

Thorsby 4-H Multi-Club Set to Release Pheasants

From Sherri Wegner

Thorsby 4H Multi-Club Pheasant Project has been collaborating with the Town of Thorsby and The Lions Club to release Chinese Ring Neck Pheasants in the Lions Park Campground.

This event is open to the public as we welcome you to come and witness the release on Saturday, August 31st at 1pm. Our members and leaders will be there to answer questions you may have.



Above: 2 of the Pheasants set to be realeased on August 31st.

This is the second year our project has been running. We currently have 5 members and 2

leaders. The pheasants are ordered from the States and delivered to us May. They are only one day old when we get them. We raise and care for them until their release in September.

Our club started this project up again, as the leader, Tim Wegner was involved with it when he was a young member in 4H. The purpose of this project is to teach the members how to care for these birds and to introduce them into the surrounding habitat.



Pictured Above from left to right:
Justin Kronschnabl, Stefanie Wegner, Shaylin Wegner,
Kaleb deBoer & Alanna.
Missing leaders Tim & Sherri Wegner

Happy Labour Day!



FOR SALE

Premium Firewood for sale. For details and pricing call James.

780.405.0826 (5-5kr)

1996 GMC SLE - Extended cab, 185,673 km, 454, no rust. \$5000 OBO.

780.999.4680 (2-2)

Whirlpool Duet matched front loading washer and dryer. Works well. \$300 for the set.

780.666.0363 (2-2)

1460 International Axial Flow Combine - 2000 Hours. Also a **9700 Massey Ferguson Tractor** (1963).

780.298.3728 (2-2)

2 - Freezer Beef - Ready to go. Grain fed, no antibiotics. Call or text.

780.915.6642 (2-2)

COMMERCIAL SPACE FOR RENT

Exciting Business Opportunity! - LOCATION-LOCATION-LOCATION - Building for rent on Main Street in Thorsby. Building is already equipped with fridges, stove, and work tables. Would make a great cafe/small restaurant, was previously a bakery. This opportunity is available immediately!

780.719.9577 (2-2kr)

FOR RENT

2 Bedroom Apartment for rent in Thorsby. Available September 1st on Hankin Street, next to the Village Office. All utilites except power included. No smoking or pets allowed. Please call:

780-789-2210 or 780-446-1596 (3-3kr)

Farmhouse for Rent - 4 1/2 mi southwest of Thorsby. Available Sept. 1st.

780.789.2351 (1-4)

4-Plex Unit in Winfield - 2 bedrooms + 1 small room downstairs, finished basement, incl. 4 major appliances. Small pets ok but no dogs. \$825 + utilities / month, \$825 damage deposit. Phone Maria 403.606.6977 or 403.249.2708 or Marie 780.932.7177 (5-5kr)

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Rick 780.289.1020 (5-5kr)

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Starting Comensation: Up to \$18.50 hourly

Summary:

Working in the production facility assembling Arctic Spa Hot Tubs.

Required Skills:

Unskilled and Skilled positions available. Experience working with air tools, hand tools would be an asset.

Key responsibilities:

- Reporting daily to the Production Manager and Supervisors to be informed of daily tasks.
- Meet the scheduled build demands as set by daily, weekly, monthly orders.

Physical Demands Required:

Able to be on your feet 8 hours per day. Able to work in a warm environment. Have no issues with adjusting personal schedule to work overtime hours when required.

PPE:

Safety glasses and steel-toe boots required, any further PPE required will be provided.

This is not a complete statement of all duties and responsibilities of this position. The position holder may be required to carry out any other duties as directed by their Manager.

Please submit resume in person or via email to Jason Walker Human Recourses Manager at Blue Falls Manufacturing. 4549-52st Thorsby Alberta T0C 2P0 or jwalker@goarctic.com



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Dawn Heisler-Re/Max Real Estate - Your local Realtor for all your Real Estate needs. Cell: 780-619-2564 Office: 780-986-2900

Kaylea Westling, Associate - Re/Max 780.898.3270 kayleawestling@remax.net

Classified Ads are \$5.00 for 2 weeks (up to 30 words) GST included.



Town of Thorsby Upcoming Council Meetings

SEPTEMBER 2019

Tuesday 3 | Committee of the Whole Meeting

Tuesday 10 | Regular Council Meeting

Tuesday 17 | Committee of the Whole Meeting

Tuesday 24 | Regular Council Meeting

OCTOBER 2019

Tuesday 1 | Committee of the Whole Meeting Tuesday 8 | Regular Council Meeting

Tuesday 15 I Committee of the Whole Meeting

Tuesday 22 | Regular Council Meeting

All meetings start at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers unless otherwise stated.

OLOV Fundraiser Helps Kids

From Nicole Bechard, Council Member

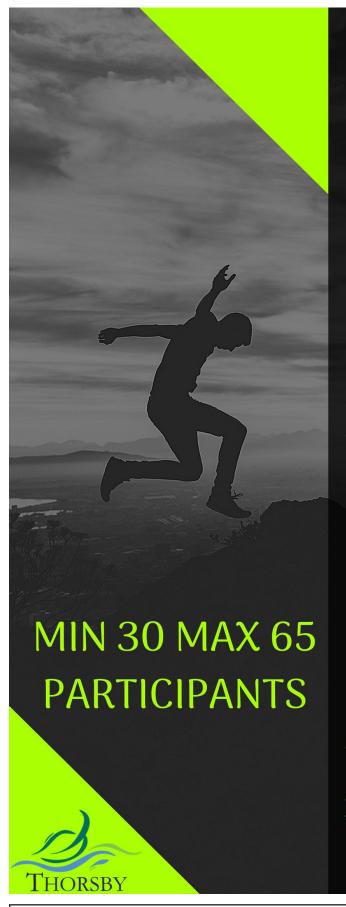
Our Lady of Victory Roman Catholic Church in Thorsby held it's 3rd Annual Back to School Fundraiser at the end of July. This event and fundraiser helps both Thorsby and Warburg school kids with needed supplies.

\$426 was collected in only 2 days and was given to respective FCSS's to distribute.

Our Lady of Victory Council would like to thank all the people who donated to this year's fundraiser. It is truly appreciated by the students.







ACTIVE BOYS WORKSHOP

Saturday, Sept 14

10am-3pm



This is a one day workshop for BOYS ONLY! They will try new activities, lunch and snacks provided as well as they will meet our RCMP as the guest speaker!! This workshop is designed to try out new sports, fun activities, bond with friends and feel confident in who you are! Boys will get take home bags at the end of the day!

Ages: 7+

Cost: \$40

At Arctic Spas Recreation Complex

Register @ 780-789-4041 or kszepesy@thorsby.ca



michaelj@mikeshomesltd.com mikep@mikeshomesltd.com

MICHAEL JACOB 780-991-1008 MIKE PETRACEK 780-699-3700

Community Events Page

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ROYAL CANADIAN LEGION #246 MUL-HURST: Inviting new members and seeking veterans in the community. FAMILY BINGO: every TUES.7PM (NEXT MEAT BINGO: Sept. 17th) COMMUNITY SO-CIAL: Friday Aug. 30th @ 7pm. NEXT GENERAL MEETING: Mon. Sept. 9th @ 7pm. Call Marion: 780-935-6281

ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST UKRAINIAN CATH-OLIC CHURCH, Thorsby - Everyone is welcome to the next mass on Sunday, Sept. 1 at 12:00 p.m. If more information is required please call Dan @ 780-789-3698

Thorsby Crib Nights - Need new players! Crib Nights at the Arctic Spas Rec Centre start back up on Wednesday, September 4th at 6 pm. Everyone is welcome!

Thorsby Bingo Starts on September 5th - Bingo is held every Thursday evening at the Senior's Centre. Regular Bingo starts at 7:15 p.m. Early Bird is at 7:00 p.m. Loonie Pots and Progressive Bingos.

Golden Spur Gymkhana Dates for 2019 are as follows: September 8. If you need any information please call Jenn @ 780-246-2377, Jodi @ 780-514-8336 or Donna @ 780-554-4714 or check out our facebook page @ Golden Spur Gymkhana

Community United Church – summer worship schedule: Sunday mornings @ 10:30 AM. NO WORSHIP ON LONG WEEKENDS: September 1. Telfordville Services: September 8. Warburg Services: September 15, 22, 29

2019 Stars of Alberta Volunteer Awards. Deadline for nominations is September 20, 2019. For more information and nomination form, see www.alberta.ca/stars-awards.

Centrelodge Community Centre presents thier Autumn Supper. September 28th from 6-8 pm Presale tickets only. All members have tickets or you can call Carolyn at 780.789.3089. Everyone Welcome. We will also be drawing the winners for our Cash Prize Raffle. 6 mi South of Thorsby and 1 1/2 mi East.

Breton Women's Wellness Day - Save the Date

for our next Women's Wellness Day – Saturday, October 19th. We are currently in the planning stages and look forward to having you join us. If you would like to be a vendor in our trade show area, please email bfcss@telus.net for more information.

Flea Market at Winfield Legion. Every Sunday 10-3. New items, Antiques and collectibles. John 780-721-8473

Thorsby Senior's Thrift Store 50% OFF CLEARANCE! Ongoing clearance. Regular Hours Thursdays, Fridays & Saturdays 10 am - 3 pm. DONATIONS ACCEPTED AND APPRECIATED DURING STORE HOURS ONLY or call Vera to arrange drop off at 780.789.3197. 4812 - 51 Street Thorsby (south of Esso)

Thorsby Bylaw Enforcement - For concerns or inquires email bylaw@thorsby.ca or call 780.789.3935 Ext. 28

Warburg RV Park open May - September. \$30 RV with services: 50 amp power, water & sewer. Weekly rate \$150. Tenting rates, RV dump, & firewood available. Warburg Village 780-848-2841

Our Lady of Victory Roman Catholic Church Mass times are at 9:00 am every Sunday until further notice

St. Matthew's Lutheran Church - Sunday Worship @10:30 a.m., Holy Communion on the first Sunday of the month; Bible study 1,3,5, sundays of the month. Pastor Ron Flamand, interim pastor. Call 780-789-3873

Seniors Fitness every Tuesday at 10:00 am at the Thorsby Seniors Center. Standing & sitting exercise through video instruction geared toward seniors. \$2.00

Thorsby Agricultural Society Meetings are held the first Wednesday of the month at 7 pm upstairs in the meeting room at the Haymaker Centre.

Thorsby Municipal Library Hours: Tuesday 10 am- 7 pm, Wednesday Noon-7 pm, Thursday & Friday 10 am- 5 pm Closed Saturdays for June - August. Open Saturdays begining in September from 11 am-2 pm (closed Saturdays of long weekends) Questions/

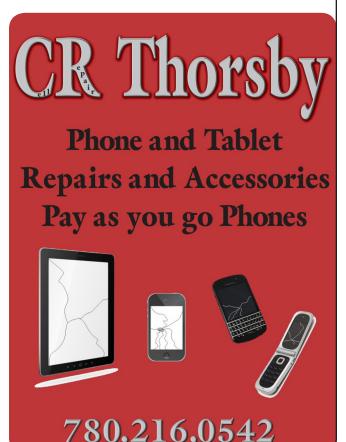














Feedback/RSVP contact us through Facebook (Thorsby Municipal Library) or call 780-789-3808.

Community United Church – Join us for worship, programs, community outreach. Sunday worship at 10:30 AM Telfordville: 2nd Sunday of each month Warburg: remaining Sundays of each month. 780-848-2227.

Thorsby Senior's Centre rentals. Call Cathy Kuzio 780-719-7124.

Treasures Thrift Shop located in Community United Church, 5112-53 St. Warburg, is open every Wednesday from 10 am - 4 pm. Gratefully accepting donations of clean, gently used clothing and small household items on Wednesday and Friday mornings.

Warburg Museum - We are now making homemade pies every Saturday from 1:00 p.m. - 4 p.m. New members always welcome and appreciated! Susie 780.848.2507

Thorsby Senior's Soup & Sandwich Day at the Senior's Centre is on the second Wednesday of every month. Five dollars will buy you a bowl of soup, a sandwich, a coffee, tea, or juice. Enjoy all this between 11:30-1:30 pm. Birthday Party follows at 1:30 pm. Everyone Welcome!

Warburg Legion Hall is available for rent at \$75.00/full day and \$50.00/half day with a deposit of \$50.00 that is refundable upon inspection. For Hall rental, please contact Deb/Max 780 848 2923 or (780) 264 9217 or Nancy/Allan 780 848 7756.

Leduc Public Market runs every Thursday 10-3 in the City Center Mall (Ken's Furniture) 5201 50 Street. Lots of vendors with a wide variety of items. For tables or info call Jenna 780-868-7616.

"Busy Brushes" meet every Wednesday from 10-2, at the Warburg Cultural Centre. Everyone welcome! Come join us for some relaxing fun and art. Call Linda Mayr @780 848 7782 for more info.

Winfield Legion is available to rent. Keep eyes open for a list of upcoming social events. Rental Inquiries - Call Gordon 780-542-1243 Or Mona 780-682-3905

Thorsby Senior's Supper Meetings These monthly meetings will now be held in the Senior's Centre (4812-51st Street) and are on the last Wednesday of every month at 6:00 p.m. Members are requested to bring a potluck dish. Memberships are available for \$10 from Elaine Warnock at 780.221.3939.

Thorsby & District Lions' Club (non-profit organization serving Thorsby & District), Meeting the 2nd and 4th Monday of the month at the Lions' Den in

Community Hall Basement at 7:00 pm. For information or membership, call Frank @ 780-905-8019.

Foot Care Nurse will be at the Thorsby Recreation Centre on the 1st Wednesday of every month. Please call Irene at 780-789-3176 to make an appointment or for information.

TOPS (Take Off Pounds Sensibly) at Thorsby Fire Hall - Mondays, weigh in at 9:00 to 9:15 am, meetings 9:15 - 9:45 am, for more info call Sherilyn 780-621-3461 or Elaine 780-221-3939.

Ashland Dam Park - For reservations call Bruce @ (780) 898-9636.

Breton Community Center- To rent the community center please visit our website www.bretonagsociety. com, call 780-696-3561 and leave a message or email us at bretonagsociety@gmail.com

Camp Barvnok - For bookings, call Walter 7807172432, or Jason 7809904043, or email bookings@barvnok.com

Royal Canadian Legion #246 Mulhurst hall rental: Call Marie @ 780-361-7350

Breton Golden Age Club - Cards every Monday at 1 pm. Floor Curling every Tuesday at 1 pm. Last Monday of every month is Potluck at 11:30 am with cards to follow. Meetings are the 1st Wednesday of every month, everyone including new members welcome!

Warburg Alliance Church Fall Worship Service 11 am. Sunday School 9:45 am. (Summer Worship Service 10:30 am) (No Sunday School for the summer) Bible Studies. Do you need prayer? Please call 780-848-7577

Telfordville Hall - For bookings call Tracy at 780-718-9549 after 5:00 pm.

Sunnybrook Hall - For bookings call Cheryl Krawiec @ 780-789-3193 or 780-920-1950. Sunnybrook Hall Meetings - 1st Tuesday of the month at 7:30 pm. Everyone welcome.

Morrowdale Community Hall - For bookings call Elaine at 780-789-2104.

Community Events are placed FREE of charge, thanks to the community commitment of



4914 HANKIN ST THURSDY 780-213-0542



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10 Years of Savings Using The TFSA (Tax Free Savings Account)

Happy 10-year anniversary to the tax-free savings account. That's right, the TFSA, once a secondary savings account where people would mostly store short-term cash, hit double digits in January and it's sure grown up over the years.

People have realized that virtually anything that can be held in an RRSP can be held in a TFSA. That's stocks, bonds, mutual funds, more long-term investments – you can put long-term retirement assets into it.

As the years have gone by, the TFSA's annual dollar limit has grown. In 2013 it rose to \$5,500 and, as of January 1, 2019, it's \$6,000. (It did jump to \$10,000 in 2015, but went back to \$5,500 the following year.) The current total contribution room for those were at least 18 years old in 2009, Canadian residents and who have never used a TFSA is \$63,500. That's a lot of room to work with.

With 10 years having passed since the introduction of the TFSA, we wanted to know if Canadians are thinking about these accounts differently than they once did. We spoke with Jonathan Braun, Manager of Tax and Estate planning at IG Wealth Management.

HOW DO PEOPLE VIEW THE TFSA TODAY?

When it first came out most people saw it as another savings account – a literal bank savings account – because it had savings account in the title. So, they were a little confused and thought

it was limited to just savings. Over the years, people have realized that virtually anything that can be held in an RRSP can be held in a TFSA. That's stocks, bonds, mutual funds, more long-term investments – you can put long-term retirement assets into it.

NOW THAT TOTAL CONTRIBUTION ROOM HAS INCREASED TO MORE THAN \$63,000, HAS THE PERCEPTION OF THE TFSA AS A SHORT-TERM PLACE FOR CASH CHANGED?

It has, or at the very least, people now have more flexibility. When the contribution limit was only \$5,000, you weren't saving a lot in tax. Now that you have \$63,000 of room, the tax savings on investment earnings start to make a difference. As well, because it's a viable option for mutual funds and long-term investing, you can make it a part of your retirement plan. And with a \$6,000 limit, which will start creeping up to a larger figure over the next few years, it's becoming more relevant to a person's retirement.

HOW WOULD HIGH NET-WORTH INDIVIDU-ALS USE A TFSA?

Not much has changed there. Most high networth individuals would probably max out their RRSP first and then max out their TFSA. They're probably already maxing it out every year – it wouldn't take much for them to do that. But anyone who isn't taking advantage of a TFSA, should.

NOW, 10 YEARS ON, WHAT DO YOU LIKE ABOUT THE TFSA?

It's simple and it's great for people who max out their RRSP and want another place where their money can grow tax-free. Personally, I use it for long-term retirement planning. So, I put in the maximum each year. When I pull it out in retirement, I won't have to pay tax on any withdrawals, so it can supplement my other sources of retirement income. It's just another tool people can use to save, and save as cheaply as possible.

If you would like a free, no obligation, financial review contact Phil Goddard to set up an appointment.



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MLA REPORT

from The Office of MLA Mark Smith, Member of the Legislative Assembly for Drayton Valley - Devon

One of the great things about being an MLA is getting to meet and eventually serve your constituents.

Over the past three weeks I have had so many opportunities to celebrate special events with constituents.

The Calmar parade and the gigantic flea market down main street has become one of the things I most enjoy attending. Many of you have seen the little red 1965 Corvair my wife drives in all of the parades across the constituency. So it was a lot of fun to discover in the antique store in Calmar an old set of 1965 Alberta license plates that are even red and white that can now adorn my parade car.

There are not many businesses in this constituency that can claim to have been in business for 90 years. So it was an amazing night spent celebrating the 90th anniversary of the Thorsby Hotel and Bar. There was great music, lots of people and it was so interesting to see some of the old pictures of the hotel over the years, especially the picture of the Thorsby Men's baseball team taken in the hotel.

Just the other day I went down to where the oil spill south of Drayton Valley occurred. No one wants to see an oil spill, especially one that affects a creek that feeds the North Saskatchewan River but I was so proud of the clean-up effort I saw going on. The scope of the effort taken to clean up what in comparison to some of the spills we have read about is a relatively small spill was impressive. The booms, skimmers and clean-up crews, the vac trucks and oversight by the AER all of these people and agencies were working together and getting the job done. It made me proud to be part of the

best, most environmentally responsible oil industry anywhere in the world. Good job guys!

I also had the pleasure this past week of attending the media event for EAVOR an Alberta energy company drilling a deep well geo-thermal pilot project near Rocky Mountain House. Several hundred attendees saw two rigs two and a half kilometers apart drill two wells 2.5 kilometres deep and then drill laterally and connect the two bore holes together to create a continuous loop that will collect the heat of the earth. I don't believe that the expertise and technology exists anywhere else in the world to do this and should the technology prove successful then the first commercial geo-thermal electrical project is slated to begin sometime in the next year in Drayton Valley.

We live in an amazing province and this constituency has so much going for it and it is a privilege to represent you inside and outside of the Legislature.

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- **Thorsby Extra Clean, 4 Bedroom Bungalow,** double detached garage, fenced backyard, partly finished basement \$249,000.00
- Thorsby Very clean, 3 Bedroom Bungalow with finished basement, single detached garage and large developed lot. \$129,000.00
- Thorsby 1556 sq.ft. Townhouse Unit. 3 bedroom, 3 bath, basement & garage. \$232,500.00
- **Thorsby 4 Bedroom Bungalow,** 1594 sq. ft., finished basement, large attached garage and huge private yard backing onto green space. \$334,000.00
- Thorsby 2001 2 Storey, 1578 sq.ft. in excellent complete acks onto greenspace, 4 bedrooms, finished basement, fenced back yard. \$299,000.00
- **Thorsby 1550 sq.ft. bungalow** with detached garage and huge yard. 4 bedroom, backs onto green space. \$239,900.00
- Thorsby 2300 sq.ft. 2 Storey 4 bedrooms, attached garage & INDOOR SWIMMING POOL! \$264,000.00

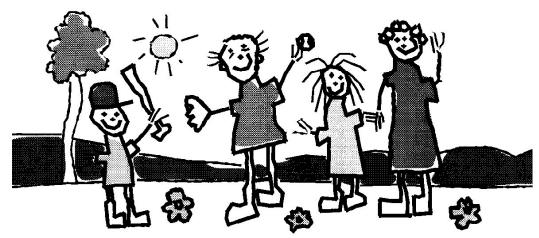
FARMS & ACREAGES

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- Thorsby Newer 1700 sq.ft. Custom Built Home on 701116, fully developed basement, open concept and 40' x 64' completely finished shop. \$729,000.00PENDING.
- **Ziener Park 2006**, **1523 sq.ft.**, 3 bedroom modular on 7.22 acres, all services in place, 30' x 40' finished heated shop, private treed location. \$299,000.00
- Pigeon Lake 160 Acres of south facing land ideal for & horses. House shows amazing, attached, oversized double garage. Beautifully treed, well **PE** ured and private yard. \$729,000.00
- **Thorsby Beautiful building spots** backing onto Strawberry Creek Ravine. Zoned Agricultural 7.36 acres \$132,900.00 & 142,900.00
- **Telfordville Gorgeous 1764 sq.ft. bi-level** on 1 acre lot. Open concept floor plan, developed basement & attached garage. Plus 25' x 40' detached garage as well. \$575,000.00
- Warburg Gorgeous & New 3 bedroom house on 13.66 private, treed acres with finished basement & attached garage. On pavement. \$695,000.00
- St. Francis On Pavement Secondary Highway 622 12 Acres+. 1400 sq.ft. bungalow, older shop, all services, some corrals \$289,000.00
- Warburg 14.72 Scenic Acres overlooking creek. 2100 sq.ft. 2 storey with attached garage, 25'x33' heated shop. \$595,000.00
- Wizard Lake 40 Acre Private Campground with man-made lake. Permits and approvals in place. Amazing setting, tons of trees & trails. \$799,000.00
- **Thorsby 36.05 Acres -** 1700 sq.ft. bungalow and tons of outbuildings, everything built 2002 or newer. Gorgeous yard with private, quiet setting. Must be seen! \$695,000.00

Haymaker Centre Schedule September 2019

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Alberta Provincial Gymkhana Association- Finals	9 am - 9 pm Public Riding	3	6 pm - 9 pm Public Riding	5:30 pm - 10:30 pm ABRA Jackpot	6	7
8	9 am - 9 pm Public Riding	10	6 pm - 9 pm Public Riding	5:30 pm - 10:30 pm ABRA Jackpot	13	Canadian Cowboy Mounted Shooters Association
Canadian Cowboy Mounted Shooters Association	9 am - 9 pm Public Riding	17	6 pm - 9 pm Public Riding	5:30 pm - 10:30 pm ABRA Jackpot	6 pm - 9 pm Private(Shelby)	21
22	23 9 am - 9 pm Public Riding	24	25 6 pm - 9 pm Public Riding	26 5:30 pm - 10:30 pm ABRA Jackpot	27 7 pm - 9 pm Setup	Linda Larson Memorial Barrel Race
Linda Larson Memorial Barrel Race	9 am - 9 pm Public Riding	6:30 pm - 9 pm Private(Darcy)	6 pm - 9 pm Public Riding	7 pm - 9 pm Private(Johnie)	4	Trick Riders- Finals

We believe seniority should be rewarded.



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Gr

R

Straight Out of Thorsby

From the County of Leduc, from Alberta and Canada, from Singapore to the U.K., from Australia to Holland, from the USA to Panama, Thorsby graduates are making a difference. This is the 33rd installment in a series of profiles which indicate what a small school and community can produce.

The people who conduct the interviews are Audrey Brosseau and John Elson. If you have. suggestions please contact John at 780-789-3822 or Audrey at 780-886-0658.

JOAN YEE (ELSON) Part 1 of 2

My parents arrived in Thorsby separately and single. My mom, Pearl Christensen, was a recent graduate from the University of Alberta Nursing Program. She had 3 job offers at that time: one with the Victorian Order of Nurses, the second with AADAC as a nurse councillor, and finally one with the Leduc Strathcona Health Unit as a public health nurse in Thorsby. Not knowing anyone, she made her way to Thorsby and in true Pearl fashion started meeting everyone and making friends. My dad arrived later in 1968. He had previously taught school in Whitecourt, but was offered a job with the County of Leduc at Thorsby High School as a physical education teacher. Somehow the two met and were married within a year (the details on this are scant, but perhaps it would make a good Thorsby Target investigative reporting story?). They were married on December 26, 1969 -Boxing Day. My sister and I always assumed this was because our dad was a big pugilist fan, but apparently it had something to do with not wanting to take time off work. I still prefer to believe the former. So, while our family roots were not deep in the Thorsby area, the community was welcoming, and it became the place we all called "Home".

In many ways, Thorsby was a great place to grow up. As a young person, I was able to wan-

der and explore. As a town kid, my friends and I would ride our bikes from one side of town to the other and also venture down the country roads. Looking back, it really allowed us to connect with nature and develop a love of the outdoors. However, the wandering did evolve into there being times when I would just leave the house and not tell anyone that I was leaving or where I was going, including when a babysitter was over. I realize now what a luxury this was to be enjoyed in a small community. The wandering continues and we have instilled a love of travel and exploring in our own children – often when we visit a new city we will explore by foot to get the true local flavour of a place.

Related to the exploring, being active was always a part of my life in Thorsby. I have early memories of skating on the outdoor rink located to the east of the public works/fire department, which was down the (gravel) street from the house where we lived. By the time I was 10 years old, the Recreation Centre was built, complete with an indoor ice arena. A few years later my mom signed me up for figure skating. Quite frankly, I wasn't all that keen to figure skate, but I was willing to try. It didn't take me long to realize how much I enjoyed skating. With the strong support of my parents, my time at the rink (in Thorsby, Warburg, and Leduc) became a very central part to my life as a teenager. Thanks Mom!

The schooling offered us in Thorsby was thorough and focused on the basics – and in doing so provided a launching point for students to further their (formal & informal) education in any desired direction (as shown in these "Straight Out of Thorsby" articles). The schools in Thorsby were small and I am sure the funding matched the population. As a result, the teachers worked hard to provide us with meaningful experiences by volunteering their own time to do so—field trips, camping trips, sports teams and other extra-curricular (yearbook, students union activities). This includes my dad who had coached basketball/baseball/football teams (in-

cluding provincial championship teams in 1972) and organized student trips in the 1970s to Italy. I recall him coaching a teen boys baseball team in the early 1980s where I would often attend the practices and games. As a family, we watched Edmonton Trappers baseball and more recently, watched MLB in various cities such as Toronto, Seattle, Kansas City and Chicago. This past summer my daughter Emma was selected to sing the national anthem at 7 Edmonton Prospects baseball games, with our whole family including my parents, my sister Kathy and her husband, often in attendance. While my own 'mosquito' baseball career was not fantastic, baseball has become my "go to" spectator sport - Thanks Dad!

After high school, I left to attend school in Edmonton. I don't believe anything can really prepare a student for the transition from high school to an educational institution as large as the University of Alberta. I graduated in 1995 with a degree in geography - focusing on an area of study that examines the relationship between humans and the environment. I became interested in how communities were built and what influences the building of them. I decided to take this topic one step further in a more applied sense and look at how the built and natural environments impact our health - this area of study is called environmental public health. In 1998 I graduated with a Bachelor of Applied Science from Ryerson University in Toronto, moved to Sarnia, Ontario and worked for Lambton County Health Unit and became a certified Public Health Inspector (CPHI(C)). I eventually made my way back to Edmonton, tried out a few other jobs, before accepting a position with Health Canada's First Nations and Inuit Health Branch. I had the privilege of working with First Nations communities for 15 years, focusing mainly on aspects of environmental public health protection. During that time, I visited many communities in all corners of the province but spent most of my time in Treaty 6 (which Thorsby is a part of) and Treaty 7 (southern Alberta). I developed an interest in how data can be leveraged (based

on how data are collected, stored, analyzed) to support evidence-based decisions. I was part of a team that designed and deployed a software application that integrated drinking water sample test results (based on the Canadian Drinking Water Guidelines) and geographic locators which provided First Nations and their partners with a means to use this information to make decisions related to a range of topics from public health protection to capital planning. Ten years later, the system is still in use. In 2015, I joined the public health team at Alberta Health Services mainly working on initiatives that address the impact of community design (including neighbourhood design, transportation networks. accessibility of healthy foods, and the natural environment) on public health (the occurrence of chronic disease like diabetes, heart disease, cancers, etc.) More recently, I was given an opportunity to lead a provincial team that provides support for environmental public health data management services and education programming for the 5 Zones of Alberta Health Services. As well somehow I managed to do a M.Sc. in Public Health Sciences, graduating in 2007 – I don't quite remember how it all happened as it's a bit of a blur, but I do remember handing in my thesis on a Thursday and then giving birth to our second daughter the following day.



John and Joan on a pre-game tour of Wrigley Field in Chicago

To be continued in next issue...



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Gear up your child for school the right way, with a comprehensive eye exam

It's that time of year again: summer is winding down, and it's time to get ready for back to school. Most parents' routines involve shopping for new clothing and school supplies so their children are prepared to succeed. What many parents tend to overlook is their child's most important learning tool: their eyes.

"Early comprehensive eye exams are critical to helping children succeed in life" says local optometrist Dr. Sara Starko. "A child's eyes are constantly used in the classroom and at play."

One in four children has a vision-related learning difficulty. A child with a visual problem won't know how the world looks and will assume that what they are seeing is normal. What's more, children with uncorrected vision or eye health problems face many barriers in life: academic, social and athletic.

It can be hard for a child to catch up after struggling and falling behind through the basics of reading, writing, and math. Countless children in Canada are told every day that they have a learning disability when in reality the problem was their vision. A vision screening is not enough. "A child who sees 20/20 can still have a vision problem," says Dr. Starko. Visual acuity is one aspect of our visual system, but the skills needed for successful reading and learning are much more complex. Vision-related learning problems can cause children to reverse words when writing or copying, confuse the same word in the same sentence, skip lines while reading or read the same line twice. "Optometrists don't just check sight. They check how well the eyes work together and how sight is processed."

Vision problems aren't always obvious (especially if it's a problem with only one eye), and the development of a growing child's eyes doesn't stabilize until age 20. Alberta Health Care covers a comprehensive eye exam every year for children 18 and under. Dr. Starko recommends that babies have their first eye exam between six and nine months.





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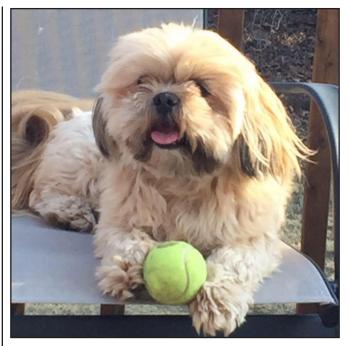
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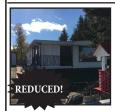
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