

# Plain & Valley

Covering Southeast Saskatchewan and Southwest Manitoba

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## Olympic gold medalist: Russ Howard coming to Maryfield

BY KEVIN WEEDMARK

People in Maryfield take their curling seriously, so Olympic gold medalist Russ Howard should fit right in when he comes to town in March.

The curling-crazy community took part in a national competition to attract Howard to town, and is one of two winning communities that will host Howard.

In addition to winning Olympic gold, Howard has earned a record 107 Brier wins, has reached multiple world championships and is considered one of Canada's best curlers.

Maryfield had entered the "Any town, Anywhere in Canada" Contest, which asked curling clubs big and small across Canada to demonstrate how they would benefit from a day with Olympic gold medalist Russ Howard.

Janet Lemon says the community got together, put together a submission quickly, and then waited patiently to see if they would be chosen. "It was last February that we had to have everything in by, and we were told in April that we were a finalist, but it wasn't until October that we knew we won. We were very excited," she says.

"Everyone in town is really looking forward to it, and I'm hoping we'll have a good crowd."

Entries flooded in from across Canada for the contest. "We received so many amazing submissions for this contest," says Harper-Collins Marketing Manager Cory Beatty. Dozens of communities put together submissions that included scrapbooks, homemade movies, songs, photo albums, and posters drawn by local kids. The two winning communities at the end of the process are Maryfield and Dartmouth, Nova Scotia.



Bailey McMullin holds a copy of Russ Howard's *Curl to Win*. This photo was on the cover of the scrapbook Maryfield submitted to try to attract the curling legend to the curling-crazy town. Howard is coming to Maryfield March 31.

Maryfield Curling Club plans to welcome Howard to "a fun-filled day complete with a taste of down-home prairie hospitality," says Janet Lemon. Maryfield's curling club won over the judges at HarperCollins—the publishers of Howard's book and organizers of the contest—with its original song "Rocks on the Ice." A video of Maryfield's junior curlers performing "Rocks on the Ice" and people explaining why they think Howard should visit Maryfield was part of the community's submission. Maryfield also submitted a scrapbook outlining the reasons why people in Maryfield want Howard to come to the



Olympic champion Russ Howard delivers a shot.

community, a proposed schedule for Russ Howard Day, information on the Lions' Mini-Spiel, the Kids' Curling Program, Maryfield's successful ju-

nior and school curlers, the Community Acres Program and The Harvest Supper, which raise money for the rink. "It even included a page

from the World-Spectator—an article written in the fall of 2008 when we had our first harvest supper," says Lemon.

The package also included pictures drawn by Maryfield students and photos of curlers and banners in the Maryfield rink. "We are a small village with a huge curling heart," says Maryfield Recreation Board President Cindy Thompson. "This visit from Russ Howard will keep the passion for curling alive and help get the next generation excited too."

Maryfield put together its submission for the contest last February.

The community has a busy day planned for

Howard when he visits Maryfield.

It will kick off with a pancake breakfast at 8 a.m. at the Maryfield Rink, followed by a visit to Maryfield School where students will perform their chants and cheers for Howard—including "Rocks on the Ice"—and Howard will speak to the students on his Olympic experience, team building and setting goals.

Curling fans will have a chance to meet Howard over lunch at the Arlington Hotel. The afternoon will include a clinic with junior curlers, four-end games with junior curlers, and a mini-bonspiel in which Howard will take turns curling with the different teams. The evening will include a social hour, supper and program at the Maryfield Auditorium, where a program dedicated to Russ Howard will be held, culminating in a speech by Howard.

There will be two book signings for *Curl to Win*—at the curling rink in the afternoon and following the program in the evening.

Howard says he is looking forward to visiting Maryfield at the end of March. "I would like to congratulate the two curling clubs from Dartmouth and Maryfield for their winning submissions," he said.

"It is a privilege for me to visit both of these communities who have shown tremendous enthusiasm for curling and their young curlers."

"I am excited to meet those responsible for the submissions, and the members and friends in their communities. It is always such a pleasure to meet people who have the same love for the game as I do!"

The Whitewood Curling Club was a runner up in the national competition.

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# Lawrence, Swiegers win bronze at nationals

BY KARA KINNA

Kennedy's Paige Lawrence and Kipling's Rudi Swiegers came within a whisper of competing at worlds, coming home with a bronze medal, after competing in the Canadian national senior figure skating championships in Victoria from Jan. 21-23.

"We're really excited," says Swiegers. "It's our first national title. It can only get better from here."

Last year the pair placed sixth at Canadian nationals. This year they went in gunning for a podium finish and made it.

"Our goal at the beginning of the season was to make the podium this year," says Swiegers. "We wanted to demonstrate to the Canadian crowds what we can do and what we're capable of."

The pair skated a successful short program, and were in second place after the first night of the competition, but a fall in the long program robbed them of just enough points to finish second overall, pushing them back to third. Only the top two pairs move on to worlds in Japan in March. Swiegers and Lawrence are the alternates for the event.

Both Swiegers and Lawrence consider it a learning experience.

"I think one of the things we've learned is that we can't get ahead of ourselves," says Lawrence. "We have to stay in the moment and really focus on what we're doing instead of getting caught up and letting a little mistake throw us off the program."

"We learned not to count your chickens before they hatch," says Swiegers. "We started off really strong (in the long program), and in the last few minutes I lost focus and that cost us a better placing, so we need to just always stay focussed right to the end of the program."

"That seems to be Rudi's and my career up to date," says Lawrence. "We're the pair that is almost there all the time. In junior nationals we got second by .06, and we got fourth in junior worlds by .04."

"I think we are learning and we are getting better, and I know eventually everything will come together at the right time for us, and hopefully when we need it. Until then we'll keep making mistakes and learning from our mistakes."

"It just makes us that much hungrier for next year—being this close to worlds and having to train for it but not

being able to go. It will push us that much harder. Everything happens for a reason." Patty Hole, the pair's coach from Virden, says that Swiegers and Lawrence are always crowd favorites at any event they perform at, and nationals was no exception.

"Their greatest strength is that people across Canada, from the east coast to the west coast, love these two. Every time the crowd is on their feet no matter where these two go to skate. So when we go to perform, that is just huge for us."

"They are known to be great, great performers, and their throws are usually a highlight."

"Our weakness is probably consistency—keeping everything together. We're going to continue to work on that."

Kirsten Moore-Towers and Dylan Moscovitch of Waterloo, Ontario took gold at nationals.

"Kirsten and Dylan have been skating consistent all year, and that's why they are the champions," says Hole.

"We've gone out there and made mistakes every time we've performed."

"But we're young and we're going to get there."

Hole says that the attitude of Swiegers and Lawrence is changing as they continue to gain experience and work toward their ultimate goal of competing in the winter Olympics in Sochi, Russia in 2014.

"We've got enough experience now," says Hole. "I do believe that now when they step onto the ice they are realizing that they can be as good as everyone else."

"They are really starting to believe and trust in themselves, and that makes it easier."

Placing third at nationals has qualified the pair to compete in the Four Continents Figure Skating Championships in Taipei, Taiwan from Feb. 15-20.

The pair considers it a major achievement to be alternates for worlds, as well as competitors in Four Continents.

"It's a great feeling," says Swiegers. "We're ready to go (to worlds) if they need us. Just to be alternates is a big honor and we're really excited."

"That's an accomplishment all in itself," says Lawrence. "It really helps that we qualified for Four Continents, and we'll keep training hard in case we get that call (to worlds). We want to be ready to go."



Canadian Press/Jonathan Hayward photos

Local pairs team Paige Lawrence and Rudi Swiegers performing their short and long program at Canadian nationals in Victoria.



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## Planning underway for marathon in Moosomin in June

BY KARA KINNA

Planning is in the very early stages for a marathon to be held in Moosomin on Sunday, June 19.

A number of local people have decided that Moosomin should host a half marathon (26.2 km) walk/run, a 10 km walk/run, and a five km walk that day, which is also Father's Day.

"What started it was when we went to the Queen City marathon in Regina last year—that's a huge event and that's a big deal," says Jason Light, who decided to get the ball rolling and approach a number of people about planning a Moosomin marathon.

Light and his wife Gabby both participated in the Queen City Marathon. Light says Gabby also participated in a marathon

held in Virden last year, and was impressed with how well organized the event was.

Light says he sees no reason why a town the size of Moosomin cannot hold a similar event.

"There are a lot of people in this community who walk, and the gym is getting busier all the time," he says.

"Our goal for the first year is more or less to get it established and to get people out there."

Light has approached Robin Berry and Kristen McAuley at Strive Fitness in Moosomin about being the main organizers of the event, and the pair have agreed to take on that role.

He has also approached a number of companies about sponsorship of the event.

Robin Berry says she is excited that planning for a marathon in Moosomin is moving forward.

"I think it gets the community involved and brings people into the community of Moosomin from other towns," she says.

Berry says there are a lot of benefits to competing in a marathon.

"You build your endurance," she says, "it's great exercise, you have a training program to stick to, it's an outdoor event, and it's something to strive toward—you can set goals."

Plans for the marathon are just in the very early stages, and the route for the marathon has not been set yet, but Light says it will likely be held on the morning of June 19 and start at the Moosomin Communiplex.

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# Manitoba sees record oil, gas figures

The latest estimates of oil and gas industry expenditures in Manitoba for 2010 total a record-breaking \$800 million and the spinoff effects will further improve the province's economy, Innovation, Energy and Mines Minister Dave Chomiak announced last week.

"2010 was a record year for the industry on several fronts," said Chomiak. "Manitoba has experienced a doubling of wells licensed, wells drilled and metres drilled compared to 2009. Last year, 632 wells were licensed and 516 new wells were drilled. As well, geophysical activity has also increased to a record level, with 23 seismic-exploration programs operating last year."

Oil production in Manitoba has more than dou-

bled since 2004. In 2010, approximately 3,300 wells produced over 29,000 barrels of oil per day. In 2004, there were 1,710 wells producing 11,020 barrels of oil per day.

"Manitoba's competitive nature appeals to the oil industry and we have an attractive incentive program to encourage the industry to invest further in our province," said Chomiak.

"The work of the industry, such as exploration and development drilling, contributes to our diverse economy, which has been critical in helping Manitoba to thrive."

The Petroleum Services Association of Canada (PSAC) is forecasting 2011 will be even busier than 2010. PSAC has forecast 550 new wells will be drilled in Manitoba in 2011.

"Penn West is pleased to be a key player in Manitoba's oil and gas industry, as well as a big part of the local and provincial economy," said Diana Walls, government and industry relations, Penn West Exploration.

"Our Manitoba operations represent one of our most significant oil resource plays and we plan to grow our operations further in the Waskada area. We appreciate the open and collaborative approach of the Manitoba government which creates a safe, balanced and productive operating environment for our industry and for the benefit of Manitobans. We anticipate a steady increase in our long-term investment in Manitoba and will continue to work with the Government of Manitoba

and area residents to support the province's goals."

The petroleum industry in Manitoba employs a workforce of about 1,500 individuals. These high-paying, technical jobs build upon the economic stability of Manitoba, said

Chomiak.

The province's Manitoba Drilling Incentive Program, which provides incentives to explore and develop petroleum resources in the province, was extended at the end of 2009 through to 2014.

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Seven minor hockey teams were chosen during Hockey Day in Saskatchewan to attend WHL games this season as part of the WHL Youth Experience Contest.

## Seven minor hockey teams chosen in WHL contest

Minor hockey players from seven teams across Saskatchewan will get the opportunity to watch some of Western Canada's elite Junior hockey players thanks to SaskEnergy Hockey Day in Saskatchewan.

The 4th Annual SaskEnergy Hockey Day in Saskatchewan took place on Jan. 15. Hockey Day is intended to promote hockey at a grassroots level, raise awareness of the importance of the local rink and celebrate the many volunteers who assist in keeping hockey active in their community.

The WHL Youth Experience Contest received 93 entries this year, with seven minor hockey teams selected to attend a WHL game in Regina, Saskatoon, Moose Jaw, Prince Albert and Swift Current during SaskEnergy Hockey Day in Saskatchewan weekend activities. The winning teams this year are from the communities of Montmartre, Rouleau/Avonlea, Radville, Rosetown, Carrot River, Herbert and Choiceland.

"This is an exceptional opportunity for SaskEnergy, the Saskatchewan

Hockey Association (SHA) and the Western Hockey League (WHL) to contribute to the development of hockey in our communities. These young players get to see elite hockey played at the major junior level and learn how hard work and determination can really pay off," said Don Toth, Moosomin MLA on behalf of Dustin Duncan, the minister responsible for SaskEnergy. "SaskEnergy is again proud to partner with SHA to keep this experience an important part of Hockey Day in Saskatchewan."

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# One trip, three cats

They say bad things come in threes. But what about good things, do they come in threes too? Or how about unexpected things, do they come in threes? Or how about encounters with cats and dogs, do they come in threes?

After a five-day excursion to Niagara Falls, I'd have to say that both "unexpected things" and "cats" come in threes.

Our first unexpected encounter came on the night before our trip, as we stayed overnight with friends in order to catch an early morning flight. Their unusually friendly cat curled up on our laps without hesitation, sought our attention at nearly every moment and probably would have come with us on our flight to Toronto if we had let it. But since this was our first slightly unique cat encounter (and because our luggage was full beyond zipping capacity), we left without Monster in any of our bags.

Our second "cat" astrophysically surprising encounter happened while learning about the history of the Niagara Falls. Any conversation about this natural wonder, which sees 600,000 litres of water per second fall 52 metres into the gorge below, ultimately turns to those crazy enough to have purposely hurled themselves over the ledge.

In 1829, Sam Patch jumped from a high tower into the gorge and survived. Yes, this is an unexpected event, but it doesn't have anything to do with cats... yet. In 1901



Christalee Froese

came miss Annie Edson Taylor, a 63-year-old Michigan school teacher who was the first person to ever go over the falls in a barrel. As amazing as this is, the cat is sandwiched between the feats of Patch and Taylor.

A poor, unsuspecting domestic cat by the name of Lag-ara was the guinea pig—or should we say "guinea cat", out of respect—for Miss Taylor's crazy publicity stunt. In order to test the possibility of survival when traveling over the falls in a wooden barrel, the cat was sent in advance of Taylor. Can you imagine the meowing and hissing that stuffing a cat into a barrel must have caused? Good thing they weren't able to tell him why the stuffing was occurring.

Anyway, the cat survived, unharmed and seemingly no worse for the 52-metre drop into an abyss of swirling water and death-defying rapids. As for Miss Taylor, she survived as well, and will forever go down in history as one crazy, cat-following act.

The final cat encounter occurred on our way home in Toronto's Pearson International Airport. While strolling aimlessly around the premises, we stumbled onto cat number three. Now, I'm still not convinced that this cat was not a stow-away, as its owner had brought it from the USA via the inside of a small travel bag. The miniscule red travel case was perched on the seat beside this lady who proceeded to tell us that she had traveled with her black and white cat across the border.

Furthermore, the cat travelled for free, did not require a cat kennel, did not have a passport, was apparently not opposed to the full body scan and was now sitting comfortably in the owner's lap, waiting for its next adventure.

Call us crazy, or call it a crazy coincidence of events, but I'm thinking there's a message in these three interesting cat encounters that came in the time span of just five days.

The message might be: if you're a cat, go with the flow. It could take you to the Regina Airport with friends or friends, or it could transport you to the Pearson Airport via John F. Kennedy International Airport in New York or it could take you right over Niagara Falls. In any case, the cat will be in for an adventure—maybe even three, if that's how many they come in?

Christalee Froese welcomes comments at [lcfroese@sasktel.net](mailto:lcfroese@sasktel.net) or visit [www.westwards.net](http://www.westwards.net).

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**Complete Beef Finisher Pellet**

- 12% CP
- NEm of 53-55 (TDN of 77-79%)
- Designed to replace the entire grain portion of the finishing ration along with forage
- Balanced to supply vitamins/mineral requirements for finishing cattle

NOTE: The information used to describe this list of products is based on sample results taken over a period of time and would be considered average.

# Cloning the mammoth

One of the more striking exhibits at the Royal Saskatchewan Museum is the woolly mammoth that looms over you, emerging from a forest, when you round one of the corners in the Earth Sciences Gallery.

Twelve thousand years ago, you might have encountered exactly that scene while strolling through Saskatchewan: these days, the closest you can come is a museum exhibit, because woolly mammoths are, of course, quite extinct.

But gone forever? Perhaps not. As the hag tells Prince Caspian in the C.S. Lewis book of the same name, "You can always get them back."

Oh, sure, she was talking about the White Witch, but she could have been talking about mammoths. At least, that's the hope of a group of Japanese researchers led by Akira Iritani, professor emeritus of Kyoto University.

Nor will it require black magic. Just a chunk of tissue from one of the mammoths periodically found frozen in the ice, an elephant's egg cell, an elephant's uterus, time . . . and luck.

The result will be, if all goes well, a living mammoth genetically identical to the long-dead but freezer-fresh original: a clone.

"Clone" sounds very science-fictiony, but in fact we've been surrounded by them for thousands of years: every plant produced from a leaf cutting is a clone, genetically identical to the plant the cutting came from.

"There are also naturally occurring clones in the animal kingdom." (I'm quoting myself here, from my book *Genetics Demystified*.) "With the right chemical stimulus, the unfertilized eggs of some small invertebrates, worms, fish, lizards and frogs, can develop into full-grown adults that are clones of the mother, a process called parthenogenesis. And, of course, identical twins are clones of each other.

"However, the first artificially produced animal clone was created by John Gurdon in the 1970s. He transplanted the nucleus of a somatic cell from one frog into the unfertilized egg of a second frog that had been enucleated—its nucleus had been destroyed by ultraviolet light. The egg developed



Edward Willett

into a tadpole genetically identical to the frog whose cell the nucleus came from. However, it did not grow into an adult frog.

"This type of cloning is called somatic nuclear transfer. It was not successfully carried out in mammals until Ian Wilmut and colleagues at the Roslin Institute in Edinburgh successfully cloned Dolly the Sheep in 1997. Wilmut took a nucleus from a mammary gland cell of a Finn Dorset sheep, and transplanted it into the enucleated egg of a Scottish blackface ewe. The nucleus and egg were forced to fuse (and stimulated into dividing) with a jolt of electricity, a process called electrofusion. The new cell divided, and was placed in the uterus of a blackface sheep to develop. Dolly was born some months later. The process had been tried 275 times before it was successful."

Since Dolly's day, many other mammals have been cloned: including, a year ago, a Pyrenean ibex, which went extinct in 2000. Scientists had preserved a skin sample in liquid nitrogen, and were able to extract DNA from it, replicate it, insert it into goat eggs, and create a viable embryo that was born alive to its surrogate mother.

Unfortunately, the newborn kid had lung defects that soon proved fatal. Which is one reason luck is vital to the attempt to resurrect the woolly mam-

moth. Cloning based on frozen DNA is only about 30 percent successful, and even extracting a good DNA sample from frozen mammoths—frozen for a very long time and at temperatures nowhere near those of liquid nitrogen—has proven high-impossible.

But recently, Teruhiko Wakayama of the Rikan Centre for Developmental Biology developed a new technique that enabled him to extract viable DNA from a mouse frozen for 16 years at temperatures comparable to those of frozen mammoths. Using a method based on that technique, Iritani and his research team have successfully extracted undamaged nuclei from mammoth eggs.

Now they'll implant that DNA into an elephant's egg, creating an embryo which will be implanted in an elephant's uterus. There are many pitfalls along the way, but Iritani hopes to succeed within five or six years.

The hope is that having a living mammoth to study will help scientists understand why they went extinct in the first place. As well, success with a mammoth might point the way to bringing other extinct species back from the grave—and ensuring that currently endangered species aren't lost forever if they fall extinct.

But never mind that. The coolest thing of all would simply be seeing a woolly mammoth, alive and in the hairy flesh.

In Lewis's *Narnia* books, the White Witch made it "always winter and never Christmas." For frozen mammoths, it's been winter a very long time . . . but Christmas, spring and summer could be just around the corner.

*Edward Willett is an award-winning writer of fiction and non-fiction from Regina.*

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|         |           |                            |          |
|---------|-----------|----------------------------|----------|
| FEB. 16 | WEDNESDAY | PRESORT FEEDER CATTLE SALE | 10:00 AM |
| FEB. 21 | MONDAY    | LOUIS RIEL DAY             | CLOSED   |
| FEB. 23 | WEDNESDAY | FEEDER SALE                | 9:00 AM  |
| FEB. 25 | FRIDAY    | BRED COW SALE              | 11:00 AM |

**MARCH**

|         |           |  |          |
|---------|-----------|--|----------|
| MAR. 2  | WEDNESDAY | PRESORT FEEDER SALE                    | 10:00 AM |
| MAR. 5  | SATURDAY  | MOUNTAIN VIEW FARMS BULL SALE          | 12:00 PM |
| MAR. 8  | TUESDAY   | SHEEP, LAMB AND GOAT SALE              | 12 NOON  |
| MAR. 9  | WEDNESDAY | FEEDER CATTLE SALE                     | 9:00 AM  |
| MAR. 11 | FRIDAY    | BRED COW SALE                          | 11:00 AM |
| MAR. 13 | SUNDAY    | REBELS OF THE WEST SIMMENTAL BULL SALE | 1:00 PM  |
| MAR. 16 | WEDNESDAY | PRESORT FEEDER SALE                    | 10:00 AM |
| MAR. 19 | SATURDAY  | PLEASANT DAWN CHAROLAIS BULL SALE      | 1:00 PM  |
| MAR. 23 | WEDNESDAY | FEEDER CATTLE SALE                     | 9:00 AM  |
| MAR. 30 | WEDNESDAY | PRESORT FEEDER SALE                    | 10:00 AM |

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# Building permits up in Saskatchewan

Building permits in Saskatchewan for December 2010 were released Feb. 7 by Statistics Canada that confirms construction sites are very busy across the province.

Between December 2009 and December 2010 build-

ing permits jumped 19.5 per cent, the third highest percentage increase in Canada (seasonally-adjusted).

Permits were also up on a monthly basis, increasing five per cent between November 2010 and De-

cember 2010. This was the fourth-highest increase in the nation over that period.

"With our population hitting record levels last year, the demand for housing increased and led to a busy year for the construc-

tion industry," Enterprise Minister Jeremy Harrison said.

"The rise in building permits shows that the strength of our economy continues to attract new people and new business to our province. The construction industry has

been able to tap into the provinces' growth by providing homes for new residents, and at the same time meet the commercial and industrial demand from our thriving business community."

Residential construction was up 62.7 per cent between December 2009 and December 2010, tied with Prince Edward Island for the highest percentage increase among the provinces.

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# Treasures from the First Nations past

By Kevin Weidmark

Marco Laquerre's handwritten note in his museum doesn't look like anything special from the outside.

But step through the front door and you feel transported into a museum.

The walls are covered with peace pipes, war clubs and other weapons, medicine bundles, effigies, and other artifacts that tell the story of First Nations on the Prairies.

Many of the artifacts are not only well preserved, but many are associated with some of the most well known figures in Plains First Nations history.

Laquerre's interest in First Nations artifacts began when he was a child.

"I had heard that they had dug and found a native pipe," he says. "I thought if I ever found a native pipe I would keep it."

"When I was living in Calgary and working as a property manager, I found a pipe that belonged to an old man. He was 90 years old, and he sold it to me. That was 10 years ago. I started with that one piece."

He says his collection grew not because he sought out pieces, but because they found their way to him.

"I don't look for them—they come on their own," he says. "One day I was talking to a historian from the University of Nebraska, who had tracked me down because I had Standing Bear's pipe. He hooked me up with the curator of the Pine Ridge Wounded Knee Museum. The museum had burned down in the '70s and the leadership on that reserve didn't want all this stuff from the past. I've got pieces that were saved from the fire. Not the whole museum, but quite a few pieces."

Laquerre's collection includes several small medicine bundle effigies made by Horn Chips or Old Chips, a well-known medicine man who was a medicine man to Crazy Horse.

"He had given Crazy Horse a medicine bundle and told him to never take it off," says Laquerre. "Crazy Horse believed it would protect him. When they arrested Crazy Horse he took off his bundle. As

soon as he did, the soldiers stabbed him in the back and killed him."

Laquerre's collection includes pieces from First Nations figures including Red Cloud and Standing Bear.

"Standing Bear was the Martin Luther King of the red people," Laquerre says. "He was the first human rights activist. He went to court to prove his people are human beings, not savages."

Laquerre's collection ranges from the pipe of the peaceful Standing Bear to that of undefeated war chief Red Cloud. "Red Cloud never lost a fight with the American army," Laquerre says. "He took down Fort Laramie. He's the only Native American

who ever took a fort down."

Laquerre has a verbal agreement to donate the items to the Ochapowace First Nation so they can be put on display.

"I showed my collection to Chief Denton George and he was just amazed," says Laquerre.

"Often when First Nations people see these, it's unbelievable to them to see these sacred objects that belonged to some very important people."

"I would donate these to Ochapowace so they can be appreciated. I'm hoping they can build an interpretive center so people can understand a little bit more about the First Nations."



At top: A peace pipe believed to belong to Chief Big Foot. It was picked up at the Wounded Knee massacre site.

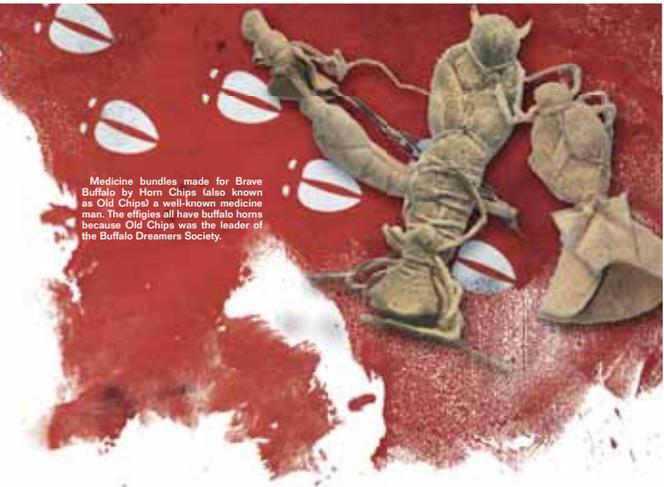
Above: A pipe that belonged to Chief Red Cloud. The design of the two arrows facing each other represents Red Cloud's courage in facing his enemies.

Top Left: A pipe belonging to Standing Bear. The red catlinite or pipestone represented blood. The weeping heart is a bullet that was fired upon him, which he had melted down to decorate the pipe.

At left, a shield made from buffalo hide. Warriors carried these as a symbolic shield of protection believing that they would help protect them against bullets. This shield appears to have been pierced by an arrow or a knife.

At right: Items belonging to Chief Running Elk. He used the small hand-to-hand weapon in the Rosebud war.

At bottom right: An eastern-type tomahawk pipe from the late 1800s.



Medicine bundles made for Brave Buffalo by Horn Chips (also known as Old Chips) a well-known medicine man. The effigies all have buffalo horns because Old Chips was the leader of the Buffalo Dreamers Society.



Above: A Cree peace pipe from the 1800s. Right: A ball war club with a 1700s Hudson's Bay blade inserted into it. Below: A shaman's healing stick.





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# RCMP Musical Ride being held in Rocanville

BY KARA KINNA

A committee has been struck and plans are moving forward for the RCMP Musical Ride tentatively scheduled to be held in Rocanville, Sask. on June 1.

"We've got our committee together and we are starting to make plans," says Rocanville Recreation Director Kathy Brown.

"It's going to be a big project. Once we start getting things in place we want to do a whole evening, not just the musical ride."

The RCMP Musical Ride is tentatively booked to be in Rocanville on June 1, but Rocanville is still waiting for final confirmation from the RCMP on that date. However Brown says that once a date for the ride is tentatively booked, it usually goes ahead, and the committee is proceeding as if the ride is a go.

"We're hopeful and we're just going to go ahead like it's a done deal," says Brown.

"We have 10 people on the committee and will break into subcommittees and let them round up volunteers for each project, whether it's entertainment, or preparing the grounds



One of the formations performed by the RCMP Musical Ride. The ride is tentatively booked for Rocanville for June 1.

The grounds will also need to be prepared and made fit for the horses and riders.

The committee is hoping to plan a supper and entertainment before the ride, which will take place in the evening. There will also be a show in the afternoon for area school children.

"It looks like we will be able to put together a two or three hour program and hopefully a meal," says Brown of the evening event.

Already there are volunteers stepping forward for the event.

"I have people phoning me so there seems to be quite a bit of interest," says Brown. "We've had a few of the service groups approach us, and there is some interest from 4-H clubs who have contacted us."

Despite the interest, Brown says there is still a need for subcommittee members and plenty of volunteers.

She says anyone interested in joining a subcommittee or volunteering for the event can call the Rocanville Recreation office at 645-2164.

or the stables."

Brown says that hosting the event will take hundreds of volunteers. The 39 horses used in the ride will arrive in Rocanville on May

31 and must be lodged and fed overnight. The horses will be housed in the Rocanville skating rink. Dirt must be hauled into the rink and temporary pens

must be set up to keep the horses overnight, and timothy hay must be provided for the horses' feed.

The ride itself will be held at the ball diamonds and

the committee will need to set up more bleachers at the diamonds to accommodate the crowds, and to allow for an elevated view of the ride and its patterns.

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Stephanie Lange photo

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## When it makes sense to borrow for your RRSP

Loans are a part of life for most Canadians. We take out loans to pay for our cars and our homes, for vacations, furniture and TVs. And, at this time of year, as the deadline for making your 2010 Registered Retirement Savings Plan (RRSP) contribution looms, you may be asking yourself if it makes sense to make one more loan—a loan to increase your RRSP contribution.

The right answer for you depends on the overall shape of your financial life. Let's look at the factors you should consider.

**IT MAKES SENSE TO BORROW**

- Because contributing to your RRSP can pay off in two ways: First, you'll increase the size of your tax refund; second, you'll have more tax-deferred money growing inside your retirement plan. But

the first rule is this: The loan must fit your budget.

- When you intend to pay off the loan within a year, remember, interest on an RRSP loan is not tax-deductible. Consider a series of smaller RRSP loans with payments within your budget. Longer term loans are more suitable for purchasing non-registered investments (when the interest is tax deductible).

- When the size of the loan maximizes tax savings. Tax rates rise with income. More tax can often be saved by spreading RRSP deductions over more than one year. While contributions made in one year can be deducted in a future year, it does not always make sense to borrow to make an RRSP contribution if it will take several years to fully utilize the deduction. Again a

series of smaller loans may produce the better financial result.

- When you use your tax refund to pay off the loan as quickly as possible.

**WHEN IT MIGHT NOT MAKE SENSE**

- If you expect to be taxed at, or near, the lowest marginal rate over time. In that case, you won't get the full tax-reduction benefit of making your maximum RRSP contribution, so the cost of taking out an RRSP loan doesn't make sense. Instead, you might want to consider contributing to a Tax-free Savings Account (TFSA). The contribution isn't tax deductible but money and interest inside a TFSA is tax-free and, unlike your RRSP, so are withdrawals, which can be made at any time for any purpose.

- If your increased

RRSP refund is already earmarked, in whole or in part, to pay taxes you owe on other income.

- If you are unsure your income level will allow you to meet your RRSP loan obligations, which you will be required to do regardless of your income level and the performance of your RRSP in the short-term.

Borrowing to increase your RRSP contribution can be a useful strategy but it also comes with specific risks. Perhaps you can avoid the need to borrow next year through a Pre-Authorized Contribution (PAC) plan that automatically deducts and saves any amount you want from your regular paycheques.

And, of course, your professional advisor can help you map out the RRSP

contribution strategy that fits the overall shape of your financial life.

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## Canadians positive about their finances

Most Canadians are feeling positive about their current financial situation and are optimistic they will meet their future financial goals, according to a recent CIBC poll. The poll also revealed that Canadians who have met with an advisor sometime in the last year are more likely to have established goals for themselves and feel that they are on track to meet them.

Key findings of the poll include:

- 69 per cent of Canadians feel positive about their current financial situation, which was consistent across all age groups in the survey.

- 71 per cent of Canadians think it's more important to set financial goals today than it was five years

ago, although only 51 per cent say they annually set financial goals for themselves and their family. Canadians aged 25 to 44 were most likely to have financial goals in place (57 per cent).

- 71 per cent of Canadians are confident they will reach their financial goals.

"It is encouraging to see that most Canadians are positive about their current financial situation and are increasingly aware of the importance of setting and working towards personal financial goals," said Victor Dodig, Executive Vice-President, Retail Distribution and Wealth Management, CIBC Retail Markets.

The poll also identified an important link between

working with an advisor, building a financial plan, and being confident about your personal financial situation.

Sixty-one per cent of Canadians who have met with an advisor in the last year have financial goals in place for themselves and their families versus just 41 per cent among those who haven't met with an advisor.

Confidence is also higher among this group that they will reach their financial goals at 77 per cent versus a 66 per cent confidence level among those who have not had a conversation with an advisor.

"We hear from our clients on a regular basis that there is a connection between having a good conversation about their broader financial goals and how they feel about their finances," added Dodig. "Having a conversation with a financial advisor about your goals and what you want to accomplish is just that—a conversation. It's an opportunity for you to talk about what matters to you, whether it's planning for retirement or reducing your debt, and then talking about how you can work towards those goals by taking a holistic view of your financial picture."

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Division Director  
carol.fawcett@investorsgroup.com

Jan Gustafson  
Associate Consultant  
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Devon Taylor, BA  
Consultant  
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# Community theatres make winter a little shorter

BY HELEN SOLMES

This year's roster of community theatre productions promises to carry us through the last few weeks of winter blaws with hours of light-hearted entertainment and a belly full of laughs that will carry us well into gardening season. From the zany antics of the Sow's Belly Soup Group in Stockholm this month to the last curtain call of the spring season in Binscarth in May, local community theatre performances offer entertainment that includes familiar faces.

This is the time of year when coworkers, carpool buddies, neighbors, and friends transform themselves into larger-than-life characters—wander-lust cruisers, a wannabe poet, Cinderella and her Prince Charming, a heart-warming senior and her malicious stepchildren, and Hans Christian Andersen's Ugly Duckling.

Local community theatre has appeals that surpass that of professional productions and, in the 15 to 30 or more years that local theatre troupes have taken to the stage in whatever facility has been available, they have sometimes drawn audiences larger and more enthused than touring productions have.

There was a curiosity factor initially, according to Binscarth Vagabond Theatre director and actor Mason Jardine. "People were initially curious to see local personalities on stage, but, with time, they have come to focus on what is happening on stage and have come to expect quality acting and variety," he said.

This year's roster promises to deliver all of the above, beginning with Stockholm's Sow's Belly Soup Group 18th annual production in March, followed by Binscarth's in early April, Esterhazy's Kaposvar Valley Kapers mid-April, Moosomin's Mooseberry Acting Company on the last weekend of April, and back to Binscarth for a children's production in early May.

With a little planning and early bookings, enthusiasts could be "off to the theatre" every other weekend from mid-March to mid-May.

**ALL ABOARD FOR ROMANCE, MYSTERY**

The Stockholm Sow's Belly Soup Group has recruited three new actors to round out a 15 member cast for its *Perils on the High Seas* production in March. Ryan Lemieux, Sadie Sinclair, and Corinne Pomainville

will join veteran Soup Group actors aboard a 1920's cruise ship headed for Jolly London in this romance and mystery comedy. Performances are March 18, 19, 25, and 26 at the Stockholm Communityplex and tickets are available from Michelle Banga at 306-793-2911.

**QUIRKY HAPPENINGS**

Esterhazy's Kaposvar Valley Kapers troupe is now four weeks into rehearsing its 15th dinner theatre production, *The Boarding House* by playwright Vern Harden. This lighthearted farce is a fast-paced play featuring the quirky happenings that are fuelled by 10 equally quirky personalities in the boarding house. For information and tickets for the April 8, 9, 10, 15, and 16 performances, contact director Grant Forster at 306-745-6588.

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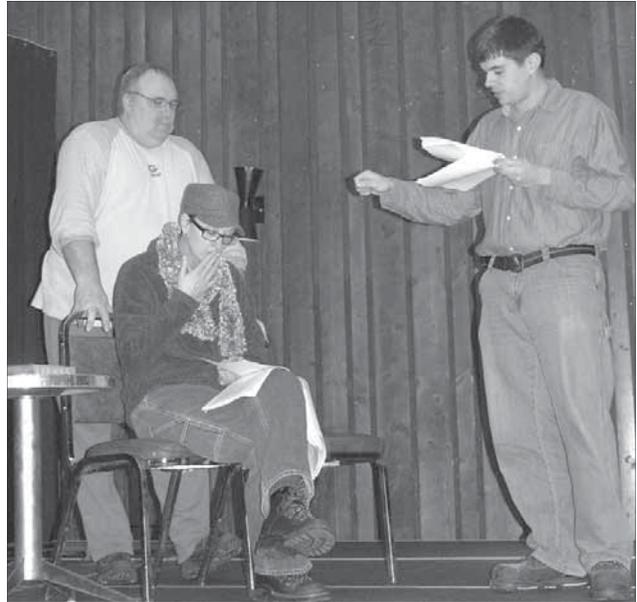
The kind-hearted residents of a senior's complex called The Cloisters come to Ethel Savage's defence when Ethel's horrible stepchildren pursue her recently departed husband's wealth in Binscarth's Vagabond Theatre production of John Patrick's *Curious Savage* on April 1, 2, 8 and 9 at the Third Avenue Theatre in Binscarth. For information and tickets, call Third Avenue Theatre at 204-532-2287.

**CINDERELLA CLASSIC, WITH A TWIST**

The Cinderella story may be as old as antiquity, dating back to the First Century BC, but the Moosomin Mooseberry Acting Company will breathe new life into the classic fairy tale in April when two equally classic seniors, ages 103 and 104 years, narrate the popular fairy tale from the Louisiana swamps. Under the direction of Jennifer Boivin and Brenda McPhedran. Performances are April 29 and 30. For information and tickets call Jennifer at 306-435-2588.

**ENERGY ABOUNDS**

No sooner will the Vagabond Theatre troupe wrap up *Curious Savage* than it will turn its focus and attention to a children's production of George Stiles' and Anthony Dreves' *Honk*, a musical based on Hans Christian Andersen's *The Ugly Duckling*, calling on the high energy level of an all-children cast. For information, call 204-532-2287.



Left to right: Veteran actors Harold Gillespie, Melanie Stadenyck, and Gavin Leach experiment with a hypnosis scene during a Kaposvar Valley Kapers rehearsal for the upcoming production of *The Boarding House* on April 8, 9, 10, 15, 16 in Esterhazy.

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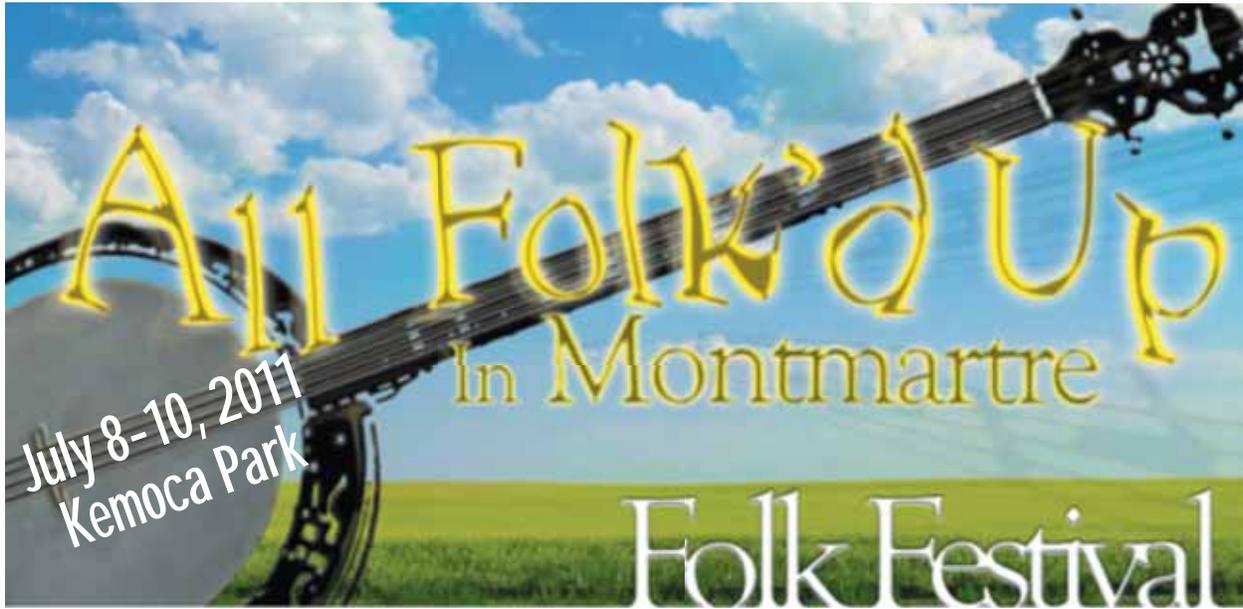
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