

Plain & Valley

Covering Southeast Saskatchewan and Southwest Manitoba

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Students at École St. Lazare work on a mosaic mural that will be installed on the front of the school. The mosaic will be unveiled in June.

Cheri Chartier photos



St. Lazare mosaic a real community project

Students at École St. Lazare are working on a mosaic mural to celebrate the community's French heritage. Because most of the materials were donated by local businesses, the total cost of the project is only \$1,000, which is covered by CDEM—the economic development council for Manitoba's francophone communities.

CDEM has embarked on a branding project and wants all French-speaking communities to display the C'est Si Bon symbol in a prominent place.

Village councillor Cheri Chartier wanted to do a mosaic like Binscarth school did as a school project a few years ago, so she met with the principal at Binscarth to see how they did it and what was involved, and planned a similar mosaic project for École St. Lazare, incorporating the C'est Si Bon symbol.

The C'est Si Bon symbol will appear at the centre of the wagon wheel design

when it is finished.

Chartier approached Grace Grabauskas who is on the support staff at the school and often does artwork and murals for grad and other special events and asked for her help with the project.

She came up with the wheel design and she and Chartier decided to put pictures inside each 'spoke' of the wheel to represent St. Lazare's community, culture, faith, and other aspects of what makes the village unique.

Grabauskas did the drawings and transferred them to the wood with carbon paper donated by the World-Spectator.

Chartier ordered the supplies from Fouillard Carpet and Fouillard Discount. "They were very helpful and donated many of the porcelain tiles for the mosaic," Chartier says. "It's amazing that we were able to get everything we needed right here in town!"

PotashCorp supplied the safety equipment (safety glasses and gloves) for breaking the tile safely.

École St. Lazare principal Gilles Normandeau wanted everyone in the school—staff and students—to all have a hand in making the mosaic. Over the past two weeks there have sometimes been as many as 18 or 20 students working on it all at once in a small room in the school—and sometimes small groups of students go down and work on it.

"Everyone from the Maternelle (kindergarten) to the Grad class has had an opportunity to come in and work on it," said Chartier, "as have the support staff and teachers. Every person in the school has done something."

When the mosaic mural is finished it will hang on the outside brick wall of the school for everyone to see. Chartier says the artists tried their best to find tiles and

grout for outdoor use and sealed the wood properly so that it will last a long time exposed to the elements.

"Our hope is that it will last a long time and the kids who worked on it will eventually bring their own children to the school to see what they have done," says Chartier.

The mosaic mural will be eight feet in diameter. "We started with two 4x8 pieces of plywood, traced the circle on, and Fouillard Discount cut it into eight pie-shaped wedges for us," Chartier explains. "We tiled the wheel around the outside first, then worked on the pictures and the spokes after."

Once the entire mosaic is completed, the Division Scholaire Franco-Manitobaine maintenance staff will assemble it on the wall and run lighting to it.

A date will be set in June for the mosaic to be unveiled.

High school charged for thousands of sweets

• A couple from New Jersey spent the weekend in an Atlantic City casino and went home with \$15,000. Not too unusual, you say? The pair had not played any of the slot machines, but instead had cleaned out 60 Coca-Cola vending machines on hotel floors of the Taj Mahal Casino Resort.

• An 18-year-old used a Middletown (OH) High School purchasing order number to place orders for thousands of lollipops and candy bars from Michigan-based The Goodies Factory. He charged the \$37,000 "sweet deal" to his former school.

• Chuck Shepherd called this bit, 'We Welcome Our New Monkey Overlords.' Researchers have recently observed monkeys planning future combat, as well as perhaps teaching their young to floss. A researcher from Sweden's Lund University described a daily ritual of a 30-year-old chimpanzee that loathes human visitors and begins every morning by roaming his enclosure to collect stones and placing them strategically in handy piles for subsequently hurling at irksome visitors.

• A 68-year-old woman in Jeonju, South Korea, has already failed her written driver's test 771 times, but has full plans to try again. She has already spent about \$3,000 on fees. She tried the test almost every day starting in 2005, but has slowed to once a week.

• Anthony Burres of Omaha, Neb, greatly appreciated the honesty of strangers. He was riding his motorcycle when the wallet loaded with hundred-dollar bills fell from his pocket onto the street. A posse of strangers rounded all except one \$100 bill. One person had followed him to tell him of his loss and by the time he returned the money (\$2,400) had been gathered up.

• Back in November, the Ontario Court of Appeal overturned the conviction of Antonio Batista. They decided his "death threat" against a Mississauga city council member, in the form of a sonnet on long-neglected potholes, was more likely literary expression.

• Michael Jackson is auctioning hundreds of awards and other personal items in April. "He's not selling everything," said Jim Barach. "Apparently he is holding onto three of his old noses for sentimental reasons."

• A 58-year-old man in Newfoundland is facing an assault charge after he punched a waiter for serving a steak that was "too meaty." Apparently he expected more fat on his steak.

• A philosophy student, who was kicked out of Erasmus University in Rotterdam because of his smelly feet,



Gene Hauta

has won the right to start attending lectures again. Teunis Tenbrook fought a 10-year legal battle after complaints from professors and other students.

• Benjamin Daniels, 28, was cited for public intoxication after observers complained about a man riding a white horse on the street during a blinding snowstorm in the northern Wyoming town of Cody. He was put in the drunk tank overnight.

• Daniel Petric, 15 at the time, shot his parents (killing his mother) back in October 2007 because they took away his violent Halo 3 video game. In January 2009, Judge James Burge pronounced Petric guilty of murder, rejecting his lawyers' claim that Petric was insane at the time because he had confused "killing" cartoon avatars with killing humans. While he declared that the kid was not insane, the judge acknowledged that Petric "had no idea at the time he hatched this plot that if he killed his parents, they would be dead forever."

• Over the last four decades, a Japanese businessman had buried about \$6 million dollars in his garden for safe-keeping. He then discovered that the money had been dug up by a thief. The man died within two months of

the theft.

• NASA reported that the urine-to-drinking-water processor is malfunctioning on the space station. "The quality of the water," noted Argus Hamilton, "has gone from spring brook, to city tap water down to public kiddy pool."

• A Monterey County jury has ordered the state of California to pay \$8.6 million to a motorcyclist who was severely injured when he struck six wild boars on a state highway in 2003. Adam Rogers deserved compensation for his injuries because officials knew that wild pigs regularly crossing a certain stretch of highway, but they did nothing about it. Rogers is now confined to a wheelchair. The driver did have a BAC of .10 but the jury ruled it did not cause the accident.

• The Smoking Gun reported Thursday that Sham Wow commercial spokesman Vince Shlomi got in a fight with a prostitute in his hotel room. "It's easy to deduce what started the fight," wrote Hamilton. "When he ordered one prostitute he thought he'd get two, plus free steak knives."

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Say goodbye to the economic Tigers; Say hello to the Prairie Pink Panther

By JACQUES MARCIL
SENIOR ECONOMIST

CANADA WEST FOUNDATION

It won't be easy. But somehow, Canadians will have to get used to being led by a new and unassuming economic champion: Saskatchewan.

Not only did Saskatchewan lead Canada in economic growth last year, it is also in solid contention for doing the same this year. In fact, many analysts expect the economy of every other province but Saskatchewan to shrink this year.

In addition to being the birthplace of public health care and the home of Corner Gas, Saskatchewan can now brag that it is Canada's economic bright spot and not just the province that is easiest to draw. While any other province would be glad just to be near the top in any economic category in 2008, Saskatchewan posted Canada's best performance in exports, retail sales, wholesale trade, building permits, and capital investment.

As manufacturing powerhouses were being shut down and resource prices dropped elsewhere in the country, spreading job layoffs and uncertainty, Saskatchewan's economy leapt ahead of the Canadian pack thanks to the unique circumstances surrounding the province's huge stash of potash.

Potash? Most Canadians probably think that potash is some sort of exotic soup or the remnants of a particularly wild party. Newsflash: potash is potassium chloride, a mined pink mineral used in the production of fertilizers. Not only does Saskatchewan produce a lot of the world's wheat, it also supplies the key ingredient in the fertilizer that keeps the world fed.

With more than half of the world's reserves, Saskatchewan is to potash what Saudi Arabia is to oil. If one combines today's very high level of worldwide demand for potash with the extraordinary level reached by its price (three times what it was in 2007, and nearly six times its level of the previous 15 years), it's easy to see why Saskatchewan is the place to be.

In 2008, Saskatchewan created more jobs than ever in its history. Things were so hot that some industries faced labour shortages, to the point that Premier Brad Wall visited job fairs outside the province to try to attract new workers.

Last year also marked the province's return above the million mark in population, a level last reached in 2001. Saskatchewan's population growth in 2008 was the strongest in almost 50 years. One third of this advance was the result of a positive interprovincial migration balance for the second year in a row following 22 years of exodus.

Things were so good in 2008 that the government has been able to cut taxes, invest in infrastructure AND balance the books. Meanwhile, the federal government and most of the provinces were speeding back into deficit territory and trying to identify some long-term distant

target date for getting back into the black.

What about 2009? The current year is turning out to be quite different from last year at the global level, if only because most of the world will spend it in recession. This will make things more difficult for an export-driven economy like Saskatchewan's. In

addition, Saskatchewan potash producers are curtailing production to limit supply and keep prices high. This is good news for the provincial government's coffers, but less so for the 3,500 people employed in potash mining. Despite this, Saskatchewan will remain ahead of the Canadian pack.

What does this mean for the rest of the country? First, Saskatchewan's growth steps in just as Alberta's oil-based force diminishes, which maintains the West's leadership presence in the overall economic picture of Canada as viewed both locally and from abroad.

Second, the potash suc-

cess confirms yet again that, despite all the diversification that has occurred over the past few decades, Canada cannot dodge its fate as a major global player in the area of natural resources, especially given the benefits that are attached.

But the most significant impact of Saskatchewan's

leap forward has to do with other Canadians' perception of the province. Over the next few years the country's attention will be fixed on Saskatchewan and the rest of the country will learn more about it than it probably did in over a generation. "Sask" basking in the spotlight? It's about time, isn't it?



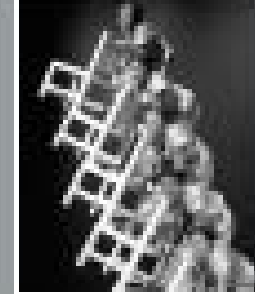
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Five area players picked in 2009 WHL Bantam Draft

BY CHRIS ISTANCE

Darryl Balog is relieved with the results of the 20th Annual Western Hockey League Bantam Draft on April 30.

Although Balog's son, Taylor, was prospected by more than half of the WHL franchises in the past few months—which includes teams as far away as Portland, Oregon and Vancouver, B.C.—he will be sticking pretty close to home.

Taylor, who is originally from Kipling but has lived in Weyburn since August, 2007, was picked in the second round, 28th overall by the Regina Pats and was one of five Bantam aged players from the region chosen by teams from Western Canada's major junior hockey league.

"He had a suspicion he would be drafted and we were hoping it would be Regina because it's close," Balog said, who noted that the Prince George Cougars also showed some interest in Taylor.

"When we found out it was the Pats who picked him, we were a bit relieved."

Taylor is a six-foot, one-inch, 170 pound forward who played with the Weyburn Crescent Point Wings last season. In 26 games, he collected 76 points, including 44 goals and 32 assists. He had 34 minutes in penalties.

"He's a big kid," Balog said. "He's a very good skater and he sees the ice well. He also has a hard shot, so he's got a lot of tools in the bag and when he puts them all together, he's an effective player."

Taylor will be moving into the Regina Pats' devel-

opment system. Balog said they have a pair of options, either playing—when he's ready—'AAA' Midget with the Regina Pat Canadians, or the Tisdale Trojans.

Balog said they are leaning toward the latter team.

"They've got a good program there. They get so much support from the community, with 600 to 700 people going to the games," Balog said, adding that the school in Tisdale provides good support to the Trojan players from outside of the town.

The WHL Bantam Draft is open to players born in 1994 who reside in B.C., Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, North West Territories, Yukon, Alaska, Hawaii and U.S. states located south of Western Canada.

Other players from southeast Saskatchewan chosen in the draft include Brady Gaudet of Redvers, who was picked by the Kamloops Blazers 10th overall in the first round.

Gaudet is a defenseman who measures five-feet, 10-inches and weighs 170 pounds. He played last season with the Moose

Mountain Wild in the South Saskatchewan Minor Hockey League, scoring 13 goals and 23 assists for 36 points.

Three players were chosen later in the draft. T.J. Reeve of Grenfell was picked by the Spokane Chiefs in the fourth round, 70th overall. Reeve is a

right winger.

Ashton Sautner of Wolseley was the 162nd pick in the eighth round. The defenseman went to the Edmonton Oil Kings.

Finally, Devan Fafard of Carlyle was chosen by the Saskatoon Blades in the eighth round, 174th overall. He plays defence.

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Meeting coming up for Kin Place

10 commitments so far for second phase of life-lease project

BY KEVIN WEEDMARK

A second meeting to gauge interest in Phase II of the Kin Place life-lease housing development in Moosomin is set for next week.

The meeting is slated for Wednesday, May 13. Information will be presented at the Country Squire Inn Banquet Room from 10:30 a.m. to 12 noon and tours of Kin Place will be available that afternoon.

The meeting will be run by Jeff Cole, formerly the economic development officer for Gateway REDA, who has been hired as project manager for Kin Place.

One meeting has been held, and Cole already has 10 cheques from interested individuals.

The first phase of Kin Place was built on Henry Street in 1999 by the Moosomin Kinsmen Club and is operated by a community board.

The second phase will be built immediately south of the initial building, facing Wright Road.

It will consist of 12-22 units depending on interest. It is a life-lease project, meaning residents will make an equity contribution of \$95,000 to \$105,000, and pay a monthly rental fee. Their equity contribution will be repaid in full when they leave the building.

Cole said the Kin Place board would like to determine as quickly as possible how much interest there is so construction can begin soon. "This isn't something that's going to drag on for a long time," he said. "We want to know if people are in-

terested and we want to get building. It seems like there's a lot of interest. The only question is how many units it will be."

Cole said this would be a great time to build, as housing prices are strong in the area—allowing people to sell their homes at a good price and buy into the life-lease project—and interest rates are very low, which will help make the project affordable. The contractor that built the original Kin Place is ready to go on phase II.

Bob Mullett was a Kinsmen member when the first phase of Kin Place was built. He said that generating interest in the project was a long, slow process, and he is happy to see how quickly things are coming together for phase II.

"I think people understand it this time," he said, "and that makes all the difference. When we did it the first time it was completely new. There were no 55-plus units in Saskatchewan at that time. We took a lot of people to Virden so they could see the project there, and the residents there were our best sales people, because they were certainly happy with it."

He said it took a lot of time to explain the financial arrangements of a life-lease project to prospective tenants.

"People didn't understand that they were going to get their money back," he said. "It was something new. Now people have seen it operating, they know the people who

live there are happy with it, and they understand the whole life-lease concept a lot better."

Mullett said he is optimistic that Kin Place phase II will be built on a larger scale than the first phase.

"This is something we really need, and it would be nice to see it as big as it can be," he said. "I know it would be a good option for a lot of people."

Cole said he is happy with the progress to date. "Was our meeting effective? Was our advertising effective? I think so—we had one meeting and we already have 10 people who are interested enough to write a cheque. The question is how big we want to go."

The life-lease project is for individuals and couples 55 years and older.

There has been interest in the project from Moosomin and from a large number of surrounding communities. "We've had calls from urban centres—people are following the project and are looking for city amenities in a country-style environment—and we've had strong interest from Moosomin, Carlyle, Fairlight, Wawota, Maryfield, Rocanville, and the McAuley area."

Cole expects to see more interest at the May 13 meeting. "With all the snowbirds back, there might be a few people who weren't around for our first meeting," he said.

Anyone interested in more information on Kin Place can contact Cole at 435-7141.

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The Town wishes to thank all persons who apply, however, only those selected for an interview will be notified. Applications may be e-mailed, faxed, delivered, or mailed to the Town of Moosomin at the following addresses:

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Moosomin Kin Place Inc. Life-Lease Condominium Development Meeting

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Jeff Cole, Kin Place Management
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The entrance fee would be refunded in full to your estate.

Will I get interest on my equity contribution?
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How secure is my contribution?
Your equity contribution is protected through a second mortgage in your name held by a trust company.

Who will be allowed to live there?
Either couples or individuals may live here, but you must be at least 55 years of age. However, if you are over 55 and your spouse is younger, you are both eligible to live there.

WHAT IS INCLUDED IN THE MONTHLY COST OF A LIFE-LEASE?

Expense:	Cost per Month
Property Tax.....	included
Heat.....	included
Lights.....	included
Water/Sewer/Garbage/Fire.....	included
Snow Removal/Lawn Care.....	included
Phone Line.....	included
Regular Repair Maintenance.....	included
(Painting, Appliance Repair, etc.)	
Periodic Major Repair.....	included
(Roof, Plumbing, Heating, Fridge, Stove, Dishwasher, Air conditioner, Water Softener, Washer & Dryer)	
Required Equity & Condo Fee.....	TBA

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Water/Sewer/Garbage/Fire	\$ _____
Snow Removal/Lawn Care	\$ _____
Basic Phone Service	\$ _____
Insurance	\$ _____
Regular Repairs/Maintenance: (Painting, Appliance Repair, etc.)	\$ _____
Periodic Major Repairs: (Roof, Plumbing, Heating, Appliances, etc.)	\$ _____
Interest Lost on Money Tied up in Home Equity Example: [(\$ _____ x 5%) + 12 = \$ _____]	\$ _____
TOTAL	\$ _____

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Businesses/Services:	Distance to Urban Centres:	Population:
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Dentists _ 3	Yorkton: 150 km	_ hour radius _ 20,000
Pharmacies _ 2	Winnipeg: 350 km	1-hour radius _ 30,000
Chiropractor _ 1	Brandon: 141 km	
Restaurants & Pubs _ 11		
Medical Doctors _ 7		
Dial-A-Van (MOTOH)		
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Photic sneezing

"Sunshine on my shoulders makes me happy," the late John Denver sang.

"Sunlight in my eyes can make me cry." Lovely lyrics. But as a kid, I thought it would have made more sense for Denver to sing, "Sunlight in my eyes can make me sneeze." Because for somewhere between one in 10 and one in three people, sunlight has exactly that effect.

It's called "photic sneezing," and it's nothing new: Aristotle wondered about it in the 4th century BC (although he thought it was brought on by heat, not light). But millennia later, we still don't know exactly why it happens, as New Scientist writer Richard Webb recently discovered.

The usual explanation for regular sneezing is that it serves to expel unwanted material from the airway. A regular sneeze begins with an irritation in your nose. This excites the trigeminal nerve, which sends impulses to the "sneezing center" in the brainstem, the primitive part of the brain that triggers our involuntary reflexes.

The sneezing center sends impulses along the facial nerve ordering the nasal passages to secrete fluid, and simultaneous impulses along the spinal cord to the respiratory muscles, prompting them to take a quick, deep breath ("Ah-"), then expel it with great force (a 150-kph "Choo!"). The abdominal, chest, vocal cord and throat muscles are all in on the act, as is your diaphragm and even your eyelids (you always close your eyes when you sneeze).

Sneezing is, as Webb notes in his article, "one of the most violent actions your body will ever perform," so violent that cases of sneezing-caused whiplash are not unknown.



Edward Willett

With today's sensitive brain-scanning equipment, you'd think it would be a simple matter to track down the precise location of the "sneezing center." But you'd be wrong. And since we can't pin down the specific neurons involved, we can't pin down how photic sneezing arises, either.

We do know a few things about it. In 1964 Henry Everett, a consulting psychiatrist at the Johns Hopkins University Hospital in Baltimore, Maryland, made one of the first systematic studies of the condition, questioning 75 of his patients and 169 of his students in detail about their sneezing habits. Among other things, he asked those with photic sneezing (18 per cent of the patients and 24 per cent of the students) if they had any close relatives who reacted to sunlight the same way, and found that 80 per cent of the sneezers said they did, compared to only 20 per cent of the non-sneezers.

This strongly indicated that photic sneezing has a genetic component, and further studies have borne that out. In fact, its inheritance is consistent with transmission via a dominant gene, meaning you only need one copy of it from either parent. This is known as autosomal dominant

transmission, so photic sneezing now has the irresistible scientific name of "autosomal-dominant compelling helio-ophthalmic outburst," the acronym for which is, of course, ACHOO.

But that still doesn't answer the question of why sunlight should make us sneeze, and as Webb found, at the moment nobody actually has an answer.

Not that there aren't theories. Other things unrelated to nasal irritation can cause sneezing, after all. A study last year revealed there are patients who sneeze when they have an orgasm, or even simply in response to sexual thoughts.

Maybe all of these strange causes of sneezing come about because of a kind of short-circuit in the brainstem, where all kinds of reflex actions are triggered, so that various stimuli that trigger unrelated reflexes such as blood flow to the genitals or squinting against a bright light also trigger, quite by accident, a sneeze. The genes that create these short-circuits are more nuisances than threats to survival, and so have been preserved by evolution.

Which sounds plausible, but there isn't actually any solid evidence for it.

Or as Webb quotes Louis Ptácek, a neurogeneticist at the University of California in San Francisco, as saying, "People speak as if they know what the hell's going on. In reality, we don't."

As our tools for studying the brain improve, maybe we'll figure it out. In the meantime, if sunlight makes you sneeze, try to follow Aristotle's example:

Just be philosophical about it.
Edward Willett is a science writer from Regina.

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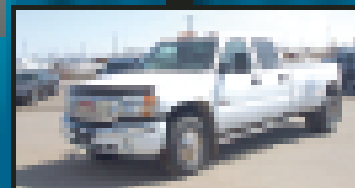
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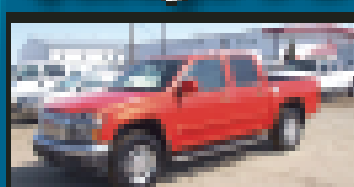
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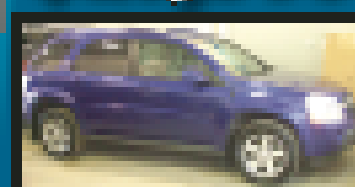
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Talisman selling Cutbank complex midstream assets for \$300 million

Talisman Energy Canada (Talisman) has entered into an agreement to sell its Cutbank complex midstream assets in west central Alberta for total proceeds of approximately

\$300 million Canadian to Pembina Gas Services Limited Partnership, a subsidiary of Pembina Pipeline Corporation of Calgary.

The sale of the Cutbank

complex includes working interests in three interconnected sweet gas processing facilities (the Cutbank, Musreau and Kakwa gas plants), nine compressor stations and more than 300 kilometres of gathering lines. The complex has an aggregate existing processing capacity of 360 mmcf/d.

The sale is subject to regulatory approval, with an expected closing date of June 2, 2009.

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 - 7:00 pm Awards Banquet
 - 8:30 pm Opening Ceremonies, followed by the SE Sask. Oilman of the Year
- Thursday, June 4, 2009 – Show hours 8:00 am-3:30 pm
 - PSAC breakfast 7:30-9:30 am
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One night together

My grandmother had a laugh like a horse braying. She would open her mouth wide, her eyes shut tight, and throw her head back, showing all of her large, square teeth while she laughed, her bony shoulders shaking in delighted good humor. It was a laugh you just couldn't forget.

Marriage is a funny thing. I don't know how many of us reading this right now would say we have the "ideal" marriage. Regardless of how well we think we know our partner on the day we say our vows, there are always unexpected idiosyncracies and sometimes unshared secrets; the creation of a harmonious inner life with your husband or wife can take years of work. It is work that pays well, however, and I can speak with some experience on that. Then there is the utter unpredictability of the life outside the inner sanctum of a marriage, from which it is impossible to remain inviolate; the economy, the stresses and joys of child-rearing . . . disease.

My grandmother's best friend was a woman named Lil. She may or may not have been a distant cousin of ours, but regardless, we kids all called her Great-Auntie Lil. As she was already old when I was still quite young, what I remember most about her was the way she died. She died bravely, proudly, and with class.

In her eighties, she was strong and independent, hosting dinner parties and supporting the local Moose Lodge. Over a decade previous, she had had hip surgery, and one afternoon it popped out and was to be replaced. She went in for what was to be a routine procedure, but during the surgery her hip popped back in and the doctors elected not to replace it. Her heart arrested and they brought her back on the table. Although she had had successful surgeries and recoveries previously, in this instance she reacted violently to both the surgical tape and to the Tylenol-3 she was given for pain management. After recuperating, Lil returned home only to have the hip pop back out. After opening her up once again, the doctors found the hip had popped back in. They closed the wound a second time without replacing the hip, she suffered another heart attack, and she was once again revived.

I remember my mother and grandmother marveling at one another how spry Lil seemed after her second convalescence, and soon she was tolerating my siblings and me as we tore around her small home while our matriarchs chatted and drank coffee. However, the third time her hip popped out and she found herself back in the hospital, Lil had had enough. Her doctor had brought her in two days prior to surgery to monitor her heart before subjecting her to the ordeal again. We were gathered in her room, keeping her company and trying to improve her attitude. She had been obstinate about this third operation, and although her family and doctors had insisted it was necessary, she was set on her own way. Sitting ramrod straight in the hospital bed, refusing to rest her iron grey, tightly permed head of hair on the stiff white pillows, she remained defiant. A doctor came in to discuss the upcoming operation, and was imperiously shooed away. Attempting to smooth her mother's ruffled feathers, a daughter tried to placate Lil with an offer of tea and toast. "No, thank you, child," she said smartly, "I don't think I'll be needing it. I'm not having fun anymore, and I'm not going to play."

The next morning she was gone. She had slipped away quietly in the night. Before, when I had thought of Great-Auntie Lil, I had remembered her with the taste of the maple cream Peek Freen cookies she had always served me still sugary on my tongue. After, I thought first of the steel glint in her eye and the peculiar feeling that she had won somehow, triumphed over that hospital smell, the backless gowns, doctors and thier plans, the intimidation and humiliation that being old and sick can sometimes bring. Now, when I think of Lil, I hear my grandmother's laugh.

As I continued to grow, I began to wonder what had made Lil who she was, so plucky and indomitable and inspiring, in her modest way. She was so loved and admired that over a decade and a half later her picture still hangs on the walls of several homes where she has no living relatives. It's always the same picture, a studio one her children gave her as a present one year. She's wearing a blue scoop-necked blouse, she's smiling gently, and her wrinkled hands are folded neatly in front of her. On her left hand, although widowed many years, her wedding band softly gleams.

I never met Lil's husband, Ron. They built homes and raised children, and 30 years into over a half-century of marriage, they moved to Vancouver Island after Ron retired. As I asked at the outset, how many of us feel that we have the ideal marriage? That after the time and work we have put into our relationship, that we got what we bargained for, what we asked for, what we feel we deserve? What we need? Well, to most of us, perhaps, a comfortable retirement on the Island with our life's mate doesn't sound too bad.

Ron developed Alzheimer's disease very shortly after his retirement. My mother can't remember exactly when, but he was still in his sixties; very young, really, with so much time still before him and his wife. At first it didn't seem so bad, and they handled it well together. Names and dates started going, and it seemed often he would lose the thread of a story. Ron was a gentle man, and became gently more and more lost in the world around him as time went on. Soon he began losing people, and the way home. One night there was a terrible thunderstorm and the power went out. Somewhere in the dark house, in the dark of that night, he lost Lil. When the lights came back on, his wife was gone, and in her place was a strange woman he had never met before.

Lil and Ron were both rather fortunate. For 20 years Lil continued to care for Ron, to serve as wife and companion to a man who politely asked her name as often as not, and he did not suffer from outbursts of anger and frustration to which some victims of this disease are prone. He never struck her or called her names; instead he praised her to all and sundry. "I don't know where Lil went," he would explain to bemused visitors, "but ever since she left this wonderful woman has been taking such good care of me! And can she cook!"

I don't know, of course, but I think perhaps he remembered his Lil as a much younger woman. He would look at old picture albums with her, and recognize her in her twenties and thirties, and tell Lil how much she was loved and missed. I can't imagine the pain she felt watching the tears roll down his cheeks as he mourned the loss of the woman holding his dry hand in hers.



Monique McKay

Lil and Ron still maintained a fairly active social life, and naturally this included annual visits from my grandparents. One summer evening, the two couples were sitting on the screened porch, drinking beet and Clamato juice, playing canasta. This was about 10 years into Ron's disease and everyone had become accustomed to the man he was now, accepting him and loving him for the sweet wonderful man he still was. My grandfather was a legendary storyteller, specializing in double entendre, and a famous flirt. He had the girls in fits, recalling stories of their shared history with many a twist in the telling that no one else at the card table could remember. He made one particularly salient point, and my grandmother threw her head back and that laugh of hers rang out loud and long through the warm summer night . . . and Ron looked up at her, and at then at Lil . . . and then he remembered.

My grandmother said it made all of them quite giddy. She said that Ron didn't say anything, but this incredible grin spread across his face and his eyes started snapping in that old familiar way. For the first time in 10 years he reached under the table to hold hands with his wife. She jumped like his touch burned, and stared back at him. He just smiled, and then she knew, and started grinning too. When they sidled

up to one another, their thighs brushing against each other, and Ron put his arm around his aged wife and squeezed her tightly to him—well, my grandmother said it was like magic. They played another hand or two of canasta, almost superstitiously acting like nothing special was going on, so as not to break the spell. Suddenly Lil stood up, a conspiratorial smile on her face. "I hope you don't terribly mind," she announced to my grandparents, "but we're going to bed." And they did.

In the morning she was gone again, and she never came back. Ron was left alone again with his stranger, and Lil with hers. How precious that one night with her husband must have been, a gem to be taken out and admired in the years to come, to be put back away in her memory for safekeeping. As she ministered to him faithfully until his passing, it must have helped to know, to know for a fact, that somewhere in the misty mind of the man she was caring for, was the man that she loved. The man who remembered her.

Marriage is a funny thing; it's hard to define, really. A promise that your life will not go unwitnessed, because your mate will witness it. Your life will not go unnoticed, because your mate will notice it. All of the intimate details of your life, your likes and dislikes, your joys and secret shames, your living history, are carried by your mate. Who can say how much they may have to carry for you tomorrow, or 10 or 20 years hence?

It is my sincere wish that anyone reading this true story who finds themselves in a similar situation is comforted by the truth that although the tunnel may be long and dim, it is not completely without light, nor laughter. May God bless and strengthen you.

Monique McKay resides in Fleming, Sask.

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Rural Canada coming into its own

Canada's economy is about to make another dramatic shift, this time away from the major metropolitan centres to medium, smaller and rural areas as resource and demographic shifts become more important to the country's economic well-being.

The first dramatic shift has occurred over the last 10 years, one that saw Canada's economy swing away from the geographic centre of the country to the West, from manufacturing to resources.

This shift will only intensify over the coming years, but because food and resources are expected to show significant positive growth, at least until 2020, economic activity will concentrate in those areas which produce these resources in abundance. In this case, that means rural parts of Canada, specifically but not exclusively in the West.

The primary sector of our industrial structure includes agriculture, fishing, mining and energy production. The rural West produces these resources in abundance.

The coming economic shift was illustrated in a recently released study by the Canada West Foundation: Economic Development Issues for Rural Communities in the Four Western Provinces, 2010-

Roslyn Kunin

2015-2020.

What are the reasons for the shift? Outside the industrialized world, there has always been a need for more and better food and the improved standard of living that wisely invested resources could provide, but the poorer countries could not afford to pay for what they needed. Now strong economic growth and rising incomes can be found in China, India, Eastern Europe, as well as other parts of the world. The shift of manufacturing to the developing world, away from the developed world, is major contributor to that growth.

The result will be a strong and ongoing global demand for food products, including more high-on-the-food-chain proteins, and for the energy, metals and other resources needed to build and maintain the infrastructure around the world that a comfortable, industrialized standard of living requires.

These resources, including agricultural land, are not found in major metropolitan areas. They are in

the rural areas served by the smaller and middle-sized centres scattered throughout the western provinces.

Another resource that these smaller communities have is affordable housing. As large numbers of baby boomers approach retirement age, many will be drawn to leave large cities for the smaller ones with their more relaxed, and affordable, lifestyle.

For the potential prosperity of the rural west to become a reality, however, certain conditions must be met. First, there must be an appropriate quantity and quality of workers. The workforce of today and tomorrow, even in industries like agriculture and mining, must have a high level of both business and technical skills. Some of these may come from older people moving to the more rural areas but younger workers will also have to be attracted to move where they are needed. Local young people must also be convinced to stay put, retained by coming attractive oppor-

tunities.

We must also pay attention to Aboriginal communities, both because they have a younger population and also because a higher proportion of First Nations people are already located in non-metropolitan areas. Immigration will also still be required to ensure that there are sufficient suitable people to meet our industries' needs.

But it is infrastructure that turns a remote rural wasteland into a resource laden asset. It is vital that transportation systems—by land, air and (where appropriate) water—be upgraded to take advantage of the coming economic shift. Communication systems (much easier with today's technology) are vital. People, however, will only stay where there are adequate medical, educational and other services to support their lifestyle and that of their families. A lack in any of these areas would limit or eliminate opportunities.

If, however, we rise to the challenges of supporting the smaller centres and rural areas, the western provinces and all of Canada will benefit from the resulting economic prosperity.

Roslyn Kunin is the director of the BC office for the Canada West Foundation.



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About Rocky Mountain Dealerships Inc.
 Rocky Mountain Dealerships Inc. (RMDI) is the largest independent dealer of Case Construction Equipment and Case IH Agricultural Equipment in Canada. RMDI owns and operates a network of 15 dealership branches located across Alberta and 6 in Manitoba and Saskatchewan. RMDI trades on the Toronto Stock Exchange under the symbol "RME".

Alberta pork industry is stepping up biosecurity measures

Alberta's pork industry is taking extra biosecurity measures to address the potential case of influenza type A H1N1 virus on one swine farm in Alberta.

"Albertans can be assured that Canada's animal health monitoring and surveillance programs are working properly," says Paul Hodgman, Executive Director for Alberta Pork. "We commend the producer and his farm vet for notifying authorities as soon as his hogs were displaying flu-like symptoms."

As a precaution, the Alberta swine herd in central Alberta has been quarantined. This precautionary measure is being taken until it can be determined exactly which flu virus these hogs may have. Samples have been taken from the herd and sent for testing. It will take up to two weeks to conclusively determine the strain of flu virus these hogs have.

"Hogs are susceptible to

many human flu viruses and we are working hard to ensure that all proper biosecurity measures are in place on our farms," adds Hodgman. "These steps minimize the introduction of a virus onto a farm, by people, by vehicles, by wildlife such as birds, or other livestock.

"Our first priority must be to take the precautionary measures to minimize the risk of spreading the virus to other pigs or people."

Increased biosecurity measures instructions include the following:

- Ensure all biosecurity protocols are strictly followed;

- People should avoid going into pig barns if they have influenza like symptoms (fever, sore throat, cough, runny nose, achy or tired) or if someone in their family has influenza like symptoms;

- People who work in pig barns should visit their doctor if they develop in-

fluenza like symptoms;

- Visitors should not be allowed into pig barns, especially if they have recently been to areas where people have been affected by this virus;

- If symptoms of swine influenza occur in a herd (coughing, fever, depression, runny nose, off feed) contact your veterinarian promptly for diagnosis and advice.

The pork industry reminds the public that type A H1N1 influenza is not a food safety concern. People cannot catch type A H1N1 influenza from consuming pork or pork products and Canadian pork continues to be safe to eat.

Alberta's pork producers will continue to work with the Canadian Food Inspection Agency and the Alberta government while maintaining strict biosecurity protocols as well as the stringent animal health monitoring and surveillance programs.

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Our Miller Farm Equipment branch in Moosomin, Saskatchewan is currently looking for a:

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The main responsibilities include:

- Review sales forecasts to establish priority for customer contact
- Work with the sales staff to understand all proposed equipment transactions
- Working with clients to obtain required credit/financial/ background information
- Negotiating with clients and lenders
- Promote sale of value added products such as extended warranties, insurance products etc.

Requirements:

- Post secondary degree in business or finance
- Must be familiar with both conditional sale and lease financing including interpretation of financial statements
- Knowledge of Agriculture Equipment is an asset.
- Must be out-going, self-motivated, organized, detail oriented with well developed negotiating skills
- Travel within the prescribed territory will be required.

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CASE III

35-1c



Rocky Mountain Dealerships Inc. owns and operates a network of 23 dealership branches located across Western Canada through which we sell and service construction and agricultural equipment.

Our Miller Farm Equipment branches in BRANDON, MANITOBA and MOOSOMIN, SASKATCHEWAN are currently looking for:

AGRICULTURAL BRANCH MANAGERS

The main duties and responsibilities of the Branch Manager include:

- Manage daily financial activities of the branch
- Monitor health, safety and environmental issues
- Oversee the supervision of personnel
- Budgeting
- Build relationships with the customer base and key suppliers
- Assist with the development and implementation of policies and procedures consistent with those of the organization
- Drive results in all departments through active participation in sales and support initiatives

Qualifications:

- Previous experience and knowledge of finance, accounting, budgeting, cash management, marketing, and staff hiring procedures
- Proven track record with agricultural equipment distribution is an asset
- Excellent communication skills, both verbal and written
- Able to supervise and train staff including employee development and performance management
- Knowledge of current business issues and trends

This position includes a competitive compensation structure including salary, performance incentives, and a comprehensive benefit package.

PLEASE SUBMIT YOUR RESUME QUOTING THE POSITION TITLE TO:

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Box 1200, Moosomin, SK S0G 3N0

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CASE III

35-1c

Montmartre News:

Hall of Fame runner coming to Perogy Run

When the starting gun goes off for Montmartre's seventh annual Perogy Run on May 30, world-class runner Ted Jaleta will be one of the competitors for the first-place spot.

Jaleta is one of the highest profile runners in Saskatchewan, and organizers hope his presence will bring out local spectators, as well as provincial fans, who want to witness Jaleta's running skills and want to hear his story.

Jaleta, who is a Saskatchewan Sports Hall of Fame member and was ranked 7th in the world in the Masters Division in 2005, will also speak at the Perogy Run lunch.

The Perogy Run attracts many local participants and many area runners who run, walk and bike the 1K/5K and 10K course.

"One of the greatest parts of our run is that it remains a family affair where three-year-olds participate alongside 70-year-olds," said Centre 48 chairperson Christalee Froese. "Having Ted at our run this year is a huge boost for Centre 48, as he is an ambassador for running, as well as being a beacon of hope for anyone who has faced adversity."

Jaleta was on track to become a world-class Ethiopian runner when civil war broke out in his country. In his 20s and at the height of his competitive years, Jaleta was impris-

oned and tortured, escaping to Canada as a refugee in 1982. Once in Canada, Jaleta immersed himself in running, rising in the masters division to eventually become one of the best in the world. To learn more about Jaleta and his book Never Give Up, visit www.tedjaleta.com.

"We hope the turnout for our run is better than ever. Every runner and biker, and every single donation means Centre 48 can continue to operate its classes (music, art, fitness) and its events (Boy Power, Girl Power, Masters Concert) at as low of a cost as possible."

To register online for the Perogy Run, please visit: www.events.runningroom.com.

'Paris of the Prairies' theme comes to life with Eiffel Tower donation

It all started in the middle of a Montmartre wheat field with a farmer on a tractor who had hours to think of ideas for his town.

Local farmer Lloyd Fink came up with the concept of Montmartre being 'Paris of the Prairies' several years ago, raising the idea at a Montmartre Economic Development Committee (EDC) meeting.

With the village having been settled by immigrants from a suburb of Paris, France named 'Montmar-

tre,' Fink thought the idea of 'Paris of the Prairies' would be a fitting slogan. The idea took some time to germinate, and has since been adopted as Montmartre's beautification theme. The 'Paris of the Prairies' concept will be used as a starting point to beautify the community and to build some interesting features which will attract visitors to town.

Regina businessman and former Montmartre resident Mallory Englot is doing his part to bring the Paris theme to life by creating, building and donating a 20-foot-high replica of the Eiffel Tower.

The 2,300-lb steel tower, which is 10-feet by 10-feet square at its base, will be installed at the north end of Main Street. The Montmartre version of the Eiffel Tower will be wired with white lights so that it is visible both day and night.

"This is a dream come true," said Village Councillor Patsy Fisher. "This tower is worth thousands of dollars and the town could never have afforded to buy it. Mallory has given a gift to the entire community and that gift is one of dreaming big and building our town."

The village also appreciates Kelly and Stacey Romanow who have volunteered to weld the massive tower together.

Climbing wall for swimming pool

Swimmers have always been able to splash, swim, dive and have a great time at the Kemoca Park swimming pool. However, this summer, they will also be able to climb.

Due to a grant from the Farm Credit Canada (FCC) AgriSpirit Fund, Kemoca Regional Park will be get-

ting an aqua climbing wall, a new pool ladder and several tot docks.


The swimming pool has embarked on a Summer Fun Enhancement Project to adapt the current pool with tot docks to help younger swimmers gain confidence in the water in a safe environment. The project will also include the installation of a poolside

modular climbing wall providing recreational use. An 'easy-ladder' will be installed to increase accessibility for expectant mothers, the elderly or swimmers with disabilities. The FCC AgriSpirit Fund is donating \$8,000 to assist in purchasing the new poolside equipment.

"Rural spirit makes the FCC AgriSpirit Fund

come alive" said Michael Hoffort, FCC Vice-President, Prairie Operations. "Having lived in small communities, I know that community projects only take place with the combined resources of every person. Anything FCC can do to help move these projects forward is a great way for us to make a difference in rural Canada."

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Chris Istace photo

Wapella Grade 6 student Jessica Baker works with cattail reeds to make a doll traditionally found in the Ojibwa First Nation culture during a symposium on First Nations culture at Wapella School on Tuesday, April 28.

Students get glimpse of First Nation culture

BY CHRIS ISTACE

Jessica Baker wraps a cattail reed around a cross she had earlier formed from a thicker piece of the material.

The Wapella School Grade 6 student is making a cattail doll, a traditional First Nations toy made by the Ojibwa people. The activity was one of many experienced by students at the school on Tuesday, April 28 through Kakwa, an aboriginal education program facilitated by Jeff and Kathleen Coleclough.

Besides making traditional arts and crafts, the students heard First Nations stories, learned about hide tanning and participated in traditional games to finish off the day-long symposium.

"The school's goals this year involve literacy and they (the Colecloughs) do a bit of storytelling with an aboriginal theme," said Wapella School principal Todd Volk.

"That fit in with the school's goals and all the other activities on top of that are just a bonus."

Since 2002, Kakwa has been based in Riceton, a hamlet located southeast of Regina, but was founded by the Colecloughs in Calgary 26 years ago. Both Kathleen and Jeff are Métis of Ojibwa descent.

Kakwa has worked with more than 100 museums, historic sites, movie production companies and schools, providing replicas of aboriginal artifacts. These items are also used for educational programs and facilitating educational presentations on traditional skills like hide-tanning, stone tool-making and earth pigments.

Kakwa's Aboriginal Resource Kit is approved for classroom use in both Saskatchewan and Manitoba, while their roster of clients has included the Canadian Museum of Civilization, the Universities of Saskatchewan, Toronto and Alberta, the Royal Saskatchewan Museum, the Smithsonian Institute in Washington, D.C., and the Royal Naval Museum in the United Kingdom.

Kakwa is also publishing books with First Nation themes. Their current list includes *Niitwin—Four Ojibwa Critter Tales* and *Black Bear Pastry and Other Delights*.

Both children's books were written by Kathleen, a former journalist who previously ran a metal music magazine. While living in Calgary in the early 1990s, the Colecloughs found that there weren't a lot of resources in their daughter's school about aboriginal culture.

With an idea to raise awareness about the culture and to make sure some of the traditional First Nations arts, skills and stories are presented to the public, the couple decided to dig deeper into their own backgrounds.

"We were lucky enough to find elders to teach us and they told us to go teach it to others," Kathleen said. "You don't argue with elders."

After sharing what they learned for two years at Fort Calgary, a North West Mounted Police fort that is now a historic site, the Colecloughs began giving presentations elsewhere, such as at schools and museums.

The couple has expanded their symposium work since moving to Riceton seven years ago.

"Sometimes, we find that teachers book us because they don't feel comfortable teaching (First Nations culture) on their own," said Kathleen. "Most of the students find seem to find it interesting."

It's also an avenue to help students understand aboriginal history and culture while breaking barriers between the First Nations and non-First Nations communities.

"When you raise awareness, it helps get rid of racism," she said.

Volk said it's good exposure to the culture for the students, especially considering Saskatchewan Education's move to incorporate First Nations culture into the provincial curriculum, particularly when it comes to treaty history.

"There was also a lot of lead-up work that had the kids prepared and interested," Volk said about the teachers who focussed on aboriginal culture in some of their classes the last few weeks.

Kakwa will be returning to the United States next month when they are facilitating a symposium in New York City.

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1995	MF	8570	Chopper, chaff spreader, PU	\$52,500
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1988	Gleason	R50	PU, header	\$22,500

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1998	MacDon	960	25', PUR	\$13,500
1994	Gleason	324	24' PUR	SOLD

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1999	Hesston	565A	5x8, auto tie	\$14,900
2009	MF	1478	16' Mower Conditioner, steel on steel rollers	0% for 5 yrs
2002	Hesston	1275	16' s/s, reverser	\$20,900
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