



Provincial Point of View March 15, 2013

HAPPY ST. PATRICK'S DAY!



May your blessings outnumber
the shamrocks that grow.
And may trouble avoid you
Wherever you go.
Irish Blessing

GOVERNMENT HOLDS THE LINE ON EDUCATION PROPERTY TAX

Premier Brad Wall announced on March 13, that the government will hold the line on education property tax in 2013.

The overall value of property in Saskatchewan has increased 67 per cent over the past four years, from \$58 billion in 2009 to \$97 billion in 2013, thanks to Saskatchewan's strong and growing economy.

Wall said while that's good news for property owners, it could have meant significant property tax increases if the government had left the education property tax rates unchanged.

“A few weeks ago, Government Relations Minister Jim Reiter said that our government would take a close look at the impact of this huge increase in property values on property taxes,” Wall said. “Today, I am pleased to announce that despite some significant pressures on our provincial budget, we will hold the line on education property taxes in 2013.”

[Government Holds the Line on Education Property Taxes](#)

GOVERNMENT DIRECTS SGI TO AMEND RATE PROPOSAL AND CAP THE INCREASE FOR MOTORCYCLES

Following concern from motorcycle owners regarding significant insurance rate hikes proposed by SGI, Minister responsible for SGI Donna Harpauer has asked the corporation to amend its rate proposal to cap increases for motorcycles at 15 per cent.

In addition, Harpauer has directed SGI to review its rating approach for motorcycles, including the injury benefit levels provided in the insurance coverage, and to examine ways to improve motorcycle safety programs.

“We heard loud and clear from the motorcycle community that the proposed increases would cause unreasonable financial hardship for bike enthusiasts, and could negatively impact business owners who deal in motorcycle and related equipment sales,” Harpauer said. “We’ve asked SGI to implement caps on these hikes to reduce rate shock for motorcycle owners. We’ve also asked SGI to look at other options in terms of coverage levels and increased safety programs that ultimately will help reduce the claim costs associated with motorcycles.”

[Government Directs SGI to Amend Rate Proposal and Cap the Increase for Motorcycles](#)

QUEEN ELIZABETH II DIAMOND JUBILEE MEDAL PRESENTATION



I was pleased to attend the final installment of the Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal Presentation on Saturday, March 9. Saskatoon-Humboldt MP Brad Trost presented 15 people with the prestigious medal. The medals were given to those who have positively impacted their communities. After hearing how each recipient has influenced the community, it was easy to see they are all very deserving of the recognition.

Congratulations to everyone who received a medal on Saturday, and throughout the Diamond Jubilee Year, including constituents Hugh Vassos and Brad Sylvester (seen above).

WATER SECURITY AGENCY RELEASES MARCH FORECAST

On Monday, as Minister responsible for Water Security Agency I released the March forecast and outlook on spring runoff. Based on the amount of snowfall this winter, an above normal runoff is expected for the majority of the province, while some areas have the potential for very high runoff and flooding.

In the news release, I noted, “The rate of melt and how much additional precipitation falls as snow

or rain in coming weeks will determine the risk of flooding this spring. However, if the precipitation conditions going forward are consistent with their historical averages, most of the province will experience an above average spring runoff.”

A hot summer and fall with below normal rainfall across the entire agricultural portion of Saskatchewan in 2012 produced relatively dry conditions going into the winter season, but a well above normal snowpack has created the potential for an above normal runoff.

The Water Security Agency will continue to monitor the 2013 spring runoff conditions across Saskatchewan. If necessary, more snow surveys will be conducted to verify snow accumulation. The Water Security Agency will be updating this forecast in April with the best information available.

[Water Security Agency Releases March Forecast](#)

JOB OPPORTUNITIES IN SASKATCHEWAN CONTINUE TO GROW - UP 12 PER CENT OVER LAST YEAR

Saskjobs.ca saw a 7.0 per cent increase in visits over February 2012, with just under a million visitors this February and a 12 per cent increase in the number of jobs posted.

A total of 15,390 job opportunities were posted by employers in February, which is up more than 12 per cent year-over-year. The sales and service category continued to make up the majority of postings at 34.5 per cent; this is a 44.2 per cent increase over February 2012. The trades, transport and construction category vacancies comprised the next largest segment of all jobs posted at 29.2 per cent, an 11.7 per cent increase year over year. Job opportunities in the processing and manufacturing category were also up by 21.2 per cent over the same month last year.

“Saskatchewan continues to offer valuable opportunities for those seeking new employment and for those employers seeking to fill positions,” Economy Minister Bill Boyd said. “And we continue to see new and exciting positions posted each and every day in virtually every category and industry and in both rural and urban markets across the province.”

[Job Opportunities in Saskatchewan Continue to Grow - Up 12 Per Cent Over Last Year](#)

CIS MEN'S HOCKEY CHAMPIONSHIP



It will be an exciting week in Saskatoon as we host the Potash Corp CIS University Cup. On Wednesday night, I had the privilege to speak on behalf of Premier Brad Wall and the Government of Saskatchewan at the University Cup Awards Gala Dinner. It was an honour to hear keynote speaker Ron McLean.

I was pleased to be part of the Opening Ceremonies on Thursday night, along with Saskatoon Mayor Don Atchison, President of the University of Saskatchewan Ilene Busch-Vishniac, Dean Carol Rodgers, Ron Bubnick, Scott Banda, Grant Wicks, Grant Kook, Leo MacPherson, and Basil Houghton.

A special thank you to Grant Kook, Chair of the 2013 University Cup, the organizing committee and the volunteers that will make this five day hockey holiday a memorable event! I encourage everyone to take in the action of the tournament as we witness the talent of these exceptional athletes.

MORE THAN 1,800 STUDENTS AWARDED THE SASKATCHEWAN INNOVATION AND OPPORTUNITY SCHOLARSHIP

Advanced Education Minister Don Morgan announced March 12, that 1,882 scholarships were awarded to Saskatchewan post-secondary students through the new Saskatchewan Innovation and Opportunity Scholarship program in 2011-12.

"I am pleased to see so many students benefiting from the new Saskatchewan Innovation and Opportunity Scholarship," Morgan said. "In our government's Plan for Growth, we are focusing on post-secondary participation and completion rates to help meet our target of adding 60,000 more people to our workforce by 2020. This new scholarship will help achieve this by providing Saskatchewan post-secondary students with opportunities to access the education and training they need to pursue their career goals."

[More Than 1,800 Students Awarded the Saskatchewan Innovation and Opportunity Scholarship](#)

HOWARD WILLEMS POSTHUMOUSLY AWARDED THE 2013 IMPACT AWARD FOR LEADERSHIP IN PUBLIC POLICY

On March 11, the National Council of the Canadian Cancer Society posthumously awarded Howard Willems the 2013 Impact Award for Leadership in Public Policy. It is the highest award within the Society granted to an individual who had made a significant contribution to public policy in the fight against cancer. Only one award is granted per year.

Mr. Willems passed away at the age of 59 last November, from a lung cancer caused by exposure to asbestos on the job. Right up until his passing, Willems advocated for a mandatory on-line registry of public buildings that contain asbestos, believing everyone has the right to know if their workplace is safe.

"Howard's selfless efforts, while battling cancer have had a positive impact on government practice, social activism, and public awareness about the danger of asbestos," says Marc Genereux, national chair of the Canadian Cancer Society Board of Directors. "We have no doubt that the accomplishments already achieved and the ones to come, are a direct result of Howard's efforts."

Just days after Mr. Willems' passing, our government announced the creation of a voluntary asbestos registry, believed to be the first of its kind in Canada. On March 14, the Legislature voted unanimously to amend the Bill to make it mandatory for businesses to report to the asbestos registry. The Bill is expected to be passed later this spring.

SASKATOON WESTERN DEVELOPMENT MUSEUM WINS 2013 READERS' CHOICE AWARDS FROM RVWEST MAGAZINE



Congratulations to the Saskatoon Western Development Museum for being the recipient of three 2013 Reader's Choice Awards from RVwest Magazine!

The Saskatoon Western Development Museum has been awarded the highest honour, the Platinum Readers' Choice Award in the following categories: Favourite Saskatchewan Attraction, Favourite Overall Saskatchewan RV Destination, and Favourite Saskatchewan Historical Site. The Readers' Choice winners have been chosen by the readers, representing RVers' favourite places, attractions, and other RV-related topics.

RVwest Magazine reaches over 800,000 people in Western Canada and the Western United States through their magazine, website, and eNewsletter.

I encourage you to visit the Saskatoon Western Development Museum and experience Saskatoon's rich history and culture.

DID YOU KNOW?

- **Saskatoon's employment was up by 9,200 for 16 months of year-over-year increases.**

- Saskatoon's seasonally adjusted unemployment rates was 4.7 per cent. Saskatoon holds steady as the fourth lowest unemployment rate, among major metropolitan areas.
- Saskatchewan's public sector employment was up by 4,400 jobs.
- Saskatchewan's private sector employment was up by 8,300 jobs.
- Those in Saskatchewan who are self-employed rose by 11,700 jobs.
- Agricultural employment was up by 8,000 jobs.

JUST THE LINKS

- March 11, 2013 - [Province Proclaims March 10-16 Agriculture Safety Week in Saskatchewan](#)
- March 12, 2013 - [Saskatchewan Provincial Parks Reservation Site Beats 2012 Record](#)
- March 13, 2013 - [New Incentive Program to Attract Doctors to Rural Saskatchewan](#)
- March 14, 2013 - [2012 GED Academic Achievement Award Recipient Announced](#)
- March 14, 2013 - [Helping Saskatchewan People at Tax Time](#)
- March 14, 2013 - [More Than 40,000 Students Benefit from Graduate Retention Program](#)
- March 15, 2013 - [One of the Largest T.Rex Skeletons Now on Display in Eastend](#)

UPCOMING EVENTS

Potash Corp CIS Men's Hockey Championship

Date: March 14 - March 17

When: Various times

Where: Credit Union Centre

For a full schedule please click [here](#)

Gardenscape

Date: March 22 - March 24

When: March 22: 11:00 am - 10:00 pm; March 23: 9:00 am - 8:00 pm; March 24: 11:00 am - 5:00 pm

Where: Prairieland Park

6th Annual Glass Slipper Benefit for Princesses

Date: April 11

When: 5:30 pm

Where: TCU Place

Tickets available at [6th Annual Glass Slipper Benefit for Princesses](#)

THOUGHT OF THE DAY

"Courage is what it takes to stand up and speak; courage is also what it takes to sit down and listen."
Winston Churchill

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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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