connect with the metal. Yes, I said magnets. My stove door has magnets that keep it closed—works very well as far as I can tell. You can only see heat escaping on winter days.

## Tried and True Recipes

by Sandra Johnson



### Tracy's Brown Bread

2 cups warm water	2 Tbsp sugar
2 Tbsp sugar	1 Tbsp salt
2 Tbsp yeast	2 cups warm water
1/2 cup oil (use oil only)	3 Cups whole wheat flour
2 eggs	8 cups white flour

In a medium bowl, place water, stir in sugar until dissolved. Sprinkle yeast over top and let stand 10 to 15 minutes. Stir well.

In a 2 cup measuring cup, put oil, eggs, sugar and salt. Whisk until blended, then add warm water to fill. In a large bowl, place the flours. Make a well in center and pour in the egg mixture, plus 2 more cups warm water, add stirred yeast mixture. Mix well to make a paste. Add flour to make a soft dough (but not sticky). Grease bowl and top of bread dough. Cover with a tea towel. Let rise for 45 minutes. Knead down. Let rise for 15 minutes. Make into loaves and place into well greased loaf pans. Cover and let rise for 1 hour. Bake at 350°F for 30 to 40 minutes.

### Grandmas' Chocolate Cake

2 cups flour	1 cup oil
1 tsp salt	1 cup hot strong coffee
1 tsp baking powder	1 cup milk
2 tsp baking soda	2 eggs
3/4 cup cocoa	1 tsp vanilla
2 cups sugar	

Sift together dry ingredients in a mixing bowl. Set aside. Mix together oil, 1 cup of coffee and milk, mix at medium speed for 2 minutes. Add eggs and vanilla, beat for 2 more minutes and add dry ingredients. Mix well. Pour into 2 greased and floured 9 inch round cake pans. Bake at 350°F for 25 to 30 minutes. Cool cakes 15 minutes before removing from pans. Cool on wire racks.



Christalee Froese

went through the floor boards, word gets around.

Turns out, the ladies at coffee row knew all about my stove.

"Oh yes, they needed to buy magnets to keep the door closed," one lady said.

"You know what, my mother used to own that stove before Annette owned that stove," said another.

Turns out that my dear stove is 45 years old. You heard me right—45 years old. It came into this world in 1964, just as the Beatles released "I Want To Hold Your Hand." That song certainly wasn't written for my stove—if John Lennon would have held its hand, it would have told him where to go in very shocking terms.

So, I surrender. I give up. I have ordered a new stove.

It will be shiny, it will be new, it will like wood and metal equally, it will hold up its end of the deal when I open its door, it will not shock, torture or torment me. It will heat so evenly that my perogies turn golden brown, my eggs stay moist and light and my water is boiled in two minutes flat.

Sometimes it takes five years of shock and torture to get through to a stubborn country girl.

I surrender.

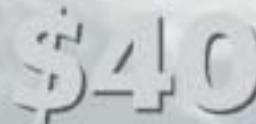
Christalee Froese writes from Montmartre, Sask. She welcomes comments at lcfoe@sktel.net.

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## Indian Head Relay For Life Saturday, June 13, 2009

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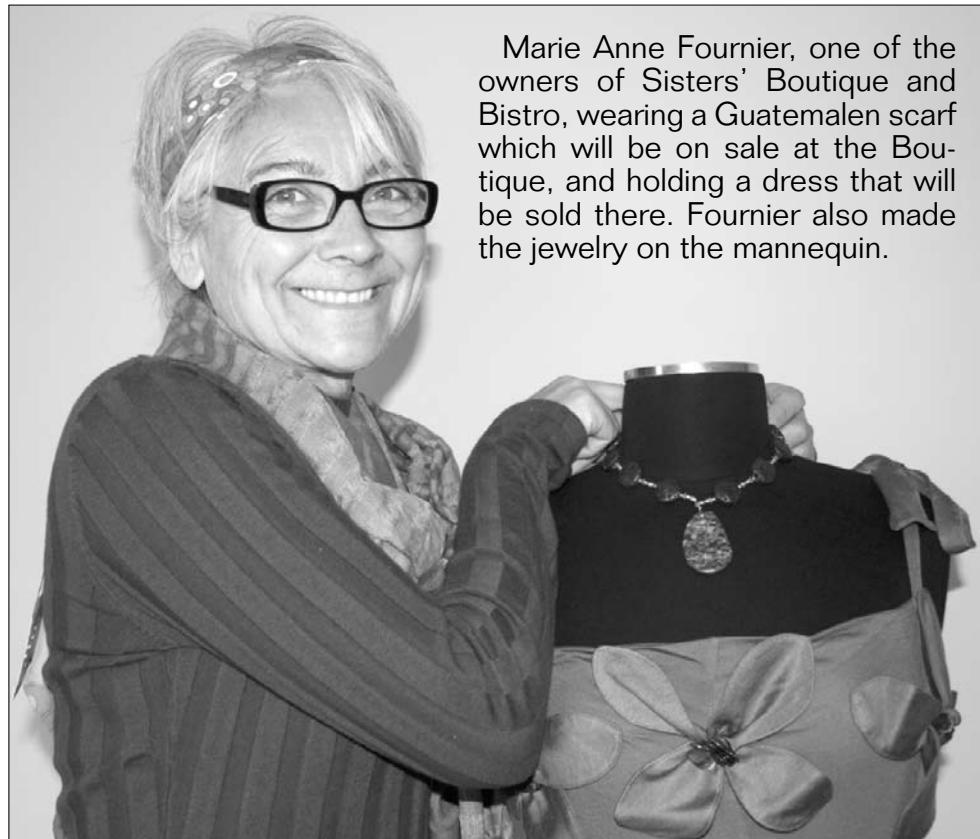
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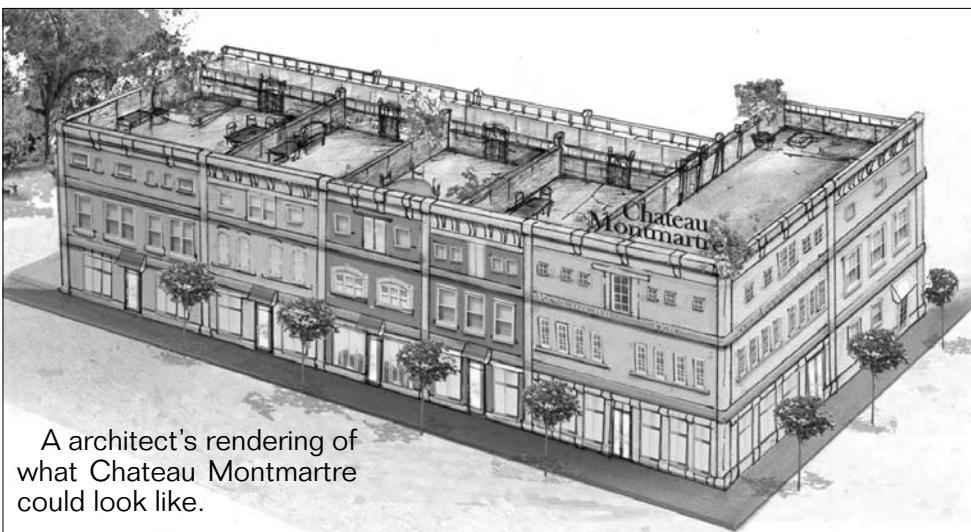


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Marie Anne Fournier, one of the owners of Sisters' Boutique and Bistro, wearing a Guatemalan scarf which will be on sale at the Boutique, and holding a dress that will be sold there. Fournier also made the jewelry on the mannequin.



A architect's rendering of what Chateau Montmartre could look like.

## Parisian-style bistro and boutique to open in June

BY CHRISTALEE FROESE

For Marie Anne Fournier and Jeannine Bujaczek (Fournier), it's all about breathing life into a historic Montmartre building and providing a unique gathering place that is inviting, fun and rejuvenating.

The sisters—two of nine girls in the Fournier family—came up with the idea for a funky boutique in downtown Montmartre the minute they heard that the former Ray's Lucky Dollar store was up for sale.

"It warms my heart to be able to breathe life into one of the older buildings remaining in the community, and to see the excitement of the local people embracing a new business," said Marie Anne, adding that several local residents have already volunteered to help out in the shop, and to lend a hand whenever needed. "I really wasn't expecting to be supported in such an unbelievable way. It's really thrilling to be a part of this community."

The two sisters have since expanded their boutique plans to include a bistro section as part of Sisters' with menu items including seasonal vegetables, local products and homegrown herbs. Items like corn and crab chowder, breakfast crepes and chocolate raspberry cheesecake will be featured on the menu.

Sisters' Boutique and Bistro will be open for breakfast and lunch, with theme suppers being held monthly. The bistro will also include an outdoor patio, and all parts of the operation will be environmentally friendly (recyclable take-out boxes, etc.)

"Sisters' is for anyone looking for some fun, some laughter and something unique," said the former social services worker. "We want to create that special environment that's warm, inviting and welcoming."

The boutique section of Sisters' will carry exclusive name brands unique to Western Canada, as well as featuring some mainstream brands that are affordable and fashionable. Accessories will be a big part of the business, with Marie Anne designing her own jewelry and selling handmade Guatemalan products such as scarves and handbags.

"For many years I've spent five weeks each year in Guatemala with a volunteer dental team. Over the years we've made connections with an amazing group of women who weave their own fabrics," said Marie Anne. "It's a thrill for me to be able to sell some of their products and support them."

Sisters' will also feature local artisans, selling art, pottery, sculptures and more. The Bistro will host musicians as well, providing entertainment and a neat atmosphere for diners.

Marie Anne and her husband Rick Flaman moved back to Montmartre in August, returning to the Fournier family home. Marie Anne has been away since 1976, living in many communities and working at various jobs. Jeannine left Montmartre after high school as well, and has worked in the retail fashion industry in Regina for 21 years.

Both Jeannine and Marie Anne agree that it's wonderful to be back home.

"I've lived in nine different communities over the years and I can tell you that there is not another Montmartre," said Marie Anne. "The sense of community and the volunteer spirit is just incredible. I know people might not realize it, but every town is not like this. We are living in an amazing town that is very supportive of new ideas and new opportunities."

BY CHRISTALEE FROESE

When people think of moving back to their hometowns, they usually look for a house to buy. Claude Fournier did the same thing, but with the tight housing market in Montmartre, Claude had to think outside of the box.

And for the Toronto construction consultant, "outside of the box" is a condominium project in downtown Montmartre that would provide space for businesses on the street-level floor, and apartments for living on the second floor. The top level would feature an outdoor living space, complete with a fenced deck, drainage-friendly rooftop, plants and patio furniture.

The working title for Claude's condo project is "Chateau Montmartre," and while the buildings have a distinct Parisian style, the youngest boy of the 11 Fournier children says he had no idea that Montmartre was planning a "Paris of the Prairies" theme when he came up with his project.

"It's sentiment for Montmartre that got me interested in this project, but it's capitalism that makes me put my money down," said Claude. "All of the indicators are out there that Saskatchewan is in for a period of growth. I feel Saskatchewan is as good of an investment as anywhere in Canada and I don't want to miss out on this particular wave of prosperity."

Claude's plan calls for seven units, one of which he will purchase and call

home.

Montmartre's Mayor Cal Abrahamson said he and his wife Yvonne are also considering purchasing a condominium unit in Chateau Montmartre, as it's the ideal setting for people who don't want the work of caring for a yard, but still want the investment of owning a property.

"I think this kind of project is needed in this community. The idea of adding a retail area is great as well," said Abrahamson. "I can see a number of small businesses starting up which can do nothing but strengthen our community."

Claude agreed that if the Chateau Montmartre project goes ahead, housing prices in Montmartre will rise.

"Personally I feel that if this gets built, everybody's property in town will go up five per cent," said Claude, adding that increased tax revenue for the town will also be generated. "I hope people will open their minds to this idea and spread the word."

The condominium project would be located on the block east of the Trackside

Inn. Claude has already purchased the former Dianne's Cafe building, with plans to purchase the empty lots on that block as well. He has also met with Ken and Michelle Hoffarth of Positive Plumbing and Heating and Susan and Cory Sebastian of the Trackside Inn to see how those businesses will fit in with the plan.

Claude says Chateau Montmartre will be ideal for former Montmartre residents like himself who are thinking of moving back to the community, as well as for retiring people and families. He also sees it as a great opportunity for investors.

An architect is currently at work on the Chateau Montmartre plans, with units expected to go up for sale in the coming months.

Claude is hopeful that ground can be broke within a year, but he'd like to have a number of units sold before construction work is started.

Claude will have a Chateau Montmartre info booth at the park during the Centennial Celebration. To contact him, email cee4@rogers.com.

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# Cash donations to Bell Barn project pass one-third mark

In September of 2006, the Bell Barn Society began raising funds to reconstruct the historic Bell Barn at Indian Head. Projections for this ambitious project indicated it would take just over \$1,000,000 to do the job.

Now, two-and-a-half years later, the Society has raised over \$355,000 in cash donations.

So far, over 700 cash donations have come in from individuals and families, small and medium sized businesses, and large corporations. Significant donations have come in the form of memorials. In addition to cash donations, "in-kind" or non-monetary donations of goods and services, with a total value of about \$195,000, have been contributed.

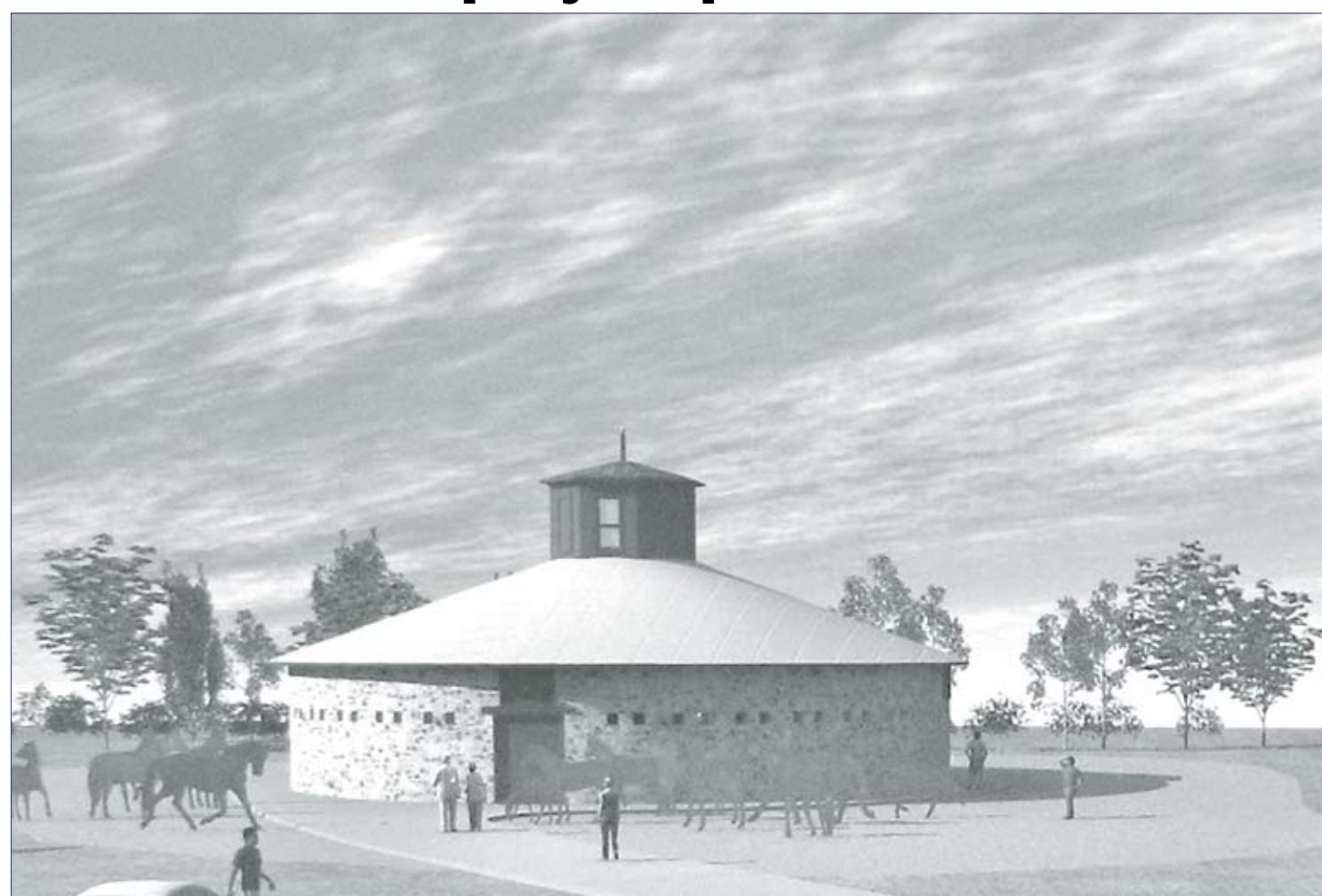
The Bell Barn itself was an in-kind donation. The Town and RM of Indian Head and other agencies have contributed a number of services to the cause.

Special fundraising events and community programs have yielded surprising amounts. Particularly noteworthy is the Society's annual dinner and auction, which raised \$45,000 in 2007 and \$46,000 in 2008. This year's dinner and auction is scheduled for July 17, and the Society is expecting another sell out.

As well, the Mini-Bell Barn Project has exceeded original donation projections. Garth Weisbrod's grade 4-5 class of 2006-2007 produced about 30 miniature round barns for use in collecting coin donations at Indian Head businesses, and collections have surpassed \$3,000 to date.

The Society continues to raise funds through the sponsoring of entertainment events and the selling of Bell Barn Society merchandise. Society merchandise is currently sold at Scott's True Value Hardware in Indian Head.

Strong support for the Bell Barn Project is evident in the results of a recent membership drive. The Society now counts



Submitted photo

Artist's sketch of the reconstructed round stone Bell Barn near Indian Head, originally built in 1882.

over 100 people as paid members, with over half as life members, and they are located not just in the Indian Head area but across the country.

Frank Korvemaker, the Society's Chair-

person, recently summed up the fundraising progress.

"Having raised over \$355,000 in cash donations and \$195,000 in in-kind contributions in two-and-a-half years is an excellent achievement for a non-profit heritage organization," he said. "We are strongly motivated to continue our fundraising ini-

tatives with even greater vigor."

"Now that cash donations have reached the one-third mark, the Society plans to concentrate fundraising efforts in the corporate and government sectors."

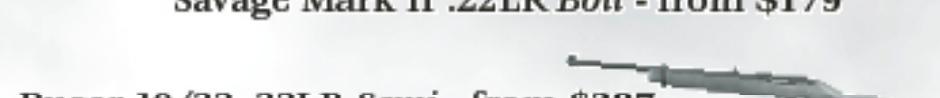
"We are all looking forward to the next phase of the project—the reconstruction of the stone wall of the barn."

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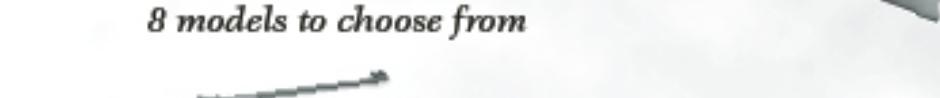
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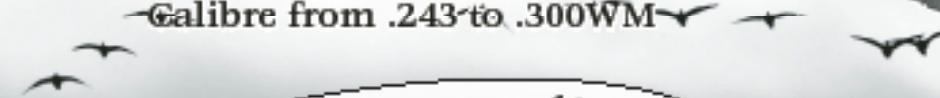
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# Montmartre's Eiffel Tower is 'big' news

Montmartre's Eiffel Tower has not only captured the attention of local residents, but the project caught the eyes, and ears, of CBC producers in Toronto as well.

Shortly after it was announced that former Montmartre resident Mallory Englot would build and donate a 28-foot-high Eiffel Tower replica for the community, the calls started to come in to Montmartre's Village Council.

CBC Radio in Toronto was the first to interview local town councillor Patsy Fisher, inquiring about the dimensions of the tower, the purpose of the 'Paris of the Prairies' project and the response from the community.

"It's been a lot of fun and people are really starting to get excited about it," said Fisher to CBC interviewer Carol Off, adding that Montmartre is a friendly, clean and welcoming community and the Eiffel Tower is a way of drawing people to see what Montmartre has to offer.

The tower will be 28-feet high, 11-feet square and will weigh 2,400 pounds. Englot is also creating 'mini' Eiffel Towers that are about three-feet high which will be sold for \$350.

Montmartre businessman Cory Chittenden has purchased an eight-foot-high tower from Englot and will have it lit and displayed in front of his Chitt-tronics business on Highway #48.

Englot's generosity has sparked many other acts of kindness, with Montmartre welders Kelly and Stacey Romanow donating their welding services to put the tower together and Cory Chittenden donating his electrical expertise to wire the tower with lights.

Regional businesses have also jumped on board with Crushrite Concrete of Esterhazy donating half the cost of pouring a cement base for the massive tower and Wayne Coueslan donating the cement installation work. Brian Erza of Glenavon is donating time to sandblast and paint the tower and Hilderman Home Hardware in Wolseley has offered to donate the paint, however, the painting needs for the tower have not yet been confirmed.

"We live in such an amazingly supportive and giving area," said Fisher. "It's just mind-blowing to think one little idea has brought people and communities together and has shown that anything really is possible."

## Montmartre wins provincial award for Centre 48

Montmartre has won top honors in Saskatchewan for its Centre 48 community development project. The RM and Village of Montmartre beat out many city projects, as well as the internationally recognized community of Ogema, to be named the best in the province.

Centre 48 was nominated for the Saskatchewan Municipal Award (SMA) in the Community Development Leadership category.

Established in 2006, the SMAs celebrate the excellent and innovative practices of municipal governments in the province.

Over the course of the last seven years, Centre 48 has educated over 1,800 students from 15 rural communities, held classes in 12 different towns, generated over \$200,000 into the local economy, employed a coordinator and playschool instructor, held many events and initiated two \$7,500 ArtsSmart projects in the local school. An SMA video crew was in Montmartre in April to film Centre 48 and its students.

"We're thrilled," said Centre 48 chairperson Christalee Froese. "This award belongs to the entire region for its unwavering support of Centre 48."



Patsy Fisher is Centre 48's coordinator. She is pictured here taking a Centre 48 ink and oil class in ArtStudio 48.

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This three-foot-tall replica of the Eiffel Tower is an exact copy of the 28-foot-high that will be installed in downtown Montmartre in June. Several replicas have been purchased by Montmartre residents, and one is being raffled by the community to raise funds to landscape the tower area.



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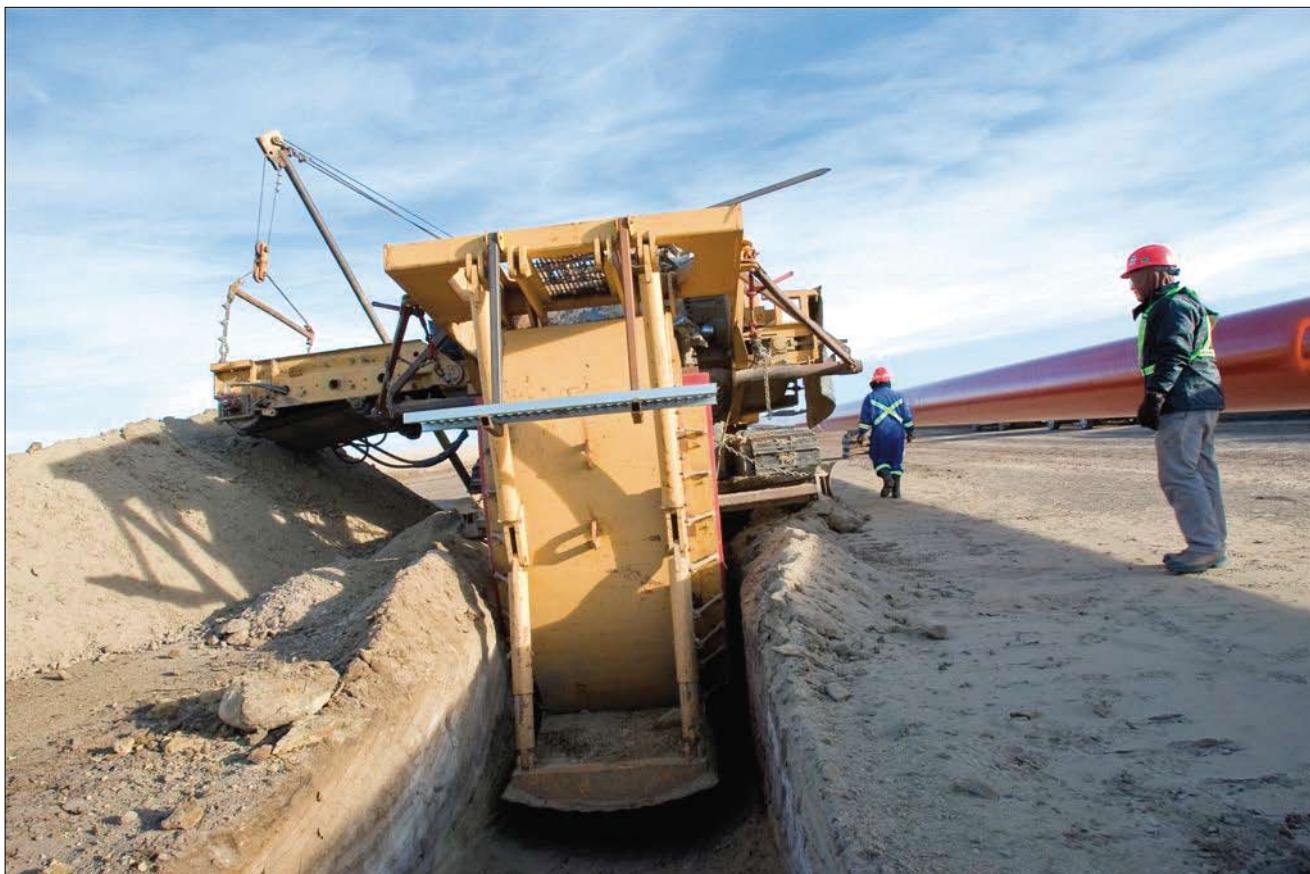
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# Who's faster—a horse or Ted Jaleta?

That was the question on many people's minds as Saskatchewan Hall of Fame runner Ted Jaleta and horseback rider Marley Kotylak lined up for the start of Montmartre's Perogy Run on Saturday, May 30.

While Queenie the horse was able to keep up with Jaleta for 500 metres or so, the horse soon fell off pace and was relegated to second.

Jaleta's stellar conditioning led him to finish the 10 kilometre distance in under 35 minutes, while Marley and Queenie were happy to run alongside the 140 other runners, walkers and bikers who took part in the Perogy Run.

The Centre 48 fundraiser brought in over \$6,500, all of which will be directed toward funding art, fitness, music and personal development classes in Southeast Saskatchewan communities.

Highlights of the run included: Participation by Saskatchewan's Lieutenant Governor and his wife, Gordon and Naomi Barnhart; morning coffee and homemade cinnamon buns made by Centre 48 committee member Shauna Hoffart and, of course, the delicious perogy lunch cooked by Montmartre's Knights of Columbus members.

"We were overwhelmed by the number of runners, walkers and bikers who came out to support Centre 48," said chairperson Christalee Froese. "Some Regina runners even biked the 90-kilometre distance to Montmartre, and then proceeded to run 10 kilometres—it was simply amazing to witness that kind of athleticism."

Next year's Perogy Run will be held on May 29, 2010. For more information, contact Centre 48 co-ordinator Patsy Fisher at 424-2166.



Horse Queenie and her rider Marley Kotylak are pictured here with Saskatchewan Hall of Fame runner Ted Jaleta.

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# Manitoba and Israel collaborate on wetland, watershed research

A joint Manitoba-Israel collaboration on research into wetlands and watersheds will be supported by a \$100,000 grant from the province, Water Stewardship Minister Christine Melnick announced in June.

"This is especially important for Manitoba as we move forward to restore and protect our wetlands including the large Delta and Netley/Libau marshes on the southern shores of Lake Manitoba and Lake Winnipeg," Melnick said.

The grant will help the International Institute for Sustainable Develop-

ment implement a joint project with the Galilee Technology Centre in Israel (MIGAL). The project arose from collaboration between scientists from Manitoba and Israel that began last August with the very successful Manitoba-Israel Water Experts Symposium, said the minister.

Scientists from Manitoba, Israel and Mexico will work together to establish an Agricultural Wetland/Watershed Research Network.

The network will provide an internet-based forum for researchers around the world whose

work focuses on the role and function of wetlands and watershed research in largely agricultural regions.

This site will serve as a globally credible source of accurate scientific information that can be used by policy-makers and other researchers interested in the flow of nutrients and other contaminants, the value of wetlands to society, the role of wetlands in providing resiliency to watersheds during times of drought and the role of protecting downstream freshwater lakes such as Lake Winnipeg.

As well, the project will

be useful to the many Manitoba conservation districts engaged in developing watershed management plans and will be consistent with establishment of a research chair in watershed sciences at the University of Manitoba announced in April 2008, the minister added.

"Israel has a long history of successfully managing many unique water quality and water supply issues throughout its history," said Miriam Ziv, Israel's ambassador to Canada, who is visiting Winnipeg today. "The partnership with Manitoba will be of great benefit

to both jurisdictions."

Also, Keren Kayemeth LeIsrael in Israel and its Canadian office, the Jewish National Fund of Canada, invited Manitoba water scientists to Israel to take part in the second international water symposium in January 2010.

"The Jewish National Fund of Canada is pleased to be a partner with Manitoba and its Department of Water Stewardship," said Mel Lazareck, president of the Prairie Region of the Jewish National Fund of Canada.

Also in attendance at the first water experts' symposium in Winni-

peg in 2008 was Israel's Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development Shalom Simhon and the world president of the Jewish National Fund/Keren Kayemeth LeIsrael Efi Stenzler.

"The Jewish National Fund of Canada is proud to be partnering with our forward-thinking Provincial Department of Water Stewardship about this most important natural resource—water, the international importance of which will continue to grow," said Erez Rotem, Israel's representative of the Jewish National Fund for the Prairie Region of Canada.

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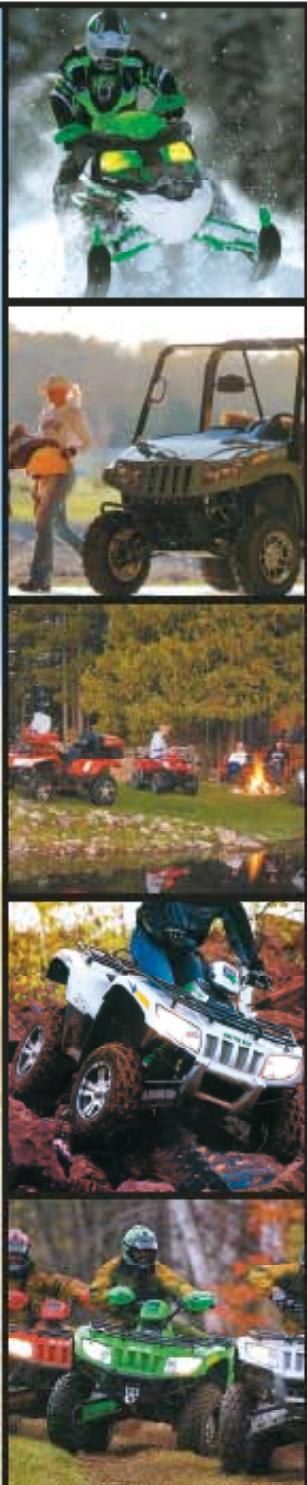
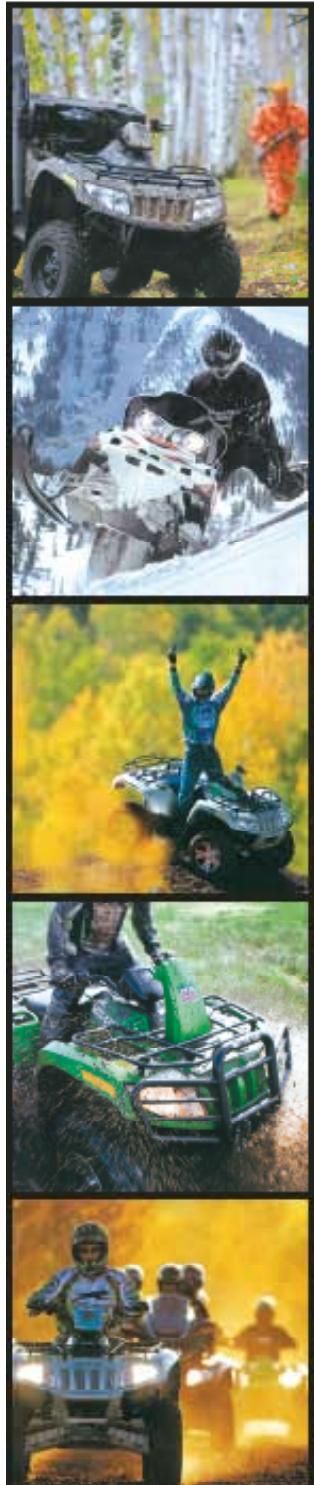
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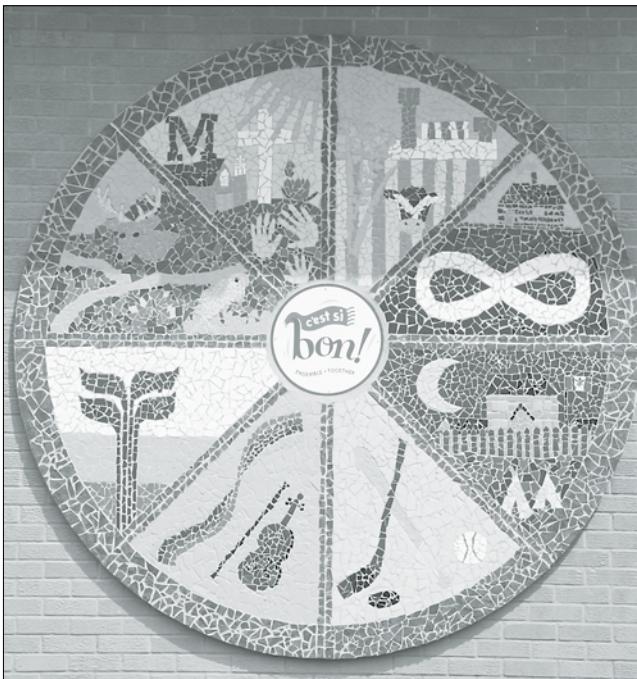
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### Mosaic represents symbols of St. Lazare

École Saint Lazare unveiled a mural that celebrates the culture of St. Lazare last month. The mural is attached to the outside wall of the school and was unveiled at a public ceremony held on the front lawn of the school.

The mural at École St. Lazare has a total of eight, pie shaped panels forming a wheel. Each panel symbolizes an important part of the community's heritage and history.

The panels include representations for St. Lazare's sources of revenue; its cultural richness—particularly with its historical and present-day connection with the Métis people—its history with Fort Ellice and First Nations people; its sporting culture; its French background; the area's Prairie landscape; and the importance of the Catholic faith in the community.



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# Disease-hunting scientist investigates bird flu in Alaska

Every spring, an estimated six million birds arrive in Alaska to breed. Some spent the winter in Southeast Asia, home to a strain of avian influenza called H5N1.

Although swine flu is getting all the attention right now, bird flu hasn't gone away: many scientists fear it could someday become more readily transmissible between humans, and produce a deadly global pandemic.

Even in its current form, it has already sickened 433 people worldwide, killing 262 of those. At the back of everyone's mind is the 1918 pandemic that killed an estimated 50 million people, many of them healthy young adults—a pandemic caused by a virus recently confirmed to have been a strain of bird flu.

The H5N1 virus hasn't shown up in North America yet. But Alaska, where more than 140 other types of avian influenza already circulate in the bird population, is a prime candidate for where it will eventually appear. And that's one reason Jonathan Runstadler, assistant professor of biology and wildlife at the University of Alaska Fairbanks Institute of Arctic Biology, has spent a great deal of time since 2005 swabbing the bottoms of birds.

The goal is both to learn more about how avian influenza survives and is transmitted among birds, and to keep an eye out for the arrival of H5N1.

Runstadler and his colleagues swab each bird's cloaca (the opening through which both urine and feces are expelled) and in some cases also the bird's trachea. Sometimes they also collect samples of blood and feathers for genetic analysis.

Rather than capture birds themselves, they work in conjunction with some of the many other bird studies going on in Alaska at any given time.

"For instance, I have been out to the Yukon flats area with a guy, Jim Sedinger, who works with Brant geese, studying the ecology of the goose in these nesting and breeding areas," Runstadler says.

Sedinger's team waits until the geese are molting, and thus mostly unable to fly, then herds them by the hundreds down long, thin bits of land, bordered on either side by streams, into temporary pens.

While Sedinger's team bands the birds and collects data on their age and molt status, Runstadler and his colleagues collect their samples.

Another major site for their work is in the Alaskan interior, not far from Fairbanks, where the Alaskan Department of Fish and Game has a banding program, and a third is within the city itself, where the Alaska Bird Observatory samples songbirds.

Runstadler's team also takes samples from the birds' environment, mud and water in the summer and ice and frozen mud in the winter, "both to detect virus and then see if we can grow virus from those samples."

Runstadler's team is working with other biologists more and more to determine what effect the viruses have on the birds in the wild.

"In some of the areas that we study up to twenty percent of birds are infected with influenza virus," he says.

The researchers are also trying to find out how important this reservoir of virus in wild birds is to the occasional out-



**Edward Willett**

break of influenza in domestic birds—and vice versa. "Is there a movement back and forth? Who is to blame?"

"I take a lot of grief for being somebody who looks at the bottom end of birds," Runstadler admits. But he enjoys the camping in the Alaskan wilderness and especially learning about the birds, "what they do, and what's special about them."

He admits he's conscious of the risk of possibly contracting a disease from all the birds he handles. "The fact that there are viruses out there . . . that can potentially kill you is something that gives you second thoughts when you're out sampling those birds," he says, but notes, "we take the precautions that we feel are necessary."

And the risk, he adds, is "really some of the motivation of it. Some of the work we do might lead to an understanding of these viruses that makes them less scary and dangerous on the whole."

That would be good news for all of us, even those of us who have never seen a bird's bottom.

*Edward Willett is a freelance writer in Regina, Saskatchewan, Canada.*

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# Manufacturer develops 920-bushel seeding tank system

Saskatchewan manufacturer to unveil largest seeding tank system in North America

As farmers continue the push to seed more acres with bigger equipment this spring, to capture greater efficiencies of size, a southern Saskatchewan seed drill manufacturer has come up with a whole new approach that helps them stretch their dollars.

Norbert Beaujot, a Langbank farmer and engineer who owns the SeedMaster manufacturing plant near Regina, has developed a 600-bushel, tow-behind fertilizer tank called the Titan III. It combines with SeedMaster's on-board seed tank to provide a 920-bushel carrying capacity—the largest of any commercial seeding tank system in North America. But it also converts into a grain cart at harvest and a fertilizer spreader.

"We had no idea when we started that we were building a tank with multiple uses. We were just trying to design a really big fertilizer system that solves some of the air delivery problems that are common with pressurized air tanks," explains Beaujot.

"Then we had a 'eureka' moment when we realized that because it's a non-pressurized tank that doesn't require a sealed lid, we could open up the design to other uses. It suddenly hit us that in five minutes a farmer can unhook this tank from their drill and hitch it to a tractor at harvest to haul grain from the combine. We had essentially created a very large, rugged steel cart on two big wheels with a roll tarp cover that can be put to any number of jobs on the farm," he explains, adding the technology that converts the Titan III into a large fertilizer spreader is

being developed.

Beaujot says the combined 920-bushel capacity of the new seeding system was designed so farmers can seed a complete quarter section without stopping to refill their tanks—saving valuable time while seeding. He says the quarter section scenario is based on a seed rate of two bu./acre, and a fertilizer rate of 200 lbs./acre—both commonly used rates. "With an 80-foot-drill, a quarter section only takes about three hours to seed," he adds.

Dean McPherson, who farms near Yellow Grass, Sask., says the large capacity of the Titan III could significantly reduce the time he spends filling, and help seed his crop faster. He currently pulls a 440-bushel air tank behind his 88-foot SeedMaster. "With such limited capacity, we go through product fairly quickly—about every hour and a half. I could seed another 40 acres in the time it takes to stop and refill."

Beaujot says existing pressurized air tank systems haven't kept pace with the larger drills and high fertilizer rates that farmers like McPherson are using. "These pressurized tow-behind tanks require a lot of air, hydraulics and large fans to blast high rates of seed and fertilizer to the openers, which can result in seed bounce and blow out. As well, everything has to be blown through long transfer hoses—up to 75 feet on the widest drills—pushing the hydraulic capabilities of the tractor to the limit, and producers end up with costly problems like plugging."

Instead of using pressurized air for the primary



Norbert Beaujot, owner of the SeedMaster manufacturing plant near Regina, with the Titan III, a multi-use fertilizer tank that combines with SeedMaster's on-board seed tank to offer a 920-bushel carrying capacity—the largest of any commercial seeding tank system in North America.

movement of fertilizer, Beaujot incorporated an auger system into the Titan III that efficiently moves fertilizer from the tank to the drill where it is metered and blown through hoses to the openers. "The auger cuts the length of the delivery hose runs in half, even on our 90-foot air seeders—eliminating plugging and dramatically reducing hydraulic demands," says Beaujot.

"We're the only ones offering a non-pressurized tank," he adds. "That's because other tanks systems are all designed for

bulk seed metering, which requires pressurized air to blow the seeds against manifold distribution plates, splitting the bulk stream into different directions and delivering seeds to the openers. We use Individual Row Metering on our seed tank which doesn't require pressurized air. The tank sits on our drill frame, and instead of blowing seeds against manifold plates which often results in seed damage, it continuously and uniformly meters seeds with rollers that gently drop them into air hoses leading directly to

the openers."

"Without Individual Row Metering, a non-pressurized tank design with multiple uses wouldn't

have been possible," says Beaujot. The Titan III will be officially unveiled at the Farm Progress Show in Regina next week.

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# A busy time of year



## Report from the Legislature

**Don Toth, MLA  
Souris-Moose Mountain**

The month of June tends to be a very hectic month for Saskatchewan families. With ball season in full swing and track and field events across the province, parents are kept busy just trying to ensure their child makes it to each event on time.

Many young people as well are involved in local 4-H clubs and are currently preparing for their annual achievement day. Added to these activities students are also preparing themselves for year-end exams. I want to wish each student well as they prepare for and write this year's final exams.

For Grade 12 students this time of year is especially challenging as they prepare to write finals with the anticipation of receiving their Grade 12 certificates. Their minds are also thinking ahead to what their future may hold. Best wishes to all senior students as they write their final exams and prepare for graduation.

Recently the provincial government announced an action plan to help low and middle income families access post-secondary education through \$22 million in student loan enhancements. These improvements, it is hoped, will ensure all Saskatchewan people can receive the education, skills training and resources they need to build their careers and futures.

These changes will take effect August 1, 2009, in time for the 2009-2010 loan year. These enhancements build on the Gradu-

ate Retention Program which offers tuition rebates as high as \$20,000 over seven years to postsecondary graduates who live in or move to Saskatchewan. For a complete list of the changes and to learn more about the student loan program please visit [www.student-loan.sk.ca](http://www.student-loan.sk.ca). For information on the graduate retention program visit [www.aeel.gov.sk.ca/grp](http://www.aeel.gov.sk.ca/grp).

I noted through a recent news release from Prairie Valley School Division that they have agreed to make space available in the Montmartre School for delivery of day care programming by Montmartre Licensed Day Care Inc. I am pleased to see an effort of this nature move forward. This should create an excellent educational opportunity as well as meeting the needs of providing day care services for young working families.

I close this report by offering my thanks to the organizing committee of this year's Relay for Life held in Moosomin. With more than 40 teams participating this year's event was an overwhelming success. For the many individuals currently battling cancer and those who have lost a loved one to cancer it was encouraging to witness the strong support of the community, family and friends through their participation in this year's Relay for Life.

If you have any concerns please call my office at 435-3329 or 1-888-255-8684 or visit my website at [www.dontoth.ca](http://www.dontoth.ca).

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# Moosomin Rodeo promises lots of action

There will be no shortage of rodeo action this summer when the Moosomin Rodeo rolls into town for two solid days on July 3 and 4 at Bradley Park.

The Moosomin Rodeo has been growing steadily every year, and the rodeo committee is looking forward to another big event in 2009. This marks the rodeo's 16th year.

Moosomin Rodeo Committee president Troy Smith says 2008 was a success and he expects the same of 2009.

"Things went really well," he says. "The crowds were fantastic, and we seem to be getting huge support from our community. We had record crowds, and we're expecting that again (this year)."

This year's rodeo features a full line-up of events, including bull riding, bareback riding, women's barrel racing, team roping, saddle bronc, steer wrestling, and calf roping. Back again this year will also be the stock dog competition that has been held for the past few years.

The rodeo will also include a DJ in the beer gardens on the Friday night, and a cabaret on the Saturday night featuring the band Shameless.

However, the rodeo is a family event, and during the day, there will be a long list of activities for children to take part in. "If anything we've probably grown the number of kids' events," says Smith.

This year children's events include three different bounce tents, laser tag, nine-hole mini golf, slapshot hockey, quarterback toss, a floating gallery game, sand art and candy art activities, panning for "gold" in Taffy's goldmine, facepainting, airbrush tattoos, and numerous other attractions that will leave children smiling.

Adding to the festivities of the weekend is the Moosomin rodeo parade, which will take place in town on the Saturday morning of the rodeo weekend. An annual tradition, this parade always includes local businesses, organizations, and a number of rodeo participants. Each year, prizes are given to the top floats in the parade.

Smith says the rodeo committee has been steadily working on improvements to the rodeo grounds over the years. New for the 2009 rodeo will be a permanent timed event chute to finish off the timed event end.

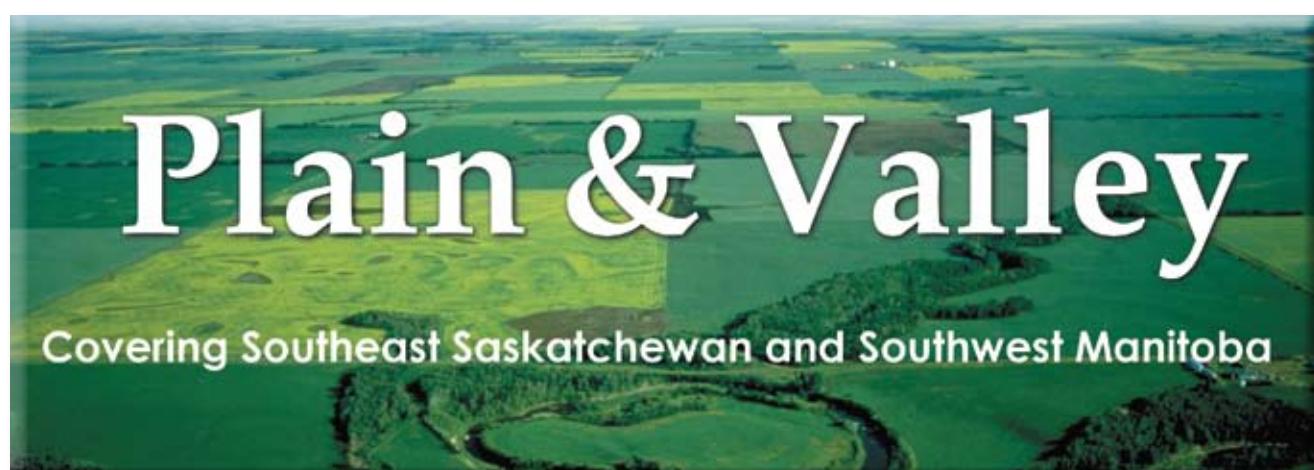
"We hope to do ground improvements again this year after the rodeo," he adds. "We're starting to build pens at the rough stock end and we might start putting in a permanent structure in there."

Smith says the rodeo's success is always a benefit to Moosomin, but adds that it is the community's support that makes the rodeo a possibility.

"We seem to sponsor the community and they sponsor us back," he says.



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# Woman calls police to get son out of bed



**Gene Hauta**

• An Ottawa woman, frustrated by her inability to get her 13-year-old son out of bed and off to school, phoned the cops. After the police responded and left without doing anything, the woman admitted that it is not really the job of police to get truant children to school, but said she was at her wit's end.

• In Lynnwood, Wash., a 78-year-old woman was arrested after beating her 84-year-old husband because she believed he cheated on her several times during their marriage. She has been charged with assault after hitting him with a bowl, pipe and carpet sweeper. The man suffered broken ribs, pelvis and a wrist. The woman also admitted kicking her husband three times in the groin in the last half-year because she believed he had an affair 35 years ago.

• In Sullivan, Ind., a suspect in a case of vandalism at a church was arrested after police found his name in the Bible. Dustin Craig Borders, 20, was charged with criminal trespass and property damage at Kingsley United Methodist Church. An investigator found an apology note inside an open Bible. Borders had broken pitchers, a stained glass window and wrote "sorry" on the pews in ketchup and mustard.

• Under pressure, the principal of a Utah middle school in West Haven apologized for forcing a kilt-wearing student to change his clothes. Craig Jessop was told to extend an apology to student Gavin McFarland, 14, who explained he wore the kilt twice in the past two weeks to Rocky Mountain Junior High as a prop for an art project. Jessop told him that the outfit could be misconstrued as cross-dressing.

• Ten years ago, Carl Cornelle Jr. killed Arlene Miske in a head-on car collision, and he has since continued to violate the terms of his probation sentence. Miske's niece, Genette Simpkins, wants Circuit Judge Steven Alm to send Cornelle to jail. Cornelle was originally convicted in 2001 for negligent homicide, after the crash while he was under the influence of drugs and alcohol. He was sentenced in October 2001 to a year in jail, five years of probation and at least 18 months of inpatient drug treatment. However, this is just the latest of a series of probation violations for using illegal drugs. According to the victim's family, Cornelle "continues to do illegal drugs" and applied for a new driver's license after his license was supposed to have been revoked for

life.

• In Winston-Salem, N.C., authorities say a teenager who was thwarted as he tried to rob a store with a banana ate it before they could arrive. John Szwalla, 17, held the banana under his shirt, implying that he had a gun while demanding money. Owner Bobby Ray Mabe and a customer jumped Szwalla, holding him until deputies arrived. In the meantime, he ate the banana. Szwalla faces a charge of attempted armed robbery, although police joked that he could be charged with destroying evidence.

• Remember that Russian who supposedly had a small pine tree growing in his lung? While I certainly questioned the story at the time, Professor Tony Linegar, cardio-thoracic surgeon at the Free State University, and Professor Gillian Ainslie, a pulmonologist at Cape Town University, both say it is possible for growths with the appearance of a ball of hair and teeth to grow inside a human body, but not plants. Furthermore, the tree would not show up on an x-ray. Also the alleged tree was far too deep in the lungs to be possible.

• During a traffic stop, a woman in Muncie, Ind., was arrested after asking a state trooper whether she could smoke. When he told her she could, she tried to spark up a marijuana joint. Honesty Knight, 32, now faces a preliminary charge of possession of paraphernalia.

• A woman in Melbourne, Fla., has sued the owner of a pet cemetery over her pet squirrel monkey's grave. Janet Steiner's half-kilogram monkey, Mighty, died of cancer in 1994, and was buried at Columbia Pet Memorial Gardens. Steiner says the grounds were not well-groomed and she moved Mighty's remains last year. Now she wants \$500, the cost of the original burial and the move. A small claims court judge will make a decision after visiting the cemetery.

• A 20-year-old shoplifter with a bottle of whiskey stuffed down his pants halted as he fled a Hartford liquor store long enough to fill out a raffle ticket. The entire bizarre incident by Shawn M. Piering was caught on a security video. After trying to win a trip to a local speedway, Piering grabbed two more whiskey bottles before he left.

• Residents of the Croatian city of Prolozac were sick and tired of corrupt officials who promised to improve their lot if elected, especially when the politicians rarely backed up their promises. This year, they elected the most honest candidate as their mayor. Josko Risa won in a landslide, even though he promised that he would rip off his citizens at every opportunity. His campaign slogan was "All for me—nothing for you." Ivan Vjasic, 57, said, "We know what we're letting ourselves in for. We're going to get ripped off no matter who takes over." Risa did say that if things get better for him then they will also get better for the people.

• Back in April in Liverpool, a performing circus clown was ordered not to wear his classic oversized shoes because he could trip and injure someone.

• Producers of an adventure documentary at the BBC cited a "telephone-book-size" set of safety precautions and ordered Sir Robin Knox-Johnston not to light a portable stove unless a "safety advisor" supervised. Knox-Johnston was only the first person to sail single-handedly and nonstop around the world.

• In Fond Du Lac, Wis., it is written that the police continue a "fruitless" search for a man wearing an ape costume who has attempted to steal foam banana displays from local gas stations. So far, two stations have been victimized. Capt. Steve Klein acknowledges that the action may seem funny, but cops still want to talk to the person behind the ape suit because they aren't sure what his motives are.

• Saskatchewan police are investigating why \$220,000 in pension payments have been going into the bank account of a teacher who has been dead nearly seven years. The man's son finally notified the Teachers' Superannuation Commission in March, but his father died in September 2002. There was no immediate disclosure if the money had been removed from the account. The commission will try to get the money back.

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# Coach, team receive district sports awards

BY CHRIS ISTACE

A coach with decades of softball experience and the 2008 provincial Bantam 'C' softball champions are among 2008's best in sport, culture and recreation.

Orey Hudym and the 981 Cyclones Bantam girls softball team were presented Southeast Connection for Sport, Culture and Recreation awards to recognize their contributions to the sport of softball. Hudym received the Coach of the Year Award, while the Cyclones were handed the Team of the Year honors.

The awards were presented at Green Acres Ball Park in Fleming recently.

Both Hudym and the Cyclones were nominated by Bill MacPherson, president of the 981 Minor Ball Association and Zone 1 director for Softball Saskatchewan.

In his nomination for Hudym, MacPherson said the Moosomin area farmer has been recognized for his involvement in softball before.

In October of 2008, he was handed a Softball Saskatchewan Service Award after playing and coaching in the sport for more than 50 years.

"I'm very humbled by this award, but I'm very proud of it, too," Hudym said after receiving the award.

Hudym first played the game in 1957 when he was 13 years old. He was a second baseman and catcher for the Kendalton Kings, a team from a school district located north of Wapella.

Kendalton later played out of Wapella and he was still on the team in the 1980s, when he became player-coach.

The Kings disbanded in the early 1990s, but Hudym moved over to the Fleming Jets, where he became coach. The team soon dominated the Southeast Men's Fastball League by winning 10 league championships. They added three provincial titles to their trophy case as well.

Hudym helped establish the Fleming Junior Jets about six years ago when his grandsons began playing competitive fastball. As coach, he helped the team become contenders in the Bantam 'B' and Midget 'B' categories.

Hudym has also been involved in the development of young players outside of the Junior Jets organization. He has instructed at skills clinics organized by Softball Saskatchewan and the 981 Minor Ball Association.

He also helped the communities of Fleming and Wapella rebuild their softball facilities. Since then, both towns have hosted provincial tournaments, where Hudym helped with diamond maintenance or scorekeeping.

"I don't know about this, but I'll take it," Hudym said. "It has been a lot of years and I know a lot of guys are here that I played with and against. On the coaching end, it has been very rewarding, both with the Jets and the Junior Jets."

In MacPherson's nomination for the Cyclones, he noted that the team fulfilled many of the requirements for the award, including a focus on the improvement of the team and the demonstration of fair play, good sportsmanship, team development and leadership.

The Cyclones were

formed as a Pee Wee club in 2005 with players coming from five towns within the boundary of the 981 Minor Ball Association.

Three seasons later, the Cyclones defeated the Pilot Butte Storm to represent Zone 1 at the 2008 Saskatchewan Summer Games in Lloydminster.

The team was coached by Tim Sweeting from Maryfield and Dave Young from Wapella. The club's roster included players from Maryfield, Moosomin and

Wapella, with additional help from Kara Donaldson and Brittany Hodgkinson, members of the Pilot Butte Storm picked up for the Summer Games competition.

The rest of the team included Michelle Sweeting, Jenna Rathgeber, Sarah Bruce, Kaylynn Soke, Ria Stewart, Chelsea Barry, Chelsea Herbert, Katelin MacPherson, Brook Young, Jennifer Barrett and Kaelyn Barrett.

The month before the Summer Games, the Cy-

clones defeated Moose Jaw for the Bantam 'C' provincial crown.

In the Summer Games last August, the Cyclones knocked over Zones 4, 7 and 8 in the round robin to finish first in their pool. They advanced to the gold medal game by defeating Zone 2 again in the semi-final, giving them a berth in the final against Zone 8.

The Cyclones lost 3-2, but returned home with a Saskatchewan Summer Games silver medal.

"I have seen the girls at the high and low points of their ball careers," MacPherson, who was manager of the team, wrote in the nomination. "No matter what happened to them, they always carried themselves on and off the field with class."

The Southeast Connection for Sport, Culture and Recreation District handed out awards in a total of eight categories.

In the Heritage category, awards were presented to Jim Nedelcov of Weyburn

and Arnold Silverthon from Glenavon.

The Culture Award was given to Peter Hozempa from Glenavon and Arline Sebastian of Montmartre.

Vern Exner from McLean and Larry Lockert from Odessa were handed Recreation Awards, while Andrew Baird from Halbrite received the Youth Award.

Kipling's Randy Rapita was given the Official Award, and Nikki Poissant of Sedley received the Athlete Award.

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# Russell man seeks Olympic dream in 2010

BY TERRIE WELWOOD

Jon Montgomery really is living his dream—a dream of sliding headfirst at breakneck speed toward the 2010 Olympic Games.

His father Eldon tells the story of a tour of the Calgary Olympic Place back in 2002.

"There was a sign-up sheet saying, 'If you want to try out skeleton racing, show up next Thursday,'" Eldon said. "So he did."

After a few weeks of training, the time for Jon's first race had arrived.

Rather than the skin tight uniform Jon sports now, Eldon said his son's first trip

down the skeleton track was little less, well, glamorous.

"He had borrowed a suit that was too big that had strips of duct tape holding parts of it together," Eldon said, adding that the sled Jon had used in his inaugural run had been scrounged, too.

Technically speaking, Jon's first run didn't even get him to his second heat, as he placed 21st in the first heat, just out of the running to move on.

But that was seven years ago. Over that time, thanks to a lot of hard work, and a few twists of fate, the

30-year-old Russell man-turned Calgary auctioneer is now recognized as one of the top skeleton racers in the world. Jon's grandparents were Maurice and Rae Montgomery who lived four miles north of Maryfield.

Jon has been Canadian skeleton champion two years running. He's had gold, silver and bronze medal runs on the World Cup circuit and during the 2006-2007 season, Montgomery was the first Canadian ever to win the Europa Cup.

With all this under his belt, all Jon needs is one

more qualifying race to represent Canada in the 2010 Olympics.

That's a dream, his parents say, that he's had since he was a kid.

"Jon's very much into being Canadian," his father said.

"No matter where he's competing, he takes every opportunity to say where he's from—which is not Calgary, but Russell, Manitoba—and secondly, to tell everyone that he's representing Canada."

Although skeleton is very much an individual sport where speeds of over 140 kilometres per hour can

mean a one-one hundredth of a second difference between a gold and a silver medal, to Jon, the main thing is that he's racing for Canada.

"Jon's dream has always been to stand on the podium and see that Canadian flag raised," his father said.

In order to celebrate his accomplishment—and cheer Jon on toward his Olympic challenge—a committee was struck several months ago looking at ways the people of Russell could give Jon the proud send off from the hometown he loves.

"We knew that Jon's

bid for an Olympic medal would be an inspiration for the kids, so involving the students from all of our surrounding communities was really important," committee chair Perry Bullock said.

To that end, each child in schools in Russell, Binscarth, Inglis and across the border into Langenburg has been fitted for a specially designed T-shirt.

"The kids will each be given a T-shirt and will be wearing them when Jon goes to speak to them at the schools," Bullock explained.

"We have the official video from CBC of the gold medal race in Whistler, which is a lot like a video game, so we're hoping for a real pep rally kind of atmosphere there, along with Jon's address to the kids."

To both Joan and Eldon Montgomery, the involvement of the students is key.

"If Jon can tweak any of those kids to 'think big' and realize that nothing is impossible, no matter where you're from, he'll have accomplished what he wanted to do here," Joan said.

Because, as she pointed out, perseverance, passion and a positive attitude have been key factors in her son's success.

"Certainly Jon tried every sport. He was never a star athlete or a top student, but he found what he wanted to do—his passion in life," she said.

Today's Main Street barbecue from 4 to 8 p.m. will offer burgers and hot dogs, chips and a drink for the nominal cost of \$5.

Along with a variety of live local entertainment, Jon will also be putting his auctioneering skills to work at a live auction.

Items up for auction include a Wii, a framed photo by renowned Birtle artist Kathy Langford and a day's labor from Eldon Montgomery, town councillor and the King of Communities in Bloom.

Jon's packed schedule also included time at other events. On Thursday, Jon helped the crew from Andrew Agencies celebrate their first anniversary during their Customer Appreciation Day.

That evening, Jon met with old friends at a wine and cheese reception at the Russell Inn.

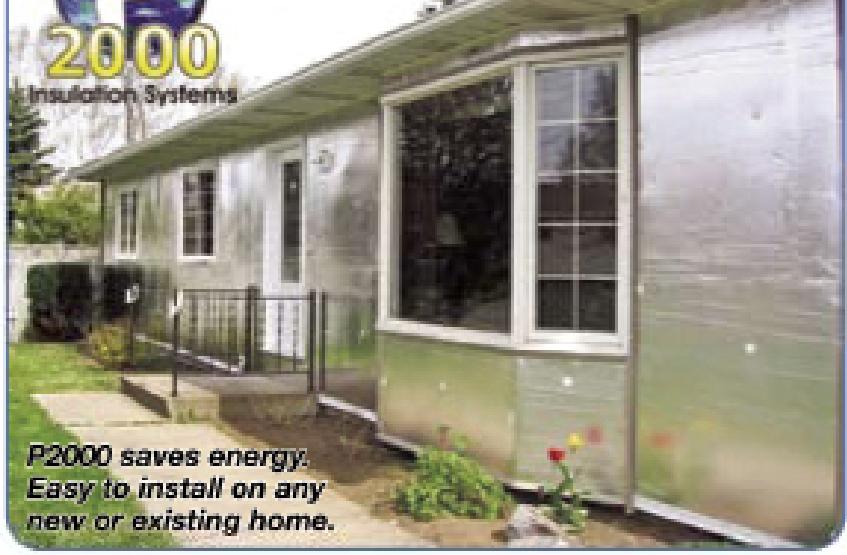
Joan and Eldon Montgomery say they are both humbled by the local effort to spur their son onto victory.

"I think that with all the hype surrounding the Olympics, the home communities of all the athletes will be able to benefit and grab onto the coat tails of all this media attention," Joan said. "And that's one way to give back to community as well."

The community support can be beneficial for Jon's run to the 2010 Vancouver Olympics as well.

"In the Olympics, you need every advantage you can get," said Joan. "And if Jon knows that there's all these people out here who are behind him, he can't help but remember that when he's standing out there on that track. Whether he's at practice or at the Olympics next February, that's going to be huge."

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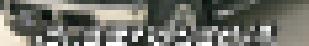
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