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# Plain & Valley

May 2026 • Volume 19 Number 5

Covering Southeast Saskatchewan and Southwest Manitoba



## Blade Across the Prairies raising funds for Rocanville Rink

Rocanville Rink Fundraising Committee presents Blade Across the Prairies in June

BY ASHLEY BOCHEK

Twelve volunteers have joined to help the community raise funds for major repairs needed on the Rocanville Rink.

Local volunteer and schoolteacher Dion Campbell will be rollerblading across Saskatchewan starting June 27 to help the committee raise funds in an effort called Blade Across the Prairies.

Chair of Rocanville Rink Fundraising Committee Sam Daku says the community's rink has many structural issues and is in need of major repairs to continue operating each winter.

"Blade Across the Prairies started with Dion Campbell's training. He decided that it would be a good way to fundraise for our local rink," he says.

"This past winter, we've really seen the Rocanville Rink deteriorate over the years. Lots of structural things such as the roof flooding and we saw that our rink isn't going to be any more if we don't start helping the town to keep it going so we started a fundraising committee and Dion Campbell decided he wants to rollerblade across the whole province of Saskatchewan. He has been training for a while for this and staying very active, so he is going to rollerblade and raise funds at the same time, and we are very thankful."

Daku explains, "We are a very newly formed committee. It has only been about a month and a half we have been meeting and this is our first fundraiser for it and it is definitely bigger than I expected it to be but we are all very excited. It will definitely spread awareness for us. I know every small town is probably in the same situation with their local rinks and everyone wants to have improvements, but this one is definitely structural for us in the case where we may not even have a rink if something is not done soon."

### Across the province

Daku says Blade Across the Prairies will begin June 27 at the Alberta-Saskatchewan border.

"Dion will start rollerblading Saturday, June 27 at Walsh, Alberta right at the Alberta-Saskatchewan border and then he is going to rollerblade across the province to the Manitoba border. It is about 700 kilometers. Dion is trying to work out how many kilometers he thinks he can do a day and weather permitting—he is hoping about six days to complete it.

She says the committee is planning to have a community-wide celebration at the end.

"We are hoping to have a little barbecue celebration in Moosomin as he rollerblades past to go to the border. We

are still in the early planning stages of when that date will be set. We are working with sponsors for the end celebration as well."

### Repairs needed

Daku explains some of the repairs Rocanville Rink needs to continue hosting community events and games each winter.

"The town owns the rink and they will definitely be looking at the structural things like the roof. It needs to be completely replaced—taken-off and a whole new roof put back on—so that is one of the biggest expenses. Since the roof has been leaking it has also gotten into our sound room and I would say it has been compromised it hasn't been totally destroyed but needs some work. In the basement there has been some flooding as well due to the structural issues and leaks. We've had lots of buckets of water all over the basement, and those are big projects.

"The town will keep the building running as our little group hopes to be able to help with the smaller things. If the town puts all of their money into a roof and there is nothing left we want to be able to help and alleviate the pressure on the town and if our fundraiser becomes huge we would love to help with bigger projects as well."

Continued on page 7 <sup>EST</sup>



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# Construction of the new Grenfell long-term care home reaches 25 per cent completion

BY NICOLE TAYLOR  
LOCAL JOURNALISM  
INITIATIVE REPORTER

Construction of the new Grenfell Long-Term Care (LTC) Home is progressing on schedule, reaching 25 per cent completion.

Work to date includes wood framing, which is approximately 75 per cent complete, with roof trusses currently being installed. Foundation work and site utility installations are complete. Site services and rough grading are scheduled to begin in the 2026 construction season.

"Every time I'm in Grenfell, which is very often, I check out the construction site and I'm usually not the only person there," says Moosomin-Montmartre MLA Kevin Weedmark and Legislative Secretary to the Ministers of Health. "There are lots of people checking on the site regularly to see construction take place I'm so excited for Grenfell and area to have this new facility on the way.

"I'm happy we were able to work with the Grenfell

Health Care Foundation on this project and we were able to reduce the community portion of the capital cost from 20 per cent down to 10 per cent."

"We are pleased to see steady progress on the Grenfell Long-Term Care Home project," Rural and Remote Health Minister Lori Carr said. "Once complete, this new facility will provide a safe, comfortable and modernized home for seniors and residents needing long-term care in the Grenfell area, serving the community for many years to come."

The new 33-bed long-term care home will include two spa tub rooms, a commercial kitchen, common living and dining spaces, administrative areas, a maintenance garage and parking stalls. Located at the corner of Alberta Avenue and Qu'Appelle Street in the northeast corner of the town of Grenfell, the home will be owned and operated by the Saskatchewan Health Authority (SHA).

"Reaching 25 per cent completion on the Grenfell Long-Term Care Home is an important milestone," SaskBuilds and Procurement Minister Sean Wilson said. "This project is moving forward with strong momentum and brings us closer to a long-term care home designed to support the community's needs today and into the future."

"Reaching the 25 per cent milestone marks meaningful progress on the new long-term care home in Grenfell," SHA CEO Andrew Will said. "We look forward to providing high-quality care for seniors in Grenfell and the surrounding area in a home-like setting, right in their own community, close to family and supports. The SHA is grateful for the partnership of the Government of Saskatchewan, the Town of Grenfell and the Grenfell and District Health Foundation in bringing this project forward."

Government is investing nearly \$40 million towards the Grenfell LTC home. The



The long-term care home under construction in Grenfell.

Town of Grenfell, the Grenfell and District Health Foundation (GDHF) and surrounding rural municipalities will invest \$4.9 million for capital costs and furniture, fixtures and equipment.

"Reaching the 25 per cent

construction milestone is an exciting moment for our community," Grenfell and District Health Foundation Chair Trevor Burnham said. "This project represents years of dedication, advocacy and partnership, and we are proud to see

steady progress toward a modern long-term care home for the people of the Grenfell district."

Onsite work, led by PCL Construction Management Inc., began in July 2025 and substantial completion is anticipated by Spring 2027.

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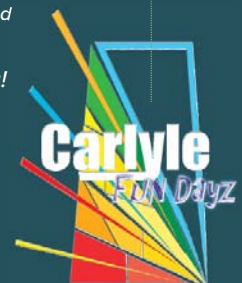
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# We'll Meet Again performed in Carlyle

BY DOUG WALDNER  
From May 1-3 Carlyle's Cornerstone Theatre presented "We'll Meet Again" in the Carlyle Memorial Hall.

"We'll Meet Again" is a musical that was originally commissioned by the Royal Canadian Legion in 1986 in celebration of its 60th anniversary. Cornerstone Theatre was formed the same year and this play was one of its initial productions in conjunction with the Ladies Auxiliary of the RCL that year. Cornerstone Theatre has produced this play several times in the ensuing years, but this year was special as it is now the 100th Anniversary of the Royal Canadian Legion and Cornerstone Theatre's 40th anniversary.

Thanks to the hard work of Joan Bue, attendees for Friday's performance were offered charcuterie cups of fruit, cheese and meat.

On Saturday, the Carlyle Branch of the Royal Canadian Legion catered a lovely ham supper as a Dinner Theatre. All proceeds from Saturday's production are going to the Carlyle Legion branch for their work in the community. The Carlyle Branch would like to take this opportunity to thank Cornerstone Theatre for its efforts in putting together this wonderful weekend of entertainment and such a successful fundraiser.

The play is set in an English pub near the end of the Second World War and the music is all of that era. Dur-



Back row from left: Paul Twietmeyer, Clay Johnstone, Jesse Twietmeyer, Sophie Turk, Jadah Walbaum, Ashton Lizitza, and Kristopher Koski.

Front row: Lane Easton, David Slykhuis, Lori Brown, Dianne Twietmeyer, Emma Boutin, Megan McAuley, Joan MacDonald, Joan Bue, and Shannon Klatt.

ing the 1986 production there were a large number of veterans and spouses of veterans who attended the play and many of them shared their reminiscences after the show. In the ensuing 40 years most, if not all, of the Second World War veterans have passed on, however Audrey Young, one of the Ladies Auxiliary members from 1986, attended this year's production. Young is 96, and has memories of the difficult times during that war.

A number of cast members from the original production have also passed on. Their roles were capably played by younger actors and singers, but the echoes of the missing singers were heard in the minds of those of us who were part of the original production. Although there were new performers, there were also the links to the past. There were a number of actors and singers who had been in either the original show

or one of the other versions who reprised their roles for this version.

Despite all the memories and ghostly voices playing in our minds, the 2026 edition of "We'll Meet Again" was exceptional. The musical accompaniment by Wendy Rounce, and Lori Brown on the piano and Clay Johnstone on the electric keyboard was excellent and so appropriate for the era. There were love songs such as "A Nightingale Sang in Berkeley

Square," and "Lilly Marlene," songs praying for a better time such as "The White Cliffs of Dover" and "When the Lights go on All Over the World," and comedic songs such as "Der Fuehrer's Face," "Knees up Mother Brown," and "The Biggest Aspidistra in the World." There were a couple of Andrews Sisters songs (with an extra sister) and a couple of barbershop quartet songs (maybe barbershop sextet songs).

The play featured a bar-

tender, barmaid, soldiers, sailors, and airmen, as well as women in the female branches of those services. Parts of the uniforms of the sailors in the show were originally worn by Mr. Gary Roy, who was in attendance, during his service in the American Navy.

The cast consisted of Dianne Twietmeyer, Joan MacDonald, Sophie Turk, Emma Boutin, Jadah Walbaum, Megan McAuley, Lauri Noble, Lane Easton, David Slykhuis, Paul Twietmeyer, Ashton Lizitza, Kristopher Koski, Jesse Twietmeyer, and Shannon Klatt, with Dianne Twietmeyer directing. Will Elliot was the sound tech and Doug Waldner handled the lighting. This performance was a true ensemble effort. Everyone in the play was showcased and did an excellent job.

The cast sang solos, duets, trios, various other groupings and mass choral work. The songs of that era, so well performed, were powerful at invoking memories of lost love, and yet optimism for the future in the face of horror and adversity of wartime. The finale with the entire cast singing "We'll Meet Again" was beautiful, powerful in what it says, and brought tears to many an eye.

This was a show about the "Greatest Generation," the adversity they faced and their triumph in the face of that adversity. Their sacrifices must never be forgotten.

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# Southeast Cultural Summit coming to Moosomin

## Moosomin Visual Arts Center will host on May 21st

BY DONNIE MATICHUK

The Southeast Sport, Culture, and Recreation District organization is hosting their second annual gathering of art, sport, and recreation on May 21st, and are encouraging anyone who is interested to come and see what they have to offer.

"The Southeast Cultural Summit is an event bringing artists, cultural leaders, municipal representatives, volunteers and provincial organizations together for a one-day celebration of how art, culture, heritage and living traditions can strengthen rural communities," says Amber Andersen, Community Development Consultant for the Southeast District.

This is the second year that the Summit will be held, with the first being in Estevan. The Southeast District is partnering with the Moosomin Visual Arts Centre and the Town of Moosomin to make this event possible.

"I think Moosomin is such a culturally vibrant community. I think it is a town of really engaged volunteers. I see Communities in Bloom, the Moosomin Visual Arts Centre, and so many other great things around town. There's a very active community making things happen, and so I think that this is a real opportunity for people to come out and basically celebrate their successes. We do have local presenters, and we want people to get inspired and be engaged," says Andersen.

The day will begin at 9:00 with a welcome and Land Acknowledgement, before going into breakout sessions with different purposes and presenters.

"It's going to be a full day of learning, connection and inspiration. Some of the highlights we have are Living Heritage and Storytelling. It's going to be an event with many different things to do and experience."

The sessions include everything from baseball history, to community improvement, to film and technology.

"The first breakout session is by Robin Jensen, who is a relatively new curator at the Saskatchewan Sports Hall of Fame. She's also a volunteer on the Indian Head Museum board, and Carol LaFayette-Boyd, who's with the Saskatchewan African Canadian Heritage Museum. They are going to share their story of how the 1950s all-African Canadian descent, Indian Head Rockets baseball team was revived through research and oral history."

"We are going to explore youth leadership and empowerment with Justin Holness, who is a councilor of Ocean Man First Nation, and he has worked with the community to develop a youth committee. That led to the creation of film production group. It is a youth run media company integrating language culture, and it's also an economic opportunity for them as well.



Left: The crowd at the last Southeast Culture Summit. Right: Amber Andersen speaking at the last event.

"We are going to look at community pride and beautification, which is going to be highlighted by Angela Thorn, who's with the town of Moosomin, and she'll be presenting on how Communities in Bloom can strengthen heritage awareness and tourism."

"We're looking at art infrastructure and advocacy, which is going to be explored by J'aimie Payne, who is with the Moosomin Visual Arts Centre. She's their Treasurer, and she's going to talk about how the center moved from a vision to reality through collaboration, fundraising and municipal engagement."

"We're also going to touch on culture and technology and how those come together. That will be with Jill Ruep, who is a founder of Metis-led beading app. Maha Abbas of Heritage Saskatchewan, who's going to reframe heritage sites as active contributors to local economies."

"We're doing an amateur spotlight, which is basically an artist spotlight. We're going to have Weiming Zhao, who's going to discuss his two decades worth of experience and the thousands of paintings that he's done. We're also going to have Krista Crellin, who is from Moosomin, and she's going to discuss her business, how she's the Chair of the MVAC, and how that reflects on creative practices as a pathway to leadership"

Lunch will be provided by The Red Barn in Moosomin, and will be included with the cost of registration for the event.

After the meal, there will be a Provincial Table-Talk session with some of the presenters at the event.

"As far as the Provincial Table-Talk session, we have an opportunity for you to

sit down with the different provincial representatives at the Summit. We have key provincial organizations such as Saskatchewan Arts, Saskatchewan Heritage Saskatchewan, the Saskatchewan Sports Hall of Fame, Saskatchewan Parks and Recreation Association, Sask African-Canadian Heritage Museum, and the Saskatchewan Metis Nation. You will get about ten minutes to sit at a table, and they're going to discuss different granting or different funding opportunities they have at a provincial level. You'll have three opportunities within the hour to select a community or provincial organization that you'd like to talk to."

Andersen said that there are a few things that her team looks for when choosing who to feature and invite to the Summit as presenters.

"What we do is, we're always visiting our communities throughout all of the southeast district, and so we're talking to recreation practitioners, we're talking to artists, we're talking to volunteers. We're talking to a whole wealth of people within sport, culture and recreation sectors. As we're going along, we make note of things that we think would be trending, are interesting or, that are success stories within our district. It's something that we're always keeping our eyes peeled for, but we always welcome more in the future."

She says that the Saskatchewan Cultural Summit has potential for meeting very talented and friendly people involved in art, sport, and recreation.

"I think that coming out to the event is a great way to network and meet new people. Your problems are not just your problems,

and your successes are not just your successes. I think that we have an amazing lineup of people who are doing really engaging and interesting work."

"I think that you'll get a real bang for your buck as well. It's \$40 for the entire day, and you must register on our website, which is southeastdistrict.ca, and navigate to the events tab. Registration is open until May 14th."

At the 2026 Summit, Andersen hopes that attendees will be able to recognize the importance of keeping the heritage and culture alive in your area.

"For this year's Summit, I want people to take away ideas. I want them to generate opportunities for their community. I want them to connect within their community. The culture is so interconnected within Saskatchewan, and I think it's really valuable to leave our offices, or our workspaces, or our farms to get out there and to be inspired."

"I hope to see a whole

bunch of community members come to this event, because I would love to introduce what the Southeast District does. So if you're in the community, if you have an interest for culture, even if it's just something that you've maybe thought about, I think this is a great way to get inspired."

Come out to the Moosomin Visual Arts Centre on May 21st to experience the second annual Southeast Cultural Summit.

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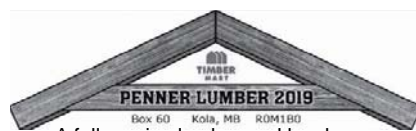
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# Blade Across the Prairies raising funds for Rocanville Rink

## Rocanville Rink Fundraising Committee presents Blade Across the Prairies in June

☞ Continued from front

She says the rink hasn't had major upgrades for years. "It has been a long time. We have some members in our committee that were actually around when the building was first brought into town. It was a used building before that the town purchased it and moved it onto the site its on now. It never really was a brand-new building in the first place so there has been lots of repairs over the years, but I've been in Rocanville for about 10 years now and there hasn't been any major upgrades in the last 10 years."

### Local volunteers form committee

The Rocanville Rink Fundraising Committee includes local volunteers and is motivated with support from the whole community.

"Our core committee has 12 people involved who come to our monthly meetings. Then, there are numerous other people that have volunteered to help at any events we put on. The whole town once they realized what condition the rink is in we just started the committee and there has been a lot of people let us know they would support and offer their help if needed. It has been really good that way.

"As the chair of the committee with this fundraiser I am trying to support Dion as best as I can and the committee can as well as get the awareness out there that we really need help for our rink and reaching out to sponsors and communities. We are all here to support Dion and his Blade Across the Prairies idea."

### Core piece of community

Daku says the rink is a place of gathering for the entire community throughout the winter months in Rocanville.

"I would say a rink in smalltown Saskatchewan is a core building. Your children are there, your spouse, your family members, we all gather there. Those cold winter months drag on in Saskatchewan and the rink always has an event on or a place to visit and go during the winter. It is somewhere where anyone can go and have a meal as well. In our small town of Rocanville we have various restaurants, but the rink has opened their kitchen to doing breakfasts, lunches, and suppers so it has been great. The rink is a core piece of the community where everyone makes memories, and it is vital for our kids too, and a place for them to be. It is a healthy environment whether it is hockey or skating lessons, it is very important to the community."

### Blade Across the Prairies on Facebook

The committee has a Facebook page for community members and the public to track Dion throughout his journey June 27.

"We have a Facebook page," said Daku. "We have set that up with updates for Dion rollerblading, how much money we've raised, and what it's all about. We will have posters and on them, and there is QR code to that Facebook page as well. My vision for the poster will have a blurb why he is rollerblading, why we need to fundraise for our rink, and then we will have e-transfer set up so anyone who wants to e-transfer directly to the fundraising committee can do that and we are hoping to have some collection sites around town to do that as well if anyone is interested in making a cash donation or mail cheques and we will have all that information on the posters and our Facebook page."

### Excited for fundraiser

Daku says the committee is excited for Blade Across the Prairie and hopes to see local communities come together to support Dion rollerblading across the province.

"We are very excited. This being one of our first fundraisers and my first time chairing a board, I am nervous, but very excited to see how it goes and see the community come together. There is no expectations I think it is going to be super fun. It is a different idea—there are so many fundraisers nowadays and this is just something different. We are going to get t-shirts, wristbands, and hats to sell too that will say Blade Across the Prairies and it will be targeting our kids and core groups that use our rink or who have visited our rink such as other local communities



and their hockey teams in the area—we visit their rinks and they come to ours."

### Campbell rollerblading across Saskatchewan in Blade Across the Prairies fundraiser

Dion Campbell of Rocanville volunteered to rollerblade across Saskatchewan to help raise funds for his hometown community rink in Blade Across the Prairies.

"I grew up in Rocanville and am a schoolteacher in Rocanville. Our local rink is in major need of repairs and to me it is more than just a building it is the heart of our community. It is where kids learn to skate, families gather, and where a lot of memories are made. It means a lot to me, it's where my kids skate. It is very important to everybody, and I just want to do what I can from my standpoint to help. I wanted to find a way to bring attention to that and help raise the money to keep it going."

### Sheldon Kennedy offering support

Campbell says Sheldon Kennedy has shared his experience in fundraising and raising awareness for child sexual abuse skating across Canada in 1997.

"I have to give a big shoutout to Sheldon Kennedy who did a blade across Canada in 1997 and actually bladed through Moosomin raising awareness. We all went to Moosomin to cheer him on and then my mom ended up buying us rollerblades and I really enjoy it. I've been rollerblading for a long time. I played hockey all over for a very long time in Germany, in the States, and on the East Coast and rollerblading was a big part of our training in the off seasons so I thought this would be a good idea."

### Blade Across the Prairies correlation to local hockey rink

Campbell says rollerblading across Saskatchewan to raise funds for local rink felt like 'the right fit.' "I chose an endurance challenge for a couple of different reasons because it definitely reflects the effort it takes to keep small town rinks like this alive. It is not easy and it takes commitment just like maintaining a rink, and I also wanted something that would stand out and get people talking and hopefully inspire them to get involved or donate. It is something totally different and not the norm when it comes to fundraising and it links back to skating. It is a natural extension of what the rink represents. It felt like the right fit for the cause and is something I enjoy, even though this distance will push me a bit.

"I haven't done anything to this extent. Blade Across the Prairies will be about 700 kilometres. I have done quite a few training sessions that are far, but not this great of a distance."

He says the rink was a big part of his life at a young age and still is now as an adult.

"I grew up in the rink. Its where I spent a lot of time, learned my skills for hockey, built a lot of friendships, and

spent time with friends. It's where I got my first job at 10 years old shoveling snow, moving nets, cleaning up dressing rooms, and for me and a lot of people in small towns the rink is a second home. This is my way of giving back to something that they gave a lot to me."

### Overwhelming support

Campbell says the committee has already had support from local members and the surrounding area.

"We've had a lot of people reach out so far. There are a lot of people that want to get involved in this. It starts June 27 at the Saskatchewan-Alberta border passed Maple Creek by Walsh, Alberta and come east toward Moosomin and to the Saskatchewan-Manitoba border. I can't give an exact end date because it depends on different elements. There will be live trackers for people to get updates on social media. We do have a vehicle that will potentially be sponsored for us. We have a camper sponsored for us as well with a huge banner that will say Blade Across the Prairies. Local businesses as well as some from Yorkton and Melville are sponsoring this.

"It means everything seeing the support. It just shows people want to get involved in a good cause such as this and most of the time I am hearing, 'This is wild! I've never heard of something like this before!' and that was a lot of the motivation behind doing an endurance challenge especially rollerblading because it isn't something you hear a lot about. You might see a cyclist or runner on the highway, but this is something a bit different. It is overwhelming the amount of support. It is getting bigger than I originally anticipated. There is a business in Yorkton that is going to help supply my wheels because I will go through a set a day so it will be a journey. It will be long days. We will start at dawn and end at dusk. There are volunteer drivers that will have shifts as well. Our committee is an amazing little group that is willing to help out in any way they can."

### Physical and mental challenge

Campbell says he has been training the last couple of months on local highways to prep for Blade Across the Prairies.

"I am very excited to do this. I like personal challenge. I am a distance runner and very active in that regard. Training has been going really well. I rollerblade almost every day if the weather allows it. There has been windy days and snow days as of late, but I have been going for a while now since it's been about -10 out get out on the highway. I got highway 8 and then the mine highway so I'll usually use those highways, or I'll get up early Saturday or Sunday mornings to do the Moosomin highway from Rocanville and I just got lucky because these highways were all just paved. I've been spoiled.

"I've been talking with Sheldon Kennedy about all of this, and he has been a great mentor and has talked to me about his experience in 1997. He has been a huge motivator and someone to talk to about it because he went through it as well to a greater extent.

"The toughest part of this whole thing will be the physical challenge. Seven hundred kilometers will definitely be a long way. The mental side will be just as big as well, but knowing why I am doing this and knowing what the rink means to people and not just in our town, but in all small towns—it is the heart of every community with our long winters—so that will definitely help push me through."

He says he hopes his journey rollerblading across Saskatchewan will help inspire people to support this initiative and bring people together.

"I hope people take away from all of this is they see just how important community spaces are and feel inspired to help support them. This helps get the repairs that are needed and it's also going to bring people together and makes it all worth. It is about bringing people together and showing what small towns can do once we rally together."

If you are interested in donating, sponsoring, and/or getting involved in Blade Across the Prairies in helping raise funds for the Rocanville Community Rink email the Rocanville Rink Fundraising Committee at rocanvillerinkfc@gmail.com

# Plain & Valley

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Next Issue: June 12

Deadline: June 3

# Goodon Industries expanding to Redvers

## New building going up on Highway 13

BY NICOLE TAYLOR  
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

A new business will be opening its doors soon in Redvers. Goodon Industries will be expanding to Redvers and building a new 60-by-100-foot shop on Highway 13 on the north side of Redvers.

"We are expanding our overhead door company and opening up shop in Redvers. We're very excited about being a part of the community," said Eric Kennedy with Goodon Industries.

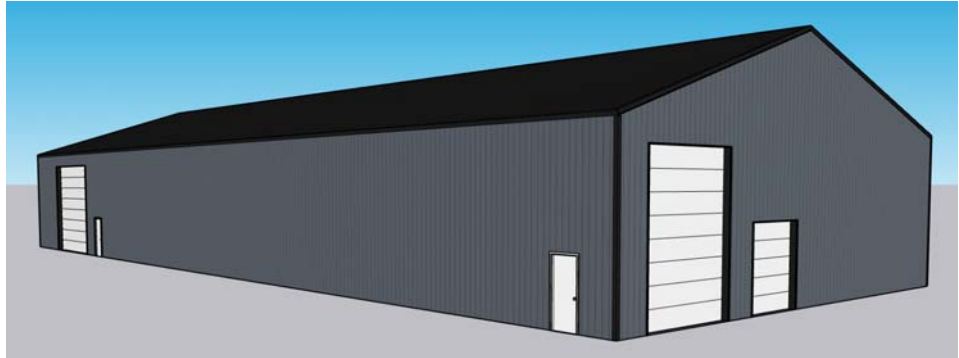
"Goodon Industries has been around for almost 60 years, and we're mainly in the construction business of supplying post-frame buildings. We also have expanded into supplying overhead doors for our buildings. This warehouse that we're building in Redvers is going to be a hub for the overhead door part of the company. It's going to help service not only Saskatchewan, but Manitoba, and even western Canada as a whole. A lot of stuff is going to be coming out of Redvers," he said.

"The location in Redvers is going to start by being a hub where doors are going to come in, and then they're going to be shipped out from there, and there will be some employees there. But in the future, I could see it becoming more of a front-end sales location as well.

"The doors are going to be packaged there and shipped out from there in Redvers. So doors will come in on a semi, much like raw materials. Somebody there will be putting those together and getting them ready to be shipped out for the building that they're designated for.

"So far it will just be the one building at that location, but there's definitely room for growth for sure. For employees, it will be small to start. We'll have between one and three employees."

Kennedy says there were a number of reasons to choose Redvers as a place to expand to.



A rendering of the Goodon Industries building that will be built along Highway 13 in Redvers.

"We chose Redvers because we do have a lot of business in that area. Our sales guy has some roots there, so he's able to help us out. Redvers was an easy choice based on our relationship with our customers there, and its close proximity to the Manitoba border. We currently don't have a hub there, so we're pretty excited to get that going. We'll be able to make things more efficient and provide better service to our customers.

"We're an international company, and we have locations in North and South Dakota, Minnesota, Montana Manitoba, Alberta, B.C., and now one in Redvers."

Kennedy says work on the new building in Redvers will be happening soon.

"We will be starting on the building definitely in the next month," he says.

He says Goodon Industries is familiar with rural communities like Redvers.

"It honestly feels great to expand to southeast Saskatchewan. Our head office

is actually in Boissevain, Manitoba, and that's a town of around 1,500 people. So to open up another hub in a small community like Redvers is something that we take a lot of pride in. We're a bigger company with a small-town feel within our business, so it was an easy decision.

"Everybody has been phenomenal when we were speaking with the town, and we couldn't say anything nicer about everybody that's been involved. We're super excited to get started.

"We're looking forward to growing and providing some jobs in the Redvers area. We're looking forward to being a really big part of the community. We're going to make sure that we do Redvers justice and do as much as we can for the area."

Goodon Industries will be building its shop on land that has been vacant in Redvers for about five years.

Mayor Brad Bulbuck says he's excited

to see the business come to Redvers.

"I'm excited," he says. "It's going to provide traffic in and out of Redvers, not only from the deliveries, but from the pickups. There's going to be exposure to Redvers and what our community has to offer. So that's always exciting."

"We're excited to have them, and we're excited to see some traffic and some product moving in and out of there."

The lot the Goodon Industries purchased was a tax title property and Bulbuck says it's good to see it being purchased and used by a large company looking to expand.

"We're pretty excited, because with the construction of the water treatment plant and what's happening with Goodons, we're obviously very excited to see something happening in the community. Everybody gets a smile on your face when they see progress. It makes everybody happy."

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# Mobile mammography units making a difference in overall cancer screening



The mobile mammography unit outside the Canalta Hotel in Moosomin.

BY KARA KINNA

The Saskatchewan Cancer Agency's and Sask Health Authority's Mobile Mammography Unit has spent time in Carlyle, Moosomin, and Broadview recently and will be in Grenfell from May 11-22.

The province of Saskatchewan recently announced funding for a second mobile unit which is already on the road in communities around Saskatchewan.

The Plain & Valley spoke with Richard Dagenais, SHA's Vice President of Clinical Support Services. Dagenais explained how the units are making a difference around Saskatchewan and how women can access screening through them. The interview with Dagenais follows.

### What's different between these units and the older unit that used to be on the road?

"The mobile unit that was out there previously was a bus. It's the same sort of bus that you might see a hockey team use, but it's been refitted. It was refitted to support the mobile breast screening. I want to be clear—that unit served us very well for many, many years. That unit served for over 20 years, but technology gets dated after that long. The bus was beginning to show signs of wear, and it was becoming more expensive to maintain and keep on the road. So when we took a look at the new units, we elected to move from a bus to a semi trailer.

The new unit is more spacious, with more room for patients to change, more room to interact with the technologists, and of course has updated technology. One of the advantages of it being a trailer as opposed to a bus is it eliminates any complications around mechanical issues. When you have a bus, if there's a problem with the bus itself, you need an auto mechanic. With the trailer, we have

a variety of people who might be able to support us in terms of getting it from one place to the next.

### How does the program work? How can women make an appointment and how early can women make an appointment? And where can women go to find out where the bus will be?

To go in for a screening, I would direct women to go to the breast check website at the [saskcancer.ca](http://saskcancer.ca) website.

The breast screening program, including the mobile breast screening program, is run jointly between the Saskatchewan Cancer Agency and the Saskatchewan Health Authority. The Saskatchewan Cancer Agency, part of the role they play is they advertise the program, and they also do the bookings, and so you can get a good deal of information through their website.

Appointments for the mobile unit can be made about six weeks ahead of the unit arriving at a site, and the Cancer Agency does endeavor to make sure that those visits are communicated in the communities where folks are going to be.

### Screening it currently for women 43 and up. If somebody under the age of 40 is wanting to be scanned, how can they do that?

Currently it's available for women aged 43 to 74 and starting this summer, that's going to be expanded so that women between ages of 40 and 74 will be able to be screened.

Breast screening is really designed for asymptomatic women, so if there's no signs or symptoms or no specific concerns. If a woman does have a specific concern and she would like to get a mammogram at a younger age,

we would encourage her to speak to her family physician, and they could arrange for her to have a diagnostic mammogram at one of the other sites across the province.

### How many women can these mobile units see in a day?

The number of patients the unit sees on average every day is usually around 50, depending of course on weather conditions, what day of the week it may be, and so on.

Continued on page 16

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## Living with local wildlife: tips for protecting your garden

Has a raccoon invited itself into your yard? Are squirrels digging up your flower beds? Here are some humane ways to protect your garden.

- Plant varieties that are naturally repellent to animals, such as daffodils, garlic, onions, lavender and rosemary.
- Don't plant hazelnuts, tulips or crocuses if you want to keep squirrels away. If necessary, protect your soil with metal mesh.
- Scatter materials with strong scents, such as granulated chicken manure or even hair from your dog, to repel intruders. Repeat this process every three weeks.
- Has a skunk dug a burrow in your yard? You can encour-



age it to move out by pouring a small amount of water—not enough to flood it—into the opening of the hole.

You can find everything you need at your local garden supply store. Do you need to relocate a stubborn critter? Call in the professionals.

## Add pollinator plants to your garden

Do you want to do your part to support pollinators like butterflies and bees? You can help by introducing pollen-rich plants into your garden. Melliferous plants—plants that are rich in pollen—can help increase biodiversity while revitalizing your garden with the buzzing of bees and the flutter of butterfly wings. Use these tips to get started.

### Plan for multiple blooming seasons

Introduce a variety of plants so that you have nectar production in all three pollinator seasons. Common spring-blooming varieties include dandelions, apple blossoms and ground ivy. For summer pollen production, you can't go wrong with purple echinacea, borage and thyme. In the autumn, New England aster and goldenrod are both

reliable late bloomers.

### Provide a water source

In addition to keeping your melliferous plants watered, you'll need to provide a source of hydration for the pollinators. An ideal solution is a pond or water feature, but even a small bowl of water will do the trick. Just add a few stones to give the bees and butterflies a safe place to land.

You'll see the best results if you plant species native to your region. For information on species best suited to your local growing conditions, visit a nearby garden store. Pollinators are attracted to areas where nectar-rich plants are most plentiful. By supporting a local biodiversity organization, you can bring more bees to your yard—and to your region.

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# HOME & GARDEN

## Kitchens: Spotlight on 3 key trends in 2026



Are you thinking about renovating your kitchen? Are you building a new home and designing your kitchen from scratch? Here's a look at some of this year's latest trends to inspire you.

1. Create a spa-like atmosphere. Melt away the stresses of everyday life by creating a relaxing, warm and uncluttered space. This means doing away with bright, clinical lighting (think low lighting!). Fill the space with soft, organic colours like sandy brown and warm grey. Ideally, the cupboards should have no handles and focus on natural materials.
2. Curate a space for social interaction. Modern kitchens are designed to be a space for cooking together or breaking bread with loved ones. Spacious islands with rounded corners, along with stools or benches and other types of dining areas, are all the rage. The focus is on creating a convivial atmosphere where family and friends can gather and enjoy each other's company.
3. Make eco-responsible choices a priority. Incorporate sustainable practices into every aspect of the space. This includes using recycled materials, VOC-free paint and wood from sustainably managed forests. You can also choose intelligent or ENERGY STAR-certified electrical appliances, such as the refrigerator and dishwasher, to reduce your carbon footprint further.

Creating the kitchen of your dreams requires careful plan-

ning. Otherwise, you could exceed your budget or run into other unpleasant surprises. Call on the services of a kitchen design specialist in your area to ensure your project goes off without a hitch.



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## Essentials (and luxuries) for your outdoor kitchen



As warm weather nears, it's the perfect time to upgrade your backyard, patio, or balcony into a welcoming space for outdoor dining. Here are seven outdoor kitchen features to impress

your guests this summer:

### A barbecue

The ultimate symbol of summer, the barbecue is an essential part of any outdoor kitchen. Find a model that fits your space and

budget—whether it's built-in, freestanding or portable. Get ready to grill mouthwatering meals!

### A versatile work surface

You need space to prepare marinades and assemble

plates. Invest in a weather-resistant countertop made from materials like stainless steel or granite. Hello, style and functionality! If space is tight, consider a removable sideboard.

### A sink

Avoid the hassle of running in and out to rinse glasses and plates by adding a sink to your outdoor kitchen. You can choose from a variety of models, including those that connect directly to your home's plumbing or to an outdoor hose for convenience.

### A fridge

Summer calls for cold drinks! Keep your lemonade, alcohol and meal-prep ingredients chilled with an outdoor fridge. Position it strategically so your guests have access to it, too. For a budget-friendly option, consider a patio cooler.

### Comfy furniture

Create a welcoming atmosphere

with high-quality, inviting outdoor furniture. Pick comfortable seating, a large sunshade or awning and a sturdy table to enhance the experience.

### A smoker

Do you want to take your outdoor kitchen to the next level? Invest in a smoker for preparing meat and fish. While some smokers can be pricey, you can find models starting at only a couple hundred dollars.

### A kegerator

For a professional touch, install a kegerator with beer or kombucha to bring everyone together. This unique addition is sure to add fun to your gatherings and is well worth the investment. Visit your local retailers to create the outdoor kitchen of your dreams.

Summer evenings can get chilly. Consider installing a patio heater to keep you and your guests comfortable.

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# HOME & GARDEN

## How to plant a windbreak



Windbreaks are commonly used in the agricultural industry to protect crops and reduce soil erosion. However, they're becoming increasingly popular on residential properties. For instance, a windbreak can help protect your home from strong winds if you live in an area with few buildings and sparse tree cover.

### CRITERIA

Planting a windbreak requires careful planning. To ensure its effectiveness, you must consider the following:

- The plant's growth, including its mature height, width and thickness
- The plant's orientation in relation to the wind
- The plant's permeability

### SPECIES

If you want to get the most out of your investment, take the time to carefully select trees or shrubs that will block the wind while also beautifying your property. Avoid invasive exotic species at all costs. Instead, choose native species that are easy to maintain and can withstand temperature variations.

**Before starting your project, consult your municipality's bylaws. For instance, you may need to plant your windbreak a certain distance from buildings, ditches, waterways and electrical wires.**





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## “Which lawnmower should I choose?”

During the summer, mowing your lawn is a must. It can be a moment of relaxation for some, while others may see it as a chore. Whatever your perspective, having the right equipment is essential. If you're looking to buy a lawnmower but can't make sense of the numerous options available, these tips can help you make an informed decision.

### Consider the size and type of lawn

The larger your lawn, the more energy it takes to maintain it. If your yard is less than 15,000 square feet, an electric mower

will generally be quite efficient. However, the power cable could make it challenging to manoeuvre in hard-to-reach areas. In this case, a battery-powered mower could be a better option. A self-propelled gas-powered model might be suitable if your lawn is steeply sloped.

### Keep maintenance costs in mind

Different types of mowers require different levels of care. Unlike their battery-powered counterparts, gas-powered models must be regularly refuelled and topped up with oil. However, electric mo-

dels can lose their charging capacity over time, forcing you to replace the batteries. This can end up costing up to half of the original price of the mower.

Weigh the pros and cons. Remember that an advantage can hide a disadvantage. Electric and battery-powered mowers are lighter but less robust than gas-powered mowers. Plug-in models are less polluting, but the cable can easily get tangled. Manual reel mowers are still the most environmentally friendly option but require more physical effort.



What's the most critical feature for you? Durability? Ease of use? Low emissions? Make sure your choice

matches your preferences, and don't hesitate to ask a salesperson for advice before you buy.

## The importance of inspecting your roof: how to avoid unpleasant surprises

Every spring, it's a good idea to inspect your roof to see if it withstood the winter months. This will help you identify any problems and take necessary action. Here's what you need to know when doing a thorough visual inspection of your roof.

### SAFETY FIRST

Climbing onto your roof can be risky, so use appropriate safety equipment, including closed-toe, non-slip shoes, a sturdy ladder and a safety harness. Having someone help you stabilize the ladder and be available in an emergency is also a good idea.

Additionally, ensure the roof is dry before inspecting it. Choose a day with minimal wind and cool temperatures to avoid working on a screaming hot surface.

### THINGS TO CHECK

First, remove any debris, such as leaves. Then, inspect all accessible parts of the roof to identify problems such as:

- Standing water
- A damaged or deformed membrane
- An uneven gravel layer
- Cracked sealing joints
- Rusted or flimsy flashing
- Protruding nails
- Missing, broken or lifted shingles
- Mould

It's also a good idea to examine your attic, walls and ceilings while you're at it. Check for signs of water infiltration or poor ventilation. Unpleasant odours, mould, excessive moisture and peeling paint are telltale signs that something's amiss.

If you notice an issue, don't wait for it to worsen. Seek

professional help. If you're uncomfortable inspecting your roof, call a local roofing professional to get the most accurate assessment of your roof's condition.

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# Mobile mammography units making a difference in overall cancer screening



The mobile mammography unit in Carlyle this winter.

Continued from Page 9

**What difference is that second unit going to make for rural communities around Saskatchewan?**

That second unit is actually already on the road. It's currently in Wynyard, and will soon be heading to Lanigan.

When we had one unit, it allowed us to visit each of the 42 communities that we serve once every two years. Having the second unit will allow us to visit each of those communities once a year. With the expansion over the last few years of the breast screening age of availability from women 50 to 74 to women 40 to 74, there's a lot more participants in the breast screening program, and having that second bus and being able to visit those communities every year will support us in keeping up with the demand for breast screening.

**How many screenings are doing a year**

**now, and how many will you be able to do with the second unit?**

With both busses on the road, we'll be able to see about 15,000 breast screening patients a year. That's not quite double what we've been seeing previously.

**Are two units enough? Or will you be looking at adding more at some point?**

At the moment, we don't have any plans to add additional units. It's important for everybody to understand that in addition to those two units, we have dedicated breast screening sites in Saskatoon and Regina. We also have fixed mammography sites at hospitals in Swift Current, Moose Jaw, Yorkton, North Battleford, Lloydminster, and Prince Albert, and so among all of that, we believe that what we have now will support us in meeting the demand.

But we always monitor demand and our ability to provide the service very, very closely, and when we need to, we expand

hours, and if the demand continues to be there, we would certainly continue to re-evaluate and assess it.

**How do these mobile mammography units fit into the overall cancer program in Saskatchewan?**

Mobile mammography is designed for women who don't have symptoms, and by having regular screening, it allows us to pick up cancers or potential cancers far earlier. And really, the earlier we can identify a potential cancer, the better the treatment outcomes, the faster we can begin treatment. It's just so much better in terms of us providing timely care to our patients. So it's really key in ensuring we can be as effective as possible in catching and treating cancer.

**Is this something that other provinces offer, or is the mobile mammography program something that's unique to Saskatchewan?**

It is not unique to Saskatchewan. There are other jurisdictions in Western Canada that offer it.

**Is there potential for the mobile model of care to be expanded to other health care services?**

We certainly want to make sure that we're providing effective services close to home for people across the province. And the idea to provide service with this kind of model is certainly something we look at. At the moment, there are no immediate plans for any other services.

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# Sod turning for new water treatment plant at Kahkewistahaw

BY NICOLE TAYLOR

LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

Leaders, project partners and community members gathered on April 13 for a sod-turning ceremony marking the start of construction on a new \$23 million water treatment plant on Kahkewistahaw First Nation.

The project includes \$20.5 million in funding from Indigenous Services Canada and a \$2.5 million contribution from Kahkewistahaw First Nation, which will also support extending water lines to homes in the valley currently relying on wells and cisterns.

"There are a lot of good stories happening on Kahkewistahaw," said Chief Evan Taypotat.

"We're building a water treatment plant. Water is life. I'm proud to be chief of Kahkewistahaw, proud of my council for supporting this, and also proud of the people that support us as well, not only the membership, but our partners."

Taypotat said the First Nation identified the need for upgrades in 2017 as the current plant was aging.

"For us, our First Nation, we had a water treatment plant that's a little bit aged," he said. "I think it was important to ensure that we have something modern, something that we can use for generations to come."

The new facility is expected to serve the community for decades.

"We're going to have a state-of-the-art water treatment plant for a couple generations, if not three," Taypotat said.

Councillor Michael Bob said the project reflects a focus on long-term planning and stewardship.

"Our job is to set future generations up and future leadership up for success," he said. "This water treatment plant that's going behind us is doing just that."

Bob said the First Nation already takes pride in its water system.

"Right now in Kahkewistahaw, through our water purification system, we have the best water in Canada," he said. "This building behind us is just going to be an addition to that."

Part of the project will expand water access to homes in the valley.

"Down the valley, we have 10 or 12 homes that are off wells and off the system," Taypotat said. "We want to make sure that we get those homes the proper water lines as well."

He said the First Nation's \$2.5 million contribution will fund those connections.

"The \$2.5 million that the First Nation is putting in is to ensure that those homes in the valley have water lines coming from our plant," he said.

Construction is expected to take about 18 months.

"You plan for 18 months, but as you know in Saskatchewan, the weather can be a factor," Taypotat said. "If we're lucky, we'll be back here at a ribbon cutting not too long



Above, members from Kahkewistahaw First Nation, Corex Construction, BCL Engineering, SAL Engineering and Indigenous Services Canada at the Sod turning on the site of the new water treatment plant.

from now."

Corex has been awarded the contract following a competitive bidding process. Regina branch manager Kyle Fairbairn said the company plans to hire locally.

"We're the general contractor, so we are going to be boots on the ground here," he said. "We're definitely looking for labourers, we're looking for skilled carpenters, and we want you to be part of the new water treatment plant that we're going to be constructing."

"Thank you for inviting us into your community to be part of the ceremony here today, to share a meal with you," he said. "You're already extremely welcoming to us, and that's very important."

Brian Arnold of BCL Engineering said the project represents critical infrastructure for the community.

"In our minds, it's kind of like the heartbeat of the community," he said. "We are creating the water here, bringing it in from the well site, treating it here, and then pumping it out to the system."

"Good, clean drinking water provides so much opportunity for membership and the community to grow and prosper into the future," he added.

Michael Propp of SAL Engineering said the project has

been years in the making.

"This has been a bit of a long project," he said. "It started way back, I think over 10 years ago now. It more so started as an urgent repair project to keep the existing water plant running until this new one could be built."

"It's going to include a new water plant, a new well, a new well control building and generator for that as well, and that extension to the water distribution system," Propp said.

Taypotat said the investment is part of a broader effort to support growth and self-sufficiency on the First Nation.

"Our population is on a spike. We've got a lot of young kids in Kindergarten to Grade 6," he said. "Everything that we're planning at our level is ensuring that they're set up for success."

He said the long-term goal is to build capacity within the community.

"At the end of the day, we want to be sovereign," Taypotat said. "If we can self-serve in our community, whatever that may be, that's the goal."

The project is one of several recent developments in the community, including the reintroduction of a herd of buffalo earlier this month.



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# Quinn Hader running for Conservative nomination in Yorkton-Melville riding

BY NICOLE TAYLOR

LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

Yorkton school principal and city councillor Quinn Hader is running in the federal Conservative nomination race in the Yorkton-Melville riding as one of the candidates hoping to replace outgoing Conservative MP Cathay Wagantall after Wagantall announced she won't be running as the Conservative candidate in the next election.

Hader says the time seemed right for him to enter politics.

"I am happily married. I've been married for 27 years. My wife, Lana, just beat cancer, and was declared cancer free a little while ago. This past year has been very interesting, but she came through, and we are so blessed," he says. "We have two daughters. One of them is 23 and the other is 19. If this opportunity would have come around when they were younger, I would not have tried to become our next MP, because the kids would need their dad, but they are now in university. They don't need me any longer, other than paying for university, so things have worked out well.

"In terms of my career, I have been a school teacher for 33 years. I've been a school administrator since 2002 and I've been a school principal for 16 years. During that time, I've learned how to communicate with people and also give them good news, but also I know how to deal with folks when there's unfortunately bad news to be delivered. That's one of the benefits of being an administrator that long is you get to deal with a lot of people.

"I'm also a social studies teacher. For a long time, I taught kids about politics, and the more I taught about it, the more interested in it I became.

"In 2016 I decided to run for the City Council in Yorkton, and I have successfully run in three elections. I have been on City Council since 2016, so this is my third term, and I'm in my 10th year, which also would be a benefit if I became MP because I understand budgeting, and also have had to learn how to develop a thick skin, because when you're making decisions about people's money and taxes and things like that, you're not always the most popular person around."

Hader has also been involved in the Yorkton-Melville riding association.

"I was on Cathay Wagantall's board for quite a few years, as both the chair or the vice-chair, and got to know Cathay quite well. I attended the Conservative National Convention in Quebec a couple of years ago, and throughout all of that, I spoke to Cathay quite often about her role and the difference that she can make, and it really appealed to me.

"So when Cathay shared that she was not going to run again, that essentially she was retiring, all the stars seemed to align, meaning, I've had a very, very successful teaching career. I can retire from that and now move on to this, and the municipal experience I've gotten has been great as well. It has all lined up, so this is the perfect time for it to happen.

"I want to thank Cathay for all the work that she's done, and I would consider it an honor to replace her, those mighty big shoes that she's leaving behind for the constituents in the Yorkton-Melville riding."

Hader says affordability and federal debt are two things that he sees as issues for the Conservative party to tackle.



Quinn Hader

"When my mom and dad put my sister and myself through university, they scrimped and saved and we had to take out some small student loans to get through but when we got finished university, it didn't take very long for me to be able to afford a house and get a car. There was enough money to do it. Of course, I had to take out a mortgage and things like that, but I was able to kind of live and achieve the Canadian dream.

"My wife and I—I think we've done everything right. We invested lots of money into our ESPs for our kids. We're hopefully going to get them through university and have them convocate or graduate with a minimal amount of debt. But to be honest with you, I don't think they're going to be able to afford a house and car payments nearly as quickly as I did. And I think the main reason why I want to do this is to help lower the cost of living and provide more opportunities for the people who live here to give them an excellent shot at a wonderful future like I had, and hopefully even better than what I had.

"Another thing, the amount of debt that our federal government has taken on since the Liberals gained the power is quite frankly, staggering. And I guess people just kind of take it for granted. But what a lot of us are either forgetting about or we don't understand is eventually that debt is going to catch up with us, and my kids and their kids, and maybe even my great-grandkids are going to be on the hook to pay that debt off if we don't start to take care of things in a much more fiscally responsible way.

"So cost of living and the debt that our government has incurred would be two of the biggest things that I want to help change."

Hader says he has always been heavily involved in his

community and will continue to do that until nomination day as a way for people to get to know him. He has also been spending time in some of the rural communities in the riding.

"Within my city I've taken on a role of supporting groups that help the community, and volunteering my time to help out different groups. I am still trying to do those things. Today I'm going to help pick garbage in a park. That's important that our leaders contribute to the communities that they live in. Tomorrow afternoon, as soon as school is done and I put those kids on the bus, I'm heading over to our local McDonald's and participating in McHappy Day. It's a great cause, and I want to help it out, and I wanted to help promote that. So those are the things that I always do, and I'm going to keep doing those things.

"But in addition to those things, there's not enough hours in the day. I'm trying to meet with as many people as possible in as many different communities as I can. We've done a few tours to get out and meet people in some of the other communities. Our riding is massive, and I hope to get to as many communities as I possibly can before that vote takes place later this spring or early in the summer.

"I've had people reaching out to me and calling. It's really about the human connection, and one of my strengths is I think that I appeal to a large demographic. I'm not a one- or two-cause candidate. I want to be somebody who empowers as many people in our constituency as possible. I believe we've got great people, we've got knowledgeable people, and we've got hard working people who live here, and we've got the resources that the rest of the world wants and needs. So it's time to unleash those resources, empower our people, and I want to be one of the voices that helps them to do that."

What has he heard from people in the riding?

"Crime rates—people are very frustrated with the multiple chances that some of the most serious criminals seem to be getting, so we need to tighten up our laws and empower our RCMP as well as the people who put the bad guys in jail. We need to make sure that it sticks so that people aren't getting released," he says.

"I've also had multiple people that say to me, 'How do I know you're not going to cross the floor to Ottawa?' And the witty response that I came up with is, 'I'm a good Catholic kid. The only crossing I do is before and after I pray.' I believe that the Conservative Party has the right ideas, I would not cross the floor.

"And then, of course, there's the less than glowing relationship that exists right now between our closest ally and our longtime friend, the United States and how divisive that relationship has become. Cutting people down has never been my style when I've been a leader, nor will it ever be. I'm much more about 'Let's sit down. Let's figure this out. Let's come up with a solution that benefits both of us,' rather than insults and comments to discredit the other group. I think that's what eventually needs to happen, as soon as possible, between Canada and the United States. We need to restore that relationship."

Nominations for the candidacy race close on May 15, and those wanting to vote for a candidate must buy a Conservative Party membership by May 15.

The date for voting will be announced after nominations close.

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My colleague Daryl Harrison and I were in Kipling May 9 as the community celebrated Paralympic Gold Medalist Gil Dash.



At the opening ceremony of the National Aboriginal Hockey Championship.



Above: At the beautiful second location of Play Fair Daycare in Moosomin

Below and below right: Progress on the second location of Play Fair Daycare in Moosomin.



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How inspiring to be there for the annual meeting of Indian Head Wheels for Wellness. In a very short time period, Wheels for Wellness went from a concept to a reality and is providing rides for people from Indian Head and area to medical appointments and making a difference in people's lives.



Indian Head EMS superintendent Ron Ball and Indian Head Hospital Health Services Manager Aubrey Vogt at the Indian Head and District Health Foundation AGM.



The new 33-bed long term care facility taking shape at Grenfell. The facility is 25% complete.



The new 33-bed long-term care facility under construction in Grenfell. We have reduced the community cost of new facilities like this to 10% down from 20% under the NDP. It was a ridiculously high 35%.



With Levi Jamieson at a fundraiser for STARS in Grenfell. I am so inspired by Levi Jamieson and everything he does to give back!

# Some highlights from the spring session

Spring session was incredibly busy, but I managed to get around the riding quite a bit! Here are some of the highlights from the last month.

## Gil Dash in Kipling

My colleague Daryl Harrison and I were in Kipling Saturday, May 9 as the community celebrated Paralympic Gold Medalist Gil Dash. Gil was part of Team Canada, which took gold in wheelchair curling at the 2026 Paralympics and brought home the gold! Gil showed us that champions come from places like this. That world-class athletes come from small towns on the prairies. That the road to a gold medal can start in the Kipling rink. Thank you, Gil. You make Kipling proud and you make Saskatchewan proud!

## National Aboriginal Hockey Championships hosted by Ochapowace First Nation

On May 3, I was on stage at the Brandt Centre in Regina with my friend Chief Shelley Bear, my friend Chief Evan Taypotat, my friend Chief Charlie Bear, and some new friends at the opening of the National Aboriginal Hockey Championships hosted in Regina by Ochapowace First Nation. I was honored to bring greetings on behalf of Premier Scott Moe and the Government of Saskatchewan, and I thank Morley Watson for the great introduction—I'm glad he has noticed that I am in the stands for a few Round Lake Bears games. Those games are always a lot of fun and a real community event that brings nations together—I've been there when Cadmus Delorme is working the merch table and Chief Bear is pushing her snack cart—and there is always a lot of excitement in the rink! I had the chance to deliver a member statement on the championships last week.

## Grenfell Long-Term Care facility

Every time I'm in Grenfell, which is often, I check on construction of the new Grenfell Long-Term Care Home. And I'm usually not the only one, there is often a parade of vehicles around the site as people check it out.

The construction is on schedule, reaching 25 per cent completion last week.

Work to date includes wood framing, which is approximately 75 per cent complete, with roof trusses currently being installed. Foundation work and site utility installations are complete. Site services and rough grading are scheduled to begin in the 2026 construction season.

The new 33-bed long-term care home will include two spa tub rooms, a commercial kitchen, common living and dining spaces, administrative areas, a maintenance



garage and parking stalls. Onsite work began in July 2025 and substantial completion is anticipated by Spring 2027.

## Second location of Play Fair Daycare

It was great to see progress on the second location of Play Fair Daycare in Moosomin, now under construction, ahead of schedule, and on budget. Our government approved 90 new spots for Play Fair to expand to meet growing demand in a booming community, and provided about \$1 million in capital funding, and the board has done a great job on the project! It was purposefully designed to be home-like and not look like an institutional building. I'm so excited to see 90 excited kids bouncing around in this beautiful building this fall!

## Annual meeting of Indian Head Wheels for Wellness

How inspiring to be there for the annual meeting of Indian Head Wheels for Wellness. In a very short time period, Wheels for Wellness went from a concept to a reality and is providing rides for people from Indian Head and area to medical appointments and making a difference in people's lives. Congratulations to Mark and the entire board for all the work they have put in, and thank you to all the volunteers and donors for making a difference!

## STARS fundraiser with Levi Jamieson

I was happy to attend and speak at the Tragedy to Triumph fundraiser for STARS in Grenfell featuring Moosomin's Levi Jamieson and his story of recovery from an ATV accident that left him without the use of his legs.

Levi believes he wouldn't be with us today if not for STARS. Levi is an inspiration, an amazing young man, and is successfully farming in the Moosomin area and is continually giving back through initiatives like this! It

was a great turnout and a great fundraiser for STARS! Thanks to everyone who came out and showed their support!

## Indian Head Hospital Foundation

I was happy to be in Indian Head for the annual meeting of the Indian Head Hospital Foundation. I enjoyed speaking to the crowd and taking questions, and hearing about the work being done in Indian Head, the role of the foundation, and the growing number of patients for both Indian Head Hospital and EMS.

## Saskatchewan's Rural and Remote Recruitment Incentive

Great news for Montmartre! Saskatchewan's Rural and Remote Recruitment Incentive program is adding nine more communities, including Montmartre!

Montmartre, Beauval, Buffalo Narrows, Carlyle, Creighton, Craik, Davidson, Ituna, and Macklin can now offer incentive packages of up to \$50,000 for a three-year return-in-service for certain high-priority health occupations needed in their communities. The RRRI is supported by an investment of \$8.7 million in the 2026-27 budget to maintain and expand the program to support new participants.

"Strengthening our health care workforce is the foundation to putting patients first and ensuring the right care is available in the right place and at the right time," Health Minister Jeremy Cockrill said. "Offering incentives to fill high priority health care positions has successfully attracted hundreds of health care workers such as nurses, lab diagnostic and other professionals to both rural and northern communities across the province."

RRRI packages are offered to new, permanent full-time employees in nine high-priority health occupations in rural and remote communities experiencing or at risk of service disruptions due to staffing challenges.

Over 530 hard-to-recruit positions have been filled as a direct result of the RRRI program, which is key to stabilizing and strengthening health care services in rural and northern communities.

Participating communities have reported reduced reliance on contract nursing, the re-opening of acute care beds that were previously closed, fewer emergency room disruptions, and expanded bed capacity. These outcomes reflect previously funded RRRI investments and demonstrate the program's role in improving stability of care in participating communities.

## Reach out

Feel free to call me at 306-435-4005 or email office@kevinweedmark.ca



The Arcola rink was transformed into a curling rink that housed five sheets for games, with the curling rink holding another three sheets.



Laurie James of Arcola was one of many locals who participated in the Arcola 64-team bonspiel in March.

# Over \$108,000 raised at Arcola 64-Team Bonspiel

**By Stephanie Zoer**  
Arcola is a small community located on Highway 13, west of Carlyle. Although the town is small, when the community pulls together, they do big things and that was proven when the Arcola 64-Team Bonspiel for the 125th anniversary took place in March from the 25-29.

Warren Neuman was the chairman of the event that was held in Memory of Cody Grimes. Cody lost his battle against health issues a few years ago, but he was very active in the town. His brother Micky Grimes was the major sponsor of the event, and he also put a team in the bonspiel.

Over the course of the five days, many games were played and the Arcola Prairie Place Complex was filled with chatter and laughter. Many spectators came out to watch, and enjoy the meals that were provided by the two kitchens that were open at all times.

The opening ceremonies took place on March 27. At this event, Sheena Grimes spoke about her beloved husband and how he was involved in many sports in the community. Warren Neuman, the chairperson, welcomed everyone, and said

how glad he was that the event was finally taking place.

Over the course of the five days a whopping \$108,424.24 was raised.

"It exceeded our expectations," said Neuman. "I am very pleased, but still a little tired."

The committee is so grateful to all the people who stepped up to the plate to help out. It took a great deal of help, sponsors and teams to play to make this event so successful.

They plan to buy a new power scraper for the curling rink, with the remaining funds going into savings.

"The plant will have to be upgraded in the future, and it is prudent to start saving now," said Neuman. "The Recreation Board has control of the funds, and they many have different plans for the funds."

"I see a renewed interest in curling, so hopefully we can keep the momentum going and grow the club in the coming years," Neuman said.

It was a well-attended event where people had fun and it is an event that will go down in the books and be remembered for a very long time.



The Arcola 64 Team Bonspiel for the 125th anniversary was in memory of Cody Grimes, a beloved member of the Arcola community.

Stephanie Zoer photos



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- Kick-off Steak or Lobster Supper

**Wednesday, June 3**

- Chain Cutting Ceremony @ 9:45am
- Trade Show 10am - 5:30pm
- Awards Luncheon
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- **Quick Dick McDick**
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**Thursday, June 4**

- Safety Stand Down Breakfast featuring **'The Grizzly Dude'**
- Trade Show 9:00am - 3:00pm
- Group Tours 10:00am & 1:30pm
- Industry Luncheon featuring **W. Brett Wilson**

## Official Show Partners

# Moosomin airport receives grant for automated weather observing system

BY NICOLE TAYLOR

LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

The Moosomin Airport has been selected to receive a provincial Community Airport Partnership grant of up to \$136,500 for an Automated Weather Observing System (AWOS).

An AWOS is a fully automated weather station that continuously measures critical aviation conditions such as wind speed and direction, temperature, visibility, cloud height, and precipitation.

Jeff St. Onge with the Moosomin Airport Committee says the AWOS system will make a big difference in terms of safety and pilots being able to land at the Moosomin airport.

"These systems run anywhere from \$275,000 to \$375,000 depending on what you put in," he says. "The entry level system is \$275,000 and there are two more things we'd like to add after that. One is measuring for thunderstorms, and the other is for freezing rain. Thunderstorms you can see on your radar, but nobody has something to detect the freezing rain."

St. Onge explains how the AWOS system works. "There doesn't have to be any human intervention, it's automated, and every hour on the hour, it will put out a report, and the report is available over the airwaves. So as a pilot, if you're flying in, you'll have a frequency and you will dial in to that frequency, and you'll hear this continuous report. It will tell you 'winds out of the north gusting at this of that angle, barometric pressure, or the clouds are at this height."

"It helps pilots to predict what weather they're flying into. Also, one of the things that is incredibly important to a pilot is to know how high they are compared to the ground. And you do that on an airplane with an altimeter that you adjust to the barometric pressure, and it will tell you how high are. That keeps moving, and every time that dial moves your distance to the ground is impacted by it."

"They have to come down to 447 feet, and then either they can land or they can't. If we have an AWOS, they come down to 250 feet. Why the difference? The difference is they have to use AWOS out of Yorkton, and then we pay a penalty. You pay a premium for every mile away from Yorkton you are. The further away they are, the bigger the penalties. So you want your AWOS as close as possible. So that's why we need one here to get that minimum that we need."

How does this change things for Moosomin airport? "There have been a number of times when we'll have a flight that was unable to come in because the minimums were just too high," says St. Onge. "In the last year and a half that I've been watching it, there have been a couple of flights that would have been able to come in, or would



Right: The installation of an AWOS at Moosomin Airport will significantly improve aviation safety and accessibility.

have had the potential to come in, because the a AWOS would have given us that other 200 feet that we're missing. It will increase our availability, and it increases the pilot safety. Before they come, they already know what to expect. And sometimes it's as simple as that safety net before you get here. There's a saying in aviation—don't fly anywhere you haven't been five minutes ahead of time. It really does increase cockpit safety."

St. Onge says that some other airports in the region, such as Virden and Yorkton have AWOS systems to assist pilots.

He says the plan is to have the AWOS system in place some time this summer.

"We're putting together an RFP right now and then we'll put that out on Sask Tenders. Let's say that by the end of May, we've got our tender in place. We've got June, July, and August to put concrete in the ground and towers up."

St. Onge says he was excited to hear that Moosomin received the CAPP grant for the system.

"I was absolutely, thrilled because the pilots will call me ahead of time, and they will ask what's it like today and I do something called a runway condition report, and that's something I can do relatively accurately, because I can drive out there, drive my vehicle up and down, tell them how slippery it is, what the snow is doing. But what I'm unable to do is tell them what the cloud ceiling is."

"So it really helps us out with running the airport."

"It's about lowering the minimums, and that increases the amount of flights that can come in and pilot safety."

"There have been a number of times when we'll have a flight that was unable to come in because the minimums were just too high," says St. Onge. "In the last year and a half that I've been watching it, there have been a couple of flights that would have been able to come in, or would have had the potential to come in, because the a AWOS would have given us that other 200 feet that we're missing. It will increase our availability, and it increases the pilot safety. Before they come, they already know what to expect. And sometimes it's as simple as that safety net before you get here. There's a saying in aviation—don't fly anywhere you haven't been five minutes ahead of time. It really does increase cockpit safety."

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# Plain & Valley

Covering Southeast Saskatchewan and Southwest Manitoba

May 2026 • Page 25



A scene from Creative Vision Productions' last performance, which was *Footloose* in 2024. This year they will be performing *Come From Away*.

## Creative Vision Productions performing 'Come From Away' this November

BY NICOLE TAYLOR  
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

Creative Vision Productions will be performing the musical *Come From Away* on November 13, 14 and 15 in Moosomin and is looking for volunteers to help bring the production to life.

*Come From Away* is a musical based on the true story of what transpired when 38 planes were ordered to land unexpectedly in Gander, Newfoundland, on September 11, 2001. With the town's population of 9,000 swelling by nearly 7,000 stranded airline passengers, the residents of Gander and area opened their hearts and homes, welcoming 'plane people' with warmth and kindness.

The musical highlights themes of community, resilience and compassion, showcasing the profound connections formed between the locals and the passengers during a time of crisis. As they navigate fear, uncertainty and cultural differences, both groups discover the transformative power of empathy and human connection.

"We will have 12 people that can play all the roles," says Sandra Poole with Creative Visions. "Everybody's going to play, somebody from Gander, Newfoundland and somebody from away, which is the way the play is set up. Every person has multiple roles within the show itself."

Poole says rights for the musical to be performed by amateur theatre companies just opened up and Moosomin will be one of the first communities to put on an amateur production of the musical.

"We had actually chosen a different play, but I could not get the rights for it because it's too popular," she says. "On my email one day, I was looking to see if we finally got the rights, and it said 'Welcome to The Rock', and that's the first line of the show, so I knew we could perform it."

"We've both seen the show. It's so powerful and impactful," says Sherrie Meredith with Creative Visions. "It's a great show for collaboration, and I think it's a new challenge for us, too. We've never done a show with a

smaller cast, and that requires everyone to be cast and crew at the same time. I think we're always looking for a new adventure, and so this is a new creative outlet for Sandra and I as well to try with all our creative people in this area."

Both Poole and Meredith say that everyone remembers the 9/11 tragedy, and *Come From Away* is an uplifting Canadian story that touches people when they see it.

"When I told people that we were going to be doing this, they all remembered where they were that day," says Poole. "They all have stories about where they were. Tannis Kelly was a flight attendant at the time, and she remembers exactly where she was and what her friends were doing. Desiree Neville was in Halifax honeymooning. People just remember where they were. It touches our hearts."

*Continued on page 27* <sup>ESP</sup>



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- Sheep Scramble during intermission
- The Truco Trick riders and wild ponies following rodeo performance
- 9<sup>pm</sup> Saturday night - DJ Platinum Music in the Beer Gardens

## SUNDAY

- 9<sup>am</sup> Pancake Breakfast at Kennedy Friendship Centre
- 11<sup>am</sup> Cowboy Church Service at the Rodeo Grounds
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- The Truco Trick riders and wild ponies following rodeo performance



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# Creative Vision Productions performing 'Come From Away' this November

Continued from page 25

"I also think that, it doesn't matter if you were even born at that time. It affected our world so greatly," says Meredith. "This part of 9/11 is almost like an untold story of the event. Everyone knows about everything that happened in the States because of it, but this is something that Canada was able to help with and not enough people know about it."

"It's got humor, it's got story, it's got amazing music and fun characters, but yet it tells a really important message about being there for one another."

Poole and Meredith says they can't wait to see local people perform the play.

"I think the storyline itself is such so compelling, and when I went to see it, that's what drew me in," says Poole. "But I think it's always different when you see people you know doing those things too. We have such a talented pool out there that I think it's a nice new challenge for our company as well."

This will be one of the first plays that Creative Visions has done with a smaller cast and both Poole and Meredith say there will be some challenges with that.

"One challenge we will have to face is that there is no intermission," says Poole. "Everything happens right away. The set changes that Sherrie has so magically done in the past, she's going to have to sprinkle more of her magic, because it happens right then and there. The dialects are going to be challenging for our actors. To flip between characters and remember that you are a Texan in one scene and a Newfie in the next could be a learning curve."

"The most rewarding thing for me is always the process and seeing people grow. It's seeing people come together and become a real family as we do this. They always have each other's backs, and it's always amazing to see how much people come into their own during these productions."

"The band is also another thing that me will have to figure out. Most of the music in Come From Away is played by a Celtic band, not a traditional pit orchestra. We'll need to put a team together of people that can play those instruments, and we will need people to help with promotion and sales. There are many jobs that still need to be filled," said Meredith.

"This is a different type of production than we've generally done. You don't need lots of makeup and elaborate costumes, because we're going to be playing real people. The challenges are just different."

Both Meredith and Poole put in countless hours of their time to bring the Creative Vision productions to life each time. Why do they do it?

"I do this and all the work that comes with it for the love of seeing people that we love on the stage," says Poole. "We have an amazing bunch of people within this area,

and it is just so fun to work with them. I love it because it gives us an opportunity to share everyone's creativity and work together," Poole said.

"Every time we do this, we create a family and our own community within the production," Meredith says. "Each year it feels like we are starting a new sports team, and we grow and learn together to be the best we can be. Even after people have been in previous shows and move on to

other things, they still keep those connections they made for the rest of their lives.

"I hope that people from the community will appreciate this show, because it is that Canadian story, and I hope people will want to come out and see it."

Poole and Meredith says they are encouraging lots of different kinds of people to get involved with the production by calling or texting 306-434-9600.

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# Farmers and Friends bonspiel raises \$182,000

BY DONNA BEUTLER  
 Whitewood has proudly hosted the annual Farmers and Friends Bonspiel for nine years running and, in that time has raised over \$1 million, including this year's fundraising amount totaling \$182,000.

As of 2025, with the \$170,000 raised that year, the event had reached the \$900,000 mark. It has been a remarkable commitment of time and effort for the committee and the many volunteers and others who make this event the great one it is.

The bonspiel committee—including Chair Chad Kelly, Jennalee Beutler, Braeden Restau, Jason Krupski, Scott Mannle and Warren Delmage—met on the evening of April 21 for a photo opp and to announce the total funds raised and where the proceeds have gone or will be going to.

From the \$182,000 raised, rental of the Whitewood Community Centre added to \$22,300. The Whitewood Grad class and Minor Hockey received \$2,210 in 50/50 proceeds and the Whitewood 4-H Beef Club received \$1,800 for catering supper during the weekend's event.

Several volunteer groups who worked bar shifts and served wings, including Whitewood Fire Fighters, Wiggles and Giggles Daycare, Grenfell Curling Club, Wapella Blackhawks, Kipling Friendship Centre, and Whitewood Figure Skating, received a total of \$6,200.

The local curling club in Whitewood was the recipient of \$15,000 which will go toward their operating expenses and \$5,000 will go toward the youth curling program that the Whitewood Curling Club runs.



From left to right are Jennalee Beutler, Braeden Restau, Chad Kelly, Scott Mannle, Jason Krupski, and Warren Delmage, all members of the Whitewood Farmers & Friends Committee who met April 21, 2026 to release the total dollar amount raised in this year's event.

Donna Beutler photo

A grant program was established through the Farmers and Friends bonspiel committee and this year, the amount that will be given out to grant recipients in the coming weeks will total \$129,490.

A total of 80 teams curled in this year's event with the Whitewood Community Centre using four rinks on the curling side of the building and five rinks on the skating rink side of the building. The event includes both U15 and a U18 event. The bonspiel draws curlers from a wide area of the province and beyond to curl over a period of four days at the end of March every year.

## Training available to producers planning to participate in Strychnine Stewardship Program

Online training is now available for producers planning to participate in Saskatchewan's Strychnine Stewardship Program. The training is a required step for producers in eligible rural municipalities (RMs) seeking access to two per cent liquid strychnine for targeted control of Richardson's ground squirrel (RGS) infestations.

"Those planning to use strychnine are encouraged to complete training as early as possible to access supplies once they are available," Agriculture Minister David Marit said.

Training is one component of the Strychnine Stewardship Program, which is available in 208 RMs through an Emergency Use Registration (EUR) outlined by Health Canada's Pesticides Regulatory Directorate. The EUR is in effect until November 2027.

The 90-minute online training course, available through the Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities, addresses responsible strychnine use, environmental protection, integrated pest management and pesticide safety. A

mandatory Treatment Plan and Declaration Form is also required to become a certified strychnine user.

Training can be accessed at [sarm.ca/strychnine-stewardship-training](http://sarm.ca/strychnine-stewardship-training).

Participating RM offices will distribute strychnine to certified users later this spring. An initial, limited supply of strychnine is expected in early June, followed by additional monthly shipments. Strychnine will be distributed evenly among participating RMs with a per-producer cap to manage supply.

As the spring application window closes on June 15, producers are encouraged to use alternative registered rodenticides, as well as biological and cultural controls, for RGS control in the next month.

Strychnine inventories are expected to increase during the July 15 to September 1 application window.

For full details on the Strychnine Stewardship Program, including a complete list of participating RM offices and information on integrated pest management for RGS control, visit [Saskatchewan.ca/RGS-Control](http://Saskatchewan.ca/RGS-Control).

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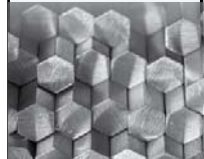
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# Is spring just teasing us?

"Sure, farming can be stressful at times, but at least the pay is pretty bad and the hours suck." I don't know who wrote that statement or I would credit it appropriately but I so relate to it. I also relate to the video of the farmer hitting the rapids in a canoe, bouncing sky high as he tries to avoid the 'rocks' of "high fertilizer prices," "high fuel prices," and "low crop prices." It can be a bumpy ride, one that I have been on for 49 years and counting, hubby even longer.

At one time, when I was oh so young and optimistic, I wanted nothing more than to be on a tractor, in a field, working the land. Summerfalling, picking rocks, harrowing, haying or combining. Even calving cows (on a very small scale) appealed to me if it didn't involve needles, C-sections or dying animals. It's very true, I was not cut out to be a cattle farmer. Probably not a grain farmer either when it comes right down to it but it is what I have come to know and it's been my life now much longer than it hasn't.

Spring has sprung sort of, at least at the time of me writing this. Or perhaps it's just teasing us. Nice day here, one there, miserable the next and snow to boot. On one beautiful day in the middle of April, hubby and I tackled installing a new exterior door on our rental garage. We allowed two hours but ran into a snag or two and it ended up taking six. It was an unfortunate thing the old siding on that old garage didn't quite allow the door to fit in and the trimming of that siding was a bit more time-consuming than we anticipated. Fortunately, the lockset went in without a hitch! We were quite pumped — spring had finally arrived. So spring-like was it that I pulled the riding mower out and gave the rental yard and our yard both a nice trimming up. The green of the grass was noticeable and despite the dust I stirred up, I was so happy to be outdoors.

I probably don't have to tell you Saskatchewan folks what we woke up to the following morning. There was not a speck of

grass to be seen under the several inches of snow that had fallen. Highways were crazy bad, the cold temperatures meant retiring the shorts I had just started wearing the day before, and the gazebo, so freshly cleaned out and ready for the season was now filled with snow. I guess I untarped it one day too soon!

And so, April rolls along, sometimes snowy and sometimes warm and sunny. On April 9, 1977, we had the driest, sunniest, hottest day ever, so much so that we were sweltering in our dresses and tuxedos. In the 49 years since, we have never had quite the same type of day, weather-wise, as our wedding day, although once over that time period, there was one fairly nice day. It was so fortunate hubby was really sick with the flu on our honeymoon, fevered and chilled and miserable, that he didn't even complain about not being able to be in the field until about three-quarters the way home from our week-long trip to the west coast and back.

On our first anniversary, with lots of snow still on the ground, we decided we would head for Santa Fe, New Mexico for a few days. Oh to be young and drive that far in such a short period of time. One night on our way home, we decided to save some money on a motel room and sleep for a few hours at a roadside rest stop along the interstate north of Denver, Colorado. The plan was to carry on to the Black Hills of South Dakota the following day. Unfortunately, our car (a lovely two-door Olds Cutlass) wouldn't start when we were ready to get on the road. The date was April 19 and it was warm enough to sleep in the car without it running, so imagine our panic when it wouldn't start. The car didn't come with factory cruise control so we had had it installed prior to our trip and though we didn't know it at the time, putting the steering wheel up had caused the problem because once we lowered the wheel, all was fine!

I happened to be behind the wheel as we turned off the interstate to head east towards Lusk, Wyoming



and out of nowhere a horrible blizzard blew in along with a good foot of snow. The secondary highway didn't have shoulders and I couldn't see where I was going. Stopping to let hubby drive was not an option and all we could do was roll the passenger window down for hubby to try spot the reflectors that stood along the highway. It took forever to reach Lusk and by the time we rolled into town, a bit before noon, we could tell that the few hotels that were there at that time were filled right up. After waiting for a couple of hours, we were able to get a room and basically sleep the day (and night) away. I am pretty sure trying to save a few dollars really saved us nothing in the end.

The twins (nearly 15 now), outdoorsmen through and through, have returned from an ice fishing trip up north to the fishing lodge and while they await their next trip up to camp, they are keeping busy outdoors. I can't be sure, but I think their washing machine must run steady just to keep up with the mud on their ski pants and their blue jeans. It's a busy life when there are creeks to conquer and cows to feed and muddy terrain to traverse on ATV's. I am reminded that I was once in the same shoes — trying to keep ahead of the mud and the laundry during spring all because of the outdoorsman the twins' dad was when he was their age.

Today, as I write this (April 21), with temperatures in the mid-20's and awaiting another unwelcome blast of rain and snow, the farm grands are busy outdoors, working with their 4-H cattle, giving the golf clubs a bit of

move to the farm. And then I remembered the forecast and thought there was absolutely no point just yet.

A few days ago, I sent individual texts to the twins, one who always responds and one who never does. The question was, "What do you want for your birthday?" And instantly, the one who never responds, answered: "Vacuum sealer." And there you have it. A good vacuum sealer apparently is a necessity.

The Lunch Bunch continues to come by at noon hours and the talk around the table today turned to summer jobs they might have someday — what they might like to do in a year or two down the road and what kind of jobs might be available. I told them it

would likely be cool to have a job up north at a fishing camp some summer but that they maybe wouldn't like to be there for an entire summer. I was wrong! It sounds like the young men around the table thought an entire summer up north would be the perfect job!

And while these youngsters, all 13 to 15 years of age, talk of summer jobs, here's hoping life on your farm this season is a good one. There's no feeling quite like it to be out pulling those air drills through the ground and smelling the fresh earth. Happy seeding to all our farmer friends out there and to everyone else, enjoy the sunshine and great outdoors once the spring weather smartens up.

## TAX ENFORCEMENT LIST Rural Municipality of Browning No. 34 PROVINCE OF SASKATCHEWAN

Notice is hereby given under *The Tax Enforcement Act*, that unless arrears and costs appearing opposite the land and title number described in the following list are fully paid before the 15th day of July, 2026, a tax lien will be registered against the land.

Note: A sum for costs in an amount required by subsection 4(3) of *The Tax Enforcement Act* is included in the amount shown against each parcel.

Assessment ID	Description of Property						Total Arrears and Costs
	Part of Lot	Lot	BLK.	PLAN	Subdivision of Hamlet	Title No.	
Part of Section	Section	TWP.	RGE.	Meridian			
000116100	NE	16	4	4	2	152831954	\$3,056.96
000116200	NW	16	4	4	2	152831943	\$3,153.37
000122100	NE	22	4	4	2	157355860	\$806.94
000122101			A	101226114		157355859	\$45.68
000127100	NE	27	4	4	2	152832102	\$3,081.27
000127200	NW	27	4	4	2	152832045	\$3,123.40
000127300	SE	27	4	4	2	152832124	\$2,533.03
000127310			A	102271610		152831910	\$419.65
000127400	SW	27	4	4	2	152832090	\$3,165.26
000134100	NE	34	4	4	2	152832001	\$3,113.95
000134200	NW	34	4	4	2	152831987	\$3,089.37
000134400	SW	34	4	4	2	152832023	\$3,129.07
000508100	9	8	5	5	2	152150183	\$996.35
	10	8	5	5	2	152150194	
	15	8	5	5	2	152150206	
	16	8	5	5	2	152150217	
000508200	NW	8	5	5	2	152150228	\$791.55
000508300	SE	8	5	5	2	152150172	\$887.69
000509101	15	9	5	5	2	106998249	\$1,159.16
000529300	SE	29	5	5	2	152150105	\$654.63
000529400	SW	29	5	5	2	152150149	\$731.06
000536410			A	102400681		156827380	\$1,781.31
000603400	SW	3	5	6	2	145152031	\$701.08
000623100	NE	23	5	6	2	152150059	\$668.14
000623200	NW	23	5	6	2	152150060	\$665.17
000626400	SW	26	5	6	2	152150037	\$510.19
	SW	26	5	6	2	152150048	
000628400	SW	28	5	6	2	153654633	\$615.21
000826100	NE	26	6	5	2	107381460	\$821.52
000835300	SE	35	6	5	2	149740016	\$862.28
505002750		10	3	L1736	Wilmar	108422580	\$65.68
505002800		11	3	L1736	Wilmar	108422344	\$368.42
		12	3	L1736	Wilmar	108422366	
		13	3	L1736	Wilmar	108422388	
		14	3	L1736	Wilmar	108422401	
		15	3	L1736	Wilmar	108422423	
		16	3	L1736	Wilmar	108422445	
505003600			F	60A00238	Wilmar	108421680	\$69.10
505005300			J	101246004	Wilmar	107013923	\$911.68

Dated this 15th day of May, 2026.

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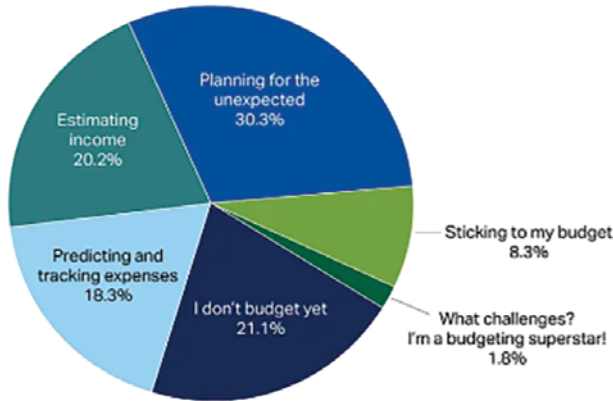
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# Do you have the two budgets your farm needs?

BY ALLISON FINNAMORE

A budget is a plan for the future, yet the unpredictability of farming makes it tough to produce an accurate forecast. There's an endless list of expenses that can arise: What will crop prices be? Will my herd get sick? Will I need equipment repairs or purchases?

It's questions like these that make budgeting for farms complex. Many producers say planning for the unexpected is their biggest challenge when it comes to budgeting.



Source: Poll results from Mastering Your Farm Budget webinar

## Why do you need a budget for the farm?

While the unpredictability of farming makes it tough to plan, that uncertainty is one of the biggest reasons to build and monitor your budget. When you have a comprehensive understanding of the numbers of your farm business paired with a regularly reviewed budget, you're in a better position to respond to the unexpected and make informed decisions with confidence.

## Two budgets to use for cash flow management success

Establishing budgets, even simple ones, is a critical first step in cash flow management – the lifeblood of any farm business.

Audrée Morin, a Business Advisor at FCC, says a strong operating budget should become your goal post for the upcoming year, while the monthly cash flow budget provides the clarity you need to achieve the year-end goal.

"The operating budget and monthly cash flow will be the catalyst to help you decide where you want to dig deeper into your operation and have a pulse on your year-end success," Morin says.

The two most important tools in cash flow management are the operating budget and the cash flow budget. Together, they provide a comprehensive view of your financial situation, allowing you to monitor your cash flow, identify potential issues, and take proactive measures to ensure you have sufficient cash on hand to meet your obligations and pursue growth opportunities.

## Operating budget

An operating budget focuses on the day-to-day operations of the farm and answers the question, "Will I be profitable?" It projects your revenue and expenses over a certain period, typically a year, using accrual accounting principles. That means the operating budget reflects the expected revenues and expenses as they are anticipated to be earned or incurred during the budget period, regardless of cash flow timing. It allows you to set financial goals, allocate resources, and make informed decisions about your operations.

Continued on page 37 <sup>ESP</sup>

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Kevin Weedmark took this aerial photo of crops near Moosomin last year.

# Sask reviewing farm land ownership

The Government of Saskatchewan announced on April 14 that it will undertake a comprehensive review of The Saskatchewan Farm Security Act, including additional public and stakeholder consultations after an initial review conducted by the Farm Land Ownership Advisory Committee.

"This review will ensure any potential changes to The Saskatchewan Farm Security Act are done right and continue to meet the needs of Saskatchewan producers," Agriculture Minister David Marit said.

The Advisory Committee met with leaders in the agricultural, real estate, legal and financial services sectors as well as conducted their own research into farm land ownership. Their work confirmed

there is no evidence of foreign ownership of Saskatchewan farm land under the current legislative framework. This aligns with the Provincial Auditor's report, which found no instances of unauthorized foreign ownership.

The comprehensive review will explore opportunities to improve ownership verification, strengthen penalty and enforcement tools, modernize definitions, and strengthen reporting obligations and oversight of permanent residents. The review will also consider other components of the Act not reviewed by the Advisory Committee, including farm security and home quarter protection, to ensure ongoing relevance and effectiveness.

"The outcome of our outreach was very informative with no evidence of foreign

ownership reported," Farm Land Ownership Advisory Committee Chairperson Ken McDonald said. "We feel this legislative review will help ensure the province's farm land stays in the hands of Canadian

farmers and that there will be a positive path forward for the next generation."

*Continued on Page 39*



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# Current farmland values are anything but 'dirt cheap'

BY JUSTIN SHEPHERD, FCC SENIOR ECONOMIST

The term "dirt cheap" was first recorded in 1819 according to the Merriam-Webster dictionary and is defined as being extremely inexpensive. While this idiom may have accurately described soil, dirt, or land prices centuries ago, farmland today plays a significant role by supplying food, feed, fuel, and fiber globally. Moreover, for most grain and oilseed producers—including those in Canada—farmland represents their primary asset reflected on their balance sheets.

The average value of Canadian farmland continued its steady ascent in 2025, with an increase of 9.3%, the exact same appreciation as last year. However, while the national number is the same, the provinces and regions which make that up shifted. Alberta, Manitoba, New Brunswick, and Prince Edward Island all increased at higher rates than the prior year and the largest decline was seen in British Columbia. In general, growth in values continue to be supported by limited supply of farmland for sale, slightly lower interest rates, and strong margins from 2021-2023.

This post marks the third consecutive year of our in-depth analysis into the underlying factors driving farmland value growth. We investigate the relationship between Canadian grain and oilseed margins and subsequent increases in farmland values. For this year, we have introduced a comparative study of cropland values between Canada and the United States.

### Canadian cultivated farmland values are correlated with margins

It is not a leap to think that higher grain and oilseed margins for producers are connected to the ability to potentially pay more for farmland during the following year. Better margins and cashflow lead producers to be more interested and in a better financial place to expand the following year, supporting demand for cultivated farmland. For example, average Canadian farmland values grew 13% in 2022 which was supported by strong grain and oilseed margins of 31% in 2021 (Figure 1).

Margins dropped but stayed historically high in both 2022 and 2023 and farmland values grew again in the following two years. However, when we get into 2025, we need a deeper dive as we see Canada's 9.3% growth in farmland values, but margins in 2024 were considerably tighter than the prior 3 years. For some producers, coming off multiple good years likely left them in a strong financial position. In ad-

dition, the supply of land was tight which helped support prices.

Can we draw any forward-looking conclusions from this? We know margins tightened further in 2025 for most grain and oilseed producers and we must look even further back in time to find those higher margin years. On the supply side, how much land comes on the market will continue to play a major part as well. Overall, it looks like cultivated farmland growth should slow this year.

### Comparing Canadian cultivated farmland value growth to the U.S.

To begin, it is important to acknowledge the complexities inherent in comparing two neighbouring countries with distinct characteristics. Although some provinces and states share similar agricultural practices and climatic conditions, the United States possesses farmland located sufficiently south to offer year-round warm environments, whereas Canada has northern regions where farmland remains snow-covered for much of the year. The types of crops cultivated, and the respective ownership restriction policies introduce further variables that may influence outcomes.

Additionally, there are variations in how Canadian farmland values are calculated. To address this, we have determined a Canadian cultivated farmland value weighted by crop acres only and compared it to an equivalent U.S. value. Conversion of U.S. values into Canadian dollars allows for a more accurate comparison. Therefore, this analysis will focus exclusively on national figures for each country and maintain a straightforward approach.

*Continued on page 38*

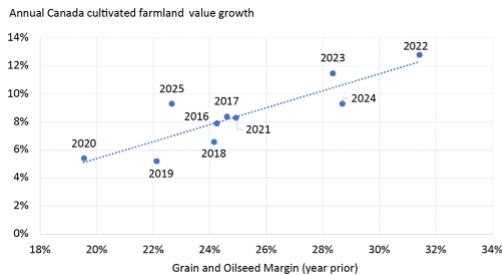


Figure 1: Canadian cultivated farmland values are connected to prior season margins Sources: Statistics Canada, FCC Economics

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# Saskatchewan value added agriculture revenue reaches record \$8.4 billion

**Value-added Agriculture**

**Record \$8.4 billion in revenue for 2024-25**

March 2024-March 2025  
Source: Statistics Canada

Saskatchewan's value-added agricultural sector is showing steady growth, reaching a record \$8.4 billion in revenue for 2024-25, almost double the amount achieved 10 years ago.

"Thanks to the strength of this sector and the quality of our crops and livestock, Saskatchewan is on track to achieve its Growth Plan target of \$10 billion in value-added agriculture revenue by 2030," Agriculture Minister David Marit said. "Recent plant openings and expansions demonstrate investor confidence in the province and position us for future growth."

"With more than 300 food processors employing over 5,000 people, value-added agriculture is playing a vital role in providing food security to over 160 countries across the globe," Trade and Export Development Minister Warren Kaeding said. "It also strengthens Saskatchewan's economy by keeping more value in the province, increasing investment, creating jobs and building opportunities here at home."

Man wearing hair net and safety goggles in food processing plant dressed in lab coat standing by conveyor belt, the text reads "Value-added Agriculture, Record \$8.4 billion in revenue for 2024-25, March 2024-March 2025, Source: Statistics Canada"

In 2024-25, food manufacturing made up close to 95 per cent of the province's total value-added revenue (2024-25 numbers are based on preliminary estimates provided by Statistics Canada). Saskatchewan's food manufacturing value increased by 150 per cent between 2012 and 2024, surpassing other provinces in the percentage increase.

Saskatchewan is also on track to achieve its Growth Plan target of processing 75 per cent of canola grown in the province with the opening of Cargill's new Regina facility and the expansion of the Louis Dreyfus Company (LDC) canola crush plant in Yorkton.

The Government of Saskatchewan and partners hosted the Agri-Value Forum and Networking Event April 30 to May 1 in Saskatoon. More than 150 people from the value-added industry including food processors, suppliers, investors and government representatives attended.

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# New Farm Stress Line partnership delivers enhanced mental health services for ag sector

As of April 1, SaskAgMatters Mental Health Network Inc. will manage the Farm Stress Line as part of a coordinated mental health support system for Saskatchewan producers, their family members and their employees. The new partnership offers 24/7 confidential access to crisis line counsellors trained in agriculture, as well as follow-up counselling sessions with Saskatchewan-based registered mental health professionals with backgrounds in agriculture.

The Government of Saskatchewan and Government of Canada are providing \$200,000 per year for the next two years for the Farm Stress Line and counselling services through the Sustainable Canadian Agriculture Partnership (Sustainable CAP).

"Farmers withstand unique demands and challenges that affect not only their physical health, but also mental wellbeing," Federal Agriculture and Agri-Food Minister Heath MacDonald said. "This partnership ensures that when members of our agricultural community reach out, they are connected with a mental health professional who truly understands their reality."

"People working in agriculture face stressful work conditions affecting their livelihood and wellbeing," Agriculture Minister David Marit said. "They need support from mental health professionals who understand the industry and who will ensure confidentiality for those who reach out. The Farm Stress Line has a proud history of supporting the agricultural community, and these improved services will help protect the health of people working in the sector."

The Farm Stress Line toll-free number - 1-800-667-4442 - will stay the same. Producers can call about anything affecting their wellbeing, including financial stress, family pressures, anxiety, depression, burnout or concern for someone else.

Rancher on a horse overlooking a

golden field. Top text reads "Protecting Producers Mental Health." Main text on the graphic reads "The Farm Stress Line is available 24/7 at 1-800-667-4442." On the bottom of the graphic the logos read "Farm Stress Line Saskatchewan, Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership, Canada and Saskatchewan."

SaskAgMatters is a Saskatchewan-based organization of producers and mental health professionals. The organization is enhancing its local counselling services through a partnership with the Canadian Centre for Agricultural Wellbeing to provide crisis support services from counsellors with agricultural training through the National Farmer Crisis Line.

"SaskAgMatters was founded to break down the barriers that Saskatchewan farm families face when trying to get help," SaskAgMatters board chair and co-founder Cynthia Beck said. "We have removed the time and stress involved in finding a mental health professional and cover the financial cost of these services. Our counsellors offer flexible appointment times and will meet by telephone or virtually."

"Through our research, we listened to Saskatchewan farmers and ranchers," Associate Professor, College of Nursing, University of Saskatchewan, and co-founder of SaskAgMatters Dr. Michelle Pavloff said. "Their experiences guided this new approach to mental health support, including a refreshed Farm Stress Line and access to therapy provided by those who understand agriculture, either through lived experience or training. This work was built with producers, and we are proud to be advancing farmer mental health in Saskatchewan."

Sustainable CAP is a five-year, \$3.5 billion investment by federal, provincial and territorial governments to strengthen competitiveness, innovation, and resiliency of Canada's agriculture, agri-food, and agri-based products sector. This in-

cludes \$1 billion in federal programs and activities, and a \$2.5 billion commitment that is cost-shared 60 per cent federally

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## Rethinking farm financing with a cash advance

Thinking about your cash flow and financing plans for this growing season? If you're looking for a way to stretch your operating dollars a bit further, it might be time to take a closer look at a cash advance from CCGA.

Canadian Canola Growers Association offers below-prime farm financing with the Advance Payments Program (APP) cash advance. The 2026 advance includes up to \$1 million in total financing. The first \$250,000 is interest-free on all commodities, plus an additional \$250,000 interest-free on canola. Any additional interest-bearing amount is at CCGA's rate of prime less 0.25%.

"For those who haven't taken a cash advance before, this year is a good time to consider it, given how costs continue to increase," says Dave Gallant, Vice-President, Finance & APP Operations at CCGA. "Farmers can significantly reduce financing costs, saving thousands to tens of thousands of dollars annually."

Cash advances are available on over 50 commodities, including all major field crops, honey, and large and small livestock, and offer flexibility on how the funds are used.

"Put an advance to work in whatever way works best on your farm: finance your operating costs, buy fuel, fertilizer, or feed, make necessary equipment repairs, or complete maintenance and upgrades," says Gallant. "It's easy to see why over 10,000 western Canadian farmers come to CCGA every year."

New customers can get their application started in as little as 20 minutes by calling 1.866.745.2256, and the CCGA team can guide farmers through the steps. Returning customers can call or apply online.

"With so many farmers taking advantage of the program each year, streamlining has been a priority," says Gallant. "Reapplying is easier than ever with a CCGA online account. It's only a matter of reviewing and updating your information."

Gallant says he also hears from customers how easy it is to apply. "CCGA's been serving farmers for over 40 years, and we've worked hard to evolve how we do things to meet their needs."

**To learn more or get started on your cash advance, visit [ccga.ca/cash](http://ccga.ca/cash)**

*The Advance Payments Program is a federal program administered by CCGA. It offers Canadian farmers marketing flexibility through interest-free and low-interest cash advances.*

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# Sask Animal Enforcement Agency now delivering animal welfare enforcement services

Animal welfare enforcement services in Saskatchewan are now being delivered by the Saskatchewan Animal Enforcement Agency (SAEA), following the transition of services previously provided by Animal Protection Services of Saskatchewan on March 31, 2026. Members of the public can call the same contact number at 306-382-0002 or visit their website at [www.saskanimalenforcementagency.com](http://www.saskanimalenforcementagency.com) to report suspected animal cruelty or abuse.

The transition supports the Government of Saskatchewan's continued commitment to protecting the safety and welfare of animals across the province. SAEA is responsible for enforcing The Animal Protection Act, 2018 throughout Saskatchewan, excluding the City of Regina, where animal welfare services continue to be provided by the Regina Humane Society.

"Our government's partnership with the Saskatchewan

Animal Enforcement Agency ensures that animal welfare enforcement continues without interruption," Agriculture Minister David Marit said. "This new agency brings a strong, long-term approach that supports effective and compassionate enforcement that protects communities and animals across Saskatchewan."

"The Saskatchewan Animal Enforcement Agency is here to serve the people and animals of Saskatchewan through professional, transparent, and accountable enforcement of The Animal Protection Act, 2018," SAEA CEO Lavan Thiruketheeswaranathan said. "In the communities we serve, including urban companion animal settings, rural livestock operations, and First Nations communities, we prioritize education and voluntary compliance while taking decisive action when animals are in distress. We are committed to building strong relationships with our communities and partners, and to collaborating with other agencies and animal welfare organizations so we can work

together toward the Ministry of Agriculture's goals of fair, consistent, and financially responsible enforcement. In partnership with the ministry, we are strengthening animal welfare, supporting Saskatchewan's agricultural community, and upholding the public's trust."

For concerns regarding animal cruelty and neglect, contact SAEA or the local police force for the jurisdiction. For animal welfare concerns within the City of Regina, contact the Regina Humane Society. For concerns regarding animal control, dangerous animals and stray animals, contact your local municipal or rural municipal office.

SAEA was selected through a public, competitive procurement process. The group brings strong internal governance framework with civilian board oversight to ensure accountability and enforcement. The board of directors have experience in law enforcement, finances and business management and includes two elders from First Nation communities to advise on First Nation related issues.

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# Good management can help keep good employees

Jackpot! You created a quality job description, took time to interview, asked the right questions, checked references and have hired a motivated, skilled and pleasant new employee. In a tight labour market, it's OK to celebrate. But not for too long. There are still onboarding tasks to complete that will benefit all, including your farm.

BY MYRNA STARK LEADER

A great onboarding experience pays real business dividends, cuts productivity loss, reduces the need for additional recruitment and improves overall team morale.

"The foundation of effective onboarding is the relationship between the hiring manager and the new employee," says Cheryl Skiba, Vice-President of Human Resources at FCC. "If that relationship doesn't start strong, the employee will struggle to succeed. Investing in that connection is essential, not only for the employee's success, but for the manager as they build a strong, high-performing team. The specific job training and technical pieces matter, of course, but they only work if the relationship is there first."

As the new person, the hire faces change and so does the farm CEO or manager. It's the employer's job to set the stage. A great start, with solid communication, increases the hire's desire to do good work, in turn helping them and the farm to succeed.

## Set clear expectations and vision

Clearly explaining specific job tasks is important and so is talking about the farm business' purpose, strategy and how the employee's work will contribute. Is the farm business helping feed people, providing an input to a high-quality product or something else? Share short- and long-term business goals and the business stage—growing, maintaining or in transition.

If experimentation, innovation and suggestions are welcomed, how and when? Talk about the operation's work culture—command and control or collaboration and consensus-building. Explain team dynamics, expectations of the new employee and your leadership style.

Skiba says everything from team dynamics to expectations begins at the top. That means understanding that the new hire isn't just a number doing a job, but a real person.

"Leaders have to be open to the fact that every individual brings something unique to the table," Skiba says. "When leaders recognize that and stay open and curious, it becomes much easier to build real rapport. That happens through simple things, regular conversation, check-ins and taking the time to understand who they are and what motivates them."

## Compensation comes in many forms

Today, compensation, or "what's in it for them," goes beyond salary, sick leave and vacation time. Ag workers increasingly want a total experience, not just a paycheck, and farm CEOs are recognizing that, says Skiba.

Beyond traditional benefits, organizations can offer meaningful development opportunities, including professional courses, certifications, mentoring and



conference participation. Many focus on lifestyle perks such as wellness programs, mental health resources or team-building experiences that help farm employees feel connected and supported.

Certain farm CEOs take it a step further by tailoring benefits to their workforce, prioritizing work-life balance, personal milestones or recognition programs that help people feel seen and valued.

When farm employees feel their CEO or manager is genuinely investing in them, not just through compensation, but through support and connection, it shows up in engagement, performance and overall job satisfaction and therefore productivity, Skiba says.

## Be open

"As leaders, we have to show the way," she explains. "That starts with being vulnerable, being open to new ideas, new perspectives and new ways of doing things. When leaders listen with intention and curiosity, it creates space for people to bring their best thinking forward."

## Let employees find their fit

New employees don't automatically understand a CEO's expectations, working style or decision-making processes. Without clarity, this can lead to job dissatisfaction or uncertainty about their role. At the same time, a new hire who brings fresh ideas or different experiences can unintentionally create discomfort among existing team members. Leaders need to anticipate both dynamics and address them openly.

"Everyone comes in with different experiences, some limited, some extensive," Skiba says. "The question is: how does that fit into your organization, and how do you embrace those opportunities to do things

differently?"

To feel confident and capable, new employees need clear information about job conventions—from work hours and responsibilities to communication norms and how decisions get made. They may also require tools such as system access, smartphones or specific applications to perform their work effectively. If new hires don't have the tools or training they need, leaders shouldn't be surprised if they struggle.

## Recognition fosters good morale

Skiba encourages farm CEOs to recognize the meaningful work employees make toward team goals. She also cautions against assuming that everyone wants to be recognized in the same way. However, don't be so quick to unexpectedly announce at a tailgate meeting the person's contribution.

For some, public recognition would be their worst nightmare, while others would embrace it. Make the effort to know what will resonate best with a given employee.

"Understanding what motivates each employee is key," Skiba explains. "How it's delivered, though, makes all the difference."

## Be patient

If someone is trying something for the first time, be aware they may make one or more mistakes. Have a conversation about it, mistakes are part of the learning curve. Talk about what happened, but don't dwell on it. Focus on what they learned and what went well. This will give the new hire a sense of psychological safety.

"It helps develop them in their career path," says Skiba. "When you create a safe environment, employees respond positively."

## Review and revise employee management policies

Hiring may also be a great time to refresh your farm business' employee management toolkit. Onboarding can highlight gaps which can be closed accordingly depending on the needs, size and nature of the business. It might mean documenting holiday or unpaid time-off policy to ensure consistency or writing a process to lodge a complaint. Or it might involve dealing with noncompliance or creation of a more formal performance management plan so all employees know how and when they will be evaluated.

Newcomers to employee management can find best practices online, through agriculture organizations or even other businesses. Consider hiring a human resources consultant, who can provide insight specific to your unique farm business, helping to customize and optimize your employee management policies.

"HR teams can be quite lean in some organizations, so staying on top of trends and staying connected to trusted resources like an external consultant can be invaluable," she says.

Skiba suggests farm CEOs and managers regularly review all of their HR policies as situations arise, but at a minimum they should be reviewed every two to three years.

Never underestimate the importance of good employee management practices, especially on a farm or ranch, where attention to this area might not always be top of mind, particularly during the peak times. It's during these busy periods where good practices are likely to have great payoff, especially for a new hire.

"Feeling valued and coached by their leader in the first 30, 60, 90 days is incredibly motivating to a new hire," Skiba says. "When that happens, they're more engaged, more energized and their performance naturally follows."

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# Do you have the two budgets your farm needs?



Continued from page 30

### How to set up an operating budget

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## Tips for success

### Record

Whether it's spreadsheets or farm accounting software like AgExpert, document your operating and cash flow budgets so you can better track and communicate the position of your farm business.

### Build

You can get more detailed with the budgets as you get the hang of it. Break your operation out by enterprise, barn, or whatever division works best for you. Be careful not to get carried away. If you are too detailed, keeping a cash flow budget becomes too big and overwhelming – you may have a tough time sticking with it.

### Monitor

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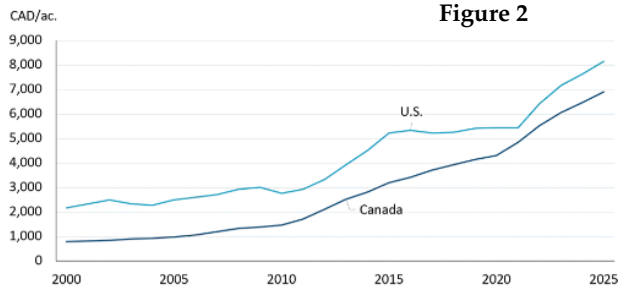


Figure 2: U.S. cultivated farmland values trades at a premium relative to Canada  
Sources: USDA, Statistics Canada, FCC Economics

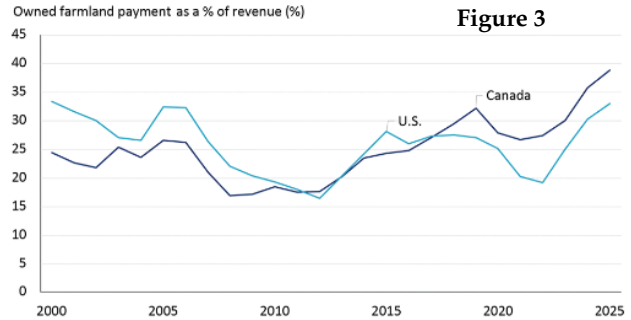


Figure 3: Owned cultivated farmland payment as a percentage of revenue in Canada is now well above the U.S.  
Sources: Statistics Canada, USDA, FCC Economics

# Current farmland values anything but 'dirt cheap'

Continued from page 32

The average price for Canadian cultivated farmland in 2025 was \$6,900 per acre, slightly lower than the \$8,150 per acre price of average U.S. farmland (Figure 2). However, when we look back since 2000, both countries cultivated farmland values have moved upwards and the dollar per acre gap between the two countries remains roughly the same today. Noticeable differences are where the U.S. land market from 2010 to 2015 had periods of very sharp growth, followed by a period of flat growth (2015-2020) before sharply increasing again. Canadian cultivated farmland values meanwhile have showed more consistent growth rates, averaging 8.7% over the last decade (whereas the U.S. only grew at 5.6% in that time).

### Producers' ability to generate revenues from owned cultivated farmland

To assess the affordability of cultivated farmland prices in both Canada and the U.S. for owned land, we rely on the Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture's formula for land investment cost. Both countries' agricultural balance sheets reveal that farmers typically have about 85% equity in their operations. Since farm real estate makes up the largest share, we assume that cultivated farmland equity matches that percentage, meaning mortgage payments are only required on roughly 15% of farm real estate value.

We apply a 1.5% opportunity cost to each country's existing 85% land equity. Opportunity cost refers to the value of an alternative investment, such as earning interest from treasury bills, instead of holding farmland. The remaining 15% is allocated to mortgage principal and interest over 25 years. In 2025, newly purchased cultivated farmland in Canada averaged \$367 per acre, while using this method, owned land costs \$143 per acre. Using U.S. interest rates, newly purchased American ground costs producers \$381 per acre, while owned land is \$127 per acre. We use the owned land value multiplied by total seeded acres as a percentage of grain and oilseed revenues to create a ratio

as shown in figure 3. This allows for a comparison that removes the impact of exchange rates.

Owned cultivated farmland payments, as a share of revenue, reached their highest level since 2000 in both Canada and the U.S. Last year in Canada, cultivated farmland payments accounted for 39% of grain and oilseed farm cash receipts—meaning for every dollar earned, \$0.39 went toward land payments. The U.S. average was \$0.33 per dollar of revenue, offering a slight advantage to American farmers. Although this calculation doesn't include income from livestock or other sectors, it demonstrates that land costs as a percentage of grain revenues are comparable between Canadian and U.S. farmers.

Since 2020, farmland values in Canada have risen faster than those in the U.S., which has reversed the previous Canadian advantage of lower land ownership costs per acre. Still, even though farmland payments now make up a larger share of producers' revenue, most have maintained enough cash flow to meet their yearly payment requirements.

### What will drive farmland affordability in 2026

It turns out the phrase 'dirt cheap' has lost its literal meaning in today's context, as farmland has become a vital asset for producers, underpinning both their balance sheets and the broader agricultural economy. While American cropland trades at a premium relative to Canada, affordability challenges are underscored by the rising share of farm revenue dedicated to owned land payments—39% in Canada, surpassing the U.S. at 33%. This shift has reversed Canada's historical advantage and reflects the impact of strong cropland value growth. Despite increased payment burdens, most producers have maintained sufficient cash flow to meet their obligations, thanks in part to prior years of strong margins and equity in operations. With how tight margins are in grain and oilseed production right now, slower farmland value growth could help long term.

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# Sask reviewing farm land ownership

Continued from Page 31

"We appreciate the government's efforts to continue to bring transparency around farm land ownership in Saskatchewan," Saskatchewan Stock Growers Association President Jeff Yorga said. "Producers want a level playing field, and the upcoming consultations are a great first step to ensuring that. We look forward to working with all stakeholders to make sure producer voices are heard."

"Protecting ownership of Saskatchewan's pasture and hayland is of critical importance to our beef cattle producers and there are no better caretakers of Saskatchewan's grassland and farmland than ranchers and farmers," Saskatchewan Cattle Association Chair Chad Ross said. "The Saskatchewan Cattle Association supports the work of the Farmland Advisory Committee and the provincial government's plans to undertake a comprehensive review of The Saskatchewan Farm Security Act and looks forward to actively participating in consultations going forward."

"The Saskatchewan Farm Security Act is an important provincial statute designed to protect, support, and provide security for Saskatchewan family farms," Wheat Growers Association Chair Darryl Fransoo said. "Today's announcement shows the continued support our government continues to provide, ensuring a prosperous future for farmers facing more challenges than ever before."

"Our farmland is one of Saskatchewan's greatest assets, and it's important that the rules around who can own and use it keep pace with the realities of farming today," Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities President Bill Huber said. "This review is a good chance to make sure the Act continues to protect family farms and support the future of our rural communities."

Saskatchewan farm land is one of the province's most valuable assets. The government says it wants to ensure the legislative framework regarding farm land ownership meets the needs of the people of Saskatchewan as the nature of farming and business continues to evolve.



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Plain and Valley is published by McKay Publications Ltd., Box 250, 714 Main Street, Moosomin SK S0G 3N0.

Plain and Valley is delivered to post office boxes across Southeast Saskatchewan and southwest Manitoba.

Canada Post Customer Number 2116693.  
 Canada Post Contract Number 40011909.

**Canada Post employees: As a community newspaper, Plain and Valley can be delivered into all post office boxes, not just those that have opted to receive flyers in the Consumers' Choice program.**

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