



## Provincial Point of View December 21, 2012

### MERRY CHRISTMAS!



Christmas is special time of year. On behalf of my family, Trish, Carter, and Paige, we wish you a very Merry Christmas and a Happy and Prosperous New Year.

### PREMIER BRAD WALL FINISHES THE YEAR AS CANADA'S MOST POPULAR PREMIER

As 2012 draws to a close, Saskatchewan Premier Brad Wall retains his status as the Canadian provincial head of government with the highest approval rating, a new Angus Reid Public Opinion poll has found.

The online survey of a representative national sample of 6,619 Canadian adults asked respondents in nine provinces about the performance of their respective heads of government.

In Saskatchewan, two thirds of respondents (67%) are content with Wall's performance, a rating that has remained stable for the past six months.

### **SASKATCHEWAN GROWS IN 2012**

28,000 more people now call our province home, pushing the population to an all-time high of 1,086,564. Growth like that means we are well on our way to achieving one of the ambitious goals we set in the Saskatchewan Plan for Growth released this fall: a population of 1.2 million by 2020.

For our government, the Growth Plan was an important milestone. In it, we laid out our vision to keep Saskatchewan strong and growing. We committed to investing a further \$2.5 billion in infrastructure over the next three years, lowering business taxes and doubling the value of our exports by 2020. The Growth Plan also outlined our government's direction to improve healthcare and education, build growing and safe communities and improve the lives of people with disabilities.

The purpose of growth should be to build a better quality of life for all Saskatchewan residents. Our Growth Plan will do that.

Looking ahead to 2013, there are already positive indications. The latest economic outlook for next year suggests Saskatchewan will have the highest rate of growth in Canada. The most recent job numbers seem to support that prediction – in November, 540,000 people were working in Saskatchewan; a new all-time high. Not only were there more people working, there were also fewer people looking for work.

Reflecting on the past year, we are reminded how blessed we are to be living in Saskatchewan. As a government, we have taken action to ensure the benefits of growth are used to improve the quality of life for you and your family. With the New Year will come new challenges, but with your help and on the solid foundation provided by our Growth Plan, we are confident that Saskatchewan will continue to move forward.

### **DRIVE CAREFULLY THIS CHRISTMAS**



Christmas travellers heading home for the holidays can have a safer journey by being aware of the potential highway hazards they may encounter during their trip.

"The best way to be prepared for winter travel is to know before you go by checking the latest road conditions on the Highway Hotline," Highways and Infrastructure Minister Don McMorris said. "We also want drivers to remember that if there is snow and ice on the road, there is a good chance you will cross the path of a snowplow. Remember to stay back, stay safe and give the plow room to work."

[Drive Carefully This Christmas](#)

### **FUNDING ANNOUNCED FOR DEVELOPMENT OF AGRICULTURAL PLASTICS RECYCLING PROGRAM IN SASKATCHEWAN**

On Monday, December 17, I was excited to announce funding of \$75,000 to CleanFARMS Inc. to support the work necessary to develop an industry-led program for the recycling of agricultural plastics. These materials include such items as plastic grain bags, plastic twine, silage bags, and bale wrap.

As the agricultural industry grows in Saskatchewan, we see a growing need to expand recycling programs to incorporate agricultural plastics. The pilot program funded by the ministry of Agriculture and operated by the Provincial Council of Agricultural Development and Diversification Boards has seen approximately 83,000 kilograms of plastic recycled alone in the past two years. With the support of Saskatchewan producers, I am confident that expanding this program will further protect our environment.

[Funding Announced for Development of Agricultural Plastics Recycling Program in Saskatchewan](#)

## **AMENDMENTS TO THE FISHERIES REGULATIONS REDUCE RED TAPE, PROTECT FISH**

In time for the 2013 angling season, the Ministry of Environment is amending The Fisheries Regulations to reduce red tape while continuing to protect fishing in Saskatchewan. The amendments will eliminate or streamline the license requirement for individuals or organizations wishing to hold a competitive fishing event, help prevent the introduction of high-risk diseases into Saskatchewan and provide additional protection to species at risk including sturgeon and mountain sucker and increase consistency with other provincial and federal regulations.

## **GOVERNMENT PROVIDES ADDITIONAL FUNDING TO CORMAN PARK TO DEAL WITH FLOODING**



On Tuesday, December 18, I, along with colleagues Honourable Don Morgan and Honourable Gord Wyant, was pleased to present the RM of Corman Park with \$280,000 through the Emergency Flood Drainage Reduction Program for flood prevention for work completed last year.

The funding helps to cover the costs incurred by the RM of Corman Park, including clearing culverts, installing new culverts, and dealing with breached roads. It will ensure the residents of the RM of Corman Park can continue to move forward as our province progresses into 2013.

[Government Provides Additional Funding to Corman Park to Deal with Flooding](#)

### **HEALTH PARTNERS BOOST EFFORTS TO REDUCE WAIT TIMES**

The latest statistics show that 90 per cent of Saskatchewan surgical patients continue to receive surgery within six months and 78 per cent receive surgery within three months. However, with little improvement in surgery wait times over the past few months, surgical teams, health regions and others are renewing their efforts to reduce surgery wait times and improve safety.

"There is a lot of work going on behind the scenes to make surgeries safer and get people in for surgeries sooner," Health Minister Dustin Duncan said. "Surgical teams, health regions and other partners are focused on achieving shorter wait times and ensuring surgical patients have a better experience."

The number of people waiting more than six months for surgery was 10,634 in November 2007. That number fell 58 per cent to 4,516 on October 31, 2012.

[Health Partners Boost Efforts to Reduce Wait Times](#)

### **CROWNS TO SUPPORT STARS WITH FIVE YEAR, \$10 MILLION CONTRIBUTION**

Saskatchewan's Crown corporations will support STARS air ambulance operations with a five-year, \$10 million contribution.

The Crown Investments Corporation, SaskPower, SaskEnergy, SaskTel and SGI will each contribute \$2 million toward this initiative within the five-year time frame.

"STARS is a natural fit for the Crowns to support," Crown Investments Corporation Minister Donna Harpauer said. "The government as a whole has committed to support STARS and the Crowns have crews working in rural and remote areas across the province, sometimes in hazardous conditions. We all have a stake in public safety and emergency response."

[Crowns to Support STARS With Five Year, \\$10 Million Contribution](#)

### **GOVERNMENT INVESTING IN CARE FOR VULNERABLE ADULTS**

The Province of Saskatchewan will provide an additional \$3.3 million per year to Approved Private

**Service Homes and Mental Health Approved Homes that care for adults with intellectual disabilities and/or mental health issues.**

"These homes provide a family atmosphere for vulnerable adults and enable them to be involved in their communities," Social Services Minister June Draude said. "Our government's continued investment in these homes and those who operate them is an important part of our commitment to improve quality of life for all Saskatchewan people, and to make this province the best place to live for people with disabilities. These are key goals in our Saskatchewan Plan for Growth, and today's announcement will help us achieve them."

[Government Investing in Care for Vulnerable Adults](#)

### **SASKATCHEWAN PROVINCIAL PARKS ANNOUNCES IMPORTANT DATES FOR 2013**

Saskatchewan Provincial Parks had a great 2012 and as the popularity of parks continues to grow, planning for a successful 2013 season is underway.

"It has been a great year for Saskatchewan Provincial Parks, setting a new visitation record and introducing the new online reservation system," Parks, Culture and Sport Minister Kevin Doherty said. "As we plan for our 2013 season, we continue to look for ways to enhance programs and services to ensure parks are accessible to as many visitors as possible."

The 2013 season will begin with the seasonal camping application process opening online at [www.saskparks.net](http://www.saskparks.net) on Monday, January 7. Seasonal camping offers the opportunity to secure a campsite for the entire park season from May until September.

[Saskatchewan Provincial Parks Announces Important Dates for 2013](#)

### **AURORA DIABLO U14 BOYS 2012 BACK FROM NATIONALS**





**Congratulations to our Aurora Diablo U14 Boys 2012 soccer team who represented Saskatchewan at nationals in Vaughan, On.**

The team finished 2nd in their pool, and lost a close game in the quarter finals to Alberta who went on to finish 2nd. In their last match they defeated PEI 5-2 to placed them 7th overall.

### **CHRISTMASTIME AT THE MEEWASIN VALLEY CENTRE**



Winter is picturesque on Saskatoon's riverbank, with the snow on the ground and the frost on the trees, I encourage everyone to head down to the riverbank and enjoy the sights. Stop in at the

Meewasin Valley Interpretive Centre to experience Saskatoon's cultural and natural history at the heart of the Meewasin Trails.

This Sunday, December 23, the Meewasin Valley Centre presents the Christmas Movie Matinee, open to everyone! This year the movie will be "Disney's A Christmas Carol" starring Jim Carrey. The movie will begin at 2:00 pm and there will be a concession open for some movie treats.

If you are looking for something to do with the kids between Christmas and New Years, the Meewasin Valley Centre is providing a drop in craft session every afternoon from December 28 to 31. Each day a New Years noise maker will be available to create.

For more information on these events or others call 665-6888.

### **DID YOU KNOW?**

- Average weekly earnings up 2.6% in September 2012 over September 2011
- Building permits up 5.6% in October
- Private and public investment intentions in 2012 are expected to top \$20 billion for the first time
- Retail sales were up 6.4% in September 2012
- New motor vehicle sales were up 15.1% in September 2012

### **JUST THE LINKS**

December 18, 2012 - [Highway Hotline Helping Hundreds of Thousands of Motorists](#)

December 19, 2012 - [\\$38 Million Dollars Invested in Bridge and Culvert Work in 2012-13](#)

December 20, 2012 - [Wages and Retail Sales Up, Year-Over-Year](#)

December 21, 2012 - [STC Passenger Fare Increase Effective January 3](#)

### **UPCOMING EVENTS**

#### **Enchanted Forest**

**Date: November 16 to January 6**



**Where: Saskatoon Forestry Farm**

**When: 5:30 pm to 11:30 pm nightly**

**Ticket Prices: \$6/per person, \$25/per car, ages 3 and under are free**

**Science Saturdays**

**Date: December 22, 29**

**Where: Children's Discovery Museum**

**When: 10:00 am to 4:00 pm**

**Ken Cheveldayoff, MLA Christmas Party**

**Date: December 21**

**Where: 138 Kaplan Green, Saskatoon SK**

**When: 7:00 pm**

**Christmas Movie Matinee**

**Date: December 23**

**Where: Meewasin Valley Interpretive Centre**

**When: 2:00 pm to 4:00 pm**

**Enchanted Forest - Saskatchewan Blue Cross Light Walk**

**Date: January 6, 2013**

**Where: Saskatoon Forestry Farm**

**When: 5:30 pm to 9:00 pm**

**Ticket Prices: \$5/per person, \$20/per family, ages 3 and under are free**

[www.push2play.ca](http://www.push2play.ca)

**THOUGHT OF THE DAY**

**"So we shall let the reader answer this question for himself: who is the happier man, he who has braved the storm of life and lived or he who has stayed securely on the shore and merely existed?"**

Hunter S. Thompson

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## KEEP IN TOUCH

I appreciate the many opportunities to make a positive difference in my constituency. Your phone calls, letters, and emails make a big difference in keeping me informed on the issues that matter to you. If you would like me to recognize anyone or have your event mentioned in this newsletter, please don't hesitate to call or email me.

*"From a Provincial Point of View"* is a weekly message from Ken Cheveldayoff, MLA Saskatoon Silver Springs. Your opinions are important and your letters, emails, and phone calls on any issues relating to the provincial government are welcomed.

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