

Miners say they had no worries during fire

BY KARA KINNA

When a fire broke out underground at PotashCorp Rocanville on Sept. 25, crews working underground, staff, and mine rescue teams did exactly as they were supposed to, and everyone went home safe, according to those who were involved with the situation.

The fire started underground at around 2 a.m. that Tuesday morning when a wooden reel wound with metal cable ignited about 15 kilometres away from the mine shaft underground. Two other cable reels caught fire and began to burn.

Darwyn Wirth, one of the shift electricians working underground, was the first to come upon the fire and report it. "I was driving down a travelway and

"At that point I realized I'm not going to try and fight it myself with a small extin-guisher. I went immediately to a phone and called our emergency response num-ber and then went to a refuge station."

Wirth says his main concern was to alert the control room up on the surface of the situation so that emergency procedures could begin to kick into place. "I was concerned about guys farther

"I was concerned about guys farther down because the smoke wasn't coming towards me, the smoke would go with the airflow, and they would be in more danger than I would be. The big thing I wanted to do is make sure the control room knew that there was a fire so that everybody could be warned." Wirth's call to the control room trig-gered a number of actions. Down below

gered a number of actions. Down below, sirens began to go off and lights began to flash, signalling an emergency, and alerting the men working the night shift below that they were to call in to the control room for more information. Paul Stapleton, an underground super-

visor who was working that night, savs

"Once you see those lights go off, you're well aware of what to do. It's really a huge part of our training to know to call the control room for information, he says.

'As a supervisor, your first thought is of, and can we get ahold of the guys who are working in that area (near the fire) and make sure they are safely stowed away in the a refuge station."

Refuge stations are scattered throughout the mine, and are usually located near work areas. The refuge stations are sealed off from the rest of the mine, with their own ventilation systems and a hardwire phone connection. The stations are also stocked with water and food in

case miners are trapped underground for a long period of time. According to PotashCorp's safety pro-cedures, once everyone underground has entered refuge stations and is accounted for, they are in constant contact with the control room and given updates on what

is happening outside in the tunnels. Stapleton says, in this case, there was never any worry about whether or not they were safe.

'Í personally wasn't worried because I am also trained in mine rescue. I know they are really well rehearsed," he says.

they are really well renearsed, ne says. "I know lots of people can't believe it, but for the most part no one was truly, truly worried because they knew we were safe and help was on its way. "A bit of the was they uniting "."

"A lot of it was just waiting." Stapleton, along with eight other workers, was in the refuge station for about five hours. Mine rescue crews were able to evacuate his refuge station earlier than others because of its proximity to the

mine shaft.

That still left 20 miners underground in three other refuge stations throughout

"When you are going home leaving guys behind it's never a great feeling," says Stapleton, who went home, then re-turned later in the day.

"Those were the guys I work with every day. I wanted to be there to greet them and bring them home," he says. Courtney Ryan was on the first mine

rescue team that went down to battle the blaze. He says everything went as well as could be expected. "Our mine rescue protocols are num-ber one, safety of the team, number two,

safety of the trapped workers, number three is to find and extinguish the fire, and number four is to rehabilitate the mine," he says. "In this case we knew that everyone was accounted for, we there was still a risk of flare ups by the

there was still a risk of flare ups by the time they went down. "When we were going down they said the fire was out, but once we got halfway out there we got a phone call and they said the fire had reignited," he says. While the wood and plastic had al-ready burned, Harper says it took a while to cool down the spools of hot, metal cable. In the end, the cable had to be spread out with a scoop in order to be spread out with a scoop in order to help it cool down.

help it cool down. "All that was left was copper wire, so we took the scoop and lifted the copper wire and separated it a little bit and just cooled it," he says. "When I lifted the cable up with the scoop, I could see some sparks flying off it into the air, so I put some more water on it."

Once there was no chance of the fire reigniting and the smoke was ventilated



Darwyn Wirth, left, and Courtney Ryan addressing the media after all of the miners had safely returned to the surface. Wirth spent 24 hours underground in a refuge station, and Ryan fought the fire as part of a mine rescue team.

knew exactly where the fire was, so our first job was to get to the fire, to try to extinguish it.

"Once we find out that there is an emergency, the protocol is to get ahold of all our guys. We also talked to Mosaic Potash (in Esterhazy), and if we need any of their help they support us. And once we have our three mine rescue teams, one ready to go down, one on standby, and one on their way, then we can pro-ceed underground and check out what's going on." Ryan says smoke is always one of the

biggest concerns when fighting a fire un-derground in an enclosed space. "Smoke is the worst risk underground.

If you don't have your fresh air and your exhaust separated, smoke goes where it's

exhaust separated, smoke goes where it's not supposed to go and people become engulfed by smoke," he says. "In this case we had enough ventila-tion that the smoke didn't back up too far, so we were able to approach the fire within 20 to 50 feet." within 20 to 50 feet."

The fire was finally extinguished just before noon on Tuesday, but that didn't mean the other 20 miners could come to the surface yet. They waited it out while the area with the fire was cooled down by rescue crews and while smoke was ventilated from the mine.

Trent Harper was on one of the mine rescue teams that was sent down to battle the fire. Harper's team was the fourth team that went down that day. He says from the mine, the other 20 workers in refuge stations were brought up from underground around 7 p.m. on Tuesday night. Since starting their shifts at 6:30 p.m. on Monday, they had been underground for 24 hours.

Harper says all that matters is that ev-eryone was safe. "I think it went really well, no one got

hurt and everyone was able to leave at the end of the day," he says. "You can al-ways replace cable, but you can't replace the guys who work there. He savs PotashCorp

says PotashCorp's emergency training played a large role in everyone's

'If you know what you need to do and how you need to go about it, it will usu-ally work out in the end," he says.

Stapleton says the same thing. "It went extremely smoothly," he says. "Our training was very well rehearsed. Everyone from the supervisors to the mine rescue co-ordinators to the workrest hemselves did everything they were trained to do, and everyone did what they needed to do to get those guys home safe and sound.

"Our guys were safe right from day one and that's because they were trained. "Right from the top down, everyone did their job well and it went smoothly."

Jack Chisholm, an underground oper-ator at the mine, was in the refuge station closest to the fire, and farthest away from the mine shaft

There were 11 workers in Chisholm's refuge station, and he says none of them had any doubt that they would get out safely

"I think we were better off than the people on the surface because we knew what was going on, we were well in-formed on the situation, and we were in

formed on the situation, and we were in good hand— there was no question of us getting out safe," he says. While the crew could smell smoke as they entered the refuge station, Chish-olm says once inside they were perfectly sealed off and safe.

"We had more than we needed to sur-vive as long as we needed," he says. "They aren't meant to be the Hilton. They are there to serve a purpose and it served it well.'

He adds that the hardwire phone con-nection in the refuge stations made the biggest difference for them.

"The phone was great, and being able to call out to our families, it was wonder-ful for PotashCorp to make that happen for us. I think that was the biggest mo-rale thing for me—I was able to call my mother in Ontario mother in Ontario.

"We're in control where we are, we know our destiny. The people on the sur-face, all they've got to do is worry." Chisholm says he can't stress enough

how well the safety procedures worked in this case and how important they are. He notes that for some of the newer min-ers, like himself, who has been there less than three years, the whole experience "an education." was

"It works," he says. "The system

"They get two thumbs up. Everyone, from the control room to security pulled as a team, and it went well, it went awesome. We weren't in any real danger once we were in the refuge stations."

He says he was particularly impressed by the support shown by the Mosaic mine rescue team, who showed up to help out if needed.

The Mosaic mine in Esterhazy experienced a fire underground in 2006, and PotashCorp mine rescue crews attended back then to help fight the blaze.

"Their big comment was they were just returning the favor," says Chisholm. "We're all family, it doesn't matter what company you work for, when you work underground long enough, you're all familv

"I can't say it enough, and there's no real way to say it chough, and hart o him and the other men in the refuge station was boredom.

"We talked and tried to sleep and then got up and stirred the air, walked around and tried to tell jokes," he says.

However, he says at no point did the men feel trapped.

"There was no point where any of us thought we wouldn't get out. You just had to have a bucket full of patience and be cool. "It was a minor inconvenience on the

grand scale of things, and we had it bet-ter than the people on the surface—we

"We just kind of sat around and did lots of talking ... it's almost like going for coffee without coffee," he laughs.

"The guys I talked to that were in the refuge station I took home, I don't think felige station took none, four think throughout the whole ordeal that they felt trapped, especially when you have steady contact with the outside. People liked talking with their wives and girl-friends and mine control—they knew they were going home."





Esterhazy celebrates 50 years of potash

On Saturday, Sept. 28, The Mosaic Company celebrated On Saturaay, Sept. 28, The Mosaic Company celebrated 50 years of potash production and the birth of the Sas-katchewan potash industry at its Esterhazy operations. The company commemorated this historical milestone with a grand opening ceremony of the Esterhazy Stage 1 expansion, launching the first phase of its \$6 billion pot-ash expansion program.

ash expansion program. "As our Esterhazy operations celebrates its 50th anni-versary, we are extremely proud of where we have come from and even more excited about where we are going," said Jim Prokopanko, President and CEO of The Mosaic Company. "We feel privileged to be a part of the provin-cial landscape, and we are fully committed to continuing to grow our business here." The following day, on Saturday, Sept. 29, the town of Esterhazy hosted a celebration to commemorate Mosaic's 50 years. The celebration was held outside the Esterhazy

50 years. The celebration was held outside the Esterhazy Potash Interpretive Centre, and featured speeches, free lunch, music, a bounce tent for the children, and tours



of the Potash Interpretive Centre. The event was well attended, with hundreds of people coming out to help the town and Mosaic celebrate

Mosaic Esterhazy is Saskatchewan's first potash pro-ducing mine. Miners broke into potash on June 8, 1962, followed by the official opening of operations on Septem-ber 20. The site has since become the world's largest pot-ash mine with the K1 and K2 mineshafts. Stage 1 of the Esterhazy expansion plan adds 800,000

tomes of annual operating capacity to the operations of the site at an approximate investment of \$600 million. Stage 2 expansion includes development of the K3 mine-shaft, which will operate as a satellite mine for the upgraded K2 mill.

"The expansion is a promise to our employees and to the province, by ensuring our operations are ready for the future," added Prokopanko. "Working together, we will continue to deliver on our mission of helping the world grow the food it needs."



Mosaic plans to invest a total of almost \$6 billion into growing its Saskatchewan operations. Expansion projects are currently in progress at the company's three potash mines in the province, located at Belle Plaine, Colonsay and Esterhazy. Mosaic expects that when completed in 2021, the potash expansion program will have increased 2021, the polasis expansion program with rave increased their annual operating capacity by 50 percent and create 500 permanent, full-time positions. The Mosaic Company is the world's leading combined producer and marketer of concentrated potash and phos-

phate, two of the primary nutrients required to help the world grow the food it needs. The company employs ap-proximately 8,000 people in eight countries and partici-pates in every aspect of crop nutrition development.

The Top left: mayor of Esterhazy speaking to the crowd.

Тор **Centre:** People line up for the barbecue lunch.

Top right: Two retired Mosaic employees pose for a photo

Left: The Bohemian Brass entertaining the crowd.

Bottom left: The mayor and Mosaic executives posing for pictures.

Bottom right: Children line up for the bounce tent.











A thousand people packed the Wawota Forum for a Friends for Cienna benefit on Saturday, Sept. 15.

\$125,000 raised for girl with brainstem glioma:

Wawota comes out in force for Cienna

BY KEVIN WEEDMARK In an huge outpouring of community support, hundreds of people crowded into the Wawota Forum Saturday, Sept. 15 for an event that raised about \$125,000 for the family of Cienna Friesen.

Cienna is a six-year-old girl from Wawota who was diagnosed in August with a brainstem glioma. The family will be flying to Toronto for Cienna's treaments.

Cienna is the daughter of Rochelle (Ford) Friesen of Wawota and the late Darren Friesen, who was killed in a quad accident at Rocanville three years ago.

ago. Kristen Murray, one of the organizers of the event, said the fundraiser was even bigger than she expected.

"It was definitely bigger than we thought," she said.

She estimates that about 1,000 people attended the event, and said a large number of volunteers contributed to making the fundraiser a success.

Inducts of an acting the fundraiser a success. The huge event came together in just a few weeks. The initial organizing meeting was Aug. 27. "Everyone we asked for help was just great," Murray said. "Everyone was willing to give, give give. Whatever we needed, it was there for us. Everyone was very giving."

Was there for us. Everyone was very giving." She said those who helped with the event are simply motivated by the desire to help a neighbor and a friend. "I told Rochelle (Cien-

"I told Rochelle (Cienna's mom), I can't take (the tumor) away, so I just want to raise as much money as I can to try to find someone who can."



Cienna Friesen

She said it feels good to be able to make a difference with a fundraiser of this size. "It feels amazing to be able to help," she said. "I really can't describe how it feels. And Rochelle is very, very, very thankful."

The fundraiser included a silent auction, a live auction, a supper, 50/50 draws, and a cabaret.

Dozens of volunteers were involved in the event, including the Lions Club, whose members worked the bar, and the Hints of Harmony, who volunteered to get people home safely from the cabaret. The massive fundraiser

The massive fundraiser at the Wawota Forum is the latest in a series of fundraisers in the area for Cienna.

Wristbands have been sold, the Kenosee Superslides had a fundraiser on the last weekend of August, a \$100-a-plate

fundraiser was organized at Second Street Eats, another supper fundraiser was held at the Arlington Hotel in Maryfield, change jars are out in businesses around the area, and a benefit concert with Country Blend was held at Moose Mountain Church of Christ at Kenosee.

And the fundraisers continue. The Wawota and Maryfield Lions Clubs are collecting donations of canola at Lincoln Farm Supply in Wawota, and of any type of grain at the Viterra 8-48 terminal at Fairlight.

light. All the money raised for Cienna is going into a trust fund at Conexus Credit Union.

Anyone interested in helping can make a cheque to the Friesen Trust Account/Cienna and mail it to Conexus Credit Union, Box 6, Wawota SK SOG 5A0.





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Surgery wait times decreasing, but not in cities

Saskatchewan is inching towards some big reductions in surgical wait times, but the province's two biggest cities are still dealing with bottlenecks.

The Ministry Of Health issued an update Monday on its efforts to cut surgical wait times.

The province set an ambitious goal in April 2010 to ensure no one in Saskatchewan has to wait more than three months for surgery.

That target is being phased in the goal for 2012-2013 is to have no one waiting longer than six months.

Right now, the Saskatchewan government says seven out of ten health regions are within five per cent of the goal. Failing to make the grade are Kelsey Trail and Saskatoon, at 90

Failing to make the grade are Kelsey Irail and Saskatoon, at 90 per cent, and Regina Qu'Appelle, which is 81 per cent. Heartland has hit the 100 per cent

Heartland has hit the 100 per cent mark, Cypress and Sunrise are at 99 per cent, Prairie North and Five Hills are at 98 per cent, Sun Country is at 97 per cent, and Prince Albert Parkland is at 95 per cent. Since taking over as government, the Saskatchewan Party has spearheaded an 82-per-cent drop in wait

As of July 31 of this year more than 2,200 fewer people were on a waiting list compared to a year earlier.

Health Minister Dustin Duncan insists the results are encouraging so far, but concedes that Regina and Saskatoon have a tougher road ahead of them than some of the rural regions.

"In some of the smaller regions they do perform some surgeries, so it would be some laproscopic procedures, maybe minor surgical procedures. Typically the larger, more invasive procedures such as surgeries related to cancer, such as hip and knee replacement surgeries, those are typically the ones that would be done in Regina and Saskatoon."

That impacts the larger centres because they then absorb the responsibility for that patient under the count.

The government says the reason for Regina's lower rate is due to an

unexpected increase in orthopedic procedures.

Duncan also notes that earlier this year Regina health region told the province it needed millions of dollars in extra funding to reach that goal. The minister instructed them to look for efficiencies in their own system and he's hoping to see some improvements soon

improvements soon. Duncan insists the latest numbers are lower than they could be because summer holidays tend to reduce capacity and result in fewer procedures being carried out

procedures being carried out. He says numerous efforts have been made to target certain surgeries that get backed up in the cities, including the use of third-party surgical clinics. "Pool referrals" have allowed

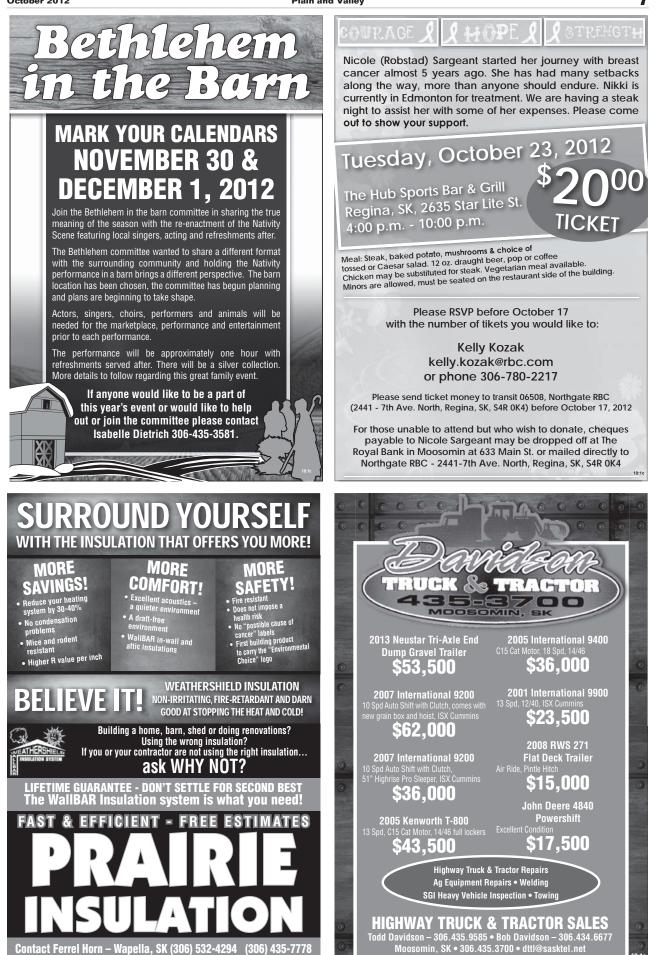
"Pool referrals" have allowed patients more timely access to surgeons and a surgical website shows patients and general practitioners which surgeons have the shortest wait lists for specific procedures. Duncan says those efforts and oth-

ers make him confident the threemonth wait target will be attainable by the March 31, 2014 deadline.









To contact Plain and Valley call 306-435-2445 or email world_spectator@sasktel.net



British find a place in Canadian farming

BY LESLIE-ANN KROEKER

Crowded streets, rigid rules, animal dis-eases and no chance for expansion. These are the common answers that several immigrant farmers in the Moosomin area gave when asked why the moved from the UK to Canada to pursue farm-

Many of them where stricken with the aftermath of the BSE (Bovine spongiform encephalopathy) and the Foot and Mouth outbreaks that swept through England in the early 2000s and caused beef prices to plummet.

Many were frustrated with the inability to buy land due to the rising prices and limited space.

Picking up and moving their families, some with young children, didn't seem like a lot of trouble at the time. What did seem like trouble would be staying in a country that wouldn't allow them to farm the way they envisioned. Canada was a land that would pro-

vide solitude from the busy streets and cramped spaces.

A commonality among them all—they moved to give their children a better op-portunity. And they all agree, they've made the right choice.

The Walkers

Teresa Walker walks out onto farm on a particularly warm morning and playfully pats her dog. She shades her eyes from the sun with her hand as she looks out over her land.

"We have a lot of land here. And we're expanding. See over there, you can see the new house I'm building," Walker says as she points to the new modern structure being built just over a hill on her current homestead

For Teresa, the wide open space has become home in the past ten years. She, along with her daughter Joanna, own cat-tle, sheep and grow hay on their 1,500 acre farm just south of Maryfield. But her picture perfect land is a lot differ-ent from where Teresa originally learned how to few

how to farm.

Teresa and her two daughters, Maria and Ioanna, moved to Canada in 2002 from Devon in the west country of England. Their cattle and sheep farm in England

and the fattle and sheep fails in England was hard when the girls where growing up. Their farm was small and Devon was considered a less favoured area for farmers. Walker represented the region on the board and says keeping up with the land was often difficult.

"They had special issues they needed addressed because it was a big holiday spot. When they got Foot and Mouth, then I had to deal with the biosecuitry with that and try and help farmers," says Walker. Foot and Morth disease below out in the

Foot and Mouth disease broke out in the early 2000s in England. It is a viral disease that spreads through hoofed animals and

is extremely contagious. The Walkers lost their livestock, even though they didn't have the disease on their own farm.

their own tarm. "They slaughtered our animals anyway because of the risk," says Walker. "They wanted to control it. They couldn't control the disease so they figured if they slaugh-tered all the cattle it wouldn't (spread)," curve Walker says Walker.

The whole event was a stressful time on the single mother. After the govern-ment slaughtered all their cattle, she had to make the decision to restock her herd or look for other alternatives.

"It was pretty horrible. Not a very good time at all. My daughter lost her sheep, we lost all our cows. We did restock but then figured there were good opportunities (in Canada)," says Walker. Teresa had heard about farming in Cana-de and docided to investigate.

da and decided to investigate. She found a relatively new program, the Saskatchewan Immigration Nominee Program (SINP), and decided to inquire. "It was super easy. I just Googled the

program—it was absolutely brand new," says Walker.

"I was the first person on the Saskatchewan Immigration Nominee Program when they first brought it out. . . provided you have enough money to buy your farm and look after yourself, they do the paper-work."

According to the SINP, to qualify as a farmer an applicant must have a net worth of \$500,000, already have an offer to pur-chase land, must visit Saskatchewan prior to making a signed offer and demonstrate knowledgeable farm operators.

Teresa was a perfect candidate. She also believes she is one of the first single moms

believes she is one of the first single moms to be accepted to the program. "I think I'm still the only single mom . . . it is an accomplishment. Your number one aim is to be the best you can for your kids. My thought right now is to do the best I can for them—to offer them future opportunities and present opportunities and safety and freedom and everything this revue her " this country has."

In 2001, Teresea and Joanna visited Agribition in Regina—one of the largest agriculture events in North America—to survey the landscape in Saskatchewan agriculture and to check out farms in the area

According to the immigration require-ments, they had to have chosen a farm and had the offer accepted. It was then subject to immigration and the provincial and federal government's approval.

The pair gravitated towards the Moosomin area for a number of reasons. They liked the schools, it was a good rainfall area, close to amenities and the price was right.

"The original 1,120 acres we bought in the first three months of being here, we bought that, including buildings, for less than the UK farm was sold for," says Walker

Walker also appreciated how the farm was kept.

"Our original farm was in really good shape. You're coming in with your pos-sessions in a container, you can't be get-ting out hammers and starting to fix stuff before you move in. It was really nicely looked after, and that was an attraction."

Teresa, Joanna, who was 11, and Maria. who was 13, travelled to Canada to per-manently live in 2002.

"It was a little bit of a shock for (Maria). It took her about three months. But the local people are so kind that they just wel-comed you. They know you've made a huge step and you're going to be looking for friends," says Walker. "It was an easy transition thanks to the people. I think if you came here and just blunked yourself on a form in the middle

plunked yourself on a farm in the middle punkea yourself on a tarm in the middle of nowhere without anybody coming to welcome you it would be kind of tough." The girls went to school in Maryfield where they found it easy to fit in with the

crowd.

"We're kind of lucky, the three of us all make friends easy. We have lots of friends here now."

They quickly got involved with local sports, 4-H club, cattle associations and local councils. Teresa a councillor in the RM of Walpole, which helped her make con-nections and friends.

She says she is happy how her girls tran-sitioned into Canadian living. "I think when you're raising kids on your own and your number one priority is to get the best deal for them that you possible can. I just felt this gave good op-rottunities for them U're offer U're not co portunities for them. It's safer. It's not so crowded." The family took their citizenship in 2006

and are now officially Canadian citizens.

"There was a big fancy ceremony so it was quite nice. We did study. We studied pretty hard for it," says Walker.

"Ten years ago, this was considered a cheap area. There wasn't quite so much (economic) activity, so I guess you could get a lot of farm for not too many dol-lars."

Joanna farms full time on the farm now a hog farm. Theresa says Joanna always had a knack for farming and is looking to



Teresa and Joanna Walker pose with a few of their sheep on their farm near Fairlight.

eventually take over the family farm.

"The interest is there for sure. I always knew she was a farmer. If I went under a bus tomorrow she could take over and run it," says Walker. The little family celebrated their ten-year anniversary in Canada with a celebration party in August, 2011. Although they do not have much for family in the area, their friends became

family, says Walker. At the end of the day, Walker says she

didn't come to Canada to escape hardship, she came to Canada for the opportunity. She relates to fellow UK immigrant Jonny Reid—the country singer—and his accep-tance speech at a recent awards show.

"He said he thanked his family for com-ing here because it's the land of opportunity. And that's the reason to move to Canada. It's the land of opportunity."

When asked if she would ever consider

going back, she laughs.

"The land of too many people, that's what England is. It's different over there now because they've gone through some really hard times. Their pound is in the toilet. They have bad issues going on with the banks. Bad unemployment." "It wasn't like that when we left and it's like that now. When I left you had people

like that now. When I left you had people working in the city doing really well and wanting to come to the country. They would pay a fortune for 10 acres with maybe one horse. That pushed the prices up and there was very little opportunity to expand there. I knew when Joanna could walk she would want to farm—she was interactual with it. To how how her more just a natural with it. To have bought more acres over there would have been so difficult. Here, you can expand.

Continued on page 9 🖙

Leslie-Ann Kroeker Photos



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British immigrants find a home on the prairies

Continued from page 8

"There's just so many people. And everyone wants their own land, so it's tough for farmers." The little family of three has definitely made a name for themselves in the area and in the farming community. Teresa knows that coming to Canada helped her girls be-come the people they are today. "I think every mother just wants the best for their child, and I just figured this would be better. And it is better."

Claire and Dewi Phillips Claire and Dewi Phillips and their children Ceri and Owen have been in Canada for 13 years after immigrat-ing from their 170 acre farm in West Wales. Like Teresa, they laugh at the idea of ever moving back to Britain, as they sit in their kitchen drinking coffee one morning.

morning.

morning. "The grass is always greener on the other side of the fence," says Dewi with a smile. Much like Teresa, the pair moved from the UK due to health issues in their livestock. "We weren't affected really by BSE, it's just that the commodity went up. We had never seen a cow with BSE but it affected all the prices of all the beef cattle there. It just slumped," says Claire. "Farming had really gone downhill because of BSE. We didn't' see a lot of future there for the kids. They were five and six when we came over and we just thought there would be a lot more opportunity out here for them." "The way things are at home now, we made the right decision." For many farmers in the area. immigration became the

For many farmers in the area, immigration became the only way of escaping the hardships of BSE. After going to a seminar put on by a realty company in Wales that show-cased Manitoba farming, the Phillips began to dream of a better life in Canada.

"It wasn't a government push but more of a relator push. Century 21 and others are actively over there every fall selling farms," says Claire. It didn't take much convincing for the pair to realize

It didn't take much convincing for the pair to realize Canada was their only way out. Packing up two children and heading to another coun-try can be daunting, but the Phillips say they had good people behind them to help with the process. They came to Canada briefly to look at some land with the help of their lawyer and instantly fell in love with southwest Manitoba scenic rolling hills that reminded them of Eng-land

"We talked to some other people from Wales who im-migrated to Birtle and they went through a specialized immigration lawyer through Winnipeg and that's what we did. He sent us the basic application form, we filled in all the basic information and sent it back," says Dewi. Once in Canada, they moved into a rented house that was given to them from a family on the other side of Bir-



Above: Claire and Dewi Phillips, who moved from Wales to their farm east of St Lazare. west of Birtle

"The elderly gentleman lived there and he would move

"The elderly gentleman lived there and he would move in the winter and live there in the summer so he said if we looked after the dog we could look after it," says Dewi. They ended up purchasing land in the Birtle area east of St. L. The couple came out on visitor Visas and were in Canada for two years on the Visas until their landed immigration paperwork went through, meaning they ini-tially couldn't work on their own farm legally and had to bire help to keep it running it for two years. Claire says it

tially couldn't work on their own farm legally and had to hire help to keep it running it for two years. Claire says it was tough playing the waiting game, but took advantage of the time by learning from their hired help. "You're waiting for two years, which is a huge chunk out of your life. But you're either waiting at home or you're out here actually learning. That's the way we chose to do it. And it cost about the same in the end," says Claire. Claire and Dewi bought land in Canada for a fraction of what thow cold the form in Wales for. This next one was in

what they sold the farm in Wales for. This nest egg was in-vested and helped them live for the two years they waited

"It's just an awful long time to live your life for two years not knowing whether you're going to get your im-migration. I don't see why it takes the government that long to process. But it does," says Claire.

After the two years, they received landed immigrant



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tatus and were able to get their own hands dirty for the first time on their own Canadian farm.

They now live on the original two quarters of farm land they purchased when they came over. They more recently ypanded and purchased 640 acres a mile away. The transition from Welsh farming to Canadian farm-

ing hasn't been that difficult, say the pair. "It's just the same basically. We were keeping a lot of stock on a small farm (in Wales) you could keep 60 cows and 250 ewes on 25 acres of crop. Here it's a lot bigger,' savs Dewi.

The weather is another difference. "Basically you don't have a line of muddy rubber boots by the door and you don't have wet weather clothing hung up ready to go every time you walk out the door," says Claire with a

laugh. The family of four now have dual citizenship. They took the application five years ago and attended in the ceremony in Brandon where they say they were proud and happy to finally be Canadian, but more proud to see others receive citizenship.

"I think it depends on your background. Whether you've had hardships in the past. For us, Canada wasn't such a big move if that doesn't sound strange. The language and the governments were similar, whereas I'm sure some others coming from somewhere like South America see such a huge improvement in their lifestyle. For them it must be a huge deal," says Claire.

Despite the two-year hiatus, since landing in Manitoba, the pair hasn't stopped working. Claire and Dewi still have the farm where Dewi is still working on the cattle. They have about 50 cows this year.

Along with the farm, they also have a part-time busi-ness running inflatable bounce tents at children's events, and Claire also works part time at the Rocanville mine.

"Maybe we've worked a little tharder than we should have," says Dewi. The hope is to cut down on the farming in the near fu-ture by renting out all the grain land. They already have a

Couple acres rented out. After 13 years in the area, Claire and Dewi say that the move to Canada was the right decision. The only time they ever get homesick is when they think about the ocean, but other than that, Canada is now a home where

"There's just so much more opportunity here, with their career or whatever. There are almost no jobs in England now," says Claire.

"It's very difficult I think. That's what we're told (from Dewi's brother). He's very surprised that our kids are

working full time." Surprisingly, they say their favorite thing about Canada is the weather

is the weather. "The fifty below was like, 'whoa'. But the first year we were here it was a mild winter so it broke us in gently. It's true what they say about the dry cold. You just feel it on your skin, you don't feel it in your bones," says Claire. "The first week we moved here it was September and I couldn't believe how nice it was," says Dewi. "The summers are nice instead of constant rain. That's a nice change. The skies are also so beautiful. Yes, it's a very pice country" says Claire.

nice country," says Claire.

Monica and Ernest Pethick

Monica and Ernest Pethick, along with their sons, Alistair and Darren, made the trip over to Canada in the fall of 1999 after they made the decision they were fed up with English farming rules and regulations.

10:1

Prairies see rise in train-vehicle collisions

The recent train-vehicle collisions at Moosomin are part of a larger trend in the Prairies. While Manitoba, Sas-

10

katchewan and Alberta are leading the country in economic growth, they are also leading the nation in the growth of a more un-fortunate series of events— train-vehicle collisions.

And they are related, says Raynald Marchand, the general manager for the Canada Safety Council and a member of Opera-tion Lifesaver's National Advisory committee. "In the Prairie corridor,

what we're observing in terms of being above the average is you get an in-creased level of economic activity in those provinces. You have a lot of freight trains that go into the prairies because they've got to transport the grain and people by cars, so about 50 per cent of all freight that

moves, moves by train." The Canadian Safety Council is an independent charitable organization that works to make Canada safer in all areas where risks to human health are present. It is a major stake-holder in the organiza-tion Operation Lifesaver, which works exclusively in preventing injuries on Canada's railroads.

Cañada's railroads. With an increasing amount of goods being produced and consumed in the West, there is an in-creasing amount of trains, he said. The area is also seeing a rapidly growing population, which also has had an affect on the num-ber of train-vehicle colli-sions sions

"You get more expo-sure," he said. This is the opposite of Ontario and Quebec, where train-vehicle collisions have been on the de-cline in recent years-their economies are producing fewer goods, which means there are fewer trains needed to ship them by rail, the main method of transportation for goods. So, the rise in train-car

collisions in the Prairie provinces balances out the declining train-car colli-sions in Ontario and Que-



Train-vehicle accidents have been increasing in Saskatchewan, Manitoba and Alberta.

bec, resulting in the annual number of such collisions at the national level to re-

main roughly the same. Overall, the number of train-vehicle collisions in the three Prairie provinces had remained relatively stable over the past six

years—until this year. In Canada there were 124 train collisions from January to August of this year, which is one below for the last five-year aver-age of that period. For the same period in Saskatch-ewan, however, there were 18 collisions, which is two more than the last fiveyear average for that peri-od, and four more than for the same period last year. In Alberta, the story is similar. There were 32 for that 8-month period of this year, which is above the 26 for the last five-year average of that period but below the number for that period of last year.

In Manitoba, the rise is more pronounced. That province's last five-year average for months from January to August is ten, but for that period of this year it had already reached 15, which is also a significant jump above last year's four for that period. While the number of

miles travelled by trains in Western Canada has

increased in recent years, and so has created more exposure, the actual cause of virtually all railroad-crossing accidents is mistakes made by ve accidents hicle drivers, according to Marchand. Failure of the warning lights and gates is virtually non-existent in Canada, he said. "Typically it is distrac-tion. They come to a cross-

ing and they don't stop or look, or the lights may be on and they think they have the time. Sometimes a train that is crossing doesn't look like it is mov-ing fast, but often they travel through crossings very fast," he said. "You

can also get the odd inci-dent where someone gets caught on the tracks be-cause of traffic backup."

But the good news is that over the past 30 years train-vehicle collisions have been on a steady decline, the result of an increasing awareness of the danger of railway crossings, and Operation Lifesaver has been behind much of the push, he said. It began when they started taking the message to schools in 1981, the year that the organization became operational.

"In more recent years we have had a number of different driver safety pro-

grams that have targeted the vehicle drivers—the new drivers, the bus driv-_the er, the truck driver, and so on. So that helps." But it has taken the pro-

vincial governments to modernize laws in order to reduce railway colli-

sions, he said. "We have also had some changes in regulation. In the past, school buses were prohibited from stopping at a railway crossing where there were lights and gates. They were only required to They were only required to stop when there was a pas-sive crossing, where there were no lights and gates, and if they stopped at one that had lights and gates, they actually received tickets. The school boards tickets. The school boards were pushing the compa-nies to stop at all railroad crossings, but the police were giving them tickets for that. So eventually the legislation changed if and

legislation changed it and it has moved from prov-ince to province in recent years," he said But despite the long-term decline in collisions, economic growth can cause increases in such in-cidents in the short-term, he said. "The economics do have an impact. In a slow down

an impact. In a slow down an inpact in a slow down, in the upswings you have more trains, and the expo-sure plays a role." Another thing that Marchand stresses is that

train engineers are almost guaranteed in their career to be behind the helm of a train that kills somebody, whether it be a person walking on the tracks or someone in a vehicle at a railway crossing. Given that it can take up to two kilometres for a train to come to a halt, this is some-thing that the engineer has virtually no control over.

"On average, each en-gineer will see three fatal collisions in their career. That's the tough part for them. For some of them, it's quite traumatic."

And so Marchand says that there is some very simple yet important wis-dom for drivers to take in mind when coming to a

railway crossing. "We tell them, 'look, lis-ten and live.'"



Moosomin physician worried about impact: Emergency services suspended at Kipling

BY KEVIN WEEDMARK The Sun Country Health Region has decided to sus-Region has decided to sus-pend emergency services at Kipling Hospital, over the objections of a local doctor who says he can maintain the service. Dr. Johan Steyn is cur-rently the only physician in Kipling, and the health region decided to close the emergency room because

emergency room because of the lack of a second doc-

"We got a letter saying to Broadview, Regina, or Moosomin," said Jonan-di Johnston, Dr. Steyn's daughter who works with him in his office.

"They claim the doctor They claim the doctor they have in town is not good enough to run the hospital. Dr. Steyn is my dad, and we were beyond mad that he was not included in any decisions. People are pretty upset with all this in Kipling. "Dr. Steyn, has been in

br. Steyn, has been in Kipling for years. There were doctors coming and going, but he has been the only doctor steady there for the last 10 years.

"There was another doc-tor there, but my dad had

most of the patients." Johnston said there has been little information forthcoming from Sun Country.

Country. "We don't know what is going on," she said. "They say they are temporarily shutting down the emer-gency room, my dad has had to transfer patients. We have no idea what they're thinking for the long term. The compunity is upset The community is upset. "He would like to stay

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there for his community, but he doesn't know what to do with no hospital." Dr. Michael Plewes said

he is upset that the Sun Country Health Region is closing another facility and relying on Moosomin doctors to take on an addi-tional load.

He said he was upset that Sun Country was telling Kipling area patients to go to Moosomin for treatment without consulting or even informing the Moosomin doctors. "They've closed Redvers and now Kipling, and they're relying on us to take care of the patients, but we don't even get the courtesy of a phone call," Plewes said.

Johnston questioned the health region's plan to close the hospital because of the single doctor. "Why can't it stay open?

When there has been an-other doctor, they're not always around. Dr. Steyn

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was the only doctor for a year and they kept it

open. "They say one doctor "They say one doctor can't handle it because he will get run down. Would it be better to have two or more, yes, but how can you have three doctors if one is not good enough to run the hospital after 10 years? Why don't they ask the doctor? I think he would know if he peeds a would know if he needs a break.

Johnston also questioned how hard the Sun Country Health Region has been looking for a doctor for Ki-

"They claim they can't get doctors for Kipling, but in the past two months, in-terim doctors have been coming down to Weyburn, why can't the interim doctors come to Kipling? They seem to not care about the

sceni to for care about the smaller places." Evelyn Szakacs of Ki-pling said she is worried

AUCTIONS DONE RIGHT.

about the closure of the

"I rely on the hospital," she said. "A lot of people rely on it. It's a very large area. If they close that down, I don't know where people can go because they come to Kipling from many miles around. There are always people lined up to see the doctor so it's

a very large area." Szakacs, one of Dr. Steyn's patients, says she doesn't understand why the hospital can't remain open with one doctor ad-

open with one doctor ad-mitting patients. "I wish that they would allow him to keep the hospital open," she said. "He's willing to do it and he's done it before. He has a lot of patients and he's willing to keep going but willing to keep going, but they're shutting the hospi-tal down.

"He's a good doctor, and he saved many lives. He saved my brother's life.

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He had heart trouble, gave him a pacemaker so he's doing okay now. He's the best doctor that we ever had or that we've ever known of. He doesn't fool around. He's very thor-

ough." Natasha Waynert of Inchkeith has used the services of the Kipling hospi-tal in the past and doesn't like the idea of it being closed.

"It's very important to the community—it's the only hospital for quite

a few small towns," she said. "All the other hosp-tials around are so full that I don't know what they're going to do without Kipling

11

"I had to use the hospital last year—I had a rash all over my body. A hospital is a very important service for a town like Kipling. "I think Dr. Steyn could use reinforcements—it would be nice to have another doctor—but I think in the course of waiting, he could handle it."





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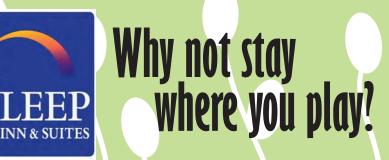
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From Many Nations, TO ONE HOME British at home on the Prairies

Continued from page 9 🖙

The family is originally from Cornwall, England where they farmed cattle and sheep, but found it increasingly difficult to maintain their farm due to the extensive red tape they always found themselves getting stuck in.

Farming is under a a lot of regulation in the UK, where rules are much more rigid than in Canada.

rules are much more rigid than in Canada. "They're so tight over there, but I suppose you have that many people, you need to be," said Monica. "It's a lot more paperwork for one thing. More and more regulations. (Farming) ion't run by the UK parlia-

"It's a lot more paperwork for one thing. More and more regulations. (Farming) isn't run by the UK parliament, it's run by the European government so they put every barrier they can because. . . they really try to (make it difficult) for the English farmer," Ernest.

edition!

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Everyday events like moving cattle or tagging sheep became a headache, as they would always need to keep thorough records of every little task.

"For instance, when you "For instance, when you move stock, you had two movement books. You had to record when you loaded the farm and the time you arrived at your destination. Then you had to record when you unloaded them again in the evening," said Monica. And the problem got

And the problem got worse the longer they were on their 30-acre farm. "You could also be subject

to spot checks. They could come inspect your movement book, your drug book, anything like that. We used to spend three evenings a week just doing paperwork,"

ov- said Monica.

The decision to move to Canada came when both Ernest and Monica discovered Alistair's interest in farming and realized there was no future for him to pursue his dream in England.

"Basically, our oldest son wanted to farm and land was so expensive. With the rules and regulation and everything else, we thought it was a good idea to come out here," said Ernest. Monica and Ernest want

Monica and Ernest went to a workshop, much similar to Claire and Dewi, with a Manitoba realtor convincing the room that Canada was the place to be

The regulations, the cramped spaces, the inability to expand and the overcrowding of people proved to be the breaking point for the family. The consensus in the family was that the move would be worth it. They made up their mind to buy a farm in Canada. Monica says she always had her children's future in the back of her mind while making the decision.

"Farming was a minority in our area. There was nobody to talk to about farming, and at that age all (Alistair) wanted to do was farm. We couldn't see any way to assist him," said Monica. Both say that the move to

Both say that the move to Canada was 'relatively easy' because of the help they received from their realtor. "Basically he left us brochures and we called him

and said we were interested in looking at some farms.

Continued on page 23 🖙

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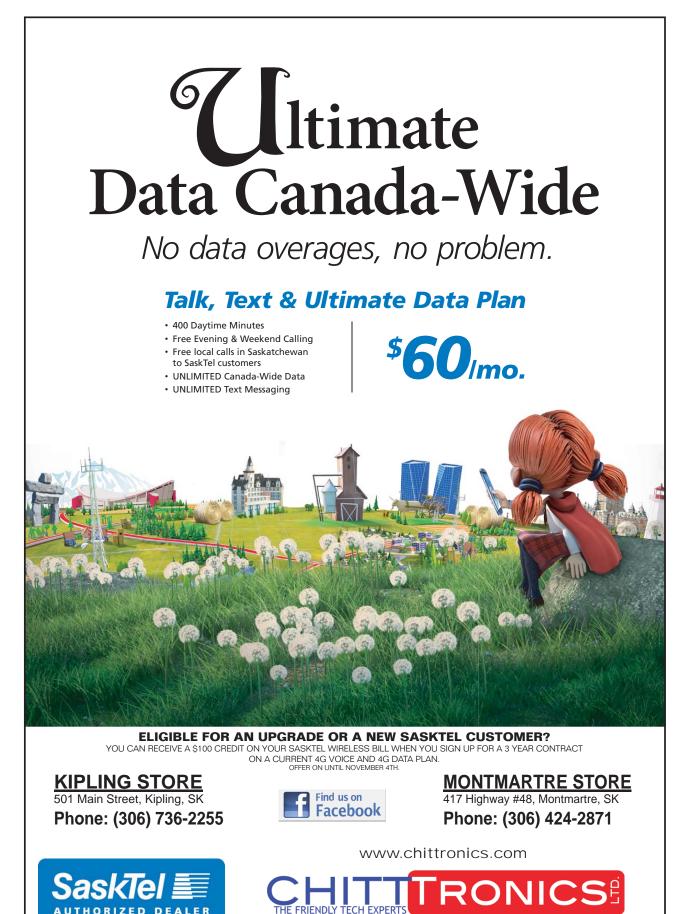
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100-year-old artefact brought to life

BY KARA KINNA On Sunday, September 9, a group of volunteers gathered at the Rocanville and District Museum with the hopes of bringing a 100-year-old machine back to life in the 21st century. About 10 volunteers—

most of them museum members—began work around 10 in the morning and wrapped up at around They also knew that what they were doing that day was a first for Saskatchewan—it was the first time the province had approved a weld repair on one of these old engines in order to restore it to work-

ing order. "This material is very old and you have to be very careful when you weld it," says Robert Bryce, who was did not allow these weld repairs until recently. This is the first repair that we know of that's legal, and for that reason we are being very, very careful."

very, very caretul." Bryce is a hobbyist who hails from Austin, Manitoba, and the person who prompted the Rocanville museum to consider repairing the steam engine to working order.

"I grew up next to the Manitoba Agricultural Mu-

seum, and my dad was a director there for a few years.

So I had no choice, I was going to be in this hobby," he

says with a laugh. Bryce has overseen other

weld repairs on steam engines in Alberta and Manitoba as well as the U.S., and went through the process of

applying to the province of Saskatchewan to do a weld repair on Rocanville's steam

engine. The engine-a 1913 model donated to the mu-

seum by former resident Ernie Symons—was in good condition but needed repair

to an area of thin metal on

Bryce submitted a weld procedure to the province, and the province approved the repair.

Because of the amount of pressure that builds up inside of the boiler, and the fact

that antique steam engines are generally operated for public interest and in pub-

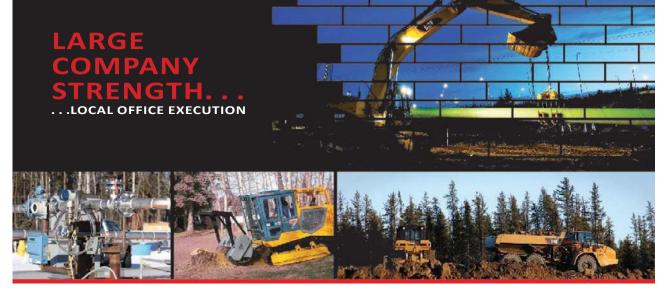
lic venues, a rupture in the boiler could be catastrophic, "like a bomb going off" ac-

the boiler.

"It's a part of our history ... These steam tractors were what broke the west open." — Robert Bryce

three in the afternoon, knowing that, if successful, their efforts that day would breathe new life into a behemoth of steel and iron—a turn of the century steam engine—that had sat dormant since the days of threshing farmers' fields in the early 1900s. overseeing the repair that day. "And the construction is unusual too for today's standards. They are riveted and they are threaded to gether instead of a welded construction, so you have to be very, very careful with the old steel. And for that reason Saskatchewan

A group of volunteers—most of them with the Rocanville museum—working together on the steam engine.



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Hobbyist Robert Bryce stands beside the 1913-model steam engine that was repaired to working order at the Rocanville museum. Bryce oversaw the repair on the engine—a weld repair that was the first of its kind allowed in Saskatchewan.

cording to the men working

on the engine. "These boilers are old they are ballpark 95 to 105 years old, and over 100 years there has been corrosion of course and we want to operate these safely and within the law," says Bryce. "And to do that sometimes we have to do repairs to these old boilers, and in this case it's a weld buildup on a thin area to give it some material back again so it can hold the pressure that we need.

"This weld repair was approved by Saskatchewan and we have a weld procedure in place and they are overseeing the repair to make sure it's done completely and properly. "I sent them the weld procedure last week and they reviewed it for approval. And they will be inspecting the repair later this week before it's operated." Neil Major from Spy Hill

Neil Major from Spy Hill was the welder who volunteered to do the repair to the steam engine's boiler. Major says he has been welding for 20 years, but has never taken on a project quite like this one.

"It's our history—we have "It's our history—we have to protect it and keep it running," Major says. "We're volunteer here today and I do it because I enjoy doing it. I want to see this old girl run."

Major says he is somewhat fascinated by steam engines. "They are quiet," he says. "Just a hiss—they are quiet and they are elegant, they're beautiful. What our forefathers built a hundred years ago with the tools they had, and to make them run like they do and to last this long, it's amazing.

it's amazing. "There are very few of them left because during the second world war, most of them were cannibalized, the brass and steel was sold for scrap. So there are very few left in the country."

Major—who works as a journeyman pressure welder with PotashCorp—says he is happy to be involved in the restoration of the old steam engine.

Continued on page 17 🖙



Turn of the century steam engine restored "I'm excited about the opportunity to keep these things operating because it is important to the history of the province. And I am also torn in the sense that these things also come with some risk, so on the same side it's

Continued from Page 16 Major spent part of the day overlay welding the thin patch of metal in the boiler to build the metal back to a thickness that could withstand pressure. "It kind of feels good to be the first one in Saskatch-ewan to do it," he says. "It's something different, some-thing bread power and prover the same set of the same set." "You've got to love doing it. There are other things I

could be doing, but I'm here because I want to be here." Bryce says there are few steam engines in working order anymore in Canada, and stresses the importance of

der anymore in Canada, and stresses the importance of repairing them when it's possible. "It's a part of our history," he says. "These steam trac-tors were what broke the west open. These were used long before the gas engines. Whole companies would send trainloads of the steam engines out to Western Canada and some of these engines designed were only designed for Western Canada, nowhere else because of such a large vast area being opened up. "So it's a very, very important part of our history, and this museum is part of the efforts of many people to show off that history."

Bryce says Rocanville's steam engine likely would

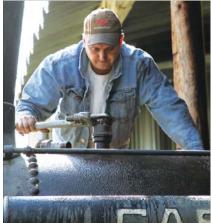
have been used for agricultural purposes. The engine rame from the Oxbow area. "It would have been used for plowing. It could have been used to break the Prairie sod for the very first time, and it probably would have been used for, I'm going to guess, about 10 seasons. It would also have been used for a lot of threshing operations because they are very powerful for threshing machines. And after the farmers were done with these, a lot of engines typically went to

savmill sites. They were a great source of power." Bryce says he hopes the weld repair procedure in Ro-canville paves the way for other, similar repairs in Saskatchewan.

"This repair procedure has been done in other juris-dictions with very good success," he says, "and we are expecting the same thing to happen here in Saskatch-

expecting the same thing to happen here in Saskatch-ewan." Chris Selinger, the chief inspector at the Technical Safety Authority of Saskatchewan (TSASK), is the one who approved the weld repair in Rocanville. Selinger says it was the wealth of information that was provided on Rocanville's steam engine that prompted him to al-low a weld repair for the first time in Saskatchewan. "I did how to give approved how you were to

low a weld repair for the first time in Saskatchewan. "I did have to give approval because it did amount to a recognition of not quite a change in policy, but very close to that," says Selinger. "In the past, our rule in the province was that weld-ing repairs were not permitted because these boilers are built using rivets, and because welding wasn't even a known technology, or demonstrated a safe technology."



Robert Bryce at work on the engine

So what changed his mind? Selinger says it was the comprehensiveness of the information that was provid-ed to him, from the original drawings of the machine to the manufacturer's spec sheet and the particulars of the metal that needed to be worked on.

metal that needed to be worked on. "They are able to provide a wealth of information that is not always available including original drawings," says Selinger. "It was mainly because of the positive ID of the materials in order to be able to select the repair procedures and welding procedures that wouldn't nec-essarily do more damage to the operation. "On top of that they had also done work on survey-ing the thickness (of the metal) through ultrasound and

ing the thickness (of the metal) through ultrasound, and with that information evaluate what pressure it could safely operate at with regards to the code of construction it was built to."

Selinger says he may now consider trying to come up with a standard procedure for weld repairs on steam en-gines in Saskatchewan.

"What I want to make sure is understood is that these repairs will be evaluated at this point on a case-by-case basis," he says. "But I would like to get together and have some discussions and look at a number of the technical issues out there to see if more of a standard procedure can be adopted.



DATE	TIME	VISITOR		
Fri. Oct. 19	7:30 p.m.	Neepawa Natives		
Sat. Oct. 20	7:30 p.m.	Dauphin Kings		
Thu. Oct. 25	7:30 p.m.	Portage Terriers		
Fri. Oct. 26	7:30 p.m.	Swan Valley Stampeders		
Sun. Oct. 28	7:30 p.m.	Neepawa Natives		
LL HOME GAMES ARE AT TUNDRA OIL & GAS PLACE				
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managing that risk, and for my role there will always be

Ron Hilgers, the vice president of the Rocanville Museum committee, says the group hoped to have the steam engine up and running for the museum's thresh-ing demonstration in September. Hilgers says months of

ing demonstration in September. Hilgers says months of work have gone into the machine. "We've probably got several hundred hours work into it easily—a few hundred man hours," he says. On top of the weld repair, Hilgers says the machine has had a number of other repairs done on it, such as replumbing, replacing the ash pan, in order to make it operational again.

He says it's a good feeling working on a project like

"It's a challenge and it's an accomplishment to make a procedure that others can use to keep history alive,"

"Everyone there enjoyed working together. There was a lot of camaraderie. There is a little pot of gold at the end of the rainbow knowing that we're accomplishing something in Saskatchewan that no one else has done

The Wednesday following the repair, the provincial

inspector came out to inspect the repairs done on the steam engine and determine whether or not the engine

In the end, the steam engine was approved to run. Hilgers says the group fired up the engine that after-

"We had first smoke at 3:15, the first rotation at 4, and by 5 we were driving laps around the building," he

says. "It's an accomplishment because that's what the goal was—we managed to do something that no one else has done in Saskatchewan."

Bryce, who kept in touch with the museum commit-tee via phone calls throughout the day, says it's always a

tee via phone calls throughout the day, says it's always a good feeling when one of these repairs is successful. "It's always a great feeling of satisfaction because these things are getting old," he says, "and every time we come across a boiler that should be pulled out of ser-vice because it's just too thin, you feel bad because it's one less engine to show people what it does. And to be able to bring one back to life—and that's essentially what you are doing because these things become alive when you're running them—to bring it back to life is always a really good feeling."

was safe enough to run. It was the moment everyone had been waiting for.

that element of nervousness.

this.

noon

he says



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2011 CHEV AVALANCHE LT

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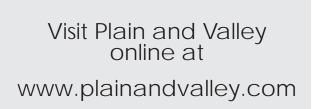
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New program to encourage rental housing construction

The provincial govern-ment has come up with a new program to encour-age the construction of rental housing in Saskatch-ewan—the Capital Rent Subsidy.

Moosomin town council was informed of the new program with a letter from the Saskatchewan Hous-ing Corporation. The Capital Rent Sub-

Ine Capital Kent Sub-sidy pilot program is in-tended to generate attain-able housing for a 10-year period using private in-ventory, by bridging the gap between market rent and affordable rent for bow-to moderate/income low-to moderate-income households.

households. The program is funded by the provincial gov-ernment through the Saskatchewan Housing Authority, an agency of Social Services, and by the federal government through Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation under the Investment in Affordable Housing 2011-2014 Agreement.

2014 Agreement. A capital loan of \$40,000 per unit is available for the development of an estimated 125 rental units

timated 125 rental units across the province. The money must be used to create attainable rental spaces, however. A condition of funding is the reduction of muchts rents reduction of market rents by \$300 per unit for quali-fying households for 10 years. Eligibility require-ments include:

• Sponsors must be a company registered in the Province of Saskatchewan; Financing must be in place;

• A minimum of four modest units must be developed in each application;

A current building permit provided— units under construction with a building permit dated on or after March 21, 2012 are eligible; and,
Units must be rented to bauealded under the bauealded under the second s

to households under the Saskatchewan Household Income Maximums (SHIM).

Anyone interested in applying for funding un-der the program should get their applications in quickly. Proposals will be approved on a first-come,

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first-served basis within available community fund-ing allocations to those projects submitting fully completed and acceptable applications within the ap-

plication timelines Information on the program is available from the Saskatchewan Housing Corporation office in Saskatoon

Above: With the The Capital Rent Subsidy pilot program now in place, families looking for rental homes will have more options available to them

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A victim of fall supper karma

It's Fall and that can only mean one thing out here in a rural community . . . it's time for the annual Fall Supper. This delights most people as they dream of turkey, stuffing and pies galore. But for me, it's a bit of a night-

I'm not a very good Fall Supper pitcher-inner (I'm pretty sure that's the technical term although it could be 'autumnal dinner culinary contributor').

I do what I can, but it always seems that some small disaster interrupts my ability to deliver my annual Fall Supper contribution in a timely and satisfactory manner. This year was no different as I reluctantly agreed to

Cook a turkey and bake a pie. It started off splendidly. The good folks from the church dropped the turkey off at 10 a.m. with a list of instructions so clear that even a kindergarten candidate could follow them. The turkey

went in, the temperature was set, the timer was timing and all that was left to do was wait and watch. As the 4 p.m. deadline to deliver the turkey to the church basement drew near, I decided I should take a peek into the roaster. Peering in at the bird, all I could see was white skin and a 'done button' that had not yet

popped up to the 'done' position. I was in the process of cranking up the temperature for the bird when my teenage son sauntered casually into the kitchen, calmly saying, "that pie was good."



Christalee Froese

I started to laugh because I knew he would NEVER eat a piece of pie that was destined for the Fall Supper. But as I turned around and spied the sliced cherry pie on the counter, the world started to turn in slow motion. It was 2 p.m. on the day of the Fall Supper and there I stood in the middle of my kitchen with an uncooked turkey in the oven and five out of six pieces of pie on the counter. What ensued was a bit like what you might see on the Food Network cooking show Hell's Kitchen . . . in fast-forward.

forward.

The pots were banging, the flour was flying and my "sous-chef son" was caught in the middle of the cross-fire. He whisked the pudding for the chocolate pie as I frantically tried to bake a pie shell in the same oven as the undercooked turkey. By 3:30 p.m. (exactly one half of ap bour before deadline time) we had a pie in the freezer an hour before deadline time), we had a pie in the freezer (yes, the freezer, to cool it off) and a turkey in an overheated oven (yes, overheated oven, to warm it up).

It was Fall Supper karma coming to bite me in the backside.

I had cheated this year by trying to contribute a cherry pie that my mother had made. She dropped it off for our family, but I 'cleverly' decided that I'd hoard the pie and save myself the hassle of baking one.

save myself the hassle of baking one. But at 2 p.m. on Fall Supper day, as I saw that piece cut out of the cherry pie, I knew I shouldn't have cheated. Karma gets me every time! At 3:59 p.m., Logan and I arrived at the church with a fully cooked turkey (thank heavens) and a fully cooled pie (thank heavens times two). We carried them into the church as if we had just spent a peaceful mother-son day quietly preparing our offer-ing of thank

ings of thanks. Next year, I will not cheat by using someone else's pie and I will definitely check the turkey earlier.

Or, if some good lady from the church is reading this column and believes in proactive karma, they'll ask me to contribute two cans of cranberries and \$5 instead!

Christalee Froese welcomes comments at Lcfroese@sasktel. net or visit www.westwords.net





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Alberta farmers happy in Sask

BY ADAM WIGHTMAN When Chris Leeds and his twin brother Anthony decided that they want-ed to leave their father's Claresholm, Alta. beef farm and start a farm of their own, their options in their native province weren't looking good. The land was priced too high for them to be able to buy the amount they wanted. So they began searching for land elsewhere, and the fields around Moosomin, where farmland went for a quarter of the price that it did back home, drew their attention.

"It was wetter here, "If was wetter here, land prices were more rea-sonable and available— Moosomin was the place. But things have changed quite a bit in 11 years since we've been here," he said. And they have changed in more were than in the price

more ways than in the price of land, which has nearly quadrupled since then.

Having moved to Moosomin in the spring of 2001, the 37-year-old Leeds brothers are among more than a dozen Alber-tan farmers who moved to the Moosomin area be-tween ten to 11 years ago. Lured by relatively cheap land of good quality, they land of good quality, they were able to purchase more farmland than they could have bought in Alberta, and most of them began cattle farming. But shortly after they got here, having made the enormous finan-cial investment required cial investment required for starting a farm, things got tough. In 2003, Bovine Spongi-

In 2003, Bovine Spongi-form Encephalopathy (BSE), commonly known as Mad Cow Disease, was detected in an Alberta cow. It temporarily devas-tated the industry. Farm-ers could barely give away their cows, and they took a shellacking on the ones that they could sell. Chris and Anthony had cattle but, luckily for them, had sold off most of their herd just off most of their herd just before the outbreak.

By then the brothers were mostly focused on grain farming. Their beast of burden was the bad weather that came. The summer of 2003 was hot and dry, resulting in lower yields. They were then hit hard by the frost of the summer of 2004, which re-duced the quality of their milling grain—used for human consumption—to the degree that it could only be sold as cattle feed grain, which then went for only \$2 a bushel. The frost also wiped out their flax crop

"When year. "When you have an event like that, you don't have the equity to carry on. You're losing hundreds of thousands of dollars in one front "oid Chrin frost." said Chris.

The area's more estab-lished farmers had been able to more easily withstand the perilous weather and volatile markets that resulted from BSE. But for Leeds and the other young Albertan farmers, saddled with the large debt bor-rowed to purchase land and machinery, it was bad timing. "It was just too tough for

too long. They just weren't making a living. You can only do that so long until you have to find a different , source of income

That's what the Leeds were forced to do, as were others. In order to diversify their income, the brothers bought an automotive parts store in town, now called Twin Auto and Ag Supply, and over the years sold off most of the land they had acquired when they first moved.

moved. "The dealership saved our bacon in '06. It's been going pretty good," Chris said. Anthony now works full time at his dealership, but Chris has since bought some more land just south of Moosomin and has sold bis balf share in Twin Auto. his half share in Twin Auto to Anthony. He has de-cided to focus on being a cattle rancher while grow-ing grain on the side, the opposite of before. He has recently partnered in some operations with his cousin-in-law, Perry Rasmuson, a 37-year-old cattle rancher originally from Wetaski-win, Alta., who is married to Chris' cousin Kristy. Rasmuson's farm is 12 kilometres straight east of Moosomin and straddles the Saskatchewan-Manitoba border.

"It's pretty good for us because he's a heavy-duty mechanic and a parts guy and an ex-grain farmer," said Rasmuson of work-ing with Chris. "Common sense seems to go a long way-when you share that, things go pretty good." Rasmuson came to

of 2002 with Kristy and their two children, Kaleb, now 11, and Blake, now 10. They have since had two more children, Dwight, 9, "Someone has to repopu-

late Saskatchewan "he says of his large family, with a quick laugh. His farm, Little Rainbow

Ranch, can have in the summer to winter months as many as 3,200 Black Angus-Senepol mixed-breed cows, comprised of the 1,000 breeding cows and their calves and the roughly 1,200 feeder calves he buys or takes in to raise for others each spring. While cattle farming is unpre-dictable, things seem to be looking good for him and Chris. The fact that their sole livelihood is still farm-ing puts them in a minority of the Albertan farmers who came to Moosomin in the early 2000s. "There aren't too many

guys who came here to ranch who are still ranch-ing. They took an off-farm job. BSE took its toll," Ras-muson said.

Another of the Alber-tan farmers who managed to withstand the financial deprivation of BSE and the weather is 72-year-old Lloyd Meidinger, originally from Pincher Creek. He came to Moosomin with his wife Janice, and their daughter and son-in-law, Holly and Will Hollingshead, moved out around the same time. The Hol-lingsheads live just down the road from the Meidinger's Spring Creek farm, but they raise cattle only on the side. Will works in the oil industry and Holly operates her own busi-ness, called Cinched Horse Training, which gives rid-ing lessons and also breaks

ing lessons and also breaks in young horses. While Lloyd has since retired from cattle farming, his operation didn't suf-fer from the BSE-induced plunge in beef prices as much as those of other, younger farmers because younger farmers, because he didn't have the debt

load they had. All in all, he said that he and his wife couldn't have

"It's the people. It's the really nice country. The people just seem friendlier here," he said while Janice talked on the phone to a friend and prepared the noon dinner.

eat, she said she completely agreed. "I love it. I wish we had

come earlier. It felt like home as soon as we got here, and we love it. Great community, great people. They're more community-oriented," she said.

She said she was par-ticularly warmed by the gesture that her neighbors gave when they first moved in. They held a wiener roast at the Spring Creek church for both her and Lloyd and the Hollingsheads. She said that because the

neighbors had heard the welcoming party was for a younger couple and an older couple, they original-ly thought she and Lloyd were the younger couple, before her daughter and Will arrived. "How old was I when I

came out here?" she asked herself aloud. 'Was I 49?'

"Just a spring chicken," answered Lloyd with a smile of affection.

smile of affection. But despite the hos-pitality of the people of Moosomin, the cultural integration of the Albertan immigrants didn't happen as soon as they moved into their houses. For many of the young courses and mala the young couples and male farmers who came over, it took some time for them to get to know people. For a while, it seems, there was a fully functioning Alber-tan community within the broader Moosomin one. "Chris Leeds was sin-

"Chris Leeds was sin-gle when he first came to Moosomin, so he used to come over here a lot for dinner," said Janice. As did others, she said. And there were different things that the Albertans did to make each other feel at home.

Continued on page 26 🖙

Stunning executive home in Esterhazy built in 2009. 2230 sq. ft. 3 bedroom, 2 bath up, 1 bedroom, 1 bath down. ICF construc-tion to the raffers, in-floor heat throughout both levels and garage, living room fireplace, tile and eng. hardwood on main level, carpet downstairs. Master bath jetted, heated and mood light soaker tub, steam shower, walk in closet. Superior finishes throughout When Janice sat down to tub, steam showed, want in closet. Subjection invalues at more displaying the home and weight in the chef's attribution cabin-etry, granite counters, stainless steel appliances, garberator, wine cooler, walk-in pantry. Large dining room with tray ceilings and breakfast nook off the kitchen that leads to the multi level com-

posite deck. Many, many additional features and inclusions in this dream home, please contact Delphine for further information. MLS #437931 Acreage \$519.000

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Plain and Valley

From Many Nations, TO ONE HOME 🔰 British immigrants at home on the Prairies

Continued from page 14 18 When we came over to look, we stayed out his house and showed us around. He took care of that for us." said Ernest.

They went to a number of places, but finally picked a farm near McAuley to call home.

When they went back to England after falling in love with the farm land outside

McAuley, they put \$100 on the farm as a down pay-ment under condition that they would sell their farm in England. It was a 12-month wait for an agreement but it eventually happened. In order to work on their

newly purchased land, the family needed to obtain a landed immigrant status. This process, like the pro-cess of buying a farm, came

relatively easy for them and come through quickly, un-like Claire and Dewi's. They sold 30 acres of their own land and also had rent-ed land, which they had to

give up. The The previous owner made the move, and the transition to Canada, a lot easier on the young family, leaving fleece jackets and extensive details about how to live in Canada.

"They were awesome. She wrote a book of all the instructions. They left manuals for the dishwasher and all the appliances as well as numbers of who to call," said Monica.

Unfortunately, this isn't always the case. Moncia and Ernest have seen many immigrant families move to Canada without proper knowledge of the land or how to run a Canadian farm properly. They say if they could do it all again, they wouldn't have bought land with all the equipment on it, and would have worked a year before making the

Applicants must:

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Right: Monica and Ernest Pethick in Monica's Canadian version of an English garden at McAuley.

over . . . You just help each other and we do the same for them," said Monica. It was three years after they landed when the fam-

ily received their Canadian citizenship. "It didn't take us too long

to decide this was home. The boys were so settled.

We wanted to take our citi-zenship," said Monica. The Pethicks originally started with 1120 acres upon first arriving, Alistair has since bought his own section to farm, increasing the total number of family acres to 2700 acres, a far cry from the original 30 in England

land. Alistair now handles the family grain farming on his own farm a mile north-east of his parents, while the couple looks after the cattle cattle

When asked if they made the right choice the couple laughs, much like Theresa and the Phillips. "Oh course," said Mon-

ica, "Look at al this space and peacefulness."

"Everything was always in a rush in the UK. Here, chances are you will meet someone and talk to them. You wouldn't be able to do that in England because they are all going so fast and

everyone is so busy. You go to the shops, no one opens the door for you. Canadians are so polite and respectful. It's a way nicer way of life," said Monica

23

Especially now that the European economic situa-tion looks grim, the couple is happy their boys will get a better chance at securing a job and a happy life. The couple have become the poster children for

immigrant couples from Cornwall. Realtors would bring interested English families to the Pethicks to show them a success story and answer any ques tions.

"They would bring people here so they can ask questions. We didn't mind, (the realtor) thought there (the realtor) thought there were difficulties that we had experienced where he hadn't so we could help people," said Ernest. The only thing they dis-like about living in Cana da is being so far away from family and an airport to act them hore a wichly

to get them home quickly, but admit that it's a small price to pay to live in a country that has provided

"We love it here. We wouldn't go back," said Monica.



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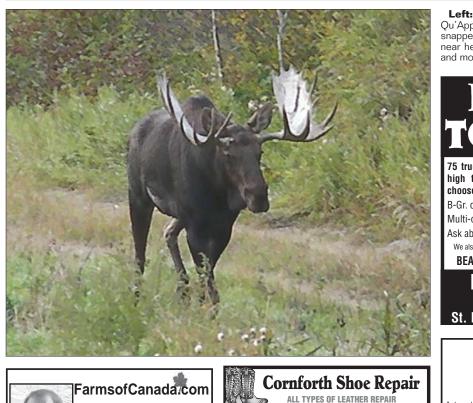
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Left: This photo of a bull moose in the Qu'Appelle Valley north of Rocanville was snapped by Tannis MacFarlane-Kelly recently near her home. Moose are becoming a more and more common sight on the Prairies.



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Alberta farmers glad they made the move

■ Continued from Page 22 The young women from Alberta created a group called the \$20 Ladies Club, which meets at one of the members' homes once a month. It was a social event and origi-nally was a time for newcomers to meet nally was a time for newcomers to meet and make new friends, and Janice and Lloyd's daughter Holly was one of the original ten members of the club. For each meeting they all drop \$20 in a pot for the host to put towards the evening's food and drinks, and also towards something nice for herself. It was not intended to be Al-barton avclusing but that is the usure that it bertan-exclusive, but that is the way that it was at first. They were all newcomers and didn't have very many friends when they first came, which is what brought them together, she said.

"That's the tough part about moving somewhere: if you're a young couple and you don't know anybody out here." The group still meets once a month and

now has members who are from Saskatch-ewan, she said.

There has been another Albertan import brought in by the new arrivals that is beginning to be practiced more widely-a different method of branding calves. Most of the Saskatchewan farmers that the Meidingers had first met had used only two or three-man crews to brand their cattle, by directing them one at a time into a chute, where at the end a rope would be fastened around their neck to keep them in place while they were branded. This takes a while, with the farmers being able to do at the most 25 calves per day, said Uavd Llovd

When the Albertans in Moosomin brand their calves, they have a party. Most of the local Albertan ranchers come in the early afternoon, and they have food and drinks after the job's done. Instead of running calves one at a time into a chute, they do it the old-fashioned way. They get on their horses and lasso them. With many Al-bertans' with the skills of rodeo cowboys helping out, it goes much quicker.

"Some of the Saskatchewan guys would come to watch," Lloyd said with a laugh. Before long some of the Saskatchewan ranchers be-



Adam Wightman photo

Janice and Lloyd Meidinger with their grandson Zavery at their Spring Creek ranch The Meidingers were among the first Albertans to move from the Pincher Creek area to the Moosomin area a decade ago.

> gan to learn from them and have these larger, branding events, and it has taken off among those Moosomin na-tives with larger cattle herds, he said. The Meidingers have made friends with many of them,

> and also with non-farm families from town. The key has been that they have actively sought to become part of the

community, Lloyd said. "You have to get involved in the community if you want to survive in the community. And we did. If not, you're going to be isolated," he said.

One of the ways that Janice had made friends with local area residents was through curling in town when she first arrived. She has also met people through giving lessons

in stained-glassed window making, a hobby of hers. She has donated the money she has made from selling some of her stained-glass art to the Southeast Integrated Care Centre. She also created the stained-glass windows

She also created the staned-glass windows in the hospital's chapel. Now retired and living their golden years in an area they love, they are still welcoming Albertans who are moving into the area.

While farmland has gone up dramatically over the past decade, it is about half the price of land in Alberta, and still inviting for cattle and grain farmers unable to expand their and grain farmers unable to expand their farms in Alberta. But many of the new Alber-tan immigrants are working in other indus-tries, such as the oil, potash and construction industries, said Lloyd. Despite their original challenges, most of the Albertans who came ten years ago to Moosomin have fared well, said the Meiding-are given if meany nearly forming full tice

ers, even if many aren't farming full-time anymore. Most of the men who came out single are now married with kids, and the couples who didn't have children when they

couples who didn't have children when they arrived all have children—often three or four of them, said Janice. Chris Leeds does. No longer a single man wanting for company at the Meiding-ers' dinner table, he is settled just south of Moosomin with his wife, Abby, who is also from Claresholm and who now works as a homeorem wurse in town. Thou hous two chil homecare nurse in town. They have two chil-dren, Chloe and Drew, and plan on staying where they are. There have

There have been many changes in Moosomin since he first moved, but the one that he has noticed the most is how much the

town has changed from a quiet community to a thriving economic hub, he said. When he arrived in 2001 there was no Convention Centre, A&W, new Red Barn, or Southeast Integrated Care Centre, and there were very few people who had recently moved into town. So people really took

"I would walk in a restaurant and the room would just go quiet, and they'd be whispering, 'That's the new guy. He's on Jim Hall's place. I'm sure that's him,'' he said. Now there are immigrants from all over the world in Moosomin, and farmers from all over Canada. "Moosomin is a homenoning bace, ' he go aid.

'Moosomin is a happening place," he said



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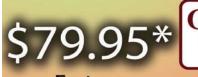


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