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Last year’s snowmobile drags were held under frigid conditions but were still a success! The White Knucklers Snowmobile Club will be using this year’s proceeds to purchase a trailer-mounted snow groomer. *ADOBE STOCK PHOTO*

Snowmobile drags set for Kindersley this weekend

BY KATE WINQUIST

KINDERSLEY — The White Knucklers Snowmobile Club, with support from Holland’s Hot Oiling Ltd., is hosting a snowmobile drag racing event this Saturday north of the Canasta Hotel in Kindersley.

Proceeds from the event will go toward purchasing a trailer-mounted snow groomer for the local area.

Registration runs from 8 a.m. to 11 a.m. at the Kindersley Inn Ballroom, with races starting at noon. The event will follow International Snowmobile Racing (ISR) rules and conclude with a presentation. Admission is \$10 for adults, while children 12 and under are free.

Races will be held on a 500-foot hard-packed track with a 2,000-foot shutdown. A weigh scale and teaching fee of \$10 applies. Entry fees are \$50 for all classes, except for the “King” class, which is \$100.

Organizers have lined up nine vintage classes, including Kitty Cat 120/200cc, 300-700 Liquid Mod, Open Liquid Mod, and King of the Snow. New classes include 1000 Stock, 900 Stock Turbo, Turbo Picked Improved, 1000 Pro Stock, Factory Mod 1 & 2, Top 2

Stroke, Pro 55, and King of the Snow. A Classic Improved Stock category for sleds from 1983 to 1995 will also be included.

King of the Snow classes offer guaranteed bonus money, with first place taking home \$2,500, second \$1,000, and third \$500. Additional bonus money will be added for classes with 10 or more entrants.

Organizer Darrell Fitterer said he is grateful for the support of sponsors who helped make the event possible, including Holland’s Hot Oiling Ltd., Kelly Insurance Brokers Ltd., Precision Instrumentation DNOW, TKC Trucking & Picker Service, Recreation Supply Co., Mid Plains Diesel, Longhorn Oil & Gas, Dennis’ Welding, JDK Potable Water Services, Tisdales Sales & Service, Full Tilt Holdings Ltd., Big Sky Steel Fabricators Ltd., Can-doo Inspections Ltd., Your Southwest Media Group, Good To Go Trucking, Hill Acme Machine Ltd., Sandy Ross Well Servicing Ltd., Fitterer Performance, Kindersley Packers, Bill’s Trucking Co. Ltd., and the Kindersley Inn.

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SGI applies for first auto insurance rate hike in more than a decade

Saskatchewan Government Insurance has applied for its first auto insurance rate increase since 2014, proposing two annual increases of 3.75 per cent beginning in June 2026.

The Crown insurer has submitted a two-year rate proposal to the Saskatchewan Rate Review Panel, with increases planned for June 2026 and June 2027. The 2026 increase would take effect on an interim basis, pending the outcome of the public rate review process.

If approved, SGI says about 98 per cent of vehicles in Saskatchewan would see a rate increase in 2026, with an average annual increase of \$38. About one per cent of vehicles would see an average annual decrease of \$8, while the remaining vehicles would see no change.

SGI says the increases are needed to address rising claim costs driven by inflation and more advanced vehicle technology.

"Inflation and advanced technology in newer vehicles have caused a sharp rise in the cost of vehicle repairs, and the Auto Fund is no longer taking in enough revenue to cover the cost of claims," said Penny McCune, SGI president and CEO.

According to SGI, the average cost of a vehicle damage claim has risen 25 per cent over the past five years, increasing from \$4,880 per claim in 2019-20 to

\$6,101 in 2024-25.

SGI said the Auto Fund operates on a break-even basis over time, but premiums have not kept pace with rising costs in recent years. The insurer has relied on its Rate Stabilization Reserve to keep rates flat, but says that is not a long-term solution.

"SGI hasn't had a general rate increase in over 10 years," McCune said. "With the sharp jump in auto damage costs, it's not possible to keep rates flat."

The proposal includes rate rebalancing, which takes into account the number and cost of claims — including damage, injury and liability — for different classes of vehicles. As a result, rate changes would vary depending on the type of vehicle.

To reduce the impact on vehicle owners, SGI said rate increases would be capped. Motorcycles and urban taxis would be excluded from the first year of the rate program while SGI consults with those industries.

SGI noted Saskatchewan drivers currently pay among the lowest auto insurance rates in Canada and said that would remain the case even if the proposed increases are approved.

Public feedback on the proposal will be accepted by the Saskatchewan Rate Review Panel through its website, by phone or by email. Proposed rates for all vehicles are also available on SGI's website.



Kindersley Rodeo Committee donates to schools and community groups
Karen Klein (right) of the Kindersley Rodeo Committee presents a donation cheque to Erin Pincemin, principal of Westcliffe School in Marengo. Westcliffe School is among many recipients of donations made by the Kindersley Rodeo Committee in recent months. Organizations receiving donations in 2025 include Westberry School, Elizabeth School, KCS High School, Eston Composite School, Eaton School, Rossville School, D'Arcy School, Plenty-Doddsland School, the Kindersley Food Bank, STARS, Pathwell to Wellness, KidSport, the Kindersley Museum, West Central Abilities, Special Olympics Kindersley, Kindersley Health and Wellness, and the Village of Hope in Eston. *SUBMITTED PHOTO*

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Everyone attending the David Reekie Community Skate for Mental Health on December 22 in Leader gathered for a group photo, followed by one minute of noise-making to break the silence around mental health.

PHOTOS BY KARISSA NEUFELD

Community turns grief into something that brings people together

BY JOAN JANZEN

The David Reekie Community Skate for Mental Health was held at Leader's G3 Ice Plex on Monday evening, December 22. Treena Redman, one of the organizers, reported \$610 was raised for the West Central Crisis Centre in Kindersley.

David Reekie passed away on October 29, 2025, at the age of 38, after he was no longer able to continue fighting the personal battles within himself. Hockey defined him, and as a goaltender he found his place in the crease, where his competitive spirit shone brightly.

While David was goalie for the Leader Flyers, "He became part of our family through our son, Austin," Treena reported. "The two of them became close friends. He simply became one of us."

The thoughtful hockey player once gave his University of Sask Huskies goalie jersey to Austin, and on another occasion arranged with the Leader Flyers to present him with a signed jersey. "Every gift had meaning behind it," Treena said.

The day after the family learned of David's death, Austin was asked to drop the ceremonial puck at the Leader Flyers' home opener. "It was an incredibly emotional moment," she remembered. A coach said he noticed how hurt Austin was during the tribute and wished he could do something to put a smile on his face.



"One morning I woke up with the idea of creating something positive out of this loss, something that honoured David while helping others," Treena said. Plans came together very quickly, people stepped up to help, and the response from the community was overwhelming. Baking, treats, prizes, and mental health ribbons were donated, hot chocolate was served, and fun activities on the ice were enjoyed, all free of charge.

The seventy-five people who attended gathered for a group photo, followed by one minute of noise-making to break the silence around mental health. "It was powerful and something I will never forget," Treena recalled.

She said the event meant so much to her and her family, and from the conversations, hugs, and shared moments, she realized it meant a lot to others as well.

"We wanted this event to remember David while also reminding people in our community that mental health and addictions support exists here, and that no one has to navigate those struggles alone," Treena concluded. It is hoped this will become an annual event as a tribute to David Reekie and an encouragement for other communities to hold similar events.

Treena said, "If this loss has taught us anything, it's that kindness matters, connections matter, and paying it forward can help turn grief into something that brings people together."

Happy New Year from the Town of Kindersley

On behalf of council, administration and staff from the town of Kindersley:

Our wish for each of you in the coming year is simple: may your homes be filled with laughter, your hearts with peace, and your lives with the steady warmth of friendship.

Let us carry the lessons and the strength we've gained into the months ahead, working together to make our town an even brighter place to call home.

Happy New Year to you and your loved ones!

*Mayor Ken Francis
Town of Kindersley*



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Kindness and courage are a light in a tunnel of darkness

I read a note that said, "Whoever stole my antidepressants—I hope you're happy now!" The joyful season of hospitality, giving, and kindness is coming to a close; however, those selfless acts of kindness and courage are desperately needed throughout the entire year.

Two heroic, selfless acts took place in mid-December at a Jewish festival at Bondi Beach in Australia, where a tragic shooting occurred. A 43-year-old man put his life at risk in order to save others. It was just an ordinary day for the fruit seller, who was having lunch with a friend when the shooting broke out, and his ordinary day became extraordinary.

A televised video shows the father of two running towards one of the shooters. He's then seen disarming the gunman before pointing his weapon back at him, prompting him to walk away.

This hero is not a member of the Jewish community, yet he risked his safety to stop one of the shooters and prevent further loss of life. He was taken to hospital and treated for bullet wounds. Instead of running away, he ran toward danger, and his courage saved many lives.

This adult male wasn't the only hero in the crowd. A 14-year-old girl also risked her life for people she didn't know. She and her friend had been at the petting zoo when they heard shooting and peo-



Opinion
By Joan Janzen

ple shouting, "Get down!" The two girls quickly found a place to hide. There was a pause in the shooting, and during that time the girl saw two preschool-aged children in front of her and their mother lying beside them with a bullet wound, crying out for someone to save her children.

Without pausing to think, the girl ran out and threw herself on top of the two children, talking to them to calm them down and cleaning the blood off their faces. "I was telling them I love them so much," the teen said in an interview.

The shooting resumed, and the girl was shot in her thigh, but she kept covering the children, phoned her dad, and stayed there until her dad came to rescue them. "In that moment, it felt like we were all brothers and sisters," the teenaged girl said.

After her surgery, she kept telling the doctors how much she loved them. She was surrounded by family and was so grateful for all the support. "God put me on this earth for a reason, so why not share good with others," she said. "At that time, everyone around me was like light in a tunnel of darkness."

Although their bravery was heroic, older generations aren't optimistic. Dr. Suneel Dhand asked his 106-year-old patient if he thought the world was better or worse than when he was growing up. "When I ask the question, some

people hesitate, but he didn't hesitate at all," Dr. Dhand observed.

"The world is far worse now than when I was growing up," the senior replied. "Basically, people don't take care of each other anymore. When I was young, there was a strong sense of commitment to family, to community. People tended to look out for one another. There was a strong sense of duty."

It's somewhat surprising that this man would say the present world is worse than the one he recalls from his past. He lived through two world wars, fought in one, survived the Great Depression, and an era when transportation and everyday tasks were time-consuming, often requiring much physical labour.

"I would rather be around now than 100 years ago when I would have been forced to fight in a trench," Dr. Dhand observed. "I don't think that the world today is worse, but I agree the sense of duty has been completely lost. Those people had very strong values and a sense of commitment and duty. We've moved from that to a generation of entitlement."

He said we have a generation where many are asking, "What am I owed simply for showing up?"

The comments written in response to Dr. Dhand's commentary about his elderly patient were very interesting. A healthcare worker remembered a woman who had abdominal surgery at the age of 106. At age 110, she returned after breaking her hip.

"She had a rough time but made it back to the nursing home where she liked to play piano for the 'old' people,"

the woman commented. A newspaper article was written about her when she turned 113, at which time she said, "I think they're keeping me around for their amusement."

At the close of 2025, long-time actor Dick Van Dyke celebrated his 100th birthday. He said his secret to a long life was singing every morning.

Acts of kindness are motivated by a desire to reduce suffering and improve the well-being of others without expecting anything in return. But when you give, you also gain a sense of purpose and fulfillment that you can't get any other way.

Two social scientists conducted a study that was published in a top-rated journal. The study found that when one person acts generously, it inspires others to act generously toward a wide range of different people, creating a chain of kind acts. We see this play out during the Christmas season, when people are more prone to generosity and kindness, and it begins to spread.

Unlike the 106-year-old patient, not everyone lives a long and happy life. An example is the Jewish girl named Anne Frank, who died at the tender age of 15 at a concentration camp. In her famous diary, she wrote, "Whoever is happy will make others happy too. He who has courage and faith will never perish in misery!"

While we can't control many of the circumstances that surround us, we can be a "light in a tunnel of darkness." Kindness, courage, and faith are what combine to ensure our world is better than the world experienced by previous generations.

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PHONE 306-463-2211 kate@yourwestcentral.com

KATE WINQUIST
Publisher

ROBERT WINQUIST
Circulation

JOAN JANZEN
Journalist

PATTI MORAN
Production

GREG PAULHUS
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Together

There is a saying in recovery: "You can't do this for me, but I can't do it alone." We heal, we grow, we learn together. To walk into a room and admit to others that we have a problem with drinking, eating, working, obsessing over others is to drop the "I've got this" pretence, an attitude that says: Going it alone may be tough, but it's what tough guys are made of.

The image of the rugged cowboy or the moody, misunderstood genius is alluring, but it's a hard act to maintain if you spend too much time around people. When you keep to yourself you may not have everything under control, but at least you can create the illusion of it.

Then, suddenly you're an old fart singing "beer is good, God is great and people are crazy" in some bar at the edge of town. Deluded enough to think you're some kind of barstool philosopher, you explain the world to anyone who'd listen. Or maybe you just grow into an old cynic who can't be bothered with stupid people—among whom you obviously don't count yourself.

When I was in university I read the existentialists, believing it was the mature, brave way to look at the world. But I soon concluded that writers like Albert Camus and Jean-Paul Sartre were less clear-eyed realists than failed idealists. "Hell is other people," wrote Sartre. "Oh yeah?" I scribbled in my notebook, "well, you ain't exactly a picnic."

It occurred to me that the existentialist "no exit" despair was just another coward's way of opting out of



Pop89
By Madonna Hamel

the human struggle, of not participating in life with fellow human beings. It's a way of trying to dodge suffering, and in so doing, missing out on wonder, too.

Still. Personally, I don't always want to play well with others. And by that, I don't mean I want a rumble. I mean, I'd like to avoid the whole mess. I want to wander off into the wild and not come back. At least, that was my intention when I moved to Val Marie and the Grasslands eleven years ago. But, once my village didn't conform to my rose-coloured romanticizations of what a village should be—hence, missing out on what it was: a history of farm and ranch life, a life connected intimately and daily to nature—I just wanted to be left alone to develop my spiritual sensibility. I wanted to do what the mystics advised every spiritual seeker: empty myself completely. Live in peace and quiet.

But even cloistered nuns and monks live together. They have to share meals and chores and space and time. They commune at communion, congregate at sacraments, gather in prayer. They live in close quarters with "Others." Others are how we refine our souls. Others force us to mature. How else do we evolve—psychologically, spiritually, culturally, socially—if not in the presence of others? How else would we know if we're patient people, if no one is there to test us? Without others there's no need to grow, change, evolve. Great.

Others. We need Others. Annoying, frustrating, infuriating Others. Delightful, amusing, enlightening, challenging Others. Bothersome, irritating, sweet Others. Others: those people who were born into the same world as us and deserve love, patience, time, and attention as much as we do. Others, who, when we have to co-operate with them, slow us down, force us to listen to their own ideas as to how things should be, or could be, done, seen, repaired, loved. Others. Who encourage us, inspire us, but who also discourage and distract us from our goals and dreams. Who lie to us and about us. Who deny lying because they don't even know they are lying.

Our immature resentment at having to share

time, space, energy, and attention with Others is, in a strange way, a response to loneliness—a new form of loneliness borne from spending too much time online. Online we isolate ourselves. Our ego takes over—promising centre stage in every activity. On social media we make ourselves celebrities, even gods. No event or experience is complete or even legitimate without a record of our presence. The ubiquitous selfie requires others, but only in a superficial way—as our audience. To compliment and admire us. And maybe even be jealous of us.

This is not togetherness. This is not fellowship. This is not belonging. It's existentialism, again. With wifi and high-speed internet and instant posting on social media, we're hyper-connected like never before. We're crawling up and down, creeping in and out of the world-wide web. We're one big global village. We should feel connected with each other, we're told.

But the internet is not a village. The predicted "global village" is more like a global city. A real village means we know each other. And yes, some days we gossip about each other. We know each other's business, joys, and losses. But also, as in my village: we gather together in the cold before the cenotaph every November. We are all on call to make sandwiches for a funeral. We volunteer at the canteen for rodeos and bonspiels. We sit around campfires.

Real connectedness is physical. It's embodied. Incarnate. It's the press of creaturely flesh, stomping your feet in the cold, swimming at the dam in the heat. It's dead-tired on your feet after a herding. It's a hug. A handshake. A basket of buns passed around the table. You can't suddenly make people disappear by ending a Zoom meeting. You have to get along. With Others. With everyone. As Pope Francis exclaimed: "Todas! Todas! Todas!" Everyone, everyone, everyone. There's room for everyone—or we must reshape the world to make it so. We all belong. That's why we do this together.

As for Sartre's famous remark about other people? It turns out, at 71, after reflecting on his personal life, he rephrased it to: "Heaven is each other."



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All the best to Rajesh and Sandhya in their new adventure.



Just a gal from Glidden

Mom, memories, and moments that mattered in 2025

BY KATE WINQUIST

Now that 2025 has come to a close, I want to share some of my favourite moments from my Just A Gal From Glidden columns. This past year, I reflected on life in west-central Saskatchewan — the joys, the challenges, the small victories, and the memories that shape who we are.

I've chosen excerpts from my columns, lightly edited for print, to give readers a sense of the year I experienced. They remind me why I love this community and why I keep writing — even in the quiet moments between deadlines.

Welcome Home, Mom and Dad

Mother's Day felt different this year. I couldn't call my mom as I had for decades, but I drove back to Glidden with both my parents' ashes and felt a profound sense of peace. Laying them to rest together, I felt connected to my roots in a way I hadn't before.

The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly

I had one of those weeks where everything seemed to happen at once — community celebrations, looming deadlines, and unexpected frustrations that tested my patience. Yet through it all, seeing neighbours come together and volunteers step up reminded me why small-town life is so special.

Ink-Stained and Hooked

I reflected on my lifelong connection to newspapers — from the smell of ink and paste-up machines to running my own local publications. Telling local stories keeps me grounded, even as the tools and technology change.

Striving, Serving, and Shining

Watching students, athletes, and volunteers quietly pursue excellence across the region inspires me. These stories are proof that community is built on effort, service, and pride.

Riders Finally Deliver Sweet Revenge

When the Saskatchewan Roughriders won the Grey Cup, I felt the joy of years of heartbreak lift. Sports have a way of uniting people, and I loved celebrating that victory with my family and all of Rider Nation.

Hallelujah and Big Balls

Music has always been a thread in my life, connecting memory, laughter, and love. This year, it reminded me of my mom and the joy we shared — a comforting presence, even when she was no longer here.

Do Not Be Afraid: There Is Good News

As the year ended, I wanted to remind myself — and my readers — that even in uncertain times, good news and kindness still matter. There is always something to celebrate, even in the smallest moments.

Looking ahead, I plan to continue writing this column as a tribute to my mom. Even after her passing, I have felt her guidance throughout the year. I truly believe I was sent back to my roots for a purpose, even if I didn't understand it at the time. Writing these stories helps me honour her memory, share meaningful moments with readers, and continue the work that has always given my life direction.

Looking back helps me move forward, and sharing these moments reminds me — and I hope it reminds you too — of the beauty in everyday life.



RURAL MUNICIPALITY OF PROGRESS No. 351

Box 460 Luseland, Saskatchewan S0L 2A0
Phone: 306-372-4322 E-mail: rm351@sasktel.net Fax: 306-372-4146

Accepting applications for

ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR

The Rural Municipality of Progress is currently inviting applications for an assistant administrator. This position is for a 12-month term to cover for a maternity leave but could turn into a full-time position due to succession planning.

The Assistant Administrator, under the direction of the Administrator, will provide support to the Administrator in all aspects of municipal administration including, but not limited to record preparation, assessment and taxation, tax enforcement, financial operations, zoning and subdivisions, permit processing, policy and courses of action as determined by Council.

Qualifications:

The ideal candidate will have a minimum Class "C" certificate of Qualification. The R.M. of Progress No. 351 may consider an individual who is currently enrolled (or becomes enrolled within 6 months) in the Local Government Administration Program through the University of Regina. The R.M. of Progress No. 351 offers a comprehensive benefits package.

- The successful applicant shall demonstrate excellent communication, organizational, computer and clerical skills, enjoy working with the public in a professional manner and be bondable.
- Ability to work independently
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- Computer proficiency: experience with MuniSoft is a strong asset

Compensation:

The R.M. offers a competitive salary based on experience and qualifications. Qualified applicants are invited to submit, in confidence, a detailed resume including education, experience, references and salary expectations by email, fax or in person. Applications will be reviewed as they are received and the competition will remain open until a suitable candidate is found.

Kim Adams, Administrator
R.M. of Progress No. 351

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Screening age for breast cancer lowered to 43 in Saskatchewan

BY IAN MACKAY

Women aged 43 and 44 may now, without a doctor's referral, book tests to discover if they have any signs of breast cancer. The change took effect on Jan. 1. The previous reduction in the minimum age for breast screening occurred at the end of June, when the provincial government lowered it to 45. A screening mammogram is a low-dose X-ray of breast tissue. Most women should undergo a mammogram every two years, a Saskatchewan Cancer Agency statement said. The measure "is part of a broader plan to gradually lower the screening age to 40 within the next six months," the recent agency statement said. "By lowering the breast-cancer screening age, more Saskatchewan women will be able to receive an earlier diagnosis, leading to more lives saved," Jeremy Cockrill, the health minister, said in the statement. Health staff diagnose about 75 per cent of breast cancers in their early stages, when a better chance of recovery exists.

Early detection "leads to more treatment options and improves outcomes," said Karen Efthimiou, an agency vice-president in Saskatoon. Women 43 and older may schedule appointments without a referral if they have no symptoms, such as lumps, bloody nipple discharge, or skin changes, don't have breast implants, "are not in active follow-up for breast cancer," and have been free of breast cancer for the last five years. "It's important to note that screening mammograms are routine examinations intended for women with no breast symptoms, while diagnostic mammograms are meant for those experiencing breast symptoms," the statement said. "Women who have concerns or experience symptoms, regardless of age, should consult with a health-care provider or visit a walk-in clinic for further guidance." Individuals may contact someone with the agency's BreastCheck program at 1-855-584-8228, toll-free, or visit saskcancer.ca/BreastCheck for information on scheduling appointments, locations, and operating hours.

Four west central schools receive grants for playground upgrades

BY IAN MACKAY

Four west-central Saskatchewan schools are receiving grants for playgrounds. Outlook Elementary, Luseland, and Macklin schools are receiving the maximum amount of \$50,000. Westcliffe School at Marengo gets \$25,000, a document showed. Grants match what parents and volunteer school councils raise to build new playgrounds or add or replace equipment for existing ones. Over 40 schools were approved for the province's School Playground Equipment Grant in 2025. The program started this past fall. Groups associated with schools have until Feb. 28 to apply in the next round, a Parks, Culture and Sport Department statement said. "Playgrounds play such an important role in the early development and formative years for children," Alana Ross, the department minister, said in the statement. The program will distribute up to \$3.75 million

annually over the next four years on a first-come, first-served basis. It's open to parent and community groups affiliated with publicly funded schools, who may apply once a year, the statement said. "The volunteer community councils and parent groups are the true catalysts behind these projects, all for the betterment and wellbeing of their schools, neighbourhoods, and communities," said Darcy McLeod, president of the Saskatchewan Parks and Recreation Association, which administers the program. People may see guidelines and apply on the association's website. Officials estimate the program will help about 75 projects each year. It's open to school councils and community groups affiliated with school divisions, First Nation schools, and publicly funded schools, including separate, Francophone, and a range of independent schools. New equipment must meet Canadian Standards Association standards and be accessible to the community at all times. Registered independent schools, home-based education programs, daycare centres, municipalities, and First Nation communities not responsible for a school playground are not eligible. Eligible expenses must be incurred between April 1, 2025, and March 31, 2027. Groups must keep receipts or other supporting documents to provide upon request for audit purposes.

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Among 2026 winners: Rory, Avs and Riders

Almost guaranteed to happen in 2026:

January — National Football League playoffs occupy the weekend spotlights this month and when the dust settles, the two Super Bowl teams have been determined — Los Angeles Rams from the NFC and Jacksonville Jaguars from the AFC.

February — Canadian skiers and curlers rack up a number of medals at the Olympic Games in Milan, but the high-profile hockey competition, beset by controversy over the arena construction, is won by the United States, which defeats Canada in the final and makes amends for the 4 Nations Cup loss last year.

March — Brad Gushue competes for Newfoundland in his final Brier appearance, capping a great career on the ice. The Brier title in 2026, however, goes to the current best team in Canada, skipped by Brad Jacobs.

April — After winning the Masters last year to complete pro golf's career Grand Slam and eliminating the pressure that went along with that chase, Rory McIlroy plays a relaxing 72 holes at Augusta National and wins by nine.

May — The Jays are for real! Toronto's run to the World Series last year was no fluke, as evidenced by the six-game lead in the American League East the Blue Jays build up by mid-May.

June — The National Hockey League season finally comes to a close with Colorado Avalanche sweeping the surprising Montreal Canadiens 4-0 in the Stanley Cup final. The Avalanche lost only 13 games in 2025-26 — counting regular season and playoffs, making a strong case to being called the best team in the NHL's history.



Sports
By Bruce Penton

July — FIFA's World Cup final is held July 19 with the championship match held in New Jersey's MetLife Stadium. Who will win? Probably one of the last six winners (there have been six different winners in the last six World Cups — Argentina, France, Germany, Spain, Italy and Brazil). If Canada were to win, the party would last so long it would clash with New Year's Eve festivities.

August — The Special Olympics Canada Summer Games are scheduled for Medicine Hat and if you're a fan of unmitigated joy on an athletic field, not to mention the ultimate in genuine sportsmanship, pay a visit.

September — For the 12th consecutive Grand Slam tennis event, Carlos Alcaraz and Jannik Sinner meet in the final. This year's U.S. Open, the final Grand Slam event of 2026, goes to Alcaraz. The foregone conclusion of major tennis events is one of the reasons fans are tuning out.

October — Gavin McKenna, the No. 1 pick in June's NHL draft, takes his first strides as a member of the Calgary Flames. "Ah, back in good ol' Alberta," said McKenna, a former Medicine Hat Tiger star.

November — Saskatchewan Roughriders defend their Grey Cup championship, beating Toronto Argonauts in the big game, and Trevor Harris, now 40, joins a short list of QBs to win the Cup in their 40s.

December — No surprise: Canadian male and female athletes of the year are two people who starred in the Milan-Cortina Olympic Games — a luger and a biathlete.

- Headline at fark.com: "Yankees shortstop Anthony Volpe needs shoulder surgery, may miss the chance to strike out four times a game to start 2026."
- Steve Simmons of the Toronto Star: "Rule changes I would propose for the NFL: 1) No more fair catch; 2) End the marginal calling of taunting penalties. Let the players play; 3) Outlaw the tush

- push."
- Mike Sando of The Athletic, on the return to the NFL of 44-year-old Philip Rivers after a four-year retirement: "Rivers' comeback at age 44 will be the feel-good story of the week ... until he wakes up feeling 144 the morning after his first start."
- Vancouver comedy guy Torben Rolfsen: "One month till the Olympics start and two months till they finish the hockey arena."
- RJ Currie of sportsdeke.com: "TSN referred to the Colts signing 44-year-old retired quarterback Philip Rivers as 'turning back the clock.' Sounds more like turning back the grandfather clock."
- Headline at fark.com, after 41-year-old Lindsay Vonn won a World Clup downhill race after a six-year retirement and knee surgery: "Old lady flies down the mountain like her hair was on fire, then drops the Curry night-night on her youth competition when she gets to the bottom."
- Steve Simmons of the Toronto Sun, on the Oilers-Penguins December trade involving Tristan Jarry and Stuart Skinner: "The best way to break down the Penguins-Oilers trade: My lousy goalie for your lousy goalie."
- Vancouver comedy guy Torben Rolfsen: "Philip Rivers' signing with Indianapolis almost didn't happen. They got caught up on ticket allotment request for family."
- Headline at fark.com: "New York Knicks will not hang a banner for their NBA Cup championship at Madison Squire Garden. Lack of rafter space not a factor in the decision."
- Another fark.com headline: "Zach Wilson confused as to why Quinn Ewers leapfrogged him to become the Dolphins' No. 1 QB. Not as bewildered as when he is trying to find an open receiver, but confused nonetheless."

Care to comment? Email brucepenton2003@yahoo.ca

RCMP respond to range of incidents in Unity, Wilkie and Macklin areas

RCMP in the Unity, Wilkie and Macklin areas dealt with a variety of incidents last week, including assaults, thefts, and property damage, according to weekly detachment reports.

In Unity, officers are investigating a report of a damaged residence door and a theft from a motor vehicle. Other calls included a well-being check requested by another detachment, a complaint of assault that the complainant declined to pursue, a peacekeeping request while an individual retrieved personal belongings, and reports of suspicious individuals at a local church. Members also responded to one traffic complaint and a false 911 call.

The Wilkie detachment handled several reports, including a request from Saskatoon police to locate an individual, who was not found. Officers also investigated a hit-and-run causing vehicle damage and a complaint of uttering threats, both of which could not proceed due to insufficient evidence. One Mental Health Act complaint led to the transport of the individual involved to Battlefords Union Hospital for assessment. Wilkie RCMP also dealt with one traffic complaint and a false 911 call.

In Macklin, police responded to an assault com-



plaint, which the complainant declined to pursue, and a report of broken windows at Macklin School, which could not proceed due to insufficient evidence. Officers also addressed two traffic complaints.

RCMP are reminding residents that information about crimes in these areas can be reported by calling the local detachments: Unity at (306) 228-6300, Wilkie at (306) 843-3480, or Macklin at (306) 753-2171. Anonymous tips can also be submitted through Saskatchewan Crime Stoppers at 1-800-222-8477, *8477 on SaskTel Mobility, or online at www.saskcrimestoppers.com. Crime Stoppers offers rewards of up to \$2,000 for information leading to an arrest for serious crimes.

The Unity RCMP also highlighted the convenience of online crime reporting for Saskatchewan residents. Certain incidents, including fraud under \$5,000, minor vandalism, lost or stolen property under \$5,000, traffic complaints without suspect information, and harassing electronic communications, can now be submitted through the RCMP's Online Crime Reporting platform at ocesielc.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/saskatchewan. Residents are advised to contact their local RCMP detachment directly if a witness or suspect is known.

Mayor of Kerrobert New Year's Message

As 2025 comes to a close, I am pleased with the accomplishments we have made in our community for continued growth and sustainability. On behalf of council and myself we look forward to 2026 with a

shared vision of opportunities and growth.

From council, staff , administration and myself, wishing everyone the best 2026.

Have a safe and Happy New year.

Mayor Mitchell

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Notice of Preparation of Assessment Roll
VILLAGE OF PLENTY

Notice is hereby given that the assessment roll for the Village of Plenty for the year 2026 has been prepared and is open for inspection in the office of the assessor from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on the following days: **Tuesday and Wednesday, January 9, 2026 to February 17, 2026.**

Inspection can be completed in person from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on **Tuesdays and Wednesdays.**

A bylaw pursuant to Section 214 of *The Municipalities Act* has been passed and the assessment notices have been sent as required.

Any person who wishes to appeal against his or her assessment or classification is required to file this or her notice of appeal with:

Secretary of the Board of Revision,
Nicolle Hoskins, Western Municipal Consulting
Box 149, Meota, SK S0M 1X0

An appeal fee of \$100.00 per property must accompany the appeal request.

Phone calls and email inquiries will also be accepted during regular business hours.

Dated this 9th day of January, 2026.

Michele Schmidt, Assessor



Pipeline Online.ca
Saskatchewan's Energy News



Poplar River Power Station, one of three coal-fired power stations that are slated for refurbishment.
PHOTO BY BRIAN ZINCHUK

SaskPower seeking 3.9% rate increases in 2026 and 2027

BY BRIAN ZINCHUK

Governments often release bad news on Fridays — a tactic highlighted in a first-season episode of *The West Wing* titled “Take Out the Trash Day.” True to form, at 1 p.m. on Friday, Jan. 2, SaskPower announced it is seeking a 3.9 per cent rate increase effective Feb. 1, 2026, and another 3.9 per cent increase on Feb. 1, 2027.

The Crown corporation said the hikes are needed to “support record capital investments and continue providing reliable power for the people, businesses and communities of Saskatchewan.”

“Reliability and energy security are top priorities,” the release stated. “SaskPower will continue to make the necessary investments to ensure power is available for all customers whenever it is needed. In the coming years, SaskPower will continue to revitalize its coal-fired power plants, expand transmission and distribution systems, and modernize the provincial grid.”

Last fall, Minister of Crown Investments Corporation Jeremy Harrison announced \$900 million would be allocated for the coal fleet revitalization. He also noted that building new natural gas plants instead of refurbishing coal would require much higher rate increases.

Costs for SaskPower’s three large-scale natural gas power stations have risen sharply. The Chinook Power Station in Swift Current, online in 2019, cost \$605 million. The Great Plains station in Moose Jaw, online in 2024, cost \$825 million. The Aspen Power Station in Lanigan is expected to cost \$1.7 billion — more than double Great Plains.

The announcement came just 12 hours after Alberta’s 1,760 wind turbines, with a combined capacity of 5,684 megawatts, produced zero power collectively at 1:18 a.m. on Jan. 2, highlighting challenges in energy reliability.

SaskPower’s NDP critic Aleana Young has frequently warned that rate increases would be needed to cover expenditures, including coal refurbishments.

“Utilities across Canada continue to face considerable rate pressures, and SaskPower is no exception,” said Rupen Pandya, SaskPower President and CEO.

“We will continue to pursue a strategy of balancing the need for moderate rate increases with our required capital investments to maintain reliability for customers.”

The Crown corporation said it plans to move forward with a rate application to the Saskatchewan Rate Review Panel. The Feb. 1, 2026, increase will be implemented on an interim basis but remain subject to public review.

The average residential customer will see increases of \$5 per month in 2026 and 2027. The average farm customer will see \$11 per month in both years. SaskPower’s most recent rate increases were 4 per cent each in 2022 and 2023, after a four-year pause.

“SaskPower is committed to keeping rates as low as possible for customers and maintaining affordability while ensuring the financial health of the company,” the release said.

NDP response

In an emailed statement, NDP Leader Carla Beck blamed the Saskatchewan Party for the rate increases:

“Scott Moe and the Sask. Party have driven our province’s finances into the ground, and there’s one group that will pay the price — Saskatchewan taxpayers. People here already report the highest financial anxiety in the country — four-in-10 are borrowing money just to put food on the table and pay rent, which has increased for 41 straight months.

“Now, they’re facing increases on home power bills and car insurance. We warned the Sask. Party repeatedly during the Fall Sitting, but they ignored us and even stated there wouldn’t be increases.

“These increases from SaskPower and SGI are just the beginning of what is a fiscal trainwreck from an incompetent premier and ministers who have forgotten who they serve. Scott Moe claims Saskatchewan remains affordable — but clearly, everyday people don’t agree.

“The Saskatchewan NDP will continue to fight to make life affordable, and when we form government, we will act on Day 1 to cut costs and clean up the massive mess this government has made of our finances.”



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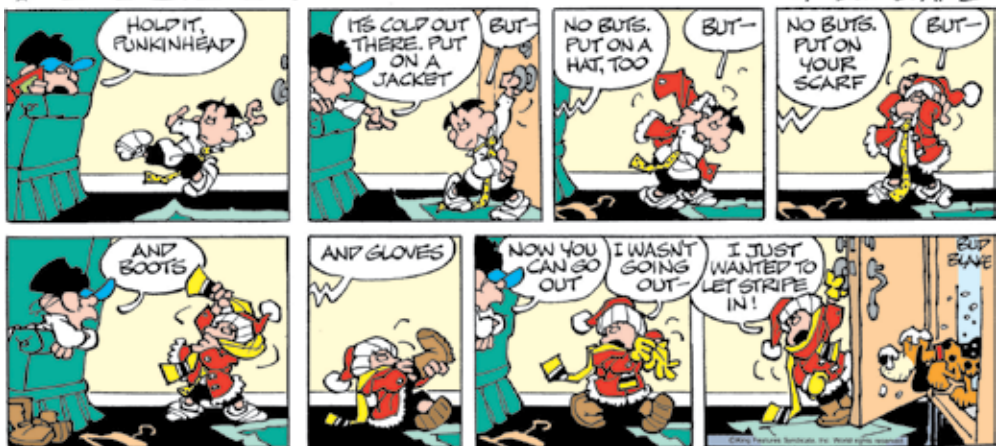


coffee time

by Dave T. Phipps



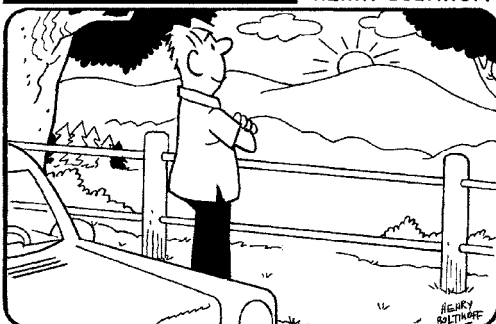
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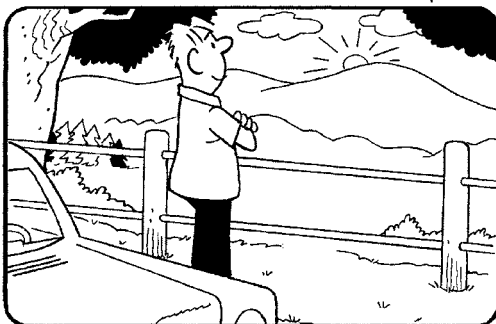
by Jeff Pickering



BY
HENRY BOLTINOFF



Find at least six differences in details between panels.



Differences: 1. Sun is smaller. 2. Fence post is taller. 3. Headlight is different. 4. Side mirror is missing. 5. Bottom of shirt is different. 6. Tree branch is missing.

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The Opportunity
KFI is seeking a process operator to join our refinery, located near Kerrobert, Saskatchewan, Canada, on a 7 on 7 off days and nights schedule. The primary role of the Operator will be to assist the Team Lead with the operation of the equipment within the tank farms, truck loadout, crude topping area, hydrogen manufacturing area, diesel hydrotreater area including incinerator and flare areas to meet throughput projections and product quality demands. As a team player you will work within the operations team to maintain a safe, reliable and effective plant operation.

Key Responsibilities
Responsibilities for this position may include but are not limited to:

- **Facility Operations:** Assist with the safe and efficient operation of equipment under the guidance of the Team Lead.
- **Maintain Equipment and Facilities:** Responsible for the day-to-day monitoring, upkeep, and minor maintenance of all equipment in the process areas.
- **Safety and Environment:** Responsible for the safe operation of equipment and personnel. Must maintain and champion a high awareness for prevention of environmental releases or other incidents.
- **Documentation and Records Keeping:** Responsible and accountable for proper monitoring and record keeping of operating variables.

Qualifications

- Three (3) years' experience in a crude oil refinery or related facility with distillation tower operation
- Possess a valid fourth (4th) class power engineering certificate in the province of Saskatchewan, or a willingness to obtain one.
- Able to work shift work. 7 on, 7 off rotation days and nights - 12-hour shifts
- H2S Alive, First Aid / CPR, WHMIS / TDG or willingness to obtain.
- Experience in hands-on support of operations technical, and maintenance work teams
- Experience in developing standard operating procedures
- Experience driving a skid steer is an asset
- Must have MS Office skills (Word, Excel and Outlook)
- Good written and verbal communication
- A valid Class 5 driver's license is required
- Must be legally permitted to work in Canada

Compensation
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- Operate a grader to complete road maintenance, grading, gravel reclamation and minor road construction, snow plowing
- Ensure roads are maintained and repaired (culverts) on a priority basis and ability to repair machinery and attachments
- Manage all duties given by Foreman & Council, & log work on provided sheets daily
- Good interpersonal skills and ability to establish effective working relationships with council, staff, contractors and rate payers
- Other duties as prescribed

The Successful Applicant Should Possess:

- Experience is an asset in maintenance and operation of a grader, tractor-trailer and heavy equipment, but training can be provided
- Willingness to be supervised and take direction from Foreman
- Great communication and documentation skills
- Valid driver's license
- 1A license would be a preference, but will train the right person

Your Resume Should Include:

- Past and present work experience
- Education and skills
- Two references
- Expected salary

Please have resumes submitted by January 12, 2026 to:
Rural Municipality of Deer Forks No. 232
P.O. Box 250
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Looking Back on 2025 in West-Central Saskatchewan

BY JOAN JANZEN

As 2025 comes to a close, west-central Saskatchewan has seen a year filled with milestones, community spirit, and moments that remind us why small-town life is so rich in connection and care.

The year began with farewells and new beginnings. At the Kindersley Library, Pat Bohn marked the end of a remarkable 34-year career. Starting as a volunteer and then becoming the community librarian in 1990, Pat assisted thousands of visitors over more than three decades, leaving a lasting impact on the community she served so faithfully.

In Eatonia, generosity continued to shine. Donor’s Choice raised an impressive \$26,830 in its 2024 campaign, with over \$14,000 staying right in the community to support local initiatives. Chair Belva Martin celebrated the achievement, noting it exceeded last year’s fundraising totals. Meanwhile, Bredy’s Country Store marked the end of an era, closing after 30 years of serving Eatonia. Joanne and Dale Bredy’s loyal customers joined them in a final sale that celebrated three decades of local commerce.

Emergency Services Gala, an awards and fundraising event that honored local volunteer services. Organizers Bailey Kemery and Chelsea Kissick brought the community together in recognition of those who serve on the front lines.

Not all news was celebratory, however. The closure of Kindersley’s Peavey Mart was a difficult blow for both the community and its farmers. As one of twelve Saskatchewan locations closing after nearly sixty years of service, it marked the end of a long-standing local resource. In contrast, spring brought positive change to Leader, where the new Happyland Thrift Shop is set to open in a repurposed Hawks Agro building, with proceeds supporting community and economic projects.

Acts of compassion were also evident. In June, Krista Roberts and her family evacuated LaRonge due to fires and found shelter in Kindersley, thanks to the generosity of Terri Wolfe at Wolfe Den Inn & Suites. Their story is a reminder of the kindness that thrives in west-central Saskatchewan.

Education and innovation made headlines as well. Great Plains College celebrated the opening of its new healthcare lab in September, a milestone in healthcare education for the region. President Brad Mahon acknowledged the many hands that helped bring the project to life, highlighting the importance of collaboration and vision.

Longevity and tradition were celebrated too. Tisdale’s Sales & Service in Kindersley marked 70 years of operation, a testament to enduring business and community relationships dating back to the mid-20th century. And in sports, the Dakota Buttar Invitational earned recognition as the 2025 Indoor Event of the Year, with organizers, riders, and bulls combining energy and dedication to deliver a standout event for fans.

From farewells to new ventures, from community generosity to local achievements, 2025 has been a year of resilience, pride, and connection in west-central Saskatchewan.

Farmers and homeowners described the Kindersley Peavey Mart’s closing as “tragic”.
PHOTO BY JOAN JANZEN

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JUNIOR CITIZEN OF THE YEAR AWARD

Over the past four decades, the Saskatchewan Weekly Newspapers Association, in partnership with SaskPower and the Lieutenant Governor of Saskatchewan, has recognized the youth of Saskatchewan through the Junior Citizen of the Year Award.

These prestigious awards are given to youths who:

- Have a positive lifestyle
- Volunteer within their community and school
- Has overcome a personal life challenge (physical, emotional or environmental)
- Have a strong sense of caring and responsibility
- Are between the ages of 8 and 18

This year, four deserving youths will receive a **\$3,000 bursary**, provided by SaskPower, to use towards their post-secondary education.

JUNIOR CITIZEN OF THE YEAR STEM AWARD

Introduced in 2025. The Junior Citizen of the Year STEM Award will recognize a Saskatchewan youth who contains all the same qualities of a Junior Citizen of the Year but **has an aptitude for science, technology, engineering, or mathematics**. This award is eligible for all students, including but not limited to, young women, and underrepresented communities.

This year, one deserving youth will receive a **\$3,000 bursary**, provided by Crown Investments Corporation of Saskatchewan, to use towards their post-secondary education.

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OBITUARIES

Allan Keith Heron
April 27, 1935 - December 27, 2025



Allan Keith Heron, Al or 'Big Bird', was born in Qu'Appelle, SK on April 27, 1935, and left this earth on December 27, 2025. He died peacefully after his 90 years, surrounded by love and family, following a brief illness.

Al was a model citizen of whatever community in which he resided, devoting himself to fundraising, governing, building community, and more than a few gardens! He was an instigator, 'gently coercing' others to join his cause – be it a new sport, a new fundraising project, or an elaborate prank. His efforts bolstered whatever cause he thought could use some support; while helping to build the communities he was so proud to call home.

Al was very interested in everyone he met, and he had a great ability to make people feel like they were a part of something. (He also may have been looking for anything he could use to tease you!) Al never met a dog that didn't bring him great joy, and he was a student, always, of his environment and the natural world around him – especially the good berry patches!

Al reluctantly leaves his devoted wife of 64 years, Claire, as well as his three daughters and

their families: Lisa (Philipp Krams), (Regina), Michael Righetti, (Victoria, BC), Anna (Shaun) and great granddaughter Cece MacNeill, (Nanaimo, BC); Paula (Rob) Kirk, Ella (Liferne) Forestal, Eddy Kirk, (Regina); Rae (Jeff) Bath, (Kenora, ON), Lauren Bath (Kieran Derksen), and baby-to-be, and Jordan Bath, (Winnipeg, MB).

He is survived by his sister Wanda (Richard) Palmer, brother-in-law Joe (Mariellen) Martin, sister-in-law Judi Whitehouse, brother-in-law Gerry Martin (Jane Sproul), sister-in-law Susan Martin, brother-in-law Michael Martin, brother-in-law Dennis (Lois) Martin, and many nieces and nephews and their families who loved him dearly. He was predeceased by his brothers and sisters-in-law Bill (Darlene) and Don (Judy) Heron, brother-in-law Ron Whitehouse, brother-in-law Tom Martin, sister-in-law Grace Martin and nephew Misha Pavelick.

The family would like to extend their immense gratitude to the staff at Rosetown and District Health Centre and Dr. Pahwa for their kind attention and genuine concern.

We celebrated his life he lived so fully and so well at 2pm on Friday January 2nd, 2026, at Sacred Heart Catholic Church, Eston, SK.

To honour Al's passion for community, youth and bringing people together, in lieu of flowers please consider a contribution to the Eston Kids Can Play, Box 757, Eston, SK, S0L 1A0, or etransfer to contact@eston.ca

RECIPE OF THE WEEK

Beef & Tomato Skillet with Cheesy Cornbread

Skillet Ingredients

- 1 tbsp canola oil
- 1 lb. lean ground beef
- 1 onion, finely chopped
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 tbsp chilli powder
- 1 tbsp dried oregano leaves
- 1 tbsp ground cumin
- 28oz can no-salt added diced tomatoes
- 19 oz can lentils, drained and rinsed well
- 2 cups mixed frozen vegetables
- 2 tbsp lime juice
- 3/4 cup sour cream
- 3/4 tsp salt (approx.)
- 3/4 tsp pepper (approx.)

Cornbread topping:

- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 1 cup fine cornmeal
- 2 tsp baking powder
- 1/2 tsp baking soda
- 1 cup shredded aged Cheddar cheese
- 1 cup buttermilk
- 1 tbsp butter, melted
- 2 tbsp grated Parmesan cheese

Preparation

Preheat oven to 400 F (200 C). Heat oil in 12-inch oven-proof skillet over medium-high heat. Crumble in beef. Cook ground beef, breaking up with spoon, for five minutes or until browned. Add onion, garlic, chilli powder, oregano and cumin; reduce heat to medium. Cook, stirring often, for five minutes or until onion is tender.

Stir in diced tomatoes, lentils and 1/2 cup (125 ml) water; bring to a boil. Simmer, covered, for 10 minutes or until sauce has thickened slightly. Meanwhile, prepare cornbread topping. Once sauce has thickened, stir in mixed vegetables and lime juice. Remove from heat. Stir in sour cream. Season with salt and pepper.

Cornbread topping: In a medium bowl, whisk together flour with cornmeal, baking powder and baking soda. Add cheese and toss to distribute evenly. Stir in buttermilk until a ragged dough forms. Dollop biscuit-sized portions of dough over beef mixture in skillet, leaving some gaps to allow for expansion. Brush with melted butter and sprinkle with Parmesan cheese.



Bake for 22 to 25 minutes or until topping is set and lightly browned on top. Cool for five minutes. Serve with diced avocado if desired.

Preparation time: 10 minutes; total time: 55 minutes.

Makes four servings, 1,017 calories each.

- Canadian Food Focus



Love your wife Kim, children Chris (Jenna), Alicia (Trevor Becker) and Nathan (Jamie), and our beautiful grandchildren Madison, Dexter, Jordynn, Tucker, Kaycee and Piper

Until we meet again, I will look for you in my dreams, much love sweetheart xoxo

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A graphic featuring a megaphone on the left, pointing towards the right. To the right of the megaphone, the word "Upcoming" is written in a large, black, cursive script. Below "Upcoming", the word "EVENTS" is written in a bold, white, sans-serif font, with each letter inside a colored circle. The circles are colored red, orange, yellow, green, blue, and purple from left to right. The entire graphic is set against a white background.

KERROBERT
- MS Support Group at Kerrobert Health Centre Meeting

- Parkinson's Support Group Meetings are held the second Wednesday of the month 1:30 PM at 401 - 4th Ave West (New Life Church). Everyone welcome! For more info call Nancy at 306-463-4514.
- Monday Night Jam Sessions at the Norman Ritchie Community Centre. Doors open at 6:30 to set-up, then the fun begins at 7-11 PM. Call Keith 306-460-8633.
- Interested in a support group for weight management? TOPS meetings; every Monday at 6:00 PM in the Kindersley Senior Centre OR contact Jill at 306-463-4210.
- Pickleball meets Sunday & Wednesday evenings 7:00 PM at Elizabeth School for the indoor season. Cost is \$50 for the season or \$5 drop in. Our club is a part of Pathway To Wellness. More info call Teresa Knight 306-460-7304.
- Fit Fighter Group Class. Helping individuals with Parkinson Disease, Fibromyalgia, MS, Arthritis and mobility issues. Monday, Wednesday, Friday 1:00 PM at Anytime Fitness. Call Karen 463-3607 for more info.
- 365 Kindersley Air Cadets meet Thursday evenings at the Kindersley Museum. No charge to be a member, youth ages 12-18, must be a Canadian resident. Contact

MAJOR

- MS Support Group at Kerrobert Health Centre Meeting Room every 3rd Saturday 2:00-4:00 PM. Contact Gail Wiebe for more information 306-834-7068.
- November / December Church Times 5:30 PM Saturdays





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