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Plain & Valley

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Covering Southeast Saskatchewan and Southwest Manitoba



Teagan Littlechief from White Bear First Nation sang Canada's National Anthem in English, French, and Cree at the 2022 Grey Cup in Regina. Aside from being a musician, Littlechief also works as an addiction counsellor in hopes of inspiring youth

Teagan Littlechief proud of how far she has come

BY SIERRA D'SOUZA BUTTS
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

Teagan Littlechief from White Bear First Nations has been a musician all of her life. She has pushed through barriers such as addiction, and has achieved success in her music career.

From reaching milestones of winning radio competitions to singing the national anthem at Canada's 2022 grey cup, Littlechief is proud of how much she has accomplished.

When she is not recording songs, she is working as an addiction counsellor and youth intervention support worker. She is also a mother to her son, Gabriel, who also carries a passion for music.

"I've been performing and competing since a very young age. I recorded my very first two singles when I was 11 years old, they were both songs that my mom had wrote," she said.

"Later on, I went to re-record one of her songs. It was right

around the residential school peak, the song is called 'Wild Girl' and it was about my mom and her sister."

Around the early 2000s, Littlechief won two radio competitions. She also recently won the 2022 Saskatchewan Country Music Award for Indigenous Artist of the Year.

Before focusing on her music career more vigorously, Littlechief experienced a period of battling with drug addiction at a young age.

"When I was younger, I was a role model. I wouldn't go out, I was a homebody, I was doing good for myself," she said.

"I was doing sober and drug free presentations because I was young and in that era, kids my age were already experimenting and doing everything. I didn't start dabbling into drugs and alcohol until I was about 18.

"When I was in high school I had a boyfriend and felt like because he drank, I wanted to drink too. From there is where my addiction started.

"Right near the end of high school I dropped out because I would rather be drunk or high than finish school. At the time, I was using music as a way to pay for my own addiction.

"I did go off and get sober, but it only lasted six months and I fell right back into it. I started noticing that my music was really taking a hit, that it was declining. It really showed that I wasn't putting the proper amount of effort into it.

"I had a lot of opportunities to flourish in music and I let my addiction get the better of me."

Through her journey of dedication and hard work to overcome her battle with addiction, Littlechief spoke about what her turning point was for choosing to get better.

"At the age of 24, I was in an abusive relationship. I had trauma as a young person, I went through heartbreak, I went through addiction, I was just trying to get myself sober and straight, but nothing was working," she said.

Continued on page 7

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The CP Holiday Train made its first stop in three years at Virden, Moosomin and Broadview in Southwest Manitoba and Southeast Saskatchewan on December 5.

Tenille Townes and Aysanabee both performed once the train pulled into town. Above is the train pulling into Moosomin, and left is Tenille Townes performing.

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Mother and daughter are happy to arrive safely in Canada from Ukraine

BY SIERRA D'SOUZA BUTTS
LOCAL JOURNALISM
INITIATIVE REPORTER

After spending six months living in Ukraine during Russia's invasion of the country, Olha Volokh and her daughter, Zlata, have finally arrived in Canada safely.

The two arrived in Moosomin, Saskatchewan in the first week of November. They were picked up by a local Ukrainian community member, Roman Chernyk, at the airport in Regina on Nov. 4 and were brought to town.

"We are from Poltava, it's the region in the central part of Ukraine to the east of the Kharkiv region," said Olha.

"We are near the region Zaporizhzhia where there is this nuclear power plant. We were staying in Ukraine for six months just hoping for the better, that this war would end as soon as possible."

Russia's invasion of Ukraine has been going on since March of this year and unfortunately, no one knows when it will come to an end.

"The power stations were attacked," said Olha.

"Most of the time our country had no light and was out of electricity because all of the main electric stations just crashed. Our government has been doing emergency repairs, but it doesn't compare with the complete renovations that the stations need."

Although Poltava was not a direct target from Russia's missile attacks, Olha said she still witnessed explosions happening in the country.

"I saw one rocket just shoot at the mall, we saw the people inside and it was in my native city," she said.

"They hit right inside the mall.

It's the central mall, there was a lot of people and I just froze that day because (I was thinking) my parents could be there, my friends could be there.

"You know the war makes you rethink all the things that happen in life and that all the materials things don't matter anymore.

"You just appreciate every morning. You appreciate when your parents pick up the phone. You appreciate when your child can smile again," she said tearfully.

"Because my child used to sleep in a closet for six months. The walk-in closet (we stayed in) had no windows, and for the first few months we were hiding in the shelters, but it's really hard to run up and down to the shelter and be there for a couple of hours.

"We decided to stay in an apartment, in the room where there's no windows and if something explodes, you hope that you'll be safe.

"In this walk-in closet we drew pictures on the walls to make it feel like a cozy place. My daughter made a painting and I helped her.

"Time flies and you begin to get used to this, and all these alarms, nine a day, it really inflames your brain. You have this anxiety all the time and you have this awful feeling of fear inside of you. It's like this stone that cannot be removed."

Being a parent while trying to survive the war

Olha was asked how it felt being a mother during these difficult times.

"You know when you become a mom you begin to have these su-



The World-Spectator's newest employee, Olha Volokh, is a recent arrival from Ukraine. From left on her first day of work are Kara Kinna, Ashley Bocek, Olha and her daughter Zlata, Ella Ferguson, Sierra D'Souza Butts, Felicité Mailloux, and Kevin Weedmark.

per powers," she said.

"You're not allowed to be weak. You're not allowed to be afraid. You have to smile, you have to be confident, you have to be strong because your daughter is always mirroring you.

"I want her to be as mentally stable as she can be because she has her whole life ahead. I don't want her to be affected by this in the future because the war affects you a lot.

"The kids in Ukraine, they're afraid every time they hear a harsh sound, like a storm or an indication that something is falling down, they jump. It's painful to watch."

The process to come from

Ukraine to Canada was not easy for Olha and her daughter.

As soon as it was safe enough for women and children to leave Ukraine, Olha said she began to look for a job so that the two of them could leave the country.

"It was a sign for me that if I found a job, I could go anywhere and work there, but I wanted to be in a safe place," said Olha.

"I began to look for a job in Canada, and Kara and Kevin, they are precious people. I can't thank them enough.

"From the very first minute of the interview I was so impressed by their attitude. They emailed me just 10 minutes after the interview and I was just so nervous, but they said I was the perfect person

for this position and I wanted to faint," she smiled.

"My husband said, 'It's a sign, you should go,' and he is very supportive. He stayed in Ukraine because he's not allowed to cross the border. My husband supports us a lot, mentally, emotionally, and financially."

Before arriving in Canada, Olha and Zlata had to travel to Poland to get their Canadian Visas.

She said because there are so many refugees, there are busses continually going to places like Czech Republic, Germany, France and others.

"We stayed in Poland when I visited the Visa centre in Warsaw," said Olha.

Continued on Page 19

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South East Cornerstone School Division

School capacity issues discussed

BY NORM PARK

It's all about keeping eyes, ears and attention on certain school facilities in southeast Saskatchewan. Some of these buildings will require additions or replacements in the future, but it was the current capacity situations that caught the attention of South East Cornerstone Public School Division board members during their November 16 meeting in Weyburn.

Gord Husband, deputy director of human resources and infrastructure, provided information on capacity issues as they currently present themselves at schools in Arcola, Weyburn, and Moosomin.

In Arcola, the only school in the town services programs from pre-Kindergarten to Grade 12. The facility has an enrolment of 237 or 222.5 full time equivalent (FTE) since the two early years programs work on half-day schedules.

The school serves the town of Arcola as well as the communities of Kisbey and the Pheasant Rump First Nation. The building's capacity is listed at 229, meaning that under the provincial formula, it's functioning at 97 per cent capacity based on the FTE assessment.

"By provincial standards, the school needs to be at 110 per cent capacity to reach the threshold to include a portable classroom," said Husband, referring to the school that is one of the oldest facilities in the division.

In Moosomin, the question of capacity involves two fa-

cilities, the MacLeod Elementary School and McNaughton High School.

MacLeod is a pre-Kindergarten to Grade 5 school while McNaughton serves students from Grade 6 to 12.

MacLeod's capacity is listed as 270 and the current enrolment is 277, but it then recedes to 245 by taking into consideration the two early years programs that work on half day schedules, making the FTE enrolment rest at 245, or 91 per cent of capacity.

McNaughton School has a rated capacity of 465 with an enrolment of 359 with no FTE situations having to be considered. It therefore is listed at 77 per cent capacity.

Husband said that education ministry officials pose the argument that reconfiguration could take place to ease the pressure on MacLeod School by transferring more students to McNaughton and therefore, it would probably not qualify for a portable classroom installation either, at least not in the near future.

In Weyburn, there are several avenues on the discussion table.

The newly opened Legacy Park Elementary School is rated for a full capacity of 590. It already has 595 students enrolled in pre-Kindergarten to Grade 6 programs, or 537 based on the FTE assessments that entail the Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten students. With that figure involved, the utilization rate is listed at 91 per cent.

Assiniboia Park Elementary School is now a dual track

school, having introduced French immersion programs in their Pre-Kindergarten to Grade 6 programming.

This facility's capacity is rated at 220 with 229 actually enrolled, but listed at 209, taking into consideration the two early years programs of half-days. This leaves the school with a rating of 92 per cent of capacity.

The challenge here, said Husband, is the fact there is the two-track system taking place in the building and finding space for the French Immersion programs and students has become an issue.

But, again, the high school comes into the equation with Weyburn Comprehensive School registering 898 students in Grades 7 to 12 within a building with a listed capacity of 1,175, or a 76 per cent occupancy rating.

Husband said the division has applied for two portable classrooms for Assiniboia using the rationale that they are needed to successfully roll out the French Immersion programs as well as the usual subjects.

They have also applied for the one portable classroom for Arcola and he noted that in the past, the additional classroom requests for MacLeod Elementary in Moosomin have been denied based on the lower capacity numbers at McNaughton High.

He said "we are not overly optimistic," but it was felt the division still needed to be pro-active on the school capacity files to keep the ministry aware of the needs in southeast Saskatchewan.

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Canada is one of the highest regions for containing radon gas:

Second cause of lung cancer is exposure to radon gas

BY SIERRA D'SOUZA BUTTS
LOCAL JOURNALISM
INITIATIVE REPORTER

According to Lung Cancer Canada, 10 to 15 per cent of lung cancer patients in Canada have never smoked, but have contracted the disease through other ways.

The primary cause for lung cancer in non-smokers is radon: an odourless, natural gas that, in enclosed spaces, like homes, can accumulate to high levels and become a risk to one's health, especially youth and babies.

Although majority of Canada, specifically the Prairies, have the highest radon levels across the world, studies have found ways to prevent Canadians from being exposed to high levels of radon in their homes.

Doctor Aaron Goodarzi, who is also an associate professor at University of Calgary and the scientific director of Evict Radon (www.evictradon.org), said there is a simple solution for Canadians to reduce the radon levels in their homes.

"This is a situation that has risen ceaselessly, and from a general perspective is also fixable," he said.

"Yet, we can wave a magic wand to reduce radon. Any existing house can be retrofitted with one to two days work, relatively minor. It's no more serious than replacing a broken large window and then your house will then be permanently fixed for radon."

Radon is a radioactive gas that comes from the breakdown of uranium in soil and rock. It is invisible, odourless and tasteless.

When radon is released from the ground into the outdoor air, it is diluted and is not a concern. However, in

enclosed spaces, like homes, it can accumulate to high levels and become a risk to the health of people and their families.

"Newer houses have a far greater risk of having high radon, but older Canadian houses already had a high risk. The problem has already gotten worse," he said.

1 in 9 houses that were built in the 1940s and earlier were at, or exceeded the 200 Becquerel (Bq)/m³ radon level. As for houses that were built between 2001-2020, show that 1 in 4 1/2 homes are at or exceed the 200 Bq/m³ radon level.

Goodarzi said there are many reasons to why the risk of radon exposure in people's homes have increased over the years in Canada.

"From our work so far, what we do know is that it's no one's fault. It's not one thing that any country has done or not done," he said.

"We've been extensively studying this, but we don't yet, have all the answers. Our study published this time last year compared the Canadian building code and building environment to the Swedish building code and building environment.

"The reason we compared Canada to Sweden is because we had data from both countries. They're also both cold climate countries, with highly educated populations, they generally have healthy populations, and they have almost identical smoking rates at about 11 to 13 per cent.

"Yet, the rate of lung cancer in Canada today is 163 per cent higher than that of Sweden, and as it turned out over time the difference was because of radon. A new house in Sweden has 467 per cent lower radon than a new house built in Canada, that is an extraordinary difference."

Based on a sample from 69 regions in the world for residential radon exposure, Prairie Canada placed second to having the highest exposure, Northern Canada was third, and Atlantic Canada ranked fourth.

Sweden was 12 on the list, with Germany being ranked 66 with the least exposure of radon to residential areas.



Through the Evict Radon National Study, Doctor Aaron Goodarzi and other researchers have found a solution to reducing and eliminating Radon levels in Canadians homes.

"The geology is quite comparable between the two of them (Canada and Sweden), they both have a source of radon. The difference is, the built environment upon them," he said.

"The Canadian and Swedish building codes have diverged quite extraordinarily over time. Neither country implemented a specific radon measure, rather they just evolved differently.

"It won't ever be one thing. Within the built environments in Canada we determined about 20 separate metrics that correlate with high radon, and these combine together to meet a house that has higher radon levels."

Despite the differences that have evolved over time, Goodarzi said the team of Evict Radon has requested the Government of Canada to include radon tests for houses that are built in the future.

"One of the things we're doing using the data generated through the radon study is engaging with the regulatory group, that exists at the federal level to produce the next building codes, in order to get a proactive radon reduction measure put in the next building code which is the 2025 code," said Goodarzi.

"We're a couple of years away from that. The hope is with that in place, we can suddenly reduce Canadian radon exposure and not only reverse the trend of it going up, because it's still going to go up unless we do something."

"Every new year we build new houses, but to suddenly reduce that and make it extremely easy for everyone living in a new house with that radon reduction measure building code in mind, will help drop the radon yet further, if they identify they have an exposure issue."

Lung and bronchus cancer is the most commonly diagnosed cancer in Canada (excluding non-melanoma skin cancers). It is the leading cause of death from cancer for both men and women in Canada, according to the Canadian Cancer Society.

It is estimated that 30,000 Canadians will be diagnosed with lung and bronchus cancer in 2022. This represents 13 per cent of all new cancer cases for the year.

Steps to take for testing radon levels in your home

Goodarzi said Evict Radon has come up with easy and accessible ways for people to

test the amount of radon exposure levels in their homes.

"This is good news because testing for radon couldn't be more simple," said Goodarzi.

"There's a variety of different ways you can get a radon test. For example, this is one of the things that the Radon National Study is doing. If someone consents to the study, what they're agreeing to is they would get the radon tests and we would get the identified reading from those tests. As well as a few details about their house, like your square footage, the height of your ceiling, things like that.

"We're able to use that data for cancer research and to engage with folks like CO Canada to make real change. The participants, or in this case the citizen scientists, get their houses radon reading and we provide, for no cost, any information you might want on how to interpret that."

He explained how the radon test work.

"The radon test usually look like a little ant trap or hockey puck. It's pretty small and requires no electricity, and you leave the radon test in your house on a floor that you typically use a lot," said Goodarzi.

"You leave the test in place for about 90 days, three

months or four, up to a year, depending what your preferences are. The best radon test are at least a year or six months, but minimum three months.

"Then you get your radon tests back and you can determine if that level is acceptable for you. Here in Canada, Health Canada indicates that a level of 200 Bq per cubic meter of radon is the maximum tolerated exposure threshold. That's set at twice the level for when you start to see a cancer risk."

"You see a cancer risk started around 100 Bq, Health Canada says anything over 200 Bq is maximum tolerated. A lot of people take action between the 100 and 200 Bq level. We've seen houses in the Prairies over 100,000 which is an extraordinary dose of radiation.

"For context, one Becquerel (Bq) means one radioactive event per second. Radon is a type of radiation called Alpha radiation, where 100 Bq means 100 annotations of alpha radiation per second, per cubic meter in ones home."

Radon kits purchased through the Evict Radon study will help people detect high radon levels in their homes and will also help collect data for cancer research, said Goodarzi.

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Teagan Littlechief proud of how far she has come

Continued from front

"I ended up meeting this guy and became pregnant. At the time, we tried to make things work.

"I remember when I went into the studio being full-blown pregnant trying to sing, and it was tough. Anyone who says they can sing while being pregnant, I call their bluff," she laughed.

"I then had my son, and he, unfortunately, had to see his mom under the influence. That's when I really started messing with harder drugs and I burned so many bridges that I never thought I could rebuild.

"In 2017 is when I got a message from my mom. She was trying to get a hold of me because I was on a bender, and she really wanted me to come home because my son was sick.

"She sent me this picture of my son, I didn't look at my phone all night. The next morning, I was coming back to White Bear with a friend. It was a silent ride, I decided to look at my phone and saw the photo. He was sleeping in his pajamas, all I could see was my baby looking all red, you could tell he was crying.

"After I dropped my friend off, I walked into my mom's house. I didn't acknowledge anyone, I saw my son, but I walked right into my mom's bedroom and just said, I want help. I'm done, I need to get sober.

"And, just like that I was in detox. Shortly after that I was in treatment. I really didn't see my son for like two months while I was getting sober.

"Then I thought, maybe I'll give music another shot, I was already doing the anthem for the Saskatchewan Roughriders and the anthem for the Regina Pats."

A few years later, a Canadian country singer came into contact with Littlechief. It was then when she realized focusing on her music career was the right path to take.

"When 2019 came around, I was single, my son was excited because it was just mommy and me time again," she said.

"All of a sudden I got this big rush because it meant that we could do music again. I just went on Facebook, because that's when Covid started hitting and I started doing live Facebook jams, posting videos and having fun. Suddenly I had this big urge and Covid was trying to hold me back, but I just kept pushing through.

"Then, Sean Hogan called me and asked me to re-record his single 'Vulnerable,' right there is when my whole spirit just came back up to life. I was ecstatic, I felt this rush of excitement run over me.

"We recorded that song, then we recorded a Christmas album, then we did heartbreak songs. We recorded all these other songs too, then this year I get Indigenous Artist of the Year, then I get Saskatchewan's big next thing, in the back of my mind I keep thinking, am I slowly rebuilding bridges with new people?"

"It's been a struggling 15 years, but I finally feel like I'm ready, whereas before I was sort of just going with the flow."

Recently, Littlechief released a cover of the song 'Indelible,' which has gained a lot of attention.

"It's getting a lot of plays right now, it's playing on SiriusXM, on channel 171 and channel 155," she said.

"It's a song written by Sean Hogan, he's the gentleman I've been working with these last few years. This is his song, it was for his mom and when I heard it, I wanted to record it for some of the families out here in the community because they've also lost someone very close to them.

"It was sort of a moment where I thought, I'd like to re-record this song and dedicate it to some of them."

Proud of her achievements

Littlechief has been sober for five years now and is proud of how much she has accomplished in that time.

She currently works as an addiction counsellor and youth interpervention support worker hoping to inspire others.

"My mom was an addictions counselor, I grew up in a very protective home. My parents didn't drink or do drugs with me, or around me at all," she said.

"I was sheltered. I didn't understand what addiction was at a younger age so my mom took me around while she was doing presentations. She would really stress, 'you won't be able to succeed if you're under the influence all the time,' and even though I was really young at the time, I saw the impact she would have on her clients.

"Till this day people say nothing but nice things about her and how great she was at her job, I always admired her for that and, it's always been something I wanted to do.

"I love music, I've always wanted to do music, but at the same time I've always wanted to help others."

During the pandemic, Littlechief went back to school to obtain her addiction counsellor certification.

"I thought I would work for the community to help adults, but then I realized I really wanted to help young people," she said.

"I want to inspire them, to try to help motivate them, to show them that they don't have to be stuck here. That there's a whole world out there for them to see and not to feel stuck, because life is life wherever you go. The job was also in the community, here in White Bear, and the kids I have here are just so awesome."

Littlechief was asked why representation of Indigenous artists and mentors, like herself, are important for the community.

"Growing up I was always the only Native performing at functions. I would be performing alongside non First Nations people," said Littlechief.

"I often would tell my mom, I feel so dark. At the time that was my biggest thing, I felt so brown. As a Native I joke about that, but it was a real feeling because I felt left out. It took a lot of getting used to and pushing through to overcome that.

"Now, being able to stand up and stand proud, to be able to do the performances that I do anywhere is a good feeling. I've worked my behind off, even though I've had stumbles along the way, I've worked hard to be where I'm at right now.

"No one can take that away, I welcome criticism, but I won't play into bullying. I find that people like to bully a lot more than be critical. Professional criticism is what I welcome the most, it's helped my career and help me get to where I am.

"I haven't heard of First Nation females getting into the positions that I've been blessed with."

She spoke about her son, Gabriel, being a big inspiration to her.

"My son is my biggest focal point. Even when I do performances, his absence is truly missed when I'm by myself," said Littlechief.

"If I don't see him, in the back of my mind I'm always thinking if he's okay, how he's doing, even if he's just at a friend's house. When I do anthems he usually will come on the sidelines with me and watch me, or I'll search for him out in the crowd and when I find him, I'm good.

"That's the guy that motivates me. I want him to know that anything is possible. Hard work does pay off, we hear people say that all the time, but in reality I want him to understand that hard work really does pay off.

"You don't get anything by just sitting down, our dreams don't become true by just sitting in the corner playing on our phones or whatever, we have to get up and work for it.

"We're going to stumble, we're going to fall flat on our face, but recovering is always going to be our hiatus. It helps us learn from our past and our stumbles."

Littlechief was asked what she sees for the future of her career.

"I am looking at 2023 to already be picking up in pace.

"I have another release coming out in January, it will be called 'One Woman.'

"It's a song about women in the world that have taken big steps to stand up, not only for themselves, but for their rights and everything around that. I mention Princess Diana in there, Rosa Parks, women like them.

"I just thought with everything going on in this world right now, this would be the perfect song to release."



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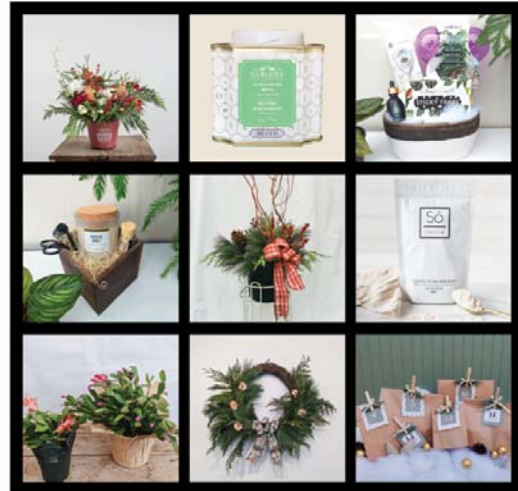
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Traci Burke shares her experience with lung cancer

BY SIERRA D'SOUZA BUTTS
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

In hope of bringing more awareness about lung cancer and to stop the stigma around lung cancer patients, Traci Burke of Rocanville decided to share her story of being unexpectedly diagnosed with lung cancer.

"I was diagnosed with lung cancer a year ago at the end of June. It was a real shock," said Burke.

"I never expected to be diagnosed with lung cancer, as a woman you always think of breast cancer.

"I was very active and lived a pretty healthy life. I had no symptoms right up until the diagnosis, which is very common in lung cancer."

Because the symptoms of lung cancer do not show in the early stages, patients can live with lung cancer for many years before they physically show any signs of symptoms.

"Thanks to Dr. Foy here in Moosomin, I had come home from a holiday and I said that I was having this persistent cough. I had chest pains, I was a very active runner and I was having trouble. I couldn't run," said Burke.

"Dr. Foy was worried about a blood clot that had moved to my lungs. She was very persistent, I had a blood test done and it showed that I did have some clotting factors show up.

"They sent me for a CT Scan right away in Yorkton. That's where they found the mass in my lung, it was very shocking. They were worried about my heart because they saw a little fluid and having it around my heart, possibly, was very serious."

Burke was the owner of Rocanville Super Thrifty for 21 years. Due to her physical and mental well-being after her diagnosis, she had to stop working.

"This has changed my life immensely, I guess that's the hardest part because I went from being a very active person, I had the pharmacy that I ran, and that whole world just came to a crashing halt," said Burke.

"Lung cancer is so insidious that it can be there and you don't have any pain or symptoms. Unfortunately, even though I was able to have surgery, they thought they got it early, but in September I had something they call pericardial effusion which meant it was around the lining of my heart and it was around the lining of my lung.

"I was in the cardiac unit for a week. It was very serious because our lungs and our hearts are very closely related. When that happened I was classed as Stage 4.

"My treatment plan changed and I was eligible for this new immunotherapy. I feel like I'm fortunate in having it because it's giving me, probably, a better quality of life.

"I'm not cancer free and I probably won't be, and that's the hard part about lung cancer is that 50 per cent of people who are diagnosed, are going to be diagnosed at Stage 4."

Burke said it is important that people have access to more screening, specifically in hospitals such as in Moo-



Traci Burke made a trip to see an international pulmonologist (a physician who specializes in the respiratory system) last month in Ottawa. Burke captured a picture in front of the Terry

somin, to help people detect the symptoms of lung cancer during its early stages.

"There's very little screening available for lung cancer that's why we're trying to bring more awareness for lung cancer screening because it can be prevented," said Burke.

"We really would like to get more screening. If Moosomin could get the CT Scanner it would be a huge help because there is a small screening program in Saskatchewan, but it's just for smokers.

"I was really lucky Dr. Foy recognized right away that there was something wrong. So many people who I have talked to, we have a lung cancer Facebook group, get put on the back burner.

"It was a big shock to me and very disappointing because it's one of those cancers where you don't have symptoms and when you find out it's pretty far advanced, it's hard.

"A lot of people who did find out they had lung cancer

early at Stage 1 or Stage 2 was by luck. They were having treatment for something else and that's when they caught it.

"I was no better than anyone else before I got lung cancer, I didn't think it would happen to me. As a pharmacist, there was lots of encouragement for smokers to not smoke, but never did I think my non-smoking patients might get lung cancer."

Stigma around lung cancer patients

Considering there is so much stigma around people who are diagnosed with lung cancer, it is the least funded illness among cancers, compared to breast cancer, prostate, and leukemia.

"Lung cancer gets less funding because of the stigma associated with it," said Burke.

"A lot of people want to blame the person having lung cancer, things like 'oh did you smoke,' and because I was a non-smoker, that's where the radon question came in because radon is the second leading cause of lung cancer.

"There's not as much funding for lung cancer which is why we don't have very good long-term outlook."

Burke said this is one of the things that people with lung cancer would like to be changed.

"If you have lungs, you can get lung cancer. It doesn't just happen to people who smoke," she said.

"And even if they were a smoker, no one deserves lung cancer. Instead of saying to the lung cancer patient, 'did you smoke,' people should say, 'I'm sorry this happened to you.'"

Although a lot of people know that the main cause of lung cancer is from smoking tobacco, not many people are aware that the primary cause for non-smokers who are diagnosed with lung cancer is radon.

Radon is an odourless, natural gas that when in enclosed spaces, like homes, can accumulate to high levels and become a risk to one's health, especially youth and babies.

Based on research, Canadians are the most exposed to high exposure of radon. However, Evict Radon (www.evictradon.org) has come up with test kits that people can use in their homes to figure out if they are at risk for high radon exposure, and find out how to permanently get rid of it.

"I want people to be proactive with helping mitigate radon from their home because the Prairie provinces are the second highest in the world," said Burke.

"Lung cancer is still very hard to treat and it's rarely curative. It can put an end to a product life and I think that somewhere along the way it seems like we're all going to know someone with lung cancer. It would be nice if there was more treatment options. I just want people to be aware."

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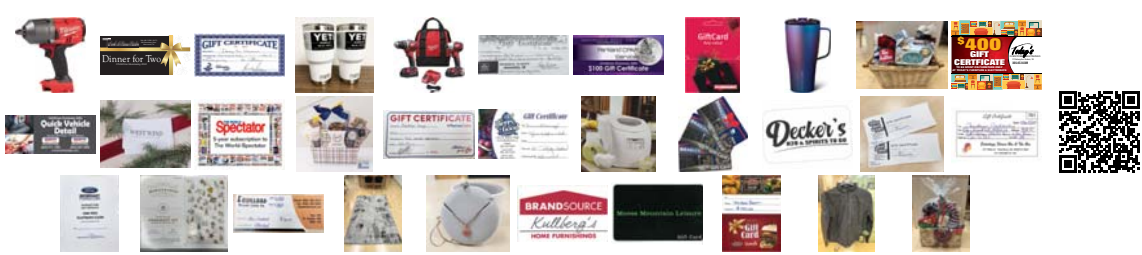
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SCC gift card fundraiser \$117,000 in local gift cards sold

BY SIERRA D'SOUZA BUTTS
LOCAL JOURNALISM
INITIATIVE REPORTER

From their Shop Local Gift Card Fundraiser, the School Community Council (SCC) of MacLeod Elementary School in Moosomin sold \$117,425 worth of gift cards for local businesses and stores in town.

"I wasn't expecting to raise that much. I was expecting \$60,000, \$80,000 at most," said Leona Gerard, SCC Chair.

"We raised \$46,000 last year. This is the biggest, I would say, profit margin for SCC ever."

"We're really excited to find out next week how we're going to allocate the funds through our learning plan, but it will mainly be through our breakfast program and other things we were struggling with before." From the \$117,425 in gift card sales, SCC made a profit of \$8,730 for the school's community council.

"It's a really big chunk for the SCC to work with," said Gerard.

"It will mainly pay for our breakfast program because that works out to about \$1,000 a month. We're blown away."

The fundraiser focused on selling pre-paid gift cards and certificates from 20 local participating businesses in Moosomin and one business from Whiteford.

In return, local businesses chose anywhere

between two to 20 per cent of the gift card sales to be donated back to SCC.

Gerard said SCC is very appreciative of the businesses in town who bought a big portion of gift cards for their staff members.

"A shout out to Ford, they were the first cheque to come in, for \$16,000, which they spent on local businesses for their employees," said Gerard.

Because Moosomin has a variety of stores and businesses compared to other small towns, Gerard said promoting local gift cards was a good fit for the fundraiser.

"We're lucky that way to have a selection of different stores in town," she said.

"Who is not buying from these places in Moosomin, especially right before Moonlight Madness. That's \$117,000 that stays in the community."

"I think that's why Tyler liked it, he was huge in helping this. I cannot thank him enough."

"At the Chamber of Commerce meeting that we were invited to, he was promoting it. Kudos to him."

Continued on page 34



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Warmest wishes from our family
to yours this holiday season,
and all the best in 2023.

Steven, Candace & Emma Bonk

Hon. Steven Bonk, MLA E.C.S.
Moosomin Constituency
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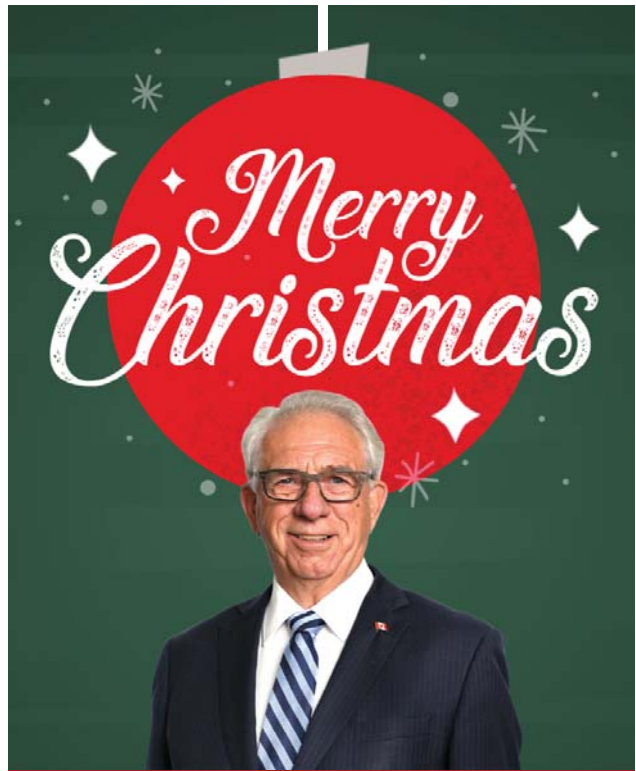
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Cobblestone House should be ready in May

A new 42 unit long-term care and assisted living facility in Moosomin should be ready for people to move into by late spring.

Cobblestone House is being built next to Pipestone Villas on Wright Road in Moosomin.

The project involves local investors, Bridge Road Construction, Care by Design, and Kohr Capital.

The plan came together as a way to offer seniors of Moosomin and surrounding area a home where they can age in place in their community, close to family and friends.

The project has endured a couple of setbacks to date. The biggest was the two months of rain during the foundation stage of the project.

This occurred back in March and April and made it very difficult to gain momentum and complete the foundations.

In order to allow the site to dry as quickly as possible, workers were pumping out water from trenches and puddles every day.

Another setback is an ongoing hurdle that the construction industry is dealing with—elongated lead times on materials. The builders are mitigating this as much as possible by ordering in advance.

This is the current state

of construction:

The building is now weather tight.

Shingles are complete.

Siding is nearly complete and should be finished in the next week.

All windows are installed except for two, where buildings are using the openings to load material into the building.

All framing is complete.

Electrical rough-in is complete on the third floor. They expect to have the first and second floors completed in four weeks.

Main electric service was received last week and is in the process of being installed.

Rough-in for the plumbing has been ongoing for the last month and will be completed in the next few weeks.

The sidewalk and curbs are nearing completion.

The storm sewer, sanitary sewer and water are complete.

Rough landscaping was started prior to the snowfall.

With the exception of a few seasonal items such as paving and sod that will need to be completed in the spring after occupancy, the builders expect to be complete for occupancy in May.



Cobblestone House under construction in Moosomin



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Moosomin's outdoor rink will be in the documentary series, Outdoor Hockey Club

BY SIERRA D'SOUZA BUTTS

LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER Canadian filmmaker Randy Frykas will be coming to Moosomin on Dec. 11 and 12 to capture the town's historical outdoor ice rink as part of his ten-episode documentary series: Outdoor Hockey Club.

The series will feature outdoor rinks on scenic lakes, frozen rivers, extraordinary backyard rinks, local community clubs, and more from all across Canada.

Rec Director Mike Schwean was asked how Frykas contacted him about including Moosomin in the series.

"Randy was told about the history of our community. Then I think he did a bit of digging and got a hold of us to be part of the series," said Schwean.

"We sent him some information and it was done pretty quickly. It's cool. We have quite a history of our outdoor rinks in Moosomin, it's nice to be recognized for our piece of tradition.

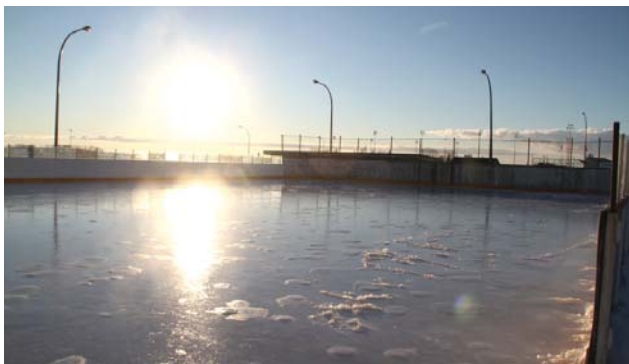
"We have the first outdoor rink in Western Canada and that's something he's interested in. We're excited that we're a part of the series. It is a national series, we try to promote the town as much as we can through our Parks and Rec stuff. This is something that is going to be on a national stage and we'll use it on our website. It's great."

On Sunday Dec. 11, there will be a barbecue sponsored by Co-op. There will be hotdogs and hamburgers for people to enjoy, free of charge.

There will also be a few recreation games going on throughout the day by members from the girls skating teams in town, and members from the local hockey teams. Schwean said he hopes to see people from the community come down to the rink that day.

Then on the Monday, students from MacLeod Elementary School will be coming down to skate at the rink.

People from the community are encouraged to come out for both days, especially on Sunday.



A picture of Moosomin's outdoor ice rink from last winter. The rink is located at the town's Bradley Park.

Schwean spoke a bit about the history behind Moosomin's outdoor rink.

"An Englishman, he was at Moosomin's Grosvenor Hotel. He came to Moosomin and he had some history with English people coming over and apparently they skated, which is common in England," said Schwean.

"There was a slough out back at the Grosvenor Hotel and he built an outdoor rink there. When his visitors came to the hotel they would go out there and skate.

"That was the first outdoor rink documented in Western Canada. Of course it was back in 1882, when Moosomin was in the Northwest Territories before Saskatchewan was formed.

"From there it was popular so they built an indoor rink and then a second indoor rink. They were the first two indoor rinks in the Northwest Territories, it's pretty cool. That was all stuff in the paper, in one of the very first World-Spectators."

Aside from Moosomin, Frykas will be including Beaver Creek Farms near MacGregor, MB, Jeff Nash's backyard rink in Edmonton, AB, Washiyeh and Andrew Jeannotte's rink in Maniwaki, QC, Moe's backyard rink near Smiths Falls, ON, Hillcrest Community Rink in Whitehorse, YT, Lions Park Rink in Newmarket, ON, and a special season ending episode in Stonewall, MB, in his series.

The other river rink episodes are not yet confirmed and will be captured next winter.

Schwean spoke about what it means to the community of Moosomin to be included in the nation wide Outdoor Hockey Club documentary series.

"We've always been pretty cognisant of promoting the community and all of the stuff that we do," he said.

"This is a chance to show the country, for a small town, that we have a lot of things to offer.

"When I look at cities, I'm always looking at everything, I think our out-

door rink is as nice as anyone's. The skating path is super cool, which is one of the few good things from Covid.

"This video is a chance to promote our town. We have a lot of facilities here and a lot of the things we have is first class. People remember stuff like that."

Around Moosomin's outdoor rink, there is also a structured skating path for the community to use. The path surrounds the rink and goes in a full circle within Bradley Park.

Because the town's indoor rinks are always full, Schwean said Moosomin's outdoor rink is highly used.

"We have so little skating room at the big rink that this outdoor rink gets used the most for skating," he said.

"This year is a record, I say that every year, but this year we have two more girls skating teams and because there's no open time at the big outdoor rink, it's not unusual to have 40 or 50 kids on it at a time.

"It's busy, especially when it's nice out, even when it's cold it's still busy. There's kids out there all the time.

"There's another cool part too, of course because we're a big hockey town, we have 20 kids that grew up here who played junior, college, even pro hockey, and they meet up every Christmas to play a shinney game out there.

"They dress in the big rink and skate over because they all skated and used that rink."

Schwean spoke about what he hopes people who live outside of Moosomin get from the documentary series.

"I hope they get a chance to see what we do for the community and maybe it will inspire some other communities to build outdoor rinks," he said.

"We take pride in our stuff for the community. Anytime you get kids out for skating, socials or anything, is great. We just hope our community helps promote active living. It's nice of Randy to come down and include us, I'm looking forward to meeting him."

Season's Greetings



TUNDRA OIL & GAS

A look into the inspiration for my column

I have been inspired by the many people who tell me how much they enjoy these columns and those who feel like they "know" the twins about whom I often write. But ever since I began writing, what I feel is a light-hearted look at farm on the Saskatchewan prairies some 10 years ago, I have always hoped none of my English teachers from high school read them. And there's a reason for that!

When I write, I intentionally (as if I am talking to someone in person) I switch between past and present tense, often in the same sentence. I also do other things I wouldn't normally do when I write - I have quotations all over my paragraph in a bit of a haphazard manner, none of it necessarily grammatically correct. I also miss typos when I proofread which drives me wild because I am OCD about correct spelling.

On Remembrance Day this year, I had the pleasure of meeting some wonderful people at the Legion supper in Moosomin, some of whom told me how much they enjoy reading my columns. Awww, it just warmed my heart and that's when I spotted her across the room - my high school English teacher. "Let's hope she has never read one," was my honest-to-goodness thought.

Before I left that night, I made my way across the hall to say hello to Mrs. McLeod and reconnect after many, many years. As I walked, I began to wonder if she had any idea that despite all that Shakespeare stuff, I really loved my English classes and even though I didn't know at the time that I would ever have anything to write about, I knew in my heart that I loved to write.

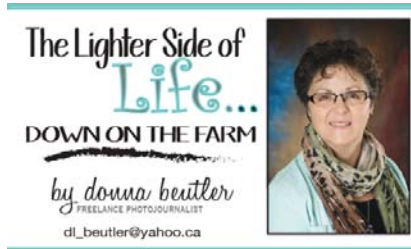
As it was, she was well aware of the columns and didn't once suggest she ought to mark them for me before I submitted them. Whew - that was a relief. I would be remiss if I didn't give credit where credit is due and Mrs. M. definitely deserves some credit!

When I think about this past harvest season, or any past one for that matter, it's interesting what comes to mind. A little incident that happened to hubby and I on our way back from Banff in October caused me to remember one of our harvest days this past fall.

I had just started the combine up on a beautiful fall day after setting my lunch cooler on the floor, my water bottle on the seat beside me, the CB radio in the cup holder and my cell phone in the gripper holder thinger. I was rolling right along and had perhaps gone all of 50 yards when I heard three beeps that caused me to look up at the warning lights, already knowing those beeps were not combine-related. But what were they?

And that's when I heard, "9-1-1, what is your emergency?" coming through my phone. "What the heck?" I wondered as I struggled to get the phone out of the gripper before finally hitting 'speaker.'

"Sorry, no emergency," I said as the combine kept up



its roar, the sound of men chattering came across the CB radio and the radio's country station playing its songs. I continued rolling along.

"Ma'am, are you okay?" I hear back.
 "Yes, I am fine. There is no emergency. I am so sorry. I didn't mean to call you," I said. I hadn't even touched the phone, so I wasn't really sure at that point what had happened.

"Are you sure you're okay, Ma'am?" she asks again.
 "Are you sure you don't need fire, ambulance or police?"
 "Oh no, no, no," I assure her. Of course, at the same time we are talking, I am envisioning police, ambulance and fire trucks racing down the grid road to our field where three combines are just doing their thing, rolling along, picking up canola swaths.

And then I have this thought - if this lady sends emergency vehicles my way, my hubby is gonna be saying, "What has that woman done now?" and my son will be thinking, "Oh mother, only you could have an emergency where no emergency exists."

So I repeat more firmly, "Absolutely no emergency here. Really. I never touched my phone. I don't know what happened."

"Oh," she responds. "Pocket dial."
 "Okay," I say. I don't have a pocket (it was a shorts and tank top kind of day), "but whatever."

"Ahh," she continues. "Cup holder?"
 "No, not a cup holder either," I say. "I'm combining and I have my phone gripped tightly in an x-shaped gripper that I can't even get out of the gripper's grip, hence why I am on speaker phone," I explain. "But as soon as I can release it, I assure you, the gripper is not where I will be putting it ever again," I say as we conclude our conversation, me with one more apology.

Later that night I see my son as he jumps into the semi and I say to him, "Were you talking about selling this combine?" "Might," the man of few words says back to

me. "Well, make sure that gripper thinger goes with the combine," I tell him before he drives off and I head off towards the next swath.

With that behind me and mostly forgotten, hubby and I happen to be spending our last night of our post-harvest trip to Banff in Medicine Hat and on the morning of our departure towards home, we get into the elevator after breakfast to go back up to our room to grab the last of our luggage.

And that's when I have a sinking feeling after pushing 'floor 2' that we aren't going anywhere and nor is the elevator door opening for us. It appears I will actually need to call 9-1-1 for real this time.

I push the 'emergency phone' button only to hear: "All our lines are busy. Please try again later." Are you serious? By this time, we are sweltering, literally. Who knew that elevators were that warm inside?

With my cell phone (that I always carry) left inside our hotel room, I have no choice now but to bang on the door and yell for help.

After 15 minutes of that, I am more than sweltering. But then I hear: "Are you okay in there? What's your room number? I will go to the front desk immediately and have them call 9-1-1." Long story short, four firefighters came to our rescue that day and yes, it seemed a bit like overkill but I won't say I wasn't happy to see them!

I would like to say that was the last of our adventures of the day but alas, it was not to be. Once we had crossed into Saskatchewan and driving along the Trans Canada we were happily listening to some Sunday morning gospel music when out of the blue and right in front of us was a little black Nissan coming straight for us, as in he was west-bound in the east-bound passing lane that we were in.

Now there's something that will get your adrenaline running in high speed, something like the half dozen cop cars that were heading west in the west-bound lane trying to stop the car that we later learned had been stolen in Swift Current and that we happened to meet in the middle of a high-speed chase that eventually ended in success for the police who were in hot pursuit.

With our adventures over, we welcomed the warm lights of home, a comfy bed and the sweet treatment of two cats who had missed me just as much as I had missed them. And if you noticed the switch from "we" to "I" there, there's a reason for that lol!

Here's hoping, as we move from post-harvest season to all-out winter season, that your days are filled with warmth and maybe a bit of adventure on the side (just not the stuck in the elevator or having a car doing 160 kph coming straight for you kind of adventure). Take care, talk to you again soon!

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Soil seeker: Finding new ways for soil to be more sustainable

BY KATIE CHALMERS-BROOKS

Go ahead, make the mistake of calling soil “dirt.” The difference between the two opens the door to better small-talk for master’s student Shannon Mustard.

“People’s eyes will glaze over when I say I’m in soil science,” the 25-year-old admits. “You can definitely read someone’s body language when they’re losing interest in the conversation.”

But they perk up when she tells them how she’s finding new ways for soil—not just mud, given its nutrient-rich composition and complex microbes from growing crops—to be more sustainable. And how, with Canada being among the 120 countries committed to the United Nations’ appeal for zero net emissions by 2050, farmers are relying on researchers like her for the best options on how to do that. The pressure is on since the UN insists our planet demands a 45 per cent drop in emissions even sooner—by 2030—to mitigate warming to 1.5 C.

The University of Manitoba leads the longest-running field-scale greenhouse gas monitoring study in the world,

launched nearly two decades ago and covering 16 acres across two sites. Mustard does her research under the wide-open skies several kilometres south of the university at the Glenlea Research Station. She’s investigating how adding an inhibitor to fertilizers can reduce emissions, while her colleagues ponder other angles, from sequestering carbon in the soil by covering crops, to better understanding the varying outputs of perennial growing versus annual.

With equipment involving laser technology, Mustard measures concentrations of carbon dioxide and nitrous oxide—two of the primary greenhouse gases associated with the agriculture industry and global warming. An

inhibitor, designed for farmers to improve nutrient uptake by plants, also plays with chemical processes to keep these nutrients from being lost to the atmosphere in the form of harmful gas.

Continued on page 35 ^{ES}



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11	Sunday	Prairie Gateway DLMS Timed Auction	
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14	Wednesday	Last Chance Presort Sale	11 a.m.
17	Saturday	December Classic Bred Cow/ Heifer Sale	12 Noon
19	Monday	Butcher Cattle Sale	8 a.m.
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 Attention: Karen Beauchamp

PROPERTY:

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- THE SE 1/4 OF SECTION 19-4-29 WPM EXC THE MINING AND MINERALS RIGHTS AS SET FORTH IN DEED 30191B0
- THE SE 1/4 OF SECTION 7 AND THE SW 1/4 OF SECTION 8-4-29 WPM EXC ALL MINES AND MINERALS AS SET FORTH IN TRANSFER NO. 1057397.

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1. The bidder whose tender is accepted will be required to complete an agreement covering terms and conditions of sale.
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3. All mines and minerals will be reserved from any Transfer.
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5. Successful bidders will be responsible for real property taxes commencing January 1, 2023.

For further information contact Karen Beauchamp at 204-522-3225



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- THE W 1/2 OF SECTION 1-3-28 WPM EXC FIRSTLY: PLAN 58137 BLTO SECONDLY: OUT OF THE SW 1/4 OF SAID SECTION ROAD PLAN 505 BLTO (BO DIV) AND THIRDLY: ALL MINES AND MINERALS AS SET FORTH IN DEEDS 19972B0, 23798B0 AND 63730B0

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For further information contact Karen Beauchamp at 204-522-3225



New law to ease accessibility

BY SIERRA D'SOUZA BUTTS
LOCAL JOURNALISM
INITIATIVE REPORTER

The Government of Saskatchewan has introduced new legislation—The Accessible Saskatchewan Act—to help prevent and overcome any accessibility issues for people with disabilities, in regards to built environments, information and communications, employment, transportation, service animals, procurement and service delivery.

"In 2015 the government came out with the Disability Strategy and this is a major piece of that," Social Services Minister Gene Makowsky told the World-Spectator in an interview on Friday.

"We've brought together several different ministries to work on this, but also consultation with the disability community. We felt this legislation was needed by our outreach and what we're hearing. This is a result of that and a big piece of our 10 year strategy we brought forward in 2015."

Makowsky explained how The Accessible Saskatchewan Act will help people with disabilities live more comfortably across Saskatchewan.

"This act will help prevention at the front end, but also dealing with situations as they arise as well," said Makowsky.

"There is already legislation out there on some of

the barriers that are there with the building codes, with human rights codes, etc., but this will hopefully fill some of those gaps.

"We want to have a piece of this legislation be on the education side to prevent some of those barriers, to get people to think about those barriers that are out there, but also deal with those things as they arise in the future.

"There was no specific legislation prior, this is enabling legislation. It allows us to come up with regulations, that's where the details will come out as we move forward, and we'll continue to consult with the sector.

"With consultation, we decided with the built environments, information and communications, service delivery, procurement, service animals, employment, and transportation. Those were identified as some of the gaps that the other legislation hasn't addressed, which we'll begin to work on those with the regulations in the next little while here.

"With the government being first in trying to fill some of the gaps that are out there or may come up in the future."

The act also makes it easier for a person with a disability to make a request to have a place become more accessible to their needs.

"What the legislation

calls for is to have that accessibility office that the ministry will staff with a certain amount of issues as they come up," he said.

"The idea is that education will be at the front of all this to have third parties, like governments, Crowns, or eventually down the road, private businesses understand the barriers that are there and work with them to try and prevent that. My understanding from previously is that anyone who had a barrier had to go through the Human Rights Tribunal and that would take a certain amount of time to process.

"Hopefully this will smooth things out and we can compile all the complaints that are out there within that office within our ministry."

An Accessibility Advisory Committee will be appointed, with at least half of the members being persons with disabilities or from organizations that represent people with disabilities. This committee will advise government on the development of accessibility standards.

"This act will need to go through the legislature," he said.

"We just did a second reading, we'll have a chance for the opposition to scrutinize any bill that goes through. Then hopefully in the spring, we'll be able to pass it."



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Keller Developments of Brandon plans to build two 12-unit apartment buildings on South Front Street between Ogilvie and Alberni. The town of Moosomin will extend a water line to make the development possible.

Two apartment buildings planned for Moosomin

BY KEVIN WEEDMARK

The Brandon developer who is planning to build two apartment buildings in Moosomin next year says he has had his eye on the community for a long time and says he believes Moosomin has a lot of potential for growth.

"Moosomin has always been on my radar," says Evan Keller. "I actually worked at RBC about 10 years ago, covering that area. I was a commercial account manager for Royal Bank so that helped me get familiar with the area. I have friends that live in the area as well so I have watched it grow over the years and I've always had my eye on it. There's been a few people from Moosomin that have reached out to us and kind of knocked on our door about coming there as well—different people from the community.

"Our most recent connection would be Kim from Royal LePage. We work with Royal LePage here in Brandon and they connected us with Kim and she's been fantastic in helping us navigate our dealings in the community."

He said there are just a few pieces to put

in place for the development. "We're three quarters of the way there," he said. "We still have some steps to take before this project breaks ground but the plan is this spring. We're just working through those last few steps to make sure everything is a go and we'll see where it goes from there."

He said he has found it easy to work with local businesses and the town.

"We did spend some time in the community talking to a few business owners a couple months back. Overall it's been all positive and dealing with the town has been good. I would say that it's a little easier doing business in Moosomin than let's say a city like Brandon. It definitely was a lot simpler that way. Smaller communities tend to be a little more that way—the council and mayors are a lot more receptive and more open to do business the old school way. You have a conversation, do what you say you're going to do, shake hands and move forward. I always like doing business that way. That's one of the perks of working with a growing centre like Moosomin that still has their rural roots."

So what else has to fall into place before the project proceeds?

"We still have some drawings to complete like home design, engineering and all that fun stuff. There will be a few reports we have to get done like environmental and geotechnical, those sort of things we still have in front of us. Those are the main things we have to get done before our spring start."

Construction should take about a year.

"I would say a year to be safe," said Keller. "We've certainly done it faster and depending on what the interest level is in the community. We are currently doing a little bit of research on that front too. We understand that there are some businesses here and the surrounding area that are looking for rentals themselves to secure for their staff, so once we have our head wrapped around that a little more clearly

we'll probably adapt our timeline to match those needs."

He said this is a good time to be investing in Moosomin.

"It seems like Moosomin is hitting a critical mass in terms of where it's located and what it's up to. I think doing business in Saskatchewan in general is a bit easier than Manitoba, I would say from what I've gathered so far. There's definitely more of a pro-business and pro-growth feel so it's kind of neat to see that.

"I definitely like what I'm seeing in Moosomin. We always take it step-by-step.

"I think Moosomin has a lot of potential and I think if everything lines up here the way we hope and we get going, then as soon as we get this one locked in place then we'll start looking for something else there, I would think, right away."

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Zlata with artwork she created for members of the Ukrainian military. Students in her school in Ukraine sent artwork and gifts to members of the military to show their support.



While living in Ukraine during Russia's ongoing attack, Olha and her daughter, Zlata, would hide in the closet of their apartment during the explosions of missiles hoping to be safe. "In this walk-in closet, we drew pictures on the walls to make it feel more like a cozy place," said Olha. "Time flies and you begin to get used to it."



Mother and daughter happy to arrive safely in Canada

Continued from page 4

"I got my biometrics done and they said to wait for the results. We couldn't go back to Ukraine because they took our passports for the process."

While waiting for all of the paperwork to go through, Olha and Zlata stayed in Poland for two months before coming to Canada.

"I began to look for an apartment. We were staying in a hotel. It was good, but there was no kitchen there, we didn't have a fridge, it was hard with a kid to have those living conditions," she said.

"When I began to look for an apartment it was interesting because no one would rent you an apartment for a few months, they wanted you to be there for at least a year.

"We stayed in a hostel which was very friendly. Zlata liked it a lot, she even didn't want to leave, but when she came here from the very first evening, she said, 'I understand now why you and my father chose Canada.'

"Now, she understands because she was impressed from her very first step off the plane."

From the moment Olha and Zlata stepped foot off the plane in Canada, they were grateful to be here, Olha said.

"Every one of the flight attendants gave Zlata candies. They were smiling to her. This immigration officer from Toronto who was giving us work permits and visitor records, he was so friendly," she said.

"My daughter had red, sleepy eyes after the 20 hour flight and he offered her his chair to lie down, it was heart warming, really a touching experience."

Thankful to be a part of the community

Being in Moosomin for almost a month now, Olha said she is so grateful for her Zlata to be here.

"I'm so impressed by the hospitality and the friendly attitude everyone has," she said.

"From the very first moment we arrived, Roman Chernyk met us in Regina. He showed us where to buy warm boots and other stuff. Then he managed everything with the home, furniture, clothes and even kitchenware."

"I can't be thankful enough for all the help. We have this beautiful apartment, that Sheilagh from the housing authority gave us, and compared to living to Vancouver or Toronto, it's almost free. The rent is affordable, it's like \$2,500 for rent in Vancouver, I would've never been able to handle that on my own."

Aside from Moosomin being more affordable to live in compared to other places in Canada, Olha said she enjoys how community-oriented the town is.

"This city is small, but it's like Stars Hollow from Gilmore Girls, it reminds me a lot of that," she smiled.

"It's really convenient that you can just reach your school, your workplace or the market in 10 minutes."

"We are just really enjoying this town. We have small towns in Ukraine, but there's not such a friendly community like here. We have friendships with other families there, but not like here where the whole town is like one big friend group."

"I was just enjoying coffee the other day and I was watch-

ing all the Canadians, they're incredible, really friendly."

Being in the community has brought back a sense of normalcy, she said.

"When the war started I lost all the trust in people, but here, I guess I found that trust again," Olha said.

"You know, we Ukrainians and Russians we are friendly nations because we are so united that you'll have relatives and family in Russia, or maybe in one family, there's a wife from Russia and the husband is from Ukraine."

"I never expected this situation from our neighbor, I could never imagine this to happen, it's awful."

"My advice is to never take the peaceful times for granted. We are blessed that we can enjoy our mornings, every morning is precious and I wish no one has to ever experience the war in their life."

Steven Bonk, MLA for Moosomin Constituency

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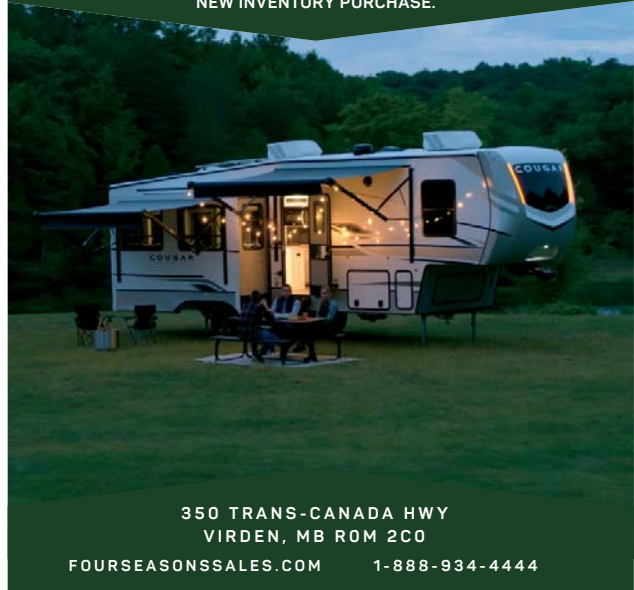
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