

Plain & Valley

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Scenes from last years Living Skies Come Alive International Fireworks Competition at Moosomin Regional Park. At left, spectators watch the fireworks going off across Moosomin Lake from the beach at Moosomin Regional Park. At right, Canadian and Chinese fireworks teams with the Stargate, which shoots fireworks in a 180 degree radius over 200 feet.

Canada vs USA in international fireworks competition: Living Skies Come Alive August 4-5

August 4 and 5—the Saturday and Sunday of the August long weekend, will be the ninth annual Living Skies Come Alive Fireworks competition. Fireworks are shot off across Moosomin Lake from the main beach.

There is a whole weekend of events planned around the fireworks, from kids games to pancake breakfasts to a sandcastle building contest, to performances by Sask Express, to performances by Shifty Morgan and Stuck on Red before and after the fireworks. (See pages 27-31 for more details on this year's fireworks weekend.)

Editor Kevin Weedmark sat down with Layne McFarlane and Laurie Renneberg of the fireworks committee to find out more about this year's show.

How is the fireworks weekend coming together?

Laurie: It is coming along great.
Layne: I would say we have had more committee meetings than ever before, we have done more planning to try to make it better than ever before. We are encouraging people to take the bus to avoid the traffic congestion.

Have you added bus capacity?

Layne: Yes, there will be two buses running and if there is enough demand then they'll make two trips with each bus. It's perfect for people that don't want to do a

lot of walking because it goes right down to the beach, they pick everyone up right at the store and take you home, so it is a totally hassle free way to come to the fireworks. The cost is \$30 and that includes your bus ticket and entry into the park.

Laurie: We just encourage people to give Taylor Charters a call if they are interested.

There were long lineups for food last year—do you have more food booths this year?

Laurie: Yes, there will be six including the store. We've got wraps, burgers, hot dogs, mini doughnuts, cotton candy, ice cream treats, butter chicken, pizza, and Tim Hortons will be there again.

Layne: There's lots of variety and more booths than ever before.

Laurie: The food booths will be open from 11 am-9 pm. They are all going to be set up in one place this year across from the store in the grassy area so it will be easy to get to, and picnic tables will be there for everyone to sit down and enjoy.

Are you expecting similar crowds to last year?

Laurie: It's hard to tell. China was just such a big draw for everybody. I think people really wanted to see what they could bring and it was a huge success. We are hoping U.S.A. will bring a lot of people out as well. The company coming

is one of the top six in 10 companies in the United States.

Layne: I was actually talking to them this morning. Our Canadian competitor says he has spent a significant amount of money to improve the quality of his show, and our American competitor has been in business for 34 years, has done the fireworks for 13 Super Bowls and the World Cup opening ceremonies. They are bringing in aspects of the show from different countries including Spain, China, and Japan. Every country or area has a different sort of an aspect on how they shoot off their pyrotechnics and design and the choreography of the show, and they are bringing all of that to Moosomin. I truly believe this is going to be the biggest and best show ever. People should not miss this show.

What else is going on that weekend?

Laurie: There will be pancake breakfasts both mornings, a sand castle building contest for the kids from 11-12 on Saturday, kids games both days, pontoon boat rides both days, a Sask Express show 4-4:45 pm each day, a beef dip supper both days, beer gardens of course, the two bands Shifty Morgan on the Saturday and Stuck on Red on Sunday, and then the 50/50 draw is always a big one, so a minimum \$500 each day.

Layne: We are attempting to make it a truly family entertainment event

and I had a fellow a few years ago that helped me with traffic control. He said he was sitting there out on the beach and kids were running around with lighted bracelets and you could tell there were the moms and dads and grandparents and he said 'what a phenomenal event to have a totally family event' and I've had others say it is a different environment than Craven and Dauphin—this is a different type of atmosphere—this is a family event.

Laurie: We just really encourage people to come early and enjoy the day and get parking early. Don't wait until 9:30 pm to show up.

What time should people arrive?

Laurie: We see the majority of people coming at 6-6:30 pm.

Layne: 6:30-9:30 pm has been the peak period of time for people coming in. But we're really optimistic that bringing in other shows such as Sask Express earlier will encourage people to come earlier. We hope people will come early and enjoy the entire event. The earlier you can come the better, because we can guarantee the earlier you bring your car out the quicker you are going to get out after the show. We will have transportation to take people down from the parking to the beach, as we've had in the past.

Continued on page 11 ^{ES}

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Jess Moskaluke nominated for six CCMA's

Rocanville's Jess Moskaluke is nominated for six awards at this year's Canadian Country Music Awards.

Another of Canada's top country stars—Brett Kissel—also has six nominations, the CCMA's announced.

In some categories Moskaluke and Kissel are vying for the same award.

Moskaluke is one of three women nominated in the album of the year category.

CCMA president Tracy Martin says that is significant.

"We've had a huge year in Canada for females," she said of the country genre.

She says this year's CCMA Awards telecast will "organically" recognize the influential women from various generations of song. Shania Twain is hosting the event, while Terri Clark will be inducted into the hall of fame, and then there's Moskaluke, the 28-year-old rising star from Rocanville whose career has been on a steady upward trajectory, helped by a number of CCMA awards and a Juno Award win for best country album.

Moskaluke, who was born and raised in Langenburg and has called Rocanville home for the last several years, got her break in 2011 after being picked as the "Next Big Thing" at a contest sponsored by Regina radio station Big Dog FM. Within months she was part of a new artist showcase put on by the CCMA's.

The attention helped draw more ears to her debut single "Catch Me If You Can," and garner significant accolades in the years that followed.

She's won the CCMA award for best female artist three times over the past four years.

Her album "Kiss Me Quiet"



Jess Moskaluke has been nominated for album of the year and female artist of the year, along with four other awards.

won the 2017 Juno Award for country album, which boosted her status on Canadian country radio.

The awareness helped her single "Drive Me Away" crack the top three of the Billboard Canadian country music airplay chart—making her the first woman to do so since 2008, when Terri Clark climbed to No. 1 with "In My Next Life."

"Drive Me Away" is now contending for single of the year at the CCMA's alongside fellow nominees that include Patrick's "Country Music Made Me Do It," James Barker Band's "Chills," Aaron Goodvin's "Lonely Drum" and Dallas Smith's "Side Effects."

Both Moskaluke's "Past the

Past" and Kissel's "We Were That Song" are in the running for album of the year alongside Patrick's "Country Music Made Me Do It," Lindsay Ell's "The Project" and The Washboard Union's "What We're Made Of."

The complete list of Moskaluke's nominations includes:

- Fans' Choice Award
- Album of the Year
- Female Artist of the Year
- Single of the Year for Drive Me Away
- Video of the Year for Drive Me Away
- Songwriter of the Year (with Zach Abend and Corey Crowder) for Drive Me Away

Moskaluke says she has never been nominated for so many CC-

MAs before and it came as a surprise to her.

"I honestly did not expect to see nearly this many nominations," she says. "I think it's the most I've ever had in one year. It's encouraging, and motivating, and exciting!"

"It takes a lot of time to build up a repertoire with lots of recognizable songs so that people remember your name. I think I'm finally getting to the point where I have enough of them now that people start to become more and more familiar with my name and my voice."

"It's a great feeling, knowing that something that you are so passionate about—and willing to risk it all on—is getting love from

your fans. You never know how something is going to be perceived until you release it, so it's really rewarding when it works."

Moskaluke says response to her new album "Past the Past" has been positive.

"I was worried that people would be confused at the amount of breakup songs on that album, given that I'll be happily married at the end of next month, but the album is called 'Past the Past' for a reason," she says. "And the response to that has been incredible in the most vulnerable of ways. People are reaching out telling me their individual stories about each song, and as a songwriter, there's really no better feeling. And as a person who's lived those stories, it's very encouraging to know that you're not alone in your experiences."

What's it like being a rising country star living in the small community of Rocanville?

"I'm sure it's managed just like anyone in the music business living anywhere else in the world," she says. "Living in a small town is not a disadvantage. Just like anyone else, there's a lot of travel. Lots of late nights, early mornings. Not many breaks, and a lot of getting good at time management!"

Moskaluke says there is new music coming soon, as well as a new video.

"I'm working on a Christmas record right now, as well as other non-Christmas music," she says. "We'll also be releasing the music video for 'Camouflage' in the next few weeks, and I have a feeling this will be one that people talk about for a very long time."


The CCMA Awards will take place in Hamilton on Sept. 9 hosted by Twain and be broadcast on the CBC.

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Kevin Weedmark photo

Gregor Gmerek is led out the back door of the Yorkton Court of Queen's Bench courthouse Tuesday afternoon to be taken to prison. Gmerek was given two four-year penitentiary sentences, for fraud and forgery, to be served concurrently. He was led out of the courtroom in handcuffs following the sentencing.

Defrauded his employer, Prairie Livestock, of \$1.2 million: Gmerek sentenced to 4 years

BY KEVIN WEEDMARK

Gregor Gmerek has been sentenced to four years in prison for defrauding his former employer, Moosomin's Prairie Livestock, of more than \$1.2 million, and could face deportation to Germany. Gmerek was found guilty of fraud and forgery in Yorkton Court of Queen's Bench in June, and was sentenced July 10.

Justice Janice McMurtry found that Gmerek had defrauded his former employer, Prairie Livestock, of approximately \$1,209,000 by various means, including issuing cheques to himself, depositing them, then voiding them on the company's accounting system and issuing second cheques with the same cheque number. Deposit slips were also falsified, Justice McMurtry found. Funds were deposited into Gmerek's bank account and used to pay his wife's credit card bills, she found.

She found Gmerek also used company funds to purchase a vehicle, and used company funds to speculate in foreign exchange markets, taking the profits for himself.

On Tuesday, July 10 Justice McMurtry sentenced Gmerek to two four-year sentences, one for fraud, and one for forgery, to be served concurrently.

Kirk Sinclair, owner of Prairie Livestock, made a Victim Impact Statement during the sentencing hearing Monday.

"For six months we had no social or personal life with family or friends, only 15 hours a day seven days a week trying to discover the full extent of the fraud," he told the court.

"Dealing with lawyers, RCMP etc. I sent over 450 emails in that period."

He said the fraud impacted Prairie Livestock's cash flow and hurt the business.

"I had to take out a \$600,000 mortgage shortly after. . . and two years later, when the full impact of the fraud hit the financial statements, I had to take another \$1 million term loan.

"I wasn't able to take any profits out of Prairie for five years. On our balance sheet, we had to write off \$1.466 million. The loss of income from being occupied with the fraud and not being able to properly manage the business is easily as much as the fraud again. It would be 10 years of my net income that is gone forever and will be missing from my retirement, or my estate."

The court had been told that Gmerek used the funds stolen from Prairie to buy cars, to buy a house in Moosomin, to buy jewelry, and to pay his and wife Renita's credit card bills.

"I accept that Mr. Gmerek's offending deprived Prairie Livestock of approximately \$1,209,657," Justice Janet McMurtry said in delivering her sentence Tuesday.

"I find the following to be relevant in determining the gravity of Mr. Gmerek's offending:

"1) Mr. Gmerek is solely responsible for fraudulently depriving Prairie Livestock of \$1.2 million.

"2) Prairie Livestock is the sole direct victim. However

this company employed approximately 15 people when he offended against it, putting their livelihoods at risk. Within two years of the discovery of the fraud, Prairie Livestock took on additional debt of \$1.6 million.

"3) The president of Prairie Livestock wrote in a victim impact statement of the effect Mr. Gmerek's offending had on his life. He suffered health problems, marital stress, and he lost significant income.

"4) Mr. Gmerek began offending against Prairie Livestock soon after he began with the company and continued until he was fired, over a period of four and a half years.

"5) Mr. Gmerek carefully covered his tracks. He created false transactions to cover the fact he was paying himself income to which he felt entitled.

"6) Mr. Gmerek has no criminal record.

"7) On the other hand, Mr. Gmerek would not have been in a position of trust if he had any history of offending."

She said there were many aggravating factors in Gmerek's case that led to the four-year sentence.

"In Mr. Gmerek's case there are many aggravating factors, and no mitigating factors, except for the lack of a criminal record," Justice McMurtry said. "For four years, through hundreds of transactions, Mr. Gmerek deprived Prairie Livestock of an enormous amount of money—\$1.2 million. His criminal actions caused significant consequences to the company president and his family, and put the viability of Prairie Livestock at risk. Mr. Gmerek used his accounting skills and his position of trust to carefully hide the fraudulent transactions. It took Prairie Livestock months to discover the extent of its loss. I accept it will take the company many years to recover financially.

"Mr. Gmerek, I am sentencing you on four years on each charge to be served concurrently."

Crown Prosecutor Dana Brule asked for a penitentiary sentence of 4.5 years in a sentencing hearing Monday, while defence lawyer Jeff Deagle argued that a penitentiary sentence of 24-36 months would be more appropriate. Deagle pointed out to the judge that a sentence of anything more than six months could lead to Gmerek being deported, as he is not a Canadian citizen and Canada's immigration law allows anyone who has been incarcerated for more than six months and has been convicted of a major crime to be deported. Gmerek was born and raised in East Germany.

Kirk Sinclair said after the sentencing that he accepts the sentence is in line with similar cases, but he would like to see the law changed so that those who commit fraud spend a longer period in prison, a time over which their loss of earnings would equal the fraud.

"I think the law needs to be changed so the time in jail is equivalent to the amount they stole," he said. "If they stole a million dollars and you made 100 grand a year you should be locked up for 10 years, otherwise you're mak-

ing money by stealing. You need to take the incentive out of it."

Sinclair won an earlier civil case against Gmerek and has recovered some property from Gmerek.

He still has a lawsuit pending against RBC, which he alleges should not have accepted fraudulent cheques made out to RBC that were then used to pay off Gmerek's credit cards and a car loan. The allegation is that RBC did not have direction from the company's owner or anyone with signing authority on how to apply the cheques made out to RBC. There is also an outstanding lawsuit against the accounting firm of Young, Park, and McNabb. In 2010, before the bulk of the fraud happened, Sinclair provided the auditors with evidence of fraud, but the accounting firm accepted Gmerek's explanation and continued to sign off on the company's accounts until Sinclair finally found proof of fraud in 2012.

Sinclair says that, while the sentence provides some sense of closure, "we're not finished because we haven't finished the civil side to recover what was lost. That will take another year. It finalizes it in the fact that these other lawsuits that are pending can be wrapped up now that we have a conviction."

What has Sinclair learned from the whole experience? "I've learned not to doubt my instincts," he says. "I was right, right from the start.

"I've also learned you can never do enough due diligence. We should have done more due diligence when we hired him. We should have fact-checked his resume.

"I've learned that our justice system is slow, but it works. The legal system is so backlogged it's unfortunate that I don't know what changes the government could make to run the court system more efficiently—it just drags on forever."

NOT CREDIBLE

In June, when Justice McMurtry delivered her guilty verdict, she went through the various pieces of evidence presented at trial, and said she found Gmerek's explanations for most of them not credible.

"I refer to these transactions to illustrate the various ways Mr. Gmerek made false entries into Genesis (Prairie's accounting system) with the purpose of paying himself or his family with company money. I am satisfied Mr. Gmerek was not entitled to any of these payments," she said.

"Mr. Gmerek is facing charges of fraud, theft, forgery, and uttering forged documents. I accept Mr. Gmerek defrauded the company of approximately \$1.2 million. This deprived the company of approximately \$1.2 million. Thus he also committed theft. To commit theft and fraud, Mr. Gmerek forged the signatures of Mr. Sinclair and others on company cheques. He then used those forged cheques to pay himself company money to which he was not entitled. I am satisfied the Crown has proved each of these charges beyond a reasonable doubt."

Team Canada Roller Derby

Four local girls chosen to compete at JRDA World Cup

BY KARA KINNA

Four local junior roller derby players will get the chance to compete in their sport on the world stage from July 23-24 after being four of only 20 players from across Canada selected for Canada's national junior roller derby team, which will compete in the Junior Roller Derby Association (JRDA) World Cup near Philadelphia from July 23-24.

Gapland Smashers teammates Presley Langley from Rocanville, Cassidy Griemann from Moosomin, Kaili Adams from Whitewood, and Paige Clark from Spy Hill all made the cut for the national team after tryouts in Regina last summer.

The four girls tried out along with around 135 other youth from across Canada and made the cut after the players were whittled down to the final 20 selected to represent Team Canada.

The JRDA World Cup is likened to the Olympics of junior derby. Held only every three years, the winning team is considered the best in the world. The four Gapland girls will be up against Team USA East, Team USA West, Team Great Britain, Team Europe, and Team Australia.

Vince Sopczak, the head coach of Team Canada, says having four local girls from the Gapland program make the team is a great achievement for a rural area.

"For a program like Gapland that's very rare," he says. "They are a smaller program and they have competed with programs like Edmonton who have a lot more people, and nobody there made the team, and in Calgary nobody made the team. So it is rare. It's just an anomaly this year," he says. "It's actually very cool that a region that small would have that many players. It's phenomenal that they have that much talent in one tiny little area."

Sopczak says the JRDA World Cup is a big deal in the derby world.

"It's a big deal in the U.S. and in Canada it's getting to be a bigger deal," he says.

"All these teams get their countries together and play. And the nice thing about this is that Regina is actually hoping to host the next one coming up. We just put a bid in yesterday. So that's what I mean—it's getting bigger in Canada, but in the U.S. the fan base for roller derby is huge."

Not only did four local girls make the team, but of the 20 players selected from across Canada, 13 of them are from Saskatchewan.

"In Saskatchewan roller derby is huge right now. Regina actually has nine on the team," says Sopczak. "It's the way it goes. A few years ago Alberta was really strong in roller derby. The last two years it's Saskatchewan. Saskatchewan for junior derby has kind of become the mecca."

Other players on the Canadian team are from the Maritimes, Ontario, Quebec, B.C. and Alberta.

Sopczak says the competition at the JRDA World Cup is going to be tough.

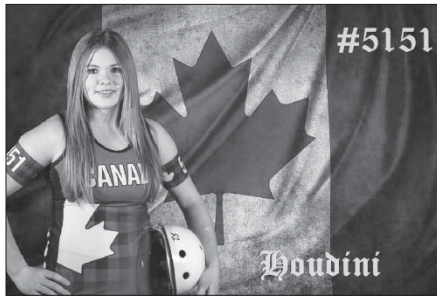
"The Americans are very,



CASSIDY GRIEMANN



PRESLEY LANGLEY



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KAILI ADAMS

very tough to beat. The difference is the Canadian teams have 130 kids try out. The American teams have two teams and they probably have 500 or 600 kids try out for those spots. So basically you are going there to beat the Americans. But the thing is the last team we took was fairly young compared to this one and we finished third. So we are hoping to finish ahead of last time for sure. Do we have a shot? Everyone has a shot, you never know how it's going to come out, but the Americans are a very, very tough group to beat in roller derby."

The other challenge for the Canadians will be that the American teams take the co-ed aspect of roller derby more seriously, and Sopczak is expecting the U.S. teams to be at least 50 per cent males. Canada only has one male on its team.

"It's co-ed. The problem is that in roller derby in Canada, the males haven't taken on playing, so we are going to be playing teams that are predominantly 16- to 18-year-old males, so it's a different type of aggression and different type of derby they play and we don't see it all the time. We have the skill that they do, but they've got the size and the testosterone that we don't," he says.

Team Canada will have a busy and rigorous schedule during the two days they are there.

"Day one we are going to play every team. So on day one we are going to play five games," says Sopczak. "We are going to play the two U.S.A. teams, Australia, Europe and England. And then we go into seeding. And then day two we play two to four games depending on how well we do, and then we play whoever we play (in the finals)."

"The first day is busy, the kids will be playing derby for 12 hours. They will have five 40-minute games, and then day two they will have two to four 60-minute games. And then they have four days of practice before that for about five hours a day."

Sopczak says Team Canada has been doing its best to prepare and practice for the World Cup.

"The goal is to get the skaters working together and to understand the terminology and the different strategies," he says. "These skaters have the skills to compete at a high level, we just have to get them working together and understanding what each other is doing."

Presley Langley, 16, from Rocanville, says she was thrilled to have made the team.



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"I decided to try out because my sister did it in 2015 and I got to go along with her and see how it was," she says. "I thought that I would really like it so I wanted to try it out too."

"I was really excited. I couldn't wipe the smile off my face when my mom told me."

"I think I'm mostly looking forward to getting to know my team better and representing my country. Derby has allowed me to travel a lot, so I'm really excited to travel, and for the adventure and the experience."

"Around here, you don't really get as much competition in a small town, so getting to go somewhere like

that is a really big deal and it really tests you."

"I was really excited and nervous and it kind of shocked me," says Paige Clark, 16, from Spy Hill.

"I'm excited for the travelling and meeting the new girls. It's really fun to meet people from all over Canada and representing our country."

"I think we will be strong because everyone is strong individual skaters so put together we should be good."

Cassidy Griemann, 15, from Moosomin, says she

has always wanted to play sports at a higher level, and derby has given her that chance.

"Ever since I was a little kid I knew I wanted to play sports at a high level, but I started hockey when I was too old and figure skating wasn't taking me anywhere, so I started derby and I was actually good at it and I thought it would be cool."

Griemann says she was "ready to jump up and scream," when she found out she made Team Canada.

"It's really cool because we are representing our nation on a world stage," she says.

Kailee Adams, 17, from Whitewood, says this will be her second time on a national team.

"I was on team True North, which was the second team Canada team we had, and I thought might as well try it again," she says.

"I got home from school and then my parents told me I was selected. I was pretty excited."

"This is pretty big for me, but no one around here really knows what derby is. But it's pretty big for me. No one else in my town has done anything like this on a national level."

"I'm looking forward to playing with the different people and with the girls that are on my own team as well."

"It's going to be pretty tough. I'm a little bit nervous and a little bit excited."

Adams says she loves roller derby.

"Derby is a part of me and is always going to be, so I'm going to play it until I can't anymore."

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SaskPower expects continued growth

SaskPower is expecting continued growth, as its annual report details net income of \$146 million.

In 2017-18, SaskPower invested \$996 million into the provincial power grid. The investment represents important projects to update the aging power grid in order to improve the reliability of the network, and continue to support economic growth in the province. While meeting a 5.4 per cent increase in power demand, SaskPower also kept on track to meet and exceed federal emission regulations by 2030.

"Every winter, we continue to see new peak power demand records being set," SaskPower President and CEO Mike Marsh said. "The increase in energy use last year is the equivalent of adding 150,000 homes onto the grid. That's why we will continue to invest approximately a billion dollars annually in updat-

ing and growing electrical infrastructure in the province."

In 2017-18, SaskPower recorded a net income of \$146 million, up from \$56 million

in 2016-17. This result was primarily due to lower natural gas prices, the signifi-

cant increase in demand, and recent rate increases. This brings SaskPower's

debt ratio to 74.9 per cent, within the company's target range.

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Greyhound ending bus service in Western Canada

Communities in Southeast Saskatchewan and Southwest Manitoba will no longer have Greyhound bus service as of October 31.

Greyhound Canada announced that it is ending its passenger bus and freight services in Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba, and cancelling all but one route in B.C.—a U.S.-run service between Vancouver and Seattle.

The changes take effect the end of October, which will make Ontario and Quebec the only regions where Greyhound will continue to operate.

"This decision is regretful and we sympathize with the fact that many small towns are going to lose service," Greyhound Canada senior vice-president Stuart Kendrick told the media.

"But simply put, the issue that we have seen is the routes in rural parts of Canada—specifically Western Canada—are just not sustainable anymore."

Kendrick said 415 people will be out of work, and estimates the decision will impact roughly two million consumers.

The company blames a 41 per cent decline in ridership since 2010, persistent competition from subsidized national and inter-re-



There will no longer be Greyhound bus service in Southeast Saskatchewan and Southwest Manitoba as of October 31.

gional passenger transportation services, the growth of new low-cost airlines, regulatory constraints and the growth of car ownership.

Declining ridership is the primary culprit, said Kendrick, who called that an "ongo-

ing spiral" that's making it impossible for the company to continue operations.

He said the company has raised concerns with provincial and federal officials over the years, and wanted to ensure both levels of government were "fully aware" of the situ-

ation. Greyhound Canada has long advocated for a community funding model to allow any private carrier to bid on essential rural services, he said.

Kendrick said Greyhound Canada will continue to push Ottawa to look at improving transport in

northern communities. "There was a commitment to look at our issue, they're well aware of it. It shouldn't come as a surprise that we've had problems, but there was no funding commitment at that time," he said.

"The company has experienced significant losses despite continued efforts to return to viability. In the affected regions, the company has run an operating deficit since 2004. We have had substantial losses over several years as a direct result of declining ridership."

All Greyhound routes in Ontario and Quebec will continue to operate except for one: the Trans-Canada, which links a number of smaller communities between Winnipeg and Sudbury, Ont.

Kendrick said the decision will leave most of the affected communities with no other transportation options.

Steven Bonk, MLA for Moosomin Constituency

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Continued from front

You had a success last year with 12,500 people through the gates. What would be your grand total that you've raised from this event over the years?

Laurie: About \$300,000 in total. That's helped us build our water treatment plant for the park. That was \$600,000, so this has helped a lot.

Layne: The new plant is coming together and the quality of the water is working fine, and together with the engineers and the trades people, they're getting the little quirks worked out of the new plant, and so overall we're very pleased.

What sort of people come out to this event?

Laurie: People from everywhere. There are quite a few families that get together every year. We've had people from the United States, from B.C., from Manitoba. It's growing and it's hard to pinpoint them. We are doing a little bit of research this year to find out postal codes when they are buying their tickets so we can get a better handle on where people are coming from.

Do you have a lot of annual visitors that come back year after year?

Laurie: Yes, definitely.
Layne: A couple of years ago I walked through the campers and just visited with people along the way and I remember one camper in particular. They were from Wolesey and they stayed four or five years ago for one night and saw the fireworks, and since then they have come for the entire weekend. They bring the camper and enjoy the entire August long weekend. It has become somewhat of a destination for many people and an annual event for many of them.

What is the history of this event? How did it get going?

Laurie: A few guys got together on the beach and bought some fireworks, and it kind of started from there and then it just grew every year.

Layne: It has grown each year. There has been a general philosophy that it can't stay the same, we've got to try to improve it every year, and we believe we have done that. Where we go from here when we believe this is the greatest show on earth, I'm not sure, but we are really excited about this year.

Why do you guys put the work you do into this event?

Laurie: Because we love the park. We had a meeting the other night and somebody was outside saying that they had been to different regional parks in Saskatchewan, and ours was just so awesome. You hear comments from people all the time about what a nice park it is, and we go travelling quite a bit to different campgrounds and we see what a gem we have here in the corner of the province, and I think that's why we do it—because we love our park and want to keep it nice. And by raising funds we're able to keep it going.

Layne: It's a public park and we are proud of it, and when we work with an event, we want it to be successful, and so we're doing everything we can to make it successful.

ful.
Laurie: Without the support of the businesses in town, without their donations and their support, we definitely couldn't. We're so happy with the support from the businesses, and from the Chamber of Commerce which nominated us for the provincial tourism awards for community event of the year. Sometimes it's not monetary donations, it's donations in kind, like from the RCMP, Fire Department, Hutch Ambulance, those people that don't have to be out there but are there because we need them for that weekend. We do appreciate them, and a lot of businesses like yourself give us a cut on different products or services, so that helps us out as well. If there is anyone out there who would still like to donate towards our worthy weekend, it would be greatly appreciated.

Do you get a lot of people for the sand castle building and kids games, those daytime events?

Laurie: Yes, last year I had to run in and buy more prizes for the kids—we had over 100 kids each day and it was just crazy. For the sand castle building, the beach is full of kids and their families. It's a family event. Everyone is out there with their pails. I bet you there are 20-30 different families out there building sand castles, and Lynn from Re/Max Realty looks after the whole event, and there are prizes, and everyone who is there gets a prize or some sort of treat.

Do you get a lot of people for the pontoon boat rides?
Laurie: Definitely. They are about half an hour ride. It is amazing how many people have never been on water before. Those are the people who truly appreciate the cabin owners taking time out of their busy weekend and giving those rides.

Layne: It's sort of a unique perspective just riding down the lake. It is different than driving down the road.

Laurie: You don't appreciate the magnitude of what our park has to offer by driving down the road—it looks very different from the water!

You've been growing each year and you had an amazing turnout last year, with 12,500 people through the gates. What are your expectations for this year?

Layne: It's so hard to tell, but we have limited the tickets this year to 7,000 per night.

Laurie: People might want to get their advance tickets by July 28.

Layne: The advance tickets are \$15 and at the toll gate they are \$20, so it pays to get advance tickets. There is also a limited amount of parking. I think we've maxed it out at 350. The camping is certainly getting filled up.

We certainly hope that we have mother nature's support once again.

Laurie: We've always been lucky with the weather, and hopefully it's good again.

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July outlook for Canadian crops remains positive

As the 2017-18 marketing year (MY) winds down, the FCC's January forecast holds fast for several Canadian crops. Corn production should remain profitable in 2018. Canola too will see positive margins till the end of the year, although they'll be more pressured than they were in the first half. The FCC expects red lentil margins to be negative. Green peas should begin to see some upside, becoming slightly profitable for the remainder of the year. Wheat won't likely be profitable despite some recent upside in pricing and global uncertainty has helped drop the soybean price to levels that, if sustained, likely mean breakeven profitability or slightly better.

The US\$0.78 loonie helped boost Canadian revenues during the first six months, offsetting increases to interest rates, and fuel and fertilizer prices.

Corn

Global corn production in 2018 is forecast up from a year ago, helping to meet global demand which is expected to grow 2% by the end of the 2018-19 marketing year. Despite those production increases, world ending stocks are expected to shrink 38 million metric tons in that time which, if realized, would be the lowest stocks on record since 2012-13.

With fewer acres seeded

to corn and lower yields expected, U.S. year-over-year corn production is forecast down in 2018. Both exports and domestic use should also be reduced throughout 2018-19 except for corn used for ethanol, reflecting expected gasoline consumption growth. With supply slowing more than demand, the 2018-19 U.S. ending stocks are forecast down 525 million bushels from last year.

Although the 2017-18 corn price received (US\$3.25) hasn't changed since January, corn futures prices for the 2018 crop had risen until the end of May because of those expected low stocks levels. The USDA projects the U.S. 2018-19 farm price to average US\$3.80, up US\$0.50 from the 2017-18 average. But the December 2018 corn price is under pressure with a higher-than-expected U.S. 2018 supply. Assuming this translates into a proportional pressure on Canadian corn prices, the 2% annual increase in Canadian corn acres planted in 2018 may not be large enough to raise corn revenues.

Soybeans

We also expect lower ending stocks for U.S. soybeans in the 2018-19 marketing year. The record U.S. 2017 crop will likely decline this year with an expected drop in acres. While solid domestic demand and a sustained strong pace of imports is

expected to lower global ending stocks for 2018-19, overall soy imports and prices are now uncertain, given China's escalating trade tensions with the U.S.

That's not necessarily a slam-dunk win for Canada. Chinese buyers faced with paying U.S. tariffs may buy more Canadian soybeans, but that positive impact might be

more than offset by negative consequences. Given China's capacity to determine the world price—they import close to 2/3 of the world's soy imports—they can shift global trade

flows between and among the world's major traders in ways that might disadvantage Canada, and ultimately lower the U.S. reference price.

Continued on page 16



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Tariffs impacting some local businesses

BY KARA KINNA

Some local businesses are feeling the effects of the trade war between Canada and the U.S., with tariffs on both sides of the border affecting everything from prices to the availability of supplies. And while some businesses haven't been affected yet, they are worried about what will happen if the trade war continues.

Norm Murray, one of the owners of Virden Recreation, which sells boats, says he's anticipating a 10 per cent increase on the cost of the boats that are made in the U.S.

"The first boats are being invoiced and coming across and it's started July 1," he says. "Plus we have about a five or six per cent increase on the 2019 product because they are having to pay more for the steel and the aluminum because of the tariff that Donald (Trump) put on that going into the country. So the boat manufacturers are putting up their price, and then the Liberals have a retaliatory tariff, and they are giving us a 10 per cent tariff on the boat when it comes across the border."

He says it's not only affecting Canadian companies, but the American companies that do the manufacturing. He says many American companies are furious.

"Brunswick is looking at moving a whole bunch more of their fibreglass production to Mexico, pulling it out of the Carolinas and Tennessee," he says. "About eight to ten years ago, they moved the Lund plant from Steinbach (Manitoba) down to Minnesota, and now they are looking at moving a bunch of it back because they still own the plant in Steinbach."

"A big part of the Lund pontoon business they've moved to Quebec. They pulled it out of Fort Wayne, Indiana where they are built and they are going to build them in Quebec."

"It's going to affect us all."

Murray says there is a guaranteed 10 per cent increase coming on anything coming out of the U.S. and while it won't affect all of their product, it will affect a large portion of it.

"For any inventory that's in the country already we are okay, but moving forward, yikes," he says. "And it's not just boats, they are talking about putting it on a whole list of stuff."

What can be done?

"We are lobbying our government, trying to get them to straighten it out, and we are hoping cooler heads will prevail and they will get NAFTA back in place," says Murray.

Stan Langley, the owner of Universe Satellite Sales in Rocanville, which sells Arctic Cat ATVs and snowmobiles, says he hasn't seen any effect of the trade war yet, but with Arctic Cat products being made in Deep River Falls, Minnesota, he's expecting an impact.

"I haven't seen anything, the only price increase we've seen is because our dollar is so low," he says. "Some of the manufacturers are increasing our cost prices because of the dollar being so low."

"I'm sure something is going to happen, I just don't know how long they keep on doing it. I can't believe Trump is letting this go."

"I'm worried. Every day I get up in the morning and I turn on BNN to see what else Trump has done today. It's just one thing after another. I am worried. Everything is priced high now. What is going to happen? We are fighting a 35 cent dollar, it's about a 35 per cent exchange rate right now, and if they throw a tariff on that isn't going to be good for anybody. It isn't going to be good for the manufacturers who are trying to ship across the border and it isn't going to be good for the people who want to buy a recreation vehicle, or buy anything really. It's just going to stall the economy in the United States and Canada as far as I'm concerned."

"There are a handful of people that are going to benefit from it and I think they all eat at the same table as Trump."

Nigel Jones, the CEO of Vaderstad, which manufactures farm machinery at Langbank, says he's seeing an impact in their supply chain.

"Obviously there is some knock-on effect to us at the moment. It's not as significant as some others, but it is starting to have an impact on us in the supply chain in particular," he says.

"We're seeing price increases as a result from the supply chain. We're having a problem with availability of supply because some of the steel supplies are going to under allocation, which means you can't increase your orders if you want to. So you can't get additional orders or additional steel and that's starting to have some impact in the supply chain."

"And then of course, the counter tariffs, if they come into play in full effect then we don't know what the impact of that is going to be yet. Certainly in the supply chain we are seeing a difference and it is having an impact on our raw material costs at the moment."

"It isn't going to be good for the manufacturers who are trying to ship across the border and it isn't going to be good for the people who want to buy a recreation vehicle, or buy anything really. It's just going to stall the economy in the United States and Canada as far as I'm concerned."

—Stan Langley, Universe Satellite Sales

He says most of their suppliers are located in Canada, but the trade war has had an impact on those Canadian suppliers, making it harder to get inputs.

"If there is a big rush to place orders on Canadian suppliers now, then obviously they don't have capacity to meet demand," he says.

While Vaderstad's machinery sales in the U.S. are small right now, Jones says they are hoping to grow in that area, and a long-term trade war would impact that.

"We don't have a very big presence (in the U.S.) at the moment so that side isn't as much of an impact to us. If it continues for the longer term then that would be an issue to us because we are expecting to grow in that area."

If the trade war continues, would prices of Vaderstad's machinery rise in the long-term?

"Yes," says Jones, "there would be a definite increase in prices and the consumer in the end would bear the brunt of it unfortunately."

"It's very difficult to say because of the mix and different factors at play, but we could certainly be looking at three to five percentage points on the overall price I guess."

Is Vaderstad able to do anything to mitigate the ef-

fect?

"We are doing what a lot of other people are doing, and trying to find Canadian sources so that we can avoid the tariffs," he says. "We are trying to mitigate that through Canadian sourcing where possible. But that has a limited lifespan because of the capacity that is available in Canada."

Alex Renard, the General Sales Manager at Four Seasons Sales in Virden, which sells RVs, says they have enough stock on site to buffer any trade war effects right now, but he doesn't know what the future holds.

"Currently they are not (feeling the effects), but that's because the nature of our business. We've ordered our inventory for the selling months well in advance. So with the tariffs that were imposed in May on the U.S. imports, a lot of our goods had already been manufactured at that time," he says.

"We do expect there to be some effect, we just don't know what that's going to look like."

All of the Four Seasons' new units come from the U.S.

"If it continues long-term we do expect the price of trailers to go up," he says. "Basically for Canadians, any U.S. manufactured good that is made of steel or aluminum, Canadians

can expect to pay a little bit more for that product."

"I've talked to a couple of reps. They expect the change to be minimal. I hope they are right, but we just don't know right now."

"We are in a good spot because we always order a lot of inventory, so we do have a vast number of 2018 units. So we are protected from any sudden price increases because we already have a lot of those trailers. We are in a better spot than a lot of the other RV dealerships. A lot of them will order in a trailer as someone comes and buys it. So then in that situation, someone comes in and says 'we want that trailer for X dollars,' they don't know what the additional charges are going to be on that trailer because they are just starting to manufacture it now. We are less concerned than other RV dealerships would be. We have a lot of stock and we take a lot of trades in, so we have a lot of used units as well that aren't going to be affected at all."

Renard says there is not much that businesses like Four Seasons can do.

"From my understanding it's something Canada didn't want to do in the first place, it was just a retaliatory measure, so the ball is essentially in the U.S. court right now. They have to decide if they want to escalate it or where things are going to go."

Arthur Ward, president of Pattison Ag, says it's hard to understand what the impacts of the tariffs will be, but if the trade war continues long-term it will effect farm machinery prices.

"We don't completely understand the impact the tariffs will have," he says. "It

will depend how long they are on and if there are additional products effected. The impact we will feel as an ag supplier will be greatly determined by how our customers are effected."

"If the tariffs remain in place, particularly those on steel and aluminum, we will start to see price increases on equipment. How big that increase will be is very difficult to predict. It will depend on the amount of those materials used in the manufacture of the particular machines and also on how much of the added cost the manufacturer feels they can pass on to the consumer."

"As we start to clean out of inventories that were ordered and purchased before the trade actions started, the prices in both complete machines and spare parts will go up and availability could very well become a challenge."

"Because these tariffs are 'stroke of pen' items, they can come off as quickly as they went on. That also means that they can increase in the same manner. It will be dependent on how other countries, particularly Canada retaliates to the tariffs."

Ward says they are limited when it comes to mitigating the effect of the tariffs.

"The only way to try and mitigate the effects is to be very cautious when it comes to ordering machines that are not presold," he says. "It is more difficult to sell from an empty shelf but it also protects us in case the tariffs come off and there is a price correction after that. Based on the actions of both sides, it is next to impossible to predict how this will play out."

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July outlook for Canadian crops remains positive

Continued from page 14
Uncertainty will, at the very least, introduce price volatility and an ambiguous U.S. farm price

Canola

With global oilseed production projected to rise in 2018-19 year-over-year, global exports should also increase, although soybeans (as of June) are expected to account for most of the increase. The added production will be used in a higher crush during the next MY, leading to lower ending stocks compared to 2017-18. Total U.S. oilseed production for 2018-19 is forecast to decrease from 2017-18, although canola production forecasts are higher.

Canola prices dropped more than expected in the first half of the year, in tandem with soy's drop. The decline in canola was more muted however, leading to our forecast of an average price of CA\$11.30 per bushel for the rest of the year. Statistics Canada estimates that Canadian producers seeded a record-high 22.8 million acres of canola in 2017, and will be planting just 1% fewer acres in 2018. This decline would lower the stocks-to-use ratio and likely support canola prices.

Pulses

India's tariffs on Canadian peas and lentils led to projected year-over-year declines in acres seeded: 12% for dry peas and 14.5% for lentils. Even with the expected decline in production, ending stocks should increase compared to the 2017-18 MY due to the slow pace of Canadian exports. Red lentils are projected to average CA\$9.80 and green peas, CA\$8.90 for the year.

Wheat

U.S. wheat production is projected to rebound in 2018 and increase 5%, yet U.S. ending stocks for 2018-19 are forecast to hit a 4-year low. Global ending stocks should also marginally decline this year, thanks to continued strength of demand and Russian production reverting back to normal levels after the large 2017 crop.

As a result, the average 2018-19 price is expected to slowly rise above the 2014-15 price for the first time. Statistics Canada expects Canadian farmers to have increased the area sown to wheat by 10.4% in 2018, given it might offer a better price and more profitable options than pulse markets. Spring wheat margins are projected to be slightly negative, on average, for the rest of the year, but efficient operations should be able to achieve positive margins.

Global market forces played a big part in Canadian competitiveness and the profitability of our agricultural sectors in 2018-to-date. Several macro factors did too—and while we didn't get everything right, our



forecasts in January help explain those trends.

Interest rates slowly trend up while the loonie hovers at US\$0.78

Our January forecast of a US\$0.78 loonie was right on the money up to mid-June (see illustration). But the Canadian economy relies on the strength of export sectors. Trade tensions, currently pushing the CAD lower, could continue to pressure the loonie below the \$0.78 projected 2018 average.

Adjustments

In the January forecast, the FCC underestimated the strength of the world economy and the resulting robustness in global oil demand: despite rising

oil production in the U.S., the West Texas Intermediate (WTI) crude oil price averaged close to US\$65, significantly more than our initial projection of US\$55.

The Bank of Canada has revised their projections of Canadian economic

growth for 2018 since our January outlook. The Bank expects a slower rate of growth, but that the economy will operate close to full capacity this year. Inflationary pressures persist, trending modestly higher than our forecast of 2.0%, the



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The FCC also correctly anticipated the higher short-term rates in the U.S. and Canada that pushed bond yields higher. The average 5-year fixed rate on mortgages has climbed 35 basis points in the first six months of 2018, in line with our forecast of an annual increase of around 75 basis points.

After a hike to the overnight rate in January (of 25 bps), financial markets suggest there'll be another rate hike in July, consistent with our expectation of at least two rate hikes and a bump of 50 - 75 basis points in 2018.

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Producers welcome changes to wheat grading system

BY CRAIG LESTER

Farmers say changes coming in the way Western Canadian wheat is graded should relieve a bit of stress come harvest time.

A year into research on how to modernize the way grain is graded, the Canadian Grain Commission has made some small changes. A minor one is separating the test between mildew-and-heat stress and frost stress.

Daryl Beswitherick, the program manager of National Inspection Standards for the CGC, says they are replacing the standard samples with the frost and mildew guides, which is currently a combination of both.

"Our research has shown that the two grading factors don't compound each other so we are going to assess them individually, not in a combination," says Beswitherick.

Beswitherick explains the frost guide has a slightly higher frequency of frost than the standard sample would have. The same goes for mildew.

"At the end of the day, it will allow a little bit more grain that has been impacted by frost and mildew into a higher grade," Beswitherick explains.

Matt Sawyer, a director with the Western Canadian Wheat Growers, says separating them out is a really good thing for producers, while not af-

fecting the end product.

He adds that looking at easing some of these standards, while not affecting milling or the bread, is a win-win for the whole system since it increases revenues for producers and takes the next step toward modernizing Canada's grain system.

The farmer from Acme,

Alberta says it should also lower farmers stress when it comes time to take grain off the field, especially if it may have been touched by light frost.

"Maybe if there was a little bit of frost on your grain, you might be able to save that grade and put more money into farmers' jeans," Sawyer

says.

Beswitherick and Sawyer stress this will have no effect on the product for the consumer. It may also encourage farmers to grow more wheat, says Sawyer who believes this

is a great first step in modernizing the grain system and making it more competitive globally.

Changes to how grain is graded that come into effect on Aug. 1 will include testing for mildew

and frost individually rather than in combination. The changes are expected to relieve and increase revenues for producers while having no effect on the end product.

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Yield bu/ac	100	70	60	70	85	85	110
Gross Profit Per Acre	\$515.00	\$360.50	\$405.00	\$385.00	\$425.00	\$340.00	\$313.50
VARIABLE COSTS							
Seed	\$68.00	\$18.00	\$27.00	\$27.00	\$18.00	\$18.00	\$21.00
Seed treatment/inoculant	-	\$6.50	\$6.50	\$6.50	\$6.50	\$6.50	\$6.50
Herbicides	\$10.00	\$10.00	\$22.00	\$22.00	\$22.00	\$22.00	\$10.00
Fungicides/Insecticides	-	-	\$18.00	\$18.00	\$18.00	\$18.00	\$10.00
Fertilizer	\$82.01	\$67.22	\$82.01	\$86.94	\$77.08	\$77.08	\$67.90
Other (staff, fuel, insurance, R&M, cleaning, drying)	\$75.00	\$67.50	\$50.00	\$50.00	\$50.00	\$50.00	\$50.00
TOTAL VARIABLE COST	\$235.01	\$169.22	\$205.51	\$210.44	\$191.58	\$191.58	\$165.40
Net \$/acre before Fixed Costs	\$279.99	\$191.28	\$199.49	\$174.56	\$233.42	\$148.42	\$148.10
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Solange Simard wins GX94 Star Search

BY KARA KINNA

For the second year in a row, a performer from St. Lazare has been named the GX94 Star Search champion.

Solange Simard, 16, came out on top in the GX94 Star Search finals on Saturday, July 7 in Yorkton, winning a Montana Silver Smith belt buckle, a Washburn Acoustic/Electric Guitar, the recording of two songs, and a limited edition GX94 Star Search Jacket.

Last year's winner was Julianna Moore from St. Lazare.

This was Simard's second year competing in Star Search, and she says going into it, she simply hoped to do better than the first time she was in it two years ago.

"Honestly I just wanted to make it past the semifinals because I didn't make it last time," she says. "So I thought I'm going to make sure I have good songs and I'm going to rehearse them and make sure I am well prepared. I just wanted to make it past the semifinals. I wasn't expecting to win, to be honest."

Simard says her final performance in Yorkton went well.

"I had a feeling," she says. "There were a lot of other talented people there so I was very nervous. But after my performance I felt even more confidence because it was one of my best performances I'd done in the competition, and so I was feeling pretty excited and nervous, but I had a feeling they'd pick me for some reason. I don't know why, but I had a feeling."

Winning was an exciting moment for Simard.

"I freaked out, and so did my whole family and my friends, and there were so many emotions running through me," she says. "I was like 'whoa I actually did it!' The best part was that it was two Lazarians back-to-back who won. Julianna won last year, so that really surprised me. I thought they are not going to pick two people from St. Lazare back-to-back. But they did which was an even bigger surprise."

Simard says the judges seemed to like everything she brought to the stage.

"One of them came up to me and he said I made it very easy for the judges to select who was going to be this year's win-



ner," she says. "And they said not only my voice but my stage presence was what they looked for also."

"I got a brand new guitar. I got a belt buckle that says 2018 GX94 Star Search champion. It's massive and sparkly gold and silver. And then I get to record two of my own compositions in their studio next spring, and I'll be touring around for rodeos and fairs. So my next gig is in Swan River at the end of July."

"It's one of the biggest things that has ever happened to me in my music career that's starting. Here I get to go on tour, I get to have my music on the radio. It's a huge deal. I'm so excited."

Simard says she wants to have a future in the music industry.

"I want to pursue it as a career," she says. "I want to go either Brandon University when I graduate or the University of Granby in Quebec. I have decisions to make, but I want to make it a career. I want to make music and do all that fun stuff."

"I love being on stage. It's so much fun. My favorite part when I'm on stage is when I see the crowds smile."

Music has been with Simard since she was a kid.

"I started off with festivals in Russell when I was a kid, I did theatre, voice, piano and dance. And then for the last four years I have been doing dance and piano. We had a band in Lazare (L'echo de la vallee) that got some stage experience because we went to a French music festival and we got to do stuff there, and that was very fun. Julianna and I were in that band together, we were the singers."

"When I was a kid my dad used to work at the garage in St. Lazare and I would perform out on the sidewalk, and I'd collect loonies and toonies and I would sing Disney songs."

As the GX94 Star Search champion, Simard will spend a year performing at various events.

Solange Simard with her new guitar and her championship belt buckle after winning GX94 Star Search at the final in Yorkton on July 7.

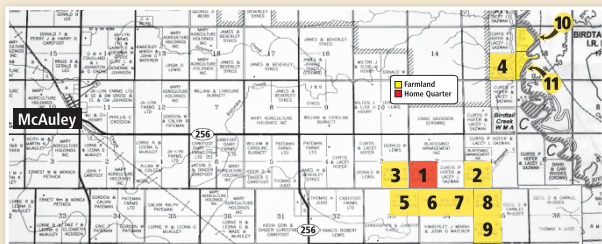
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